

## Salt

By Paul Stepp  
of Indore, West Virginia

Salt is mentioned numerous times in the Scriptures. It is mentioned often in different capacities. It is referred to in both the Old and New Testaments. It is something that was familiar to the patriarchs, to the prophets, to the Jews, and to the Gentiles. It was important in the ancient times and it is important now. I think that this would make a good study for us to look at the use of salt in the Scriptures.



### ATTRIBUTES OF SALT

Salt is necessary for life. The human body is created by God and God has decreed that the human body will have need of salt. Oftentimes today the medical community decides that the human body intakes too much salt. Recent evidence, though, seems to indicate that the dangers of salt have been vastly overrated. Regardless of the controversy that surrounds salt, it cannot be denied that the body must have at least some intake of salt to survive. Salt contains sodium and chloride. Sodium is a mineral that the body must have to survive and it cannot produce it on its own. Chloride, too, is essential to good health. The same is true in the animal world around us. We all have seen the evidence of the need and desire for salt

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## Youth In America

By Roger Reed  
of Mansfield, Ohio

**"If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that, when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them: Then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place; And they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton, and a drunkard. And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he**



**die: so shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear"** (Deut. 21:18-21).

### INTRODUCTION

The above Scripture was quoted, or should I say tried to be quoted, by Senator Obama before he was elected president. He then said with a smirk on his face, "Folks haven't been reading their Bibles." I can assure you Mr. President, Baptists have been reading their Bibles, and we know all too well

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## Complete in Christ

By Milburn Cockrell  
(1941 - 2002)

**"And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power"** (Col. 2:10).

The expression, **"And ye are complete in him,"** is short but most expressive. How emphatic this is. **"Ye are,"** not "ye shall be." And how inclusive: **"Ye."** The weakest saint is included in that **"ye."** Also observe it reads: **"In him,"** not in myself. Thus it is not a matter of attainment but of faith. The Colossian Christians needed no Jewish ordinances and traditions, nor the philosophy of the Greeks. They had no need of some newly-invented superstition. They did not need a cup of water, seeing that they already had the whole fountain.

Note the connection between Colossians 2:9 and this verse: **"For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."** It is after this that Paul goes on to say: **"And ye are complete in him."** Believers receive the Divine filling which flows down from their Divine covenant Head (John 1:16). Christ is the fullness of God, and we are filled from Him. We are in Christ, and all fullness being in Him, we are filled with all we are capable

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## The Visibility of Divine Grace

**"Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord"** (Acts 11:23).

True religion expands the hearts of believers, and induces them to promote the glory of God and the happiness of their fellowmen. A disposition to do good to all, especially to them who are of the household of faith, is recommended by the example of God, who is kind to the unthankful and unholy, and who is the Saviour of men. The Lord is good unto all, and His tender mercies are over all His works. The same disposition to promote the happiness of our fellowmen

is recommended by the example of Jesus Christ who, in the days of His flesh, went about doing good to the souls and bodies of men. And prophets, apostles, martyrs, who were faithful in their generations, made every exertion to turn men from darkness to light, and they rejoiced to hear of the conversion of sinners. The members of the early church were animated by the same benevolent spirit, and hence we are informed, in the chapter before us, that when the church at Jerusalem heard of the salutary effects produced by the gospel at Antioch, they sent forth Barnabas to confirm the new converts, and to teach them the way of God more

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## Questions for Those Who Deny Predestination

### SATAN'S FALL

Could anything in this whole creation have ever existed, except by the will and decree of Almighty God?

Could there have ever been a Satan, except by the will and decree of his Creator? (**The deceived and the deceiver are his**) Job 12:16).

Could there have ever been a fall by Satan, except by his being created with the capability of falling?

Could the fall of Satan have ever taken place if the created circumstances had not been in existence?

Could not God have created Satan and other circumstances so that there could have been no fall? How long beforehand did God know this?

Did God know prior to Satan's creation that he would fall?

If God knew Satan would fall, yet proceeded to create him and the

circumstances in which he fell, does this not reveal that it was the will of God that Satan fall?

If you knew your child would drown itself if you placed it in water, yet you went ahead and did such, would this drowning not be blamed on you?

If God did not intend the fall of Satan to take place, why did He not either refrain from creating him or else, by His sovereign power, prevent the fall?

Could not He have done either?

Is it not true that God either could not prevent the fall or would not prevent it?

If He could not, why could not He?

If He would not, does not that prove He willed it?

Does God permit anything to happen that He has not decreed to permit?

Did God decree to permit the fall of

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*Kind words bring no blisters on the tongue that speaks them,  
nor on the ear which hears them.*

**"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver"** (Proverbs 25:11).

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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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# Questions for

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Satan?

If so, is the fall of Satan not the result of the decree of God?

If God did not willingly decree this fall, then who forced Him to allow it?

Did God decree to allow Satan to lead other angels astray?

Could Satan have done this against the will or decree of God?

If God decreed to allow Satan to lead other angels astray, then was it not the will of God that they be led astray?

In fact, if God had decreed to allow Satan to lead other angels astray, was not it an absolute certainty that such would take place?

If it had not been the will of God for Satan to lead angels astray, could not God have hindered him?

If you saw a snake crawl up to your child, would you sit by and watch the snake bite the child, if you could prevent it?

Could not God have destroyed the fallen Satan, if He did not will any further existence of sin?

Could not God have defended His angels against Satan and prevented their being led astray?

If God did not "raise a finger" to obstruct the course of Satan, is it not because Satan was fulfilling what God had previously decreed?

Does not the case of Job reveal that Satan can do nothing but what God decrees?

Would God permit that which is contrary to His decrees?

If not, was not the fall of Satan and other angels the result of God's decree?

## THE FALL OF MAN

Could there have even been a human being except by the will and decree of God that men exist?

Could the fall of man have ever taken place had not God created man capable of falling?

Could the fall of man have ever taken place had not God placed him in circumstances in which it was possible for him to fall?

Could the fall of man have taken place, if Satan had not had access into the earth?

Could not God have prevented the entrance of Satan into the world of man?

Did God permit the entrance of Satan into the world of man?

If God permitted Satan's entrance, did He not decree to grant this entrance?

Was not this decree prior to the creation of the human being?

Was not this decree eternal, seeing that all of God's decrees are eternal?

Did not God, then eternally decree the entrance of the fallen Satan into the world of man?

Was not, then, the actual fall of man

into sin the result of the eternal decree of God?

If God decreed to allow Satan to enter the world, did He not also decree to allow Satan to deceive man?

If God had not willed that Satan deceive man, could He have not taken some action to prevent this "catastrophe"?

Did God just stand by, with "hands folded," and allow Satan to disrupt His beautiful creatures?

If you had been in the place of God (back in Eden), would you have prevented the fall of man, if you could have done so?

If your child were in danger of being bitten by a serpent would you just stand by and watch, doing nothing to prevent it?

Since God could have prevented Satan from entering the world, but did not; and since God could have prevented the fall, but did not; is not it an evident certainty that God willed the fall of man into sin to take place?

Since God wills nothing but what He decrees and decrees nothing but what He wills, did not God therefore will and decree that man fall into sin?

And since God's decrees are eternal, did He not will the fall of man from all eternity?

## DAMNATION

If God willed or purposed the fall of man, did He not also will the consequences of that fall, seeing that He took all things into consideration?

Is not it impossible to separate God's purpose and the consequences of that purpose?

If a man purposes to shoot another man, is not the man's purpose and the consequences of it inseparable?

Hence, if the damnation of sinners be a consequence of the entrance of sin into the world, did not God decree and will the damnation of sinners?

If God did not decree the damnation of sinners, why did He decree that sin enter into the world, seeing it is sin that damns?

If sin entered by God's decree, and if men are damned for sin, are they not damned as a result of God's decree?

Does not God know who will be damned, even before He creates them?

Has He not known these eternally?

If so, why did not He change matters, if He wanted no one to be damned?

He either could not, or He would not--which?

If He knows they will be damned, and He then goes ahead and creates them, is it not evident that it is His will that they be damned?

If He does not want to damn them, why does not He just refrain from creating them?

Is there any force over God that forces Him to create those whom He knows shall be damned?

Do you deny that God foreknew

exactly who would be damned?

If God calls the stars by name (Psa. 147:4), does not He have more sense than you allow Him? (Isa. 46:9, 10; Jer. 1:5).

Could not God have foreknown who would be damned, if He so desired?

Why wouldn't God want to know who would be damned?

Does not it appear that if God did not want any one damned, He would have foreknown their destiny and at least refrained from creating them? Would you have created them?

If you knew that your child would become a thief, murderer, drunkard, gambler, blasphemer, idolater, liar, whoremonger and infidel, then die unsaved, would you go ahead and bring him into the world?

Does God care about the destiny of men as much as you care about the destiny of your children?

If so, would not He have foreknown men's destinies and not brought them into existence, if He foresaw damnation?

If He chose to be ignorant (which is absolutely an unworthy thought as to our eternal all-wise God), would that make "god's" ignorance responsible for the damnation of souls?

And would not such choice of ignorance reveal "his" total unconcern about the souls that are damned?

And if "his" ignorance is responsible for their damnation, did not "he" in effect decree damnation for those people when "he" decreed to be ignorant?

Why would "he" decree ignorance, when "he" had nothing to lose but everything to gain by foreknowing all things?

Was "he" afraid to foreknow the future? What was "he" afraid of?

Does it manifest wisdom for a man to shut his eyes and take a leap into the dark?

If you had the power to foreknow, would you exercise that power or choose to be ignorant?

If you chose to be ignorant, would not that prove you were ignorant in the first place?

Do not men "rack their brains" in making plans so as to insure safety and wastelessness? Would not they "give their right arm" for the ability to foreknow?

If men had enough sense to recognize the value of foreknowledge, why contend that God has less sense than men?

Is it not true that what God foreknows as coming to pass is absolutely certain to come to pass?

If anything were to turn out otherwise than God foreknew it, then would not that mean that God foreknew a lie?

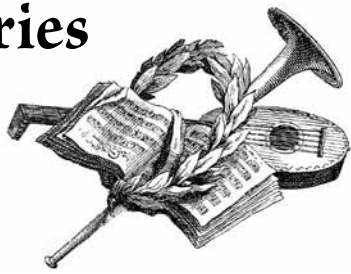
So if God foreknew who would be damned, then are not these certain to be damned?

And since He foreknew their damnation, then created them, is not it

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# Hymn Histories and Scriptures

By Nathaniel Hille  
of Caldwell, Kansas



## Amazing Grace

**"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Col. 3:16).**

We previously noted the His-Story behind the hymn *"It Is Well With My Soul"* by Horatio G. Spafford. We now wish to look at the story behind the most beloved hymn: *"Amazing Grace"* written by John Henry Newton. There are few who are truly familiar with the story of Newton, more are acquainted with him, knowing that he was once a slave-trader and then a slave himself, but there is an entire generation who are totally ignorant of the story behind this hymn. Newton kept extensive journals, thus we know much concerning him.

It will probably surprise many that this hymn was not written by a Sovereign Grace Baptist, but by an Anglican or Church of Englander. It is stated that he was a friend to all including the Dissenters, and aligned himself with the Evangelical revival, "reflecting the sentiments of his friends George Whitefield and John Wesley and Calvinistic-Methodism." Regardless of what he became, it is clear that Newton's heart was touched, washed, and regenerated by the everlasting blood of Christ Jesus.

Newton, born in 1725 in England, was the son of a shipmaster. His mother, Elizabeth Newton, died of tuberculosis in 1732. At age eleven, Newton went to sea with his father until 1742, when his father retired from sailing. In 1743, we see God's providence working in Newton's life. He went to visit some friends and was "pressed" into the Royal Naval service. He became a midshipman aboard the *HMS Harwich*. Newton transferred to the *Pegasus*, a slave ship bound for West Africa. Newton, was a continual problem for the crew of *Pegasus*, and they left him in West Africa with Amos Clowe, a slave trader. There Newton was treated as a slave himself. Newton later remembered this as the time he was "Once an infidel and libertine, a servant of slaves in West Africa."

It is alleged that Newton's father sent a friend to find John and bring him back to England. What we do know is that in 1748 Newton was aboard the merchant ship *Greyhound*, sailing for England. The

ship encountered a severe storm and nearly sank. He recorded in his journal that when all seemed lost he exclaimed, "Lord, have mercy upon us." The ship did not sink and Newton was saved. Newton began to reflect on what he had said and began to believe that God had addressed him though the storm and that grace had begun a work in him. Newton began to read the Scriptures and other religious literature. Newton marked that day for the rest of his life as the day of his conversion, to which Newton referred to as his "great deliverance."

There is much more concerning John Newton's life, but we see here of the providence of God bringing about the foundation for that Christian anthem: *Amazing Grace*. You and I who are saved, can agree with Newton, though we may not have the same background as he, that it was the "amazing grace" of God that "saved a wretch like me. I once was lost, but now am found, was blind but now I see." Maran-atha, AMEN!



## Questions for

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evident that He willed their damnation?

### HELL

Did God create Hell? If not, who did?

When He created Hell, did He know why He was creating it?

Was He certain that someone would occupy Hell, or did He create it "just in case"?

Is not Hell created for the devil and his angels? If so, would not that make God's work of creating Hell all in vain?

With the power to foreknow, why would God go to the trouble of creating Hell, if it would be in vain and He knew it would be in vain?

Would you go to the trouble of building a house, if you knew no one would ever use it?

If Hell were created by God, is it not one of His works?

If it is one of His works, has it not always been known to Him? (Acts 15:18).

Does not God do in time what He has decreed to do? Is not His decree from eternity?

If He created Hell, was it not according to decree?

When He decreed to create Hell did He know who would spend eternity there?

For how long has God known about Hell? From eternity?

If He has always---eternally---known about Hell, has not He always known exactly who would go there?

Does not He create the very ones that go there?

Is it not by the act of God that the lost shall be turned into Hell? (Rev. 20:11-15).

If this is an act of God, has He not always known He would do it? (Acts 15:18).

If He has always known He would pronounce damnation upon the lost, has He not always known who the lost would be?

If He has always known who the lost would be, did He not know this before creation?

If He knew from eternity who would be lost, then created those very persons, did He not by the act of creation manifest that it is His will that they be damned? Otherwise, why create them that perish?

### CHRIST'S DEATH

Was the death of Christ foreordained of God?

Did God determine that Christ should die, or did He just foresee that He would die?

If He determined that Christ should die, did He not also determine HOW He would die?

Did He not also determine WHO should put Christ to death?

Did He determine that Judas should betray Christ, or did He just foresee this?

If He did not determine Judas to betray Christ, could Judas have kept from doing so?

If Judas had not betrayed Christ, would Christ have died?

Did not the Scripture foretell in Psalm 41:9 that Judas would betray Christ?

If he could have done otherwise than he did, would that not mean that the Scripture could be broken?

If Scripture can be broken, cannot God's Word fail in other places?

If Scripture cannot be broken and it foretells of Judas' betraying Christ, then was it not impossible for Judas to do otherwise?

To make certain that Judas would not do otherwise, must not God have determined the whole affair?

Does not the Bible say that what was done to Christ was **"whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done?"** (Acts 4:28).

Was not it a horrible sin to put Christ to death?

Was not it exactly what God purposed? (1 Peter 1:20; Acts 2:23; Matt. 26:54).

Who sinned: God or man?

But did not God determine that they do this?

Is it not right, then, for God to determine for men to do sin, when it performs His own good pleasure and

will? (Rev. 17:17).

In determining the death of Christ, did not God at the same time determine that sin existed?

If He had not determined for sin to exist, how could He determine that Christ would come and die FOR SIN?

Is not it a fact that God determined to give sin an entrance into the world, granting Satan the right to lead Adam and Eve astray?

Is not the entrance of sin therefore according to the will and purpose of God, since it was necessary to the accomplishment of redemption through Christ?

Did God determine to save men before the world began?

If so, did He not determine to save them from sin?

If from sin, did He not also decree that sin would come into existence?

How could there be salvation from sin if there had been no sin?

Could there be sin apart from the will of God?

If God punished Christ for our sins, did God not have to know in advance about our sins?

If He knew about one sin in advance, did He not also know about every sin?

If He knew about every sin, could any sin exist or come to pass without His willing it?

Did not Christ die for our sins before we were born?

How could He die for sins that had not even been committed?

Is not this because God knew all about all of our sins before we were born?

If He knew we would sin, could we possibly have done otherwise?

If God punished Christ for our sins before we committed them, He must have determined that we be sinners. Otherwise, how could He be certain that Christ would have to die for us?

If He "permits" sin, does He not decree to permit it?

Do you permit things to happen that you have power to prevent?

Does not God have the power to prevent all sin?

If He does not have the power to prevent sin how do you know He has the power to give us victory over sin?

If He can't prevent it, how can He whip it?

Is not Satan the instrumental cause of sin?

If so, and if God cannot prevent sin, is Satan not therefore stronger than God?

If Satan is stronger than God, how can we be saved?

Was Satan stronger than God in Eden, thereby bringing in sin?

Did Satan's bringing in of sin fulfill God's purpose or defeat God's purpose?

If He defeated God's purpose, is not God a loser?

If Satan can defeat God once, can not

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# Questions for

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he do so again?

Would not that make Satan truly God?

But does not God reveal to us in the book of Job that He is sovereign over Satan?

If Satan can do only what God decrees, is not Satan merely the servant and slave of God?

If Satan is the servant and slave of God, how could He bring sin into the world if God had not wanted it here?

If God wants sin here, is it not for a purpose?

Is the purpose of sin not related to the eternal purpose of God in the death of Christ?

If so, did not God decree the entrance of sin and its existence when He decreed the death of Christ for sin?

How many times does God demand that sin be punished?

Does God punish two people for the same sin?

If God punished Christ for a person's sins, would God ever punish that person for the same sins?

If so, would that not be punishing sins twice?

Would not that be contrary to Law?

Why would God punish Christ for a person's sins, if He knew in advance that He would also punish the person for the same sins?

Did He just delight in punishing Christ and the person for the same sins?

Does it reflect any wisdom to say that God punished both Christ and the sinner for the same sins?

What is the purpose of doing this?

Did not God know that the sinner would be lost anyway?

Did Christ die for the sins of those who go to Hell?

Did God know in advance that some for whom Christ died would go to Hell?

If He did not know, could He have known?

If He could have known, why did not He do so, since He would not have had to punish Christ for those sins?

Did Christ enjoy being punished for sinners who would go to Hell?

If Christ died to suffer the curse of the Law, what curse could possibly be upon those for whom He died?

If Christ died for our sins, are not we dead to the law's curse?

If the curse of the law can be resurrected to condemn us, would not Christ have to die again to redeem us?

If so, would not He have to die every time we broke the law?

Is God glorified by the death of Christ?

But was not the death of Christ definitely an act of sin on the part of man?

Is God glorified by sin?

If the death of Christ glorifies God, was not it necessary that sin exist in order that God might be glorified in Christ's death?

Editor's Note: I do not know who wrote this article. I found it inside an old paper. It was a tract without the writer's name.



## The Visibility of

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perfectly. Barnabas was well qualified for this important mission, as he **"was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith"** (Acts 11:24). Some who were scattered abroad by the persecutions at the death of Stephen, traveled as far as Antioch, preaching the gospel, and their labours were not in vain. Accordingly, we are told, at the 21st verse, **"And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord"** (Acts 11:21). When this was going on, Barnabas arrived at Antioch, and when he saw the grace of God he was glad. We shall now consider---

### I. HOW BARNABAS SAW THE GRACE OF GOD.

The gospel was faithfully preached at Antioch, and it came to many not **"in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance"** (I Thess. 1:5). Barnabas had only to open his eyes, and look around among the new converts, and he could see the grace of God by the effects it had produced on the tempers, dispositions, and deportment of many. He could not see the hearts of those who professed the faith, but, observing that the streams of life were pure, he concluded that the fountain of the heart had been "purified by faith," and "purged from dead works." **"Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things"** (Matt. 12:34-35). When the grace of God changes the hearts of sinners, "old things pass away, and all things become new," and henceforth, as "the epistles of Christ, they are seen and read of all men." Men take knowledge of them that they have been with Jesus. But to be more particular, Barnabas saw---

1stly. The *freeness* of the *grace* of God. Grace is the free favour of God manifested to sinners of the human race, who are up in arms against the majesty of Heaven, and seeking to overturn the eternal throne. "We are justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. It is of faith that it might be by grace." Grace reigns through the whole scheme of salvation. Grace formed the plan before the birth of time; grace laid the foundation of the spiritual

temple in the Saviour's blood; grace has been raising the superstructure during all the past ages of the world; and when the building of mercy is finished and the head stone is brought forth, saints and angels will exclaim, "Grace, grace unto it!"

Now Barnabas had ample proof of the freeness of this grace when he saw the inhabitants of Antioch turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to the service of the living and true God. They were proverbial for their wickedness, and had no merit to recommend them to the Divine favour; but everything to excite His indignation and wrath. Publicans and harlots enter into the kingdom of Heaven before those who trust in their own righteousness and despise others. God is found of them that seek Him not. His ways are not as our ways. And at the very time when sinners are at the height of their wickedness, and, in the estimation of their fellowmen, on the brink of destruction and beyond the reach of mercy, they are arrested by Divine grace, and plucked as brands from the burning. When Saul, on his way to Damascus, was breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of Christ, the Saviour met him, called him by His grace, changed his views, and appointed him to preach the gospel, and to bear His name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel. The apostle tells us, that in his case, **"the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus"** (I Tim. 1:14). And all who forsake their sins and follow holiness are induced to do so by the grace of God, or, in other words, by the influence of the Holy Spirit: **"If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his"** (Rom. 8:9).

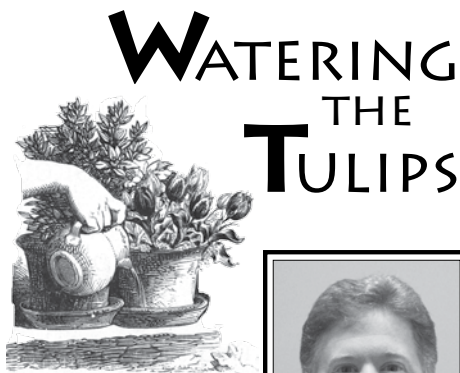
2ndly. Barnabas saw the *discrimination* made in Antioch by the grace of God. Some of the inhabitants were converted, whilst others remained under the power of sin, and were led captive by Satan at his will. To some the gospel was the power of God to salvation, whilst others despised the message of mercy, and accounted themselves unworthy of eternal life. Some were hardened and others were softened. One shall be taken and another left. The Lord takes one of a city, and two of a family, and brings them to Him. In the dispensations of providence and grace, He works all things according to the counsel of His will. He is the Ruler of the world, and being independent of all His creatures, He has a right to bestow favours on guilty sinners, according to His own good pleasure. **"He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can say unto him, What doest thou?"** (Dan. 4:35). "He maketh poor and he maketh rich" (I Sam. 2:7). Some of the human family are born of poor parents, and destitute of the necessities of life, and others are born to honourable

titles and large estates. Some are born beggars, and others princes. The ruler of the world, who is holy, just, and good, has appointed our lot, and marked out the bounds of our habitation; and though we cannot account for the distinction He makes between one man and another, we may rest assured that Infinite Wisdom does all things well.

The same sovereignty is seen in the operations of Divine grace. The gospel is to some the savour of life unto life, and to others the savour of death unto death. Sinners of all descriptions, young and old, rich and poor, profligate and sober, have been captivated by the grace of God. This grace rides through the world in the chariot of the everlasting gospel, triumphing over the depravity of human nature, and transforming sinners into the image, and restoring them to the favour of God. When the Lord pours out His spirit, hard and stony hearts are softened, drunkards are made sober, profligates are reformed, prodigals return to their father's house, blasphemers cry for mercy, and publicans and harlots are made meet for the kingdom of Heaven.

3rdly. Barnabas saw the grace of God inducing the believers at Antioch to attend to *social duties*. Paul and Barnabas remained a whole year in Antioch, preaching the gospel, and the Lord blessed the word of His grace, and great accessions were made to the church: Much people was added unto the Lord; **"And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch"** (Acts 11:26). Here the cause of Christ continued to flourish during the first three centuries; and history informs us that, at one period, Antioch contained half a million of souls, and a hundred thousand of the inhabitants were nominal Christians. Multitudes professed the faith, and were united in church-fellowship, at the time that Barnabas visited Antioch, and he was delighted to see them walking in the commandments and ordinances of God blameless. He saw them watching over one another in love, bearing one another's burdens, comforting the feeble-minded, supporting the weak, and helping one another forward to a better country. Oh what a delightful sight, to see a church walking in love, and keeping the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace! God rejoices over them to do them good, the Redeemer sees of the travail of His soul and is satisfied, and saints and angels see the effects of Divine grace and are glad. **"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity"** (Ps. 133:1). In earlier times, all who believed became members of the church. On the day of Pentecost, three thousand were converted, and the same day they were added to the church. None of them stood alone. Then there were only two societies---the church and the world---the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom

♦ (Continued on page 145)



By Todd Bryant  
of  
Northport, Alabama



## God Knows About It

**"The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good"** (Pro. 15:3).

There isn't a person alive on the face of the earth that wouldn't do well to memorize this verse and quote it several times a day. The omniscience and omnipresence of God are fundamental doctrines in the Lord's churches. Yet, practically, we often forget these truths the moment we walk out the doors of church. It's not as though we do not believe them. The problem is that we forget to apply these things.

Certainly, every child of God should consider this verse in light of our coming judgment. At the Judgment Seat of Christ, **"Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is"** (I Cor. 3:13). We may, perhaps, fool our fellow believer here on Earth. We may have the entire congregation convinced we are working for the Lord as hard as anybody. However, God knows all our ways. We cannot do anything outside of the knowledge of the Lord. We cannot get outside the presence and knowledge of God. Without doubt, we would do good to remember this... and apply it!

Even more, God knows our motives! I Kings 8:39 says, **"Then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest; (for thou, even thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men)."** Only God knows the heart. Perhaps the church sees you as one who gives to the church bountifully while God knows you do it for control. Perhaps the church sees you as one who shares in song mightily for God, but God knows you do it for the praise of men. Perhaps the church believes you preach God's Word out of conviction, but God knows you do it out of contempt and vainglory. Folks, our motives will be taken into account by God as well as our works! Let us all examine ourselves!

Certainly, the lost should know that

God sees their actions. Job was a saved man, for sure. However, his words in Job 31:4-5 can be applied to us all, **"Doth not he see my ways, and count all my steps? If I have walked with vanity, or if my foot hath hasted to deceit."** Whether a man is a Christian or not, God is acquainted with his ways and will certainly judge them one day. In fact, even the atheist will be judged by the very God he denies exists. Whether we, as man, believe God is real or not does not change the fact that He is both Creator and Judge.

Child of God, commit the verse before us to memory today. Meditate on it. Apply it in your life daily! Truths are not made just for our knowledge. Certainly, we must ever desire to know the truth. But, we learn truths so that we may apply them in our lives. May we know the truths of both God's omniscience and omnipresence and apply them day by day as we sojourn here on Earth!



## The Visibility of

(Continued from page 144) ♦

of Satan; but now we have a third class of men, who stand half-way between the church and the world, and they wish to be in the good graces of both parties. They do not profess infidelity, but whilst they call themselves by the name of Christ, they refuse to submit to His authority, and do not the things He commands. Young converts, and timorous Christians, who are weak in faith, are sometimes afraid to unite with the church in attending to the ordinances of Jesus Christ. All their hopes for time and eternity are built on the sure foundation that God has laid in Zion, and yet they want fortitude to profess their faith before men and angels. And why should they remain in the outer court? The Saviour invites them to cast in their lot with His people. The good Shepherd carries the lambs in His bosom; He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and will not break the bruised reed. Many stand at the door of the church day after day, and year after year, resolving and re-resolving to enter in, till the impressions made on their minds are obliterated, and their relish for Divine things becomes weaker and weaker. The spark of devotion in their souls is in danger of being extinguished, as they avoid the means which God has appointed to fan it into a flame.

### II. THE EMOTIONS PRODUCED ON BARNABAS BY WHAT HE SAW AT ANTIOCH.

He was glad, because he knew, in the *First place* that God would be glorified by the conversion and salvation of sinners. Everything connected with the great work of redemption will ultimately redound to the glory of God. To promote this glory the Saviour appeared in our guilty world;

to promote the glory of God He went about doing good; to promote this glory He died on the cross, and by His death all the Divine perfections were glorified. **"I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do"** (John 17:4). And when sinners are converted God is glorified. In reflecting on the transformation of men into the Divine image, we are led to admire infinite wisdom. Before the foundations of the earth were laid God devised the plan of our salvation, and appointed the means by which sinners were to be delivered from the power of Satan, and brought into **"the glorious liberty of the children of God"** (Rom. 8:21). And every sinner that is converted gives a new proof to the church and to the world of the manifold wisdom of God. By the conversion of sinners the power of God is glorified: **"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power"** (Ps. 110:3). And the apostle speaks of **"the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead"** (Eph. 1:18-19). No power less than Divine can raise a sinner from the dead, make him a new creature, and transform him into the image of God. And this work is accomplished by **"the renewing of the Holy Ghost"** (Titus 3:5). The goodness of God is displayed and glorified when sinners are converted. He might have allowed the whole human race to perish, but He has been moved by the goodness of His nature to deliver millions of guilty sinners from going down to the pit. And when those who are ready to perish are attracted by His mercy, they taste and see that God is good, and they exclaim, **"How great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty"** (Zech. 9:17). 2. *Love to his fellow-sinners* made Barnabas glad, when he saw the grace of God at Antioch. He knew that men in their natural condition are in a state of condemnation, like criminals under sentence of death, exposed to misery in this world, and to endless misery in the world to come. **"Destruction and misery are in their ways, and the way of peace have they not known"** (Rom. 3:16-17); and they are every moment suspended by the brittle thread of life over the gulf of everlasting despair; and should that thread break, their portion will be the blackness of darkness for ever! Under the slavery of Satan they are strangers to peace and happiness. And all who know the value of the soul, and the fearful danger to which sinners are exposed, will be moved with compassion when they reflect on their deplorable state, and see them standing on the verge of destruction. David shed rivers of tears when he saw men breaking God's law. Paul wept because many were enemies to the Cross of Christ; and Jesus, the compassionate friend of sinners, wept over His enemies, saying, "O that thou

hadst known in this thy day the things that belong to thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes!" But David was cheered with the hope of being able to teach transgressors God's way, that sinners might be converted unto Him. Paul thanked God when sinners were cast into the mould of the gospel, and Jesus rejoiced in spirit when He saw Satan's kingdom falling as lightning from Heaven. Angels rejoice over one sinner who repents. God, like the father of the prodigal, receives the returning sinner with complacency, and believers raise a song of praise because their brother who was dead is alive again--he was lost and is found. Here they behold a man, who has been emancipated from the slavery of Satan, made an heir of God and a joint-heir with Christ; and the period is coming when that poor helpless sinner, who has been saved by grace, shall be raised to a throne, and wear a crown of glory that shall never fade. Thrice happy man! God is his father, Christ is his older brother, angels are his guardians, and Heaven is his home!

3. Barnabas was glad, because he knew that the believers at Antioch would be a blessing to the world. God bestows grace on His people, not that they may monopolize the heavenly gift, but that they may diffuse it in their families, in the church, and in the world. The Lord blessed Abraham that he might be a blessing to others. And every believer should do good in the city, the town, the village, or the hamlet, in which Providence may have cast his lot. He is sometimes apt to forget the salutary or pernicious effects that may be produced by his deportment. Others fix their eyes on him, resolving to form their opinion of religion by what they see in his temper, spirit, and conduct; and when he supposes that God is the only witness of his actions, many around are observing his holy conversations, and learning by his example to fear God and honour His laws. For the salvation of sinners, the Lord allows His people to remain in the world, that they may reflect the light they receive from Heaven on those who are in darkness. The church is like a light erected on a rock, to direct the mariner in his voyage through the tempestuous ocean of this world to the haven of eternal repose. The church is a lamp to guide weary pilgrims, during the dark night of life, to a land of unclouded light and eternal felicity. He who walks in the midst of the golden candlesticks supplies this lamp with oil--the oil of grace, and it will burn brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. In short, the church is a pillar that exhibits the truth to the world, and on this pillar is inscribed in legible characters, Holiness to the Lord.

(*Evangelical Magazine & Missionary Chronicle*, May 1850).





## A Dose of Reality

### "Common Sense Comments"

by Joseph Harris

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## First Things First

A good foundation is always important. A solid foundation is essential in the construction of a building. A strong academic base is important for success in higher education. The parable Jesus told about the wise man and the foolish man is more than just a children's Bible story. Rock is always preferable to sand for a foundation.

The philosophy of America's "multi-culturally diverse" society is built upon the sand of man's wisdom and not the rock of God, for too often every culture except American culture is celebrated. The education system is built on the sinking sand of humanism and relativism and not the solid rock of the absolute word of God. American politics is built on the sand of public opinion instead of principles based upon God's wisdom. I could go on with examples, but you get the picture.

Though it sounds too simple, the basic "why" of all man's problems is traced directly back to the exclusion of God. Now don't go to the illogical conclusion that the presence of God means the absence of all problems, or you might get initiated into the "name it and claim it" club. **"Man . . . is born unto trouble"** (Job 5:7), according to a wise man who knew very well by experience.

"Jesus is the Answer" is not just a hollow sounding truth. It is reality. Notice the Bible does not begin with a plea for salvation, or how to live a holy life, or how to be victorious over sin. It begins with the foundation, GOD. Genesis 1:1 does not even try to prove the existence of God. It assumes His existence. The Scripture simply says, **"In the beginning, GOD created . . ."** (emph. JH). Belief in God as Creator is foundational because if you do not accept the existence of the Creator, nothing else matters. Acceptance of God as Creator precedes acceptance of God as Savior. Like I said, first things first. This fact explains why Satan tries to supplant the Creator and creationism with evolution. If there is no Creator, then life has no meaning or direction, hence we are all animals with no purpose of existence and no destination but the grave. Wow, what hope and comfort evolution gives!

Christianity supplies something no other religion, philosophy, or world view can give: (1) beginning; (2) purpose, and

(3) destination. Christianity provides a perfect trinity of explanation of: (1) origin of life (God), (2) the meaning of life (glorify God), and (3) the conclusion of life (eternity with or without God). Notice, God is the center of the threefold explanation.

God is essential. Man is not capable of ultimate success apart from God because of depravity. Man, left to himself, apart from God, will always degenerate. Since Adam, every person has entered this world with a predisposition to turn away from God and commit sin. Every society in human history that ignored God eventually crumbled.

As you live your life, put first things first. Don't just include God. Build your life around Him. Place God at the center. Put Him first in your life, first in your marriage, first in your finances, and first in your work.

**".. to love the LORD your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul"** (Josh. 22:5).

## Abortion Is the Ultimate Child Abuse

Outrage is expected from both liberals and conservatives on the issue of child abuse, but what about the ultimate child abuse of abortion? Liberals are usually strangely silent. As horrible as neglect, molestation, beatings, and desertion may be, murder of the helpless and innocent through abortion is worse. Though abandoned and abused children suffer, at least they still have life, and hopefully can be taken by someone who will really love them. No such chance for the murdered unborn innocents.

Selfishness is the main motivation for abortion. Under the guise of "concern" for the unborn, the mother may use excuses such as, "Inability to support a child" or "I can't give it the quality time needed" or any number of other inexcusable excuses. The paramount excuse for abortion is the one disguised in the cloak of the so-called freedom of a woman's "right" to do with her body as she chooses. But a living, breathing human baby is not a part of the mother's body; it is distinct from the moment of conception. The mother's body gives life, support, and nourishment to the separate, living human baby inside. If the embryo (another word for a DEVELOPING, MATURING baby) was only a blob, or mass of protein, then it could possibly be considered a part of her body, but common sense says otherwise. The dictionary definition of embryo is "The first rudiments of an animal (or human) in the womb or of a plant in the seed; the FIRST STATE (emp. mine) of anything" *Webster's Expanded Dictionary*, 1992.

Being a parent means more than just bringing life into the world. It means giving up time, sleep, money, and possibly a career, just to mention a few basics. And parents only bring life into this world. They do not give it. God is the giver of life, not the father or mother. God uses the father and mother to begin a new life in the womb. In a sense, every new life is an extension of God, for all life comes from God. Try as he may, through cloning or the test tube, man will never create life. If life is an extension of God, who made man in His image, then all murder is an attack on the creator of life. The state may sanction, even fund murder, but God will hold murderers accountable. Pro-choice (which is really pro-death as opposed to pro-life) is nothing more than allowing people the choice to legally kill. Murder is murder, regardless of the reason.

Children are a blessing from God. We should thank God for the little blessings He has given and treat them with love, respect and a reverent awe, for each one is a little unique image of God, testifying to the greatness of the Creator, reminding us that only God can give life.

**"Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate"** (Ps. 127:3-5).



## Youth in America

(Continued from page 141) ♦

what (Deuteronomy 21:18-21) means, and if America would have followed the example in Deuteronomy, maybe our children would not be so out of control.

There is no doubt that the youth of today are out of control, and the philosophy that many churches have held for years and still do, "let us reach the youth", has failed. The adults should have been witnessed to and then taught them how to raise their children, not the other way around. If we would have gotten the parents into the church before their children were born, or at least while they were younger, things may have been different. But no, man has to have it his way, and not God's. Very few of our churches have young people in them anymore.

Parents, we are responsible. **"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it"** (Prov. 22:6). I preached this message about our youth in America at my home church a while back. While I was standing at the back greeting the people as they left, a Sister came up to me and reminded me that this verse of Scripture was a promise from God, and she would

say it every day. If we have a child that is not in church we all should say this verse each day, for it is truly a promise from God!

**"He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes"** ("betimes" means promptly)(Prov. 13:24).

**"Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying"** (Prov. 19:18).

**"Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him"** (Prov. 22:15).

**"Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell"** (Prov. 23:13-14).

**"The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame. Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul"** (Prov. 29:15, 17).

Parents, children are a gift from God, they are lent to you. Children belong to God and they are His. **"Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward"** (Ps. 127:3). Parents who put their children before God should be ashamed of themselves. Luke 14:26 makes it very plain, **"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."** God has not changed in almost 6,000 years and neither should His people. **"But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth"** (Job 23:13). **"The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations"** (Ps. 33:11). **"For I am the LORD, I change not"** (Mal. 3:6). I do not have all the answers, but God does. But I do not have stupid written across my forehead either. You might think I am old fashioned and an old fuddy-duddy but that is all right, because what I tell you is because I care, and because it is the truth, **"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free..."** (John 8:32). I would rather be called old fashioned and be in the will of God than be the most popular preacher in the country and be out of the will of God! I have heard many say from the ages 40-60 that my parents made me do thus and so and I am not making

♦ (Continued on page 147)

## GOING, GOING, GONE!

Look at your mailing label on the front page of this month's paper. If you see above your name "Expires 8/2012" then this will be your last issue. So don't miss an issue! Renew now so you won't miss next month's *Banner*.

## Youth in America

(Continued from page 146) ♦

my kids do that...ta da, and look at our youth today. Oh, there are some that turned out all right, but they are few and far between and how many of them are in church today? There are four things I wish to discuss in this article.

### RESPECT

The first one is respect. There is no respect for the parents, no respect for the preacher, no respect for the elderly, and no respect for each other. I believe a lot of it started with the Hollywood scene, remember James Dean, "Rebel Without a Cause" Marlin Brando, "The Wild One", just to name a couple? We have so much disrespect today it is downright ugly and embarrassing. I hear today what we call "Teen Lip". It has even carried over to the adult world. Here are a few; "Whatever" "Well, hell-O" "Well, Duh" "What's it to you?" And my favorite; "You just don't understand, Dad." Do you know what that means? It means you do not agree with them.

I never called my Mother the old woman or old lady and I never called my Dad the old man, I liked my teeth in my mouth. I heard an evangelist once and he said he was afraid to talk back to his parents because the belt in the bathroom said "I Need Thee Every Hour"! Also, I never referred to God as the man upstairs or the big guy as many do today.

So why respect? Because the Bible says so. **"Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord"** (Col. 3:20). I can not believe how parents allow their kids to talk back to them in public. Read Romans 1:28-32 paying attention to verse 30 **"disobedient to parents"**; II Timothy 3:1-5 paying attention to verse 2, **"disobedient to parents"**; II Peter 2:12-14, paying attention to verse 14, **"cursed children."** And why were they cursed? Because Moms and Dads did not do it God's way.

I think the worst is when a child says to their parents, I HATE YOU! Many of the children end up losing their parents and never have the opportunity to take it back...what a terrible way to live the rest of one's life! If you are a Christian boy, girl, teenager or college student, you need to listen and show respect to your parents and those around you who are older than you. When I was growing up, I would not dare smart mouth anyone, they would smack me and tell my parents, and then I would get that belt that said, "I need you every hour." I was afraid of my parents, my teachers, and the law, not so much a trembling fear, but a respectful fear. I respected those in authority. Oh I tried the reins, but it did not last.

If I had to do it all over, our children would have gone to a Christian school or been home schooled. All though I know

Christian schools are not always the answer. My sister went to a Christian school and 4 out of the 6 girls she would have graduated with were pregnant their senior year, and many of the students smoked marijuana in the parking lot. But when our daughter was in Junior High, 45% of the girls were pregnant, which at that time was a higher percentage than the High School. Now the schools just want to pass out contraceptives to cure the problem. Back when there was prayer and the use of the Bible was still allowed, you rarely heard of girls being pregnant, and if they were - they were expelled.

Also, my dictionary that I had for years in school said that queer was somebody that was odd or different and I got three hard whacks for calling another student queer, and I was only in the sixth grade. The teacher asked me if I knew what it meant and I said "someone who is odd." He said "No, it is someone who kisses a person of the same sex." I'm not sure he knew the full extent of the situation.

If you or I use the word queer today it is considered hate speech. My, how things have changed in 49 years. I would ask the reader to look the word queer up in the dictionary; the only difference in it and the Bible is the Bible calls it sin.

### DRESS

The second one is dress. Our young people (and older ones do the same) seem to have no morals or modesty when it comes to the way they look and dress. I see more and more tattoo and body piercing parlors going up all over the place. I see young and old that have so many tattoos that I can not even tell if they have a shirt on or if it is all tattoos. And the piercings they have on their ears, nose, and face are horrid to say the least. Have you seen those big black plugs in their ears? I saw a young man who did not have his in and his earlobe had this huge hole in it. Do they not know that is not going to grow shut when they decide they no longer want to wear it anymore, you know, when they grow up and realize how stupid they were!

I did not use to think so, but I think all public schools should have uniforms to wear to school. When I was in school, (you know, back in the dark ages!), we had to have our shirts tucked in or get sent to the office, and believe it or not, we had to wear socks...can you believe it? If the teacher thought the girl's skirt or dress was too short they would make them get on their knees and if the hem did not touch the floor they were sent home. Wow, how things have changed.

And the way people go to church today is pathetic. My wife and I were driving to church and we pass many church buildings on the way and you can not tell who is going to church or who is going to the store or getting ready for bed. Do you not think dress should be part of your Christian walk? I mean

men, you do not have to wear a suit, or even a tie, but shorts and baggy pants that are down on your butt? Come on. I had a parent come in the building years ago who missed Sunday school because he went turkey hunting and had his camo coveralls on. I hunt but I hated it that they opened Sunday hunting. What message does that send to your kids? I really blame Hollywood, and I really understand that it is hard to find clothes in the store because everything seems to be geared these days with the fashions from Hollywood. I am so tired of seeing bra straps I could scream. I guess young ladies and women of all ages think it is attractive to have their bra straps and other straps from their clothes they wear show and are falling off their shoulders. And ladies, is it enjoyable for you to tug at your dress or skirt and tops? You see it all the time, women tug to pull their dress down because it is too short, and pull up on their blouses because they are cut too low...I just figured they enjoy doing it as often as you see it done. Dear Sisters, if you have to pull it down or pull it up, it should not be worn to church... correction; it should not be worn at all outside your home, if you can feel good about it.

I was at a Bible conference a few years ago and there was a young lady there who had a dress so short she could hardly move without tugging on it; it was that short. I looked over at one of the other preachers who was there and we just looked at each other in disbelief. Folks, for me it was embarrassing. I can not tell you how many times she kept tugging at her dress. And then to our surprise she sang a special sitting down playing her guitar. She had to be a member of one of the churches represented there. Pastors, what are you doing? There is a time to be a peace maker and there is a time to start standing up against these things.

Another evangelist I heard preach met a young lady at the back of the church after the services and told her never to wear what she was wearing to church again. Well, mom threw a fit and told that preacher they would not be back. Several months later he got a call from that same mother and asked if he would come over, which he did and the girl was sitting on the couch crying and so was the mother. The girl was pregnant by a 32 year old man that she met at a teen hangout. By the way, the girl was 14-15.

Moms and Dads, you can get mad at us preachers and pitch a fit but we are only trying to help you live a Godly life.

### MUSIC

The third one is music. I was born in 1951 and I remember when Elvis was on the Ed Sullivan Show. I was raised with the Beatles and all the rest of rock 'n' roll...Elvis, Jerry Lee Lewis, the Beatles... Etc. They were part of my life growing up. But I also remember how preachers

♦ (Continued on page 148)

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




### Lies & Excuses

Are you as sick of excuses as I am? Preachers are told more lies and excuses than any other one single person on God's green earth. The most common lie told is, "Yeah, I'll see you Sunday, Preacher" and the one telling the tale has no intention of darkening the door of God's house, the next Sunday, or any time soon. Missing church is bad enough, but compounding your sin with a bald faced lie is worse, and remember, the Bible says all liars shall be given a slap on the wrist. That's in the NPCV, otherwise known as the New Politically Correct Version, for you sissies who can't handle the real truth of where liars are really headed if they don't mend their ways.

When you happen to run into that liar, and you will, he then just digs the hole deeper. He begins to make excuses why he couldn't be at church. I have heard them all. "The truck wouldn't crank, the alarm clock didn't ring, the wife didn't feel like going, I didn't have nothin' to wear, the dog ate my Bible", and the list of pitiful excuses grows longer than Aunt Bessie's tongue at a quiltin' bee.

There's a reason for this. You know why sinners don't like to go to church? It gets them too close to God. I don't blame them; gettin' near God gets mighty uncomfortable when you are living like the devil. You can't see nothin' in the dark, but when the light is turned on, everything appears to your eyes, even though it was already there. God's light doesn't pick and choose. When it shines down, the good, the bad, and the sinful all shows, and that makes sinners squirm like a nightcrawler on blacktop at noon.

There's a way to fix this: if they won't come to church and get a glimpse of God, then just take God to them. Jesus said to go into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in. I don't know of anything stronger than the love of God as a compeller, so when you get after a sinner because you love their soul and don't want to see them in hell, and you hound them, love them, pray for them and treat them as Jesus would, pretty soon you can knock down all the excuses they can conjure up and wear them down. They might finally just show up to shut you up. Hopefully, you will be able to win them outside of church, but if not, I don't know of any better place folks ought to be than in the house of God. Stay after 'em. They can only lie and excusicate for so long. 

# Youth in America

(Continued from page 147) ♦

at that time told the evils of rock ‘n’ roll and what it would eventually do to our country...and they were right.

If it does not Glorify Christ it should not be listened to. It should appeal to the soul, not the carnal mind. I know we are not perfect, and many like other music. I even like certain American Ballads sung by Johnny Cash, and I listen to them from time to time. But the following Scriptures should be applied to our lives:

**“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God”** (Rom. 12:2).

**“Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord”** (Eph. 5:19).

**“And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things”** (Phil. 4:7-8).

There are five themes in the world’s rock ‘n’ roll music; Sex, Drugs, Rebellion, False religion (usually Eastern religion), and Devils. If we were honest with ourselves, any music that does not incorporate these eight things; any lyrics that are not True, Honest, Just, Pure, Lovely, of Good Report (among young and old), Virtuous and Praiseworthy! Rock ‘n’ roll music should have no part in a Christian’s life. After we have listened to music, we should be able to say, “Praise the Lord, for that music.” Christians have been tricked, not by **“flesh and blood”**... but “principalities, powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, and spiritual wickedness in high places.” Ungodly music should be burned, not given away either, and parents should set the standards.

And for all you country western music listeners, the popular singer Carrie Underwood (who was raised a Baptist) recently came out in support of same-sex marriage stating she believes everyone deserves to love whomever he or she chooses, citing her faith as the basis for her reasoning. She now attends a “gay-friendly” non-denominational church. The organization GLAAD (Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation) applauded her by saying they commend her for supporting marriage equality and rooting it in her faith.

Is not it amazing the words that describe Sodomy today, GLAAD, GAY, and their symbol is the RAINBOW!

**“Even so, come, Lord Jesus”** (Rev. 22:20).

## DATING

The last one is dating. **“But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out”** (Num. 32:23). From time to time our children would try to pull the wool over our eyes and I would open up my Bible when they would come home from school and ask them to read Numbers 32:23. They would look at me in surprise and then later ask, “How did you find out?” You listen to this preacher; dear reader, our Christian youth need to set the standards in our world and not let the world set their standards. And we need to be the teachers. Oh, I forgot, the psychologists tell us we do not know how to raise our kids today, we are not smart enough and do not have the education to do so. That might be so but my Bible does, and if I follow it, I will know how to do it. Yes Mr. President, that is right; the Bible does tell us how to live our lives before a Holy, Sovereign God and how to raise our children.

Young people; Virginity is not a dirty word, Respect each other in your dating and it makes for a great marriage. Our kids did not date until they were 16; they never got into a car unless that person was over 17 and had been driving for at least a year, and they had a curfew. Parents, no child under 18 needs to be out past midnight! And if one of our kids would need to come back home and live with us, their curfew would still be midnight unless they were working. There is no good that comes from being out that late for anybody, unless of course you’re fishing. I had a curfew, and if I was not in that driveway by midnight there was someone standing at our door and let me tell you, I did not want to see that person at my front door...even though there were a few times, I did not make a habit of it, let me tell you.

Dear reader if you have children that are at the age of dating, you can not know enough about the person they are going out with. I think 60 – 80% lose their virginity on Prom Night. I heard some numbers years ago but can not find any information other than 2/3 of boys and 1/3 of girls say prom night is the night to lose their virginity. Parents have really made it too easy for this to happen. One reason is their philosophy that their kids can not miss their Prom Night. Well

they can, and they should.

Parents the School has your children about 16% of the week, the Church has them about 5-7%. That is less than 25% a week. What do you do with your children the other 75%?

**“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it”** (Prov. 22:6).

If you do it God’s way you can not go wrong. God Bless!



# Complete in Christ

(Continued from page 141) ♦

of receiving. We derive all things which we want from His fullness, and we are safe in His keeping, who is Head of **“all principality and power.”** We want no other wisdom, righteousness, strength, holiness, liberty, or victory, than that which Christ gives. there is a completion, or a filling up in Christ so as to leave nothing wanting. Christ is all in all to the believer.

## RESTORATION IS COMPLETE

In Adam we lost our knowledge of God, our title and fitness to Heaven, and our moral likeness to God. But all we lost in Adam we regained in Christ a thousand-fold. **“For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many”** (Rom. 5:15). Then Paul goes on to write: **“But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound”** (Rom. 5:20). We gained much more in the Second Adam, the Lord from Heaven, than we lost in the first Adam. We have in Christ all that God can exact from a sinner at the judgment day.

What is it to be in Christ? It is not union with a system of doctrine, nor with external religious influences, nor with some church, but rather with a personal, risen, living Lord and Savior. It means to be spiritually, ethically, and morally joined to Jesus Christ as our covenant Head. It is not knowing that Jesus Christ lived as a historical figure centuries ago. Many know this but are not in Christ. To be in Christ is to be a Christian. It is to know that you are complete in Christ---that you have in Him all your needs and desires.

## REDEMPTION IS COMPLETE

Today men are preaching rank heresy

about the redemption of Christ. They say Christ died for every son of Adam, removing the legal impediments out of the way of the salvation of all men and making it objectively possible for every hearer of the gospel to be saved. They contend the death of Christ made possible the salvation of all, and that all which hinders the salvation of any man is his refusal to come to Christ. This is Arminian foolishness which cheapens the blood atonement of Jesus Christ.

The Bible teaches that when Christ died He actually redeemed a people unto God: **“Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us”** (Heb. 9:12). The redemption work of Christ is sufficient because it is efficient for the salvation of all for whom it was made. Its sufficiency lies not in affording men a possibility of redemption, but in accomplishing their redemption with invincible power. Psalm 111:9 says: **“He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever. . .”** The Bible does not say that God offers us redemption, if we will receive it. Rather, it declares: **“In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace”** (Eph. 1:7).

Christ is the only living and true Redeemer. Our redemption originated with Him, was carried on by Him, and completed by Him. He removed every obstacle and met every demand of God the Father in the covenant. He has satisfied every claim of Divine justice. He has finished the mighty undertaking. He has obtained eternal redemption for all His elect people. **“But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons”** (Gal. 4:4-5).

## JUSTIFICATION IS COMPLETE

Man is by nature and practice a sinner before God: **“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God”** (Rom. 3:23). If men were not violators of God’s moral law, they would not need to be justified before God. If they were not law-breakers and rebels against the moral government of God, they would be just before God. But the Bible, history, and experience reveal that all men are law-breakers and rebels against the most High. Hence the question naturally arises: **“How then can a man be justified with God?”** (Job 25:4).

Justification is a change in man’s standing before God. It has to do with the realization that has been disturbed by sin. Justification is the reversal of God’s attitude toward the sinner. God did condemn; now He acquits. He did reject; now He admits to favor. Why is this so? Because of the sinner’s new relation

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Tune in to the

Berea Baptist Broadcast

STATION	TIME	DIAL	WATTS
WCNA, Myrtle, MS.....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m. ....	95.9.....	3,000 FM
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WFTA, Tupelo, MS.....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m. ....	101.9.....	3,000 FM
KARI, Blaine, WA .....	Saturday 10:30 - 11:00 a.m....	550.....	5,000 AM
KPRV, Heavener, OK .....	Sunday 8:30 - 9:00 a.m. ....	92.5 .....	1,000 FM



# Complete in Christ

(Continued from page 148) ♦

to Christ. He is completely justified in Christ as though He had never sinned a day of his life. **“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus”** (Rom. 3:24). **“Much more then, being now justified by his blood. . .”** (Rom. 5:9). **“Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died. . .”** (Rom. 8:34).

Christ is the great and grand meritorious cause of justification. He is the medium and means of forgiveness of sins. Believing in Him we are completely justified: **“and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses”** (Acts 13:39). The remission of sins is preached in His name (Luke 24:47). We **“are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus”** (I Cor. 6:11). In Christ we have a complete and perfect righteousness. Our justification is so complete that any attempt to unite any thing else with His merits will entirely prevent it from being effected.

## HOLINESS IS COMPLETE

Positional holiness, or sanctification, is in Christ. By His death the believer is completely sanctified, or made holy: **“By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all”** (Heb. 10:10). **“For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified”** (Heb. 10:14). Every believer is a sanctified man, and every believer is a saint. Jesus Christ spoke to Paul about **“them which are sanctified by faith that is in me”** (Acts 26:18). The same act that ushers the believer into a state of justification admits him at once into a state of sanctification, in which he is to grow until he reaches the fullness of the measure of the stature of Christ.

Throughout the New Testament believers are called saints (I Cor. 1:2; Rom. 1:7; Eph. 1:1). If a man is a believer he is a saint, and if a man is not a saint he is not a believer. The term “saints” takes in all believers, and it does not refer to some spiritual aristocracy. A saint is not a sinless person, but a separated person, separated to God in Jesus Christ. It is wrong to believe that if you live a very saintly life, eventually you may become a saint. We hear much today of one church who canonizes some people as saints after they are dead, but in the New Testament believers were canonized as saints while they lived.

Christ is our sanctification: **“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). By sanctification we are made spiritually alive in Christ. there is a total renovation of the whole man. What a privilege this

is! What a blessing from Heaven! To be translated from the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God’s dear Son! To put off the old man, which is corrupt, and to put on the new man, which is created after God in righteousness and true holiness. All of our holiness is derived from Christ, and it is complete in Him.

## PEACE IS COMPLETE

Sometimes I hear men urge sinners to make their peace with God. But, according to the Bible, Christ is **“our peace”** (Eph. 2:14), and He has made our peace with God (Eph. 2:15). Romans 5:1 says: **“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”** The sin question has been fully settled which separated our souls from God. It was settled at the cross by Christ, and He has given to us everlasting peace.

I must not look to my feelings which change like the wind, but I must look to Christ for my everlasting peace. Circumstances may arise which cause the clouds to overshadow my soul and hide the sunshine of God’s face. My poor soul may experience darkness, doubt, difficulty and perplexity. At such a time conscience cries in my ears: **“Pay that thou owest.”** Then I look up to Christ seated in Heaven, and I say, “Yonder is my peace, my Shiloh, my heart trusts in Him, who made peace by the blood of His cross. My peace remains unchanged because it is complete in Him.” This turns the frowns of my conscience into smiles. In Christ I have peace of mind and conscience.

## TRIUMPH OVER SPIRITUAL ADVERSARIES IS COMPLETE

As the children of God we must realize **“there are many adversaries”** (I Cor. 16:9). We are surrounded by atheists, scoffers, skeptics, Communists, humanists, cultists, liberals and others, but the most dreadful foe of them all is our **“adversary the devil”** (I Peter 5:8). Satan and his host of demon spirits, combined with the unsaved host of men, are constantly seeking to hinder us in serving God and preaching the gospel. At times it seems they have gained the upper hand. We appear to be losing the battle. Let us be on guard and **“give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully”** (I Tim. 5:14). Let us put on the whole armor of God, and in **“nothing be terrified by our adversaries”** (Phil. 1:28).

As Christian soldiers we must not be dismayed or discouraged because of minor skirmishes which occur from day to day with our spiritual foes, for we have won the war through Christ. He has already **“spoiled principalities and powers, triumphing over them”** by His cross (Col. 2:15). He is the captain of our salvation (Heb. 2:10). **“Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ”** (II Cor. 2:14). **“But thanks be to God, which giveth us the**

**victory through our Lord Jesus Christ”** (I Cor. 15:57). **“Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us”** (Rom. 8:37). Truly we can boldly say that we **“can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth”** us (Phil. 4:13).

## SERVICE IS COMPLETE

God saved us to serve Him. He did not save us merely to keep us out of Hell. When He freed us from being **“servants of sin”** we **“became servants of righteousness”** (Rom. 6:18). We were purged from our sins **“to serve the living God”** (Heb. 9:14). As new creatures in Christ we must serve Him in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life (Luke 1:74-75). The Lord’s yoke is easy and His burden is light. Even our afflictions are light afflictions.

In ourselves we are all **“unprofitable servants”** (Luke 17:10). Our service to God is only acceptable through Christ. As believer priests we **“offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ”** (I Pet. 2:5). God only can be **“glorified through Jesus Christ”** (I Pet. 4:11). God is glorified in the church by Jesus Christ (Eph. 3:21). Our services are only acceptable as they ascend through the medium of His merits and are rendered holy by His priestly intercession. Our services are complete in Christ. **“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him”** (Col. 3:17).

## HAPPINESS IN DEATH IS COMPLETE

How awful the reign of Death. The King of Terrors daily advances on us. His eye has no pity; his arm is never weary; his mouth is wide open. Every ache and pain points to his advent. We were born to die and we die daily. Every breath we draw makes it less likely that we shall draw another. We can as soon run from ourselves as the monster, Death. A few more years and these sparkling eyes shall close when the Grim Reaper comes. Then our remains shall go to lie beneath the grassy sod, moldering in the grave. Our never dying soul shall then be in Heaven or Hell.

**“Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord. . .”** (Rev. 14:13), but cursed are the dead outside of Christ. To die in Christ is no loss but an eternal gain (Phil. 1:21). In Christ even death is ours and we must not fear it (I Cor. 3:22). To pardon sinners death has lost its sting. Forgiven souls may triumph over death and say, **“O death where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?”** Death to pardoned sinners is a messenger, inviting us to exchange our tabernacle of clay for a palace not made with hands---a deliverance from the fetter of time---a summons to God’s soldiers to lay aside the armor and to shout the victory---a chariot to convey us from this famine-stricken land to the Goshen of perpetual

plenty---a ferry to carry us once for all over the flood that rolls between this wilderness of sighs and the happy land, where sorrow and sighs have for ever fled! Verily, the King of Terrors is the Prince of Peace!

## OUR GLORY IS COMPLETE

Death is a workman appointed by God to tear down this earthly house of morality and clay, that it may be set up anew, infinitely more lasting, beautiful, and glorious. God tears down this vile body that He may fashion it like the glorious body of His own Son. **“For our conversation is in heaven: from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself”** (Phil. 3:20-21). In Christ we have hope of the resurrection of the body.

At death the spirit and the body go their separate ways. The body goes to sleep in Jesus in the grave and the spirit returns to God who gave it. But these two old friends are not eternally parted at death, for they shall meet again at the resurrection. The spirit will return laden with the wealth of Heaven and fetch his old companion to the participation of all his joy and happiness. **“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. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the triumph of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 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”** (I Thess. 4:13-17).

Jesus Christ is our resurrection and life (John 11:25). His death and resurrection perfumed the grave and brought resurrection glory to light. His resurrection is the pledge for ours. Jesus Christ is coming again to raise those who have fallen asleep in Him. **“The dead in Christ shall rise first.”** The Spirit of Life is the vital bond which holds the bodies of the saints as well as their spirits in union with Christ. **“But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you”** (Rom. 8:11). Our resurrection and eternal glory are complete in Christ.

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## The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. Genesis 6:4 declares: "There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown." Please explain who were the "giants in the earth," the "sons of God" and the "daughters of men?" - New Mexico

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I am going to cheat on this question just a bit. I would like to say first, that it has been debated for years of just what does Genesis 6 declare. And because I hold a certain view, there is no need to go into detail when I can guide the Questioner and the Reader to the answer as I have now come to believe it.

In February of this year's issue of the BBB page 29 "From the Pen of a Country Preacher" the late Milburn Cockrell's article titled "The Sons of God" in Genesis 6 was published. I would encourage the Questioner and the Reader (because I am in agreement with him) to obtain a copy of that issue or go online to <http://www.bereabaptistchurch.org/> to read it.

Also, you can go to the Philadelphia Baptist Church web site and read this article by the late Oscar B. Mink. I am in total agreement with him as well <http://pbcofdecaturalabama.org/OBMink/nephilim.htm>.

There is no need for me to try and answer a question that I can't do any better than these two men, there is no more to say in my opinion. I will say I didn't always believe as they did. But I always came back to the same question, "what did the angels do that are mentioned in the Book of Jude, that they are kept in chains until the Day of Judgment?" **"And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day"** (Jude 1:6). We know there are more evil angels that fell with Satan who are not chained; these angels that are chained had to do something horrendous that God would lock them up, and I believe they are "The Sons of God" in Genesis 6.

Again, Genesis 6 has been and will still be much debated. But I think Brother Cockrell and Brother Mink (knowing their diligence in their study) have done a fabulous job proving who "The Sons of God" were. But that is what I believe!

I would like the Questioner and Reader to ponder one more thing before you come to any final conclusion,

(because I am sure there are many who will not agree with this position) consider this, Satan is a great imitator of God, Scripture says, **"And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light"** (II Cor. 11:14). So answer these questions, who is the earthly mother of the antichrist (just for the record, I have no idea)? Who is the father of the antichrist? If Satan can have an offspring, then why can't fallen angels do the same? **"And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation"** (Jude 1:6). Just a thought, God Bless!

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These are questions that have made theologians and non believers alike spend many hours trying to answer. I myself am neither of the aforementioned, although I have a great deal of prayerful thought and consideration wrapped up into these questions.

There are two schools of thought that are under our attention, and to tell you the truth I, for one, do not adhere to either of the conventional theories. The answers that I will give may not be popular and may even be too simple. God's Word is to be measured by God's Word, and God's Word will interpret itself.

First off who were the giants in the earth? **"And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants; and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight."** (Num. 13:33) Obviously by this verse the giants were well known of the inhabitants of the earth, in fact so well known the Israelites knew their lineage and their antiquity by stating that they come of the giants. The realization that giants have always been around, and still to this day do they walk the earth, is no surprise or a fantastic revelation. The tallest man alive today is a Russian measuring at 8 feet 3 inches, the tallest woman alive is 7 feet 10 inches.

Surprisingly enough the tallest woman ever measured 8 feet 4 inches. I suppose

that if these individuals married and had children that their off spring, over a number of years, would produce giants and individuals of somewhat normal size. One does not have to look very far to see athletes of unusual size that have physical abilities greater than "normal" people.

Who were the sons of God? I break away from the two common views here as I have with the giants. The first seven verses deal specifically with the men that were on the earth, also the daughters of these men as mentioned in the first verse that were born to them, these were the daughters of men. There is no indication of a spiritual difference between the men and the daughters. I hear some say well, in the second verse it says the sons of God! I agree it does say that, I do not shrink to deny that it means Godly men. I went thru much study about this and I was surprised to find that it was under my nose the whole time.

The word "elohiym" is the Hebrew word most commonly used for "God." I looked at the definition carefully and saw that it also has a definition of rulers or judges. The word "been" pronounced "bane" is the Hebrew word for "son" or "children." Look at the Scriptures with that in mind and see if it makes more or less logical sense. I still hear some doubters as to the definition, I just want you all to look at the context to determine your answer and not what we have always heard to be true. I want to turn your attention to this verse of Scripture **"Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him for ever."** (Ex 21:6) and also **"For all manner of trespass, whether it be for ox, for ass, for sheep, for raiment, or for any manner of lost thing, which another challengeth to be his, the cause of both parties shall come before the judges; and whom the judges shall condemn, he shall pay double unto his neighbour."** (Ex 22:9) The word used for judges in these scriptures is "elohiym."

The sons of the judges saw that the daughters of men were fair and they "took" all of which they chose, because they were influential people. Space does not allow me to continue on with this subject, but I am willing to discuss it even more at a later date.

Who were the daughters of men? I have already answered that question. They were, as it says, the daughters men, the offspring of God's creation (man), whether they be saved or not. We have to remember that just because Seth was a Godly man does not mean that all the offspring of Seth was Godly, and that some of the offspring of Cain was not converted. I want you to remember like begets like.

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Good men have differed greatly in their interpretation of Genesis 6:1-4. I am sure that my answer will not settle the debates between commentators, theologians, and preachers. I can remember some animated discussions I had with Brother Cockrell several years ago over this passage of Scripture. We finally agreed to disagree. The short version of what I believe is that the giants were very large people similar to Goliath, or that they were giants in the sense that they were men of renown, i.e. famous for their exploits. The sons of God were of the godly line of Seth who had called upon the name of the Lord and professed to be saved. The daughters of men were unsaved women. I have never been able to bring myself to believe that God would consider fallen, reprobate angels as the sons of God in any sense.

I wrote an exposition of Genesis that has never been published. Here are some gleanings from the study I taught our church:

There are basically three interpretations of who the sons of God refer to in this passage. 1. They were fallen angels who left their first estate, came to earth to marry and have sexual relations with the daughters of men that resulted in a mutant race of giants. 2. The second view is that the sons of God were men possessed by demonic spirits who married the daughters of men and had sexual relations with them, producing a mutant race of giants. 3. The third view is that the sons of God were men of the godly line of Seth, who had called upon the name of the Lord and professed salvation. The saved sons of God chose beautiful daughters of men who were unsaved. The result of their union were men of renown who were also referred to as giants. Because of the context which deals specifically with men and women (angels are never mentioned in this chapter), and because of God's laws of reproduction (like begetting like, after their own kind) I believe that the sons of God were of the line of Seth who went into the daughters of men who were of the ungodly line of Cain.

There are several reasons why I believe the sons of God cannot be fallen angels. First, the context is clearly dealing with men and their God-given mandate to multiply by way of procreation. Angels are never mentioned in Genesis chapter 6. Secondly, God's laws of reproduction that were set forth in Genesis chapter

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## The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. Was Jesus a member of the church at Jerusalem? If so, was he the first member of the church at Jerusalem? - Editor

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Jesus walked a long way to where John the Baptist was baptizing, because only John the Baptist had authority to baptize. Jesus would not start His church without authority first; that is why He was baptized in the river.

Jesus was not an Arminian in His ways, such as starting a church just anywhere at anytime. Jesus was the first member of the Jerusalem church, it is His body, you can't originate something and not be a part of it.

Jesus did not receive vertical authority, He is the authority. Preachers today who desire to be like Jesus, promulgate the Arminian doctrine of vertical authority. These men have either never left their Arminian roots or are excluded persons from true churches and find themselves far short of the standards Jesus left for His churches in Matthew 28:18-20.

Baptism is the chain-link between true churches. The chain started when Jesus went to John the Baptist to be baptized, because Jesus gave the authority to John the Baptist to baptize, so Jesus went to where the authority was.

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First let me commend the Editor on such a fine and thought provoking question. We had to think long and hard and look at many Scriptures.

1. Christ is the Chief Shepherd, **"And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away"** (I Pet. 5:4).

2. He is the Corner Stone, **"Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes"** (Matt. 21:42)? **"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being**

**the chief corner stone"** (Eph. 2:20).

3. He is the Foundation, **"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone"** (Eph. 2:20). **"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity"** (II Tim. 2:19).

4. He is the Rock, **"And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ"** (I Cor. 10:4).

5. He is the Head of the Church, **"And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence"** (Col. 1:18).

All these verses give us who the starter of the first Church was, for me there is no doubt **"And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it"** (Matt. 16:18).

So we prayed, and read, and prayed some more until the Lord revealed the answer. I will give it to you, dear reader, just how I received it or if you will, came to what I believe is the answer, and we can very well be wrong in our answer. It will be interesting to read what my fellow Forum Brethren answer.

This is the Scripture that came to me first, that helped with the answer **"He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled"** (John 3:29). John the Baptist was no doubt the friend of the Bridegroom (Jesus Christ) but he was not a member of the church. He died never becoming a Baptist church member, and there is no record that John was ever baptized. So as I pondered on that point, I realized Jesus being baptized of John, because he had the authority from God, was not a church member of the first church. And that's when it came to me (no I didn't have a vision, just Scripture), Jesus is the Bridegroom therefore how can He be the Bride as well? He didn't die for Himself as being a church member; He died for His Bride, the Church. He died for His *ekklesia* **"He that hath the bride is the bridegroom:"** Paul said, **"For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to**

**one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ"** (II Cor. 11:2).

So my answer to the Questions is No and No! Was Jesus a member of the church at Jerusalem? No! Therefore He was not the first member of the church at Jerusalem? He is not, nor can He be both a member of the Bride, whom He died for as the Bridegroom. If that were the case we would have a very ugly marriage.

**"For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body"** (Eph. 5:23).

**"And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence"** (Col. 1:18).

One day there will be a marriage in Heaven and the Bridegroom will marry His Bride (The Local New Testament Baptist Churches) and John the Baptist, no doubt, will be the best man. What a glorious day that will be, praise God! **"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God"** (Rev. 19:7-9). God Bless!

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Usually there is a question behind the question in a question like this! If there is a trick answer, I'm oblivious to it, so don't hold me responsible for going off in the wrong direction.

It is an intriguing question to study, however. Christ was baptized by John the Baptist, but since John didn't start the Lord's church, that is not necessarily relevant yet to the membership aspect of baptism. Jesus Christ founded the first Baptist church at Jerusalem/Galilee by setting apart some of His disciples- **"And God hath set some in the church, first apostles"** (I Cor. 12:28). This actual event took place, I believe in Luke 6:12-17 as you compare Scripture with Scripture, obviously established well before Matthew 16:18, **"...I will build <edify> my church."**

After the church was established, its Head and Saviour, authorized them to baptize new members as seen in John 4:2, **"Though Jesus himself baptized**

**not, but his disciples,"** and Matthew 28:19, **"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:"** We, therefore, as members continue to follow this precedent by submitting to the precedent of Christ in baptism, thereby gaining admission into HIS church and perpetuating its physical existence here in this world. At this point we can safely say that He is the Head of His church, but does that make Him a member? Selah! Think about it!

Let's look at a couple of scenarios, if the Beloved Reader would...

1. A father is the head of his family and he is considered PART of that family, or a member of the family.

2. A king is the head of his kingdom, but is he considered a citizen? Certainly he is not considered a subject! He is what the citizens are subject unto!

3. Jesus is the Head of His Church (Col.1:18). Does that fall into the first or latter category?

I think that if we phrase it correctly, we will see the answer. The church is called the BODY of Christ, meaning that we are a part of HIM, not the other way around (Him a part of us)! Authority headship is what 1 Corinthians 11:3 teaches, not physically attached headship: **"But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God."** Our heads are physically attached to our bodies, but the man is not physically attached as the head of the woman's body, neither is Christ attached as the physical head of every man's body. He is the AUTHORITATIVE head of our bodies, though! As the Apostle Paul continues in this chapter to speak of the woman's veil, he emphasized that it is not any mere tradition he is speaking of, but the NECESSITY of the RECOGNITION of headship! **"FOR THIS CAUSE (emp. M.S.) ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels. Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God"** (I Cor. 11:10-12).

Let us continue the next step up the headship ladder carefully. "Nevertheless neither is Christ without the church, neither the church without her head in the LORD. For as the church is OF Jesus Christ, even so is the head honored BY the church; but all things of God!"

Just as John the Baptist claimed no spot in the Bride, but asserted status as friend of the Bridegroom, even so, our Lord will maintain His eminence (separate of the Bride) as THE Bridegroom. **"For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body"** (Eph.

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## Forum #1

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one are clear. Like produces like, after their own kind. This principle would have clearly been violated. Third, Jesus said that angels neither marry, nor are given in marriage (Matt. 22:30). Fourth, if this had been a marriage of angels with women, their posterity would have been half angels and half men. There is no such mixture of men and angels ever referred to in Scripture.

There are two good reasons why I believe the sons of God were of the godly line of Seth and the daughters of men were of the ungodly line of Cain. First, the sons of Seth were men who had at least outwardly called upon the name of the Lord. They were however, men who succumbed to the allurements and enticements of worldly, beautiful women. Solomon warned about the snares and traps that ungodly women lay of unsuspecting men. The sons of God made the mistake of looking only upon the deceptive outward beauty of the daughters of men without considering their inward spiritual condition. The sons of God, by virtue of their fallen will had entered into an unholy union that was not approved by God. It is interesting that the first mention of the word wickedness in the Scripture is associated with the unlawful union of the sons of God with the daughters of men. Secondly, marriages between believers and unbelievers are strongly warned against in other Scriptures. The people of Israel were forbidden to marry the heathen (Deut. 7:3-4). Failing to separate from the ungodly in marriage was the down fall of king Solomon (I Kings 11:1-4). The marriage of God's chosen people with the heathen was considered a sin during the times of Ezra (Ezra 9:1-2). The New Testament makes it very clear that believers should marry **"only in the Lord"** (I Cor. 7:39). The Scriptures also make it clear that Christians are to live separated lives from the world of the ungodly (II Cor. 6:14-18). We are forbidden from touching the unclean thing which would certainly include entering into a life long marriage union with an unbeliever.

C.H. Mackintosh wrote:

"We cannot possibly imagine that an advantage is gained when the people of God mingle themselves with the children of this world, or when the truth of God is corrupted by human admixture. Such is not the divine method of promulgating truth, or of advancing the interests of those who ought to occupy the place of witnesses for Him on earth. Separation from all evil is God's principle; and this principle can never be infringed without serious damage to the truth."

The results of the union between the sons of God and the daughters of men

proved to be favorable in the eyes of the world. They produced giants, men of great physical prowess and size. They also became known as mighty men of renown. They were considered to be famous men. Men of great intellectual capacity, social standing, and wealth. Yet the standards by which the world measures success are not the standards of a thrice holy God. God sees and thinks much differently than fallen man does. So it should come as little surprise that those whom the world considered to be famous and great, would be regarded as wicked and sinful in the eyes of God (Gen. 6:5). Their outward appearance and demeanor may have appealed to the eyes of men, but God looked upon the heart and saw evil, deceit (Jer. 17:9), madness (Ecc. 8:11), and all manner of defilement (Matt. 15:19-20).

The practical lesson of this passage of Scripture should at once become crystal clear. You cannot defy the laws of God and expect God to approve of what you are doing. You cannot mix the truth of God with the error of men because there can be no true testimony where truth is forfeited. It is sad to see that in our present religious world many are attempting to mix the holy with the profane in order to see grander results. However, you can never alter God's way of doing things and expect Him to bless your efforts.

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Very difficult text, very difficult answers. Some things in the Bible we will never all agree upon, and this is one such passage. Please don't let us become dogmatic about our insight into such passages, as that will only lead to division and wrath.

The passage of Genesis 6:1-7 in my mind is one of the most powerful texts on total depravity that we can find in Scripture (paralleled only by Rev.20:7-9). Our passage picks up at the end of the genealogy of Adam in chapter 5, revealing in just a few quick verses the alarming decline of his descendants when left to their own nature, before being capped by the most remarkable Scripture, **"But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD"** (Gen 6:8). Selah! Think about it!

To answer the last question first, the daughters of men are defined in context by Scripture in verse one, **"And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them."** This does not

mean that the descendants of Adam had only daughters born unto them, but merely is telling us that the generations continued apace. Children had children that had children, being pictured in this case by the daughters that were able to produce that offspring. This also dispels any daughters of Cain marrying sons of Seth theory, except in the allegorical sense of the intermarriage of believers and unbelievers. Simply put, the **"daughters of men"** here are among the physical descendants of Adam and Eve, letting the Bible interpret itself as usual.

In verse two, we have the introduction of the **"sons of God."** Here is where the debate has occurred over the millennia. Who are these **"sons of God?"** Are they fallen angels come down from Heaven to seduce the children of Adam? Many scholars believe so, and at times in my life I have been persuaded by their arguments to seriously consider the verses they use to back such a theory. However, I have never been fully satisfied with such a theory, and keep coming back to this simply being a text on total depravity. We won't have the space here in this column to answer all the objections, but we will answer the most pertinent, I hope.

In only two other instances do we find this coupling of **"ben Elohim"** or **"sons of God"**. In the first couple of chapters of Job and also the 38<sup>th</sup>. I firmly believe that BOTH of these references do indeed refer to heavenly angels, but cannot make this an axiom for bringing it to chapter 6. The words **"ben"** and **"Elohim"** are just too common elsewhere in Scripture to limit them to Job's nomenclature of angels. In Genesis 3:16 the word **"ben"** is rightly translated **"children,"** not **"sons"** - **"Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children..."** and is in fact used 14 times before our reference in chapter six, never once meaning angels as can clearly be seen by the context usage.

But WHO could be the **"sons of Elohim"** in the context given in chapter 6? Certainly, we cannot rule out the angels, but we must ask ourselves what they would have to do with the context. If the theory of angels intermarrying with mortals is true, then the case is closed. But I would never want to be guilty of taking a theory of man and making the Scriptures fit to it. That happens WAY too much of the time, as it is! Some have linked the passage in II Peter 2:4-6 and concluded that Peter was correlating the judgment of the fallen angels with the judgment of the flood. But that sort of exegesis would have to include Sodom as well, and it falls short there. I believe that Peter is simply giving three SEPARATE examples where God has not withheld judgment to exhort us not to presume upon His longsuffering.

So the OTHER six times **"sons of God"** is used in the Bible (the New

Testament), it is referring to saved folk. Two will suffice here: John 1:12, **"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name,"** and Philippians 2:15, **"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world."** Saved folk differentiated from lost folk. As we come back to our original text of Genesis 5 & 6, I believe this will give us a more true insight as to who Moses was referring to.

To me, the most important phrases in verse two of the text are that the **"sons of God"** saw the **"daughters of men"** that THEY WERE FAIR and they (sons of God) TOOK THEM WIVES OF ALL WHICH THEY CHOSE. This was not indiscriminate angels marrying whatever women would have them, but Godly men (and women) looking with the eyes of Lot upon the plains of Jordan (Gen.13:10-11) and seeing what they wanted in the flesh, not with the spiritual eyes of God. THEY chose! THEY decided beauty was the determining factor in the proposed marriages! Beloved reader, this is not Biblical, but it IS depraved human nature. The Apostle Paul warns against this in II Corinthians 6:14-18, **"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, AND YE SHALL BE MY SONS AND DAUGHTERS,** (emp. M.S.) **saith the Lord Almighty."** The last phrase here is pertinent to our study, isn't it! IF we remain spiritual, we will be the **"Sons of God!"**

The last piece in the puzzle is **"who are the giants?"** The Hebrew word here is only used one other place in Numbers 13:33, speaking of large people (or Giants) in Canaan. The actual definition here for these Giants is **"fellers"** (understood basically as **"tree cutters"**). Many have interpreted this word from its root **"to fall"** and therefore taken this to be **"fallen ones"**. But I don't get that from the Hebrew. These Giants are ONES that **"do the felling of others."** They physically dominate (Num.13) or spiritually deceive and fell (Isa.14:8). In the latter reference Satan is called a **"feller"** (allegorically of trees) but rightly enough of people and

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## Forum #1

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nations- remember Adam and Eve's "Fall"? Who felled them? Selah! Think about it!

A more proper parallel passage describing these physical Giants and the relationship with the Mighty Men that came as a result of unequal yokes and marriages is Genesis 10:8-10, "**And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the LORD: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel...**" Same Hebrew word here speaking of Nimrod back there in the mighty men of renown in our text. They were not known for their Spirituality, but rather for establishing carnal kingdoms like Nimrod. Laboring for the flesh and forgetting their Creator. In context with the very next verse- Genesis 6:5, "**And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.**" Selah! Think about it!

But not Noah! Genesis 6:9, "**These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.**" Everything that his peers and fathers did, Noah did the opposite! He was just (in his judgments), they were wrong to lightly esteem God's will! He was perfect in his generations, they were following the whispers of the feller and marrying and giving in marriage with abandonment! Noah walked with God and was protected from the deluge to come... they were completely destroyed... Selah! Think about it!

MATTHEW STEPP



## Forum #2

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5:23). A husband is head of both family and wife, but he is only a member of the family, not a member of the wife. Selah! Think about it!

MATTHEW STEPP

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Jesus is the Head, Founder, foundation, and chief cornerstone of His church (Matt. 16:18; Eph. 1:22-23; 2:20-22). On that basis, I would definitely

consider Him to the first member of the church at Jerusalem. As a member and Head of the Jerusalem church He gave the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20) and instituted the observance of the Lord's Supper (Matt. 26:26-30).

TOM ROSS



## Complete in Christ

(Continued from page 149) ♦

### NOTHING MORE IS NEEDED

Every grace in the Christian economy is to be had in Christ. Let us not look to baptism, for it is a picture of Christ's burial and resurrection from the dead. Let us not look to the Lord's Supper, for it represents the death of Christ by which we are actually saved. Let us not look to the church for spiritual completeness, for Christ is its Head. "**And ye are complete in him.**" We are complete in Christ in the sense that in Him we have all the fitness for Heaven provided for us.

But do we not need an altar where sinners come to give their hearts to Jesus? We have but one altar, Jesus Christ. Do we not need an earthly priest? There is no visible priest in the New Testament church. Jesus Christ is the great apostle and high priest of our profession, who ever lives to make intercession for us. Do we not need a sacrifice? There is no atoning sacrifice in the house of God. The Lord's Supper is a festival, not a sacrifice. Jesus Christ offered one sacrifice once for all, inexhaustible and available for ever. We need not merit of penance, for we have a perfect righteousness in Christ. We need no intercession of a female beside the throne of God, for Jesus Christ ever lives to plead our case before God. We need not the purifying of purgatorial fire, for His blood cleanses from all sin. We need not the forgiveness of some high church council or church official, for we are completely forgiven by Christ of all our trespasses.

All honor and glory to the dying Lamb! We can glory only in Christ and in the blood of His cross. "**But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ**" (Gal. 6:14). "**Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake**" (Ps. 115:1). Heaven help us to magnify our great Redeemer and to shout His praises to the top of the everlasting hills. O Lord, help us to avoid self-righteousness.

### CONCLUSION

In Colossians 4:12 I read: "**. . . always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.**" Does these words contradict our text? No never! One refers to our standing, while the other refers to our state. In other words, Paul says: "Ye are complete; therefore, you must become so." Reason would

say otherwise, but God says: "Ye are complete; therefore, strive to become so." Although counted complete in Christ, I am experimentally incomplete in myself. God would have me to make true in myself what is already true in Christ. He desires to make me what He already counts me to be!

This spiritual completeness in Christ must be personally realized by an experience of God's grace in the heart. We must be joined to Christ by faith. There must be close spiritual union and communion between Christ and our human spirit. "**But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit**" (I Cor. 6:17). We must be in Christ, and Christ must be in us if we are to have any hope of everlasting glory. Do you know Christ? Are you in union with Him?



## Salt

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amongst the horses, cattle, and even the deer around us. I have no claims to being even slightly authoritative when it comes to human physiology or animal physiology. But I do know from observing the world around us that God has endued within the human body a need for 'salt.'

Salt is good. On two different occasions the Lord Jesus Christ tells us that "**salt is good**" (Mark 9:50, Luke 14:34). Salt is beneficial to one's health. Salt is a preservative. Salt adds flavor to food. Salt is used in healing. Salt is used in many forms by many peoples around the world. It is something that naturally occurs in the Creation and is given to mankind to be used to his benefit. Salt is given to us by God and it has so many uses that it cannot be denied that "**salt is good.**"

Salt adds flavor. "**Can that which is unsavory be eaten without salt? Or is there any taste in the white of an egg**" (Job 6:6)? Even in the time of Job, salt was a valuable nutrient in the daily diet of the people. It is one of the attributes of salt that it can bring out the flavor of something that seemingly has no flavor. Isn't that amazing? Have you ever really stopped to think about how salt accomplishes this? How does salt bring out flavor? How does salt make something that is unsavory palatable? Surely we can now begin to make application to our lives as compared to the holiness of our God. It is not without purpose that salt is mentioned so prominently in the Bible. I suppose that salt is one of the most prominently mentioned nutrients in the Bible. This must be important for us to study.

We see now that salt has many attributes and that it is featured quite often in the Holy Scriptures. Let's look at some of the ways that salt is depicted in

the Bible.

### SALT AS A PRESERVATIVE

We have already mentioned that salt is very valuable as a preservative. I suppose that even the most ancient of civilizations realized the value of salt in this regard. The Bible certainly makes mention of salt used in this fashion. "**Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men**" (Matt. 5:13). This verse makes a good jumping off point as we think about the way that salt is applied to the human race in the Scriptures. We have already read that Jesus Christ declared that "**salt is good.**" Apparently now the Lord is stating also that His people are the "**salt of the earth.**" What possible comparison can we make between the people of the Lord and salt? We know that salt is important and we mentioned already that we will make application of the comparison of salt and the human body, and salt and God Almighty. I would like to make two points concerning this verse.

First, we have stated already that salt adds flavor. Job even told us that, essentially, salt gives "taste" to things that are "unsavory." It is hard enough for us to comprehend this in the flesh. Now, try to understand the meaning that the Lord Jesus Christ is conveying in this verse. I believe that He is telling us that His people are to the earth what salt is to the "white of an egg." The people of God add flavor to this earth in the eyes and even in the taste of God. I cannot explain to you why it should be so, anymore than I can explain to you how that salt adds flavor to the unsavory food. I can tell you that the Lord Jesus Christ and the Father in Heaven have a love for the elect that transcends anything that we can imagine. But why He should love us is beyond my understanding. The Lord loves His people so much that the world of men exists only because of their presence. I think we can see that it is only because of the salt and its sweet savor that the world continues. The salt makes the unsavory world to be savory.

Second, the salt of the earth acts as a preserving agent. I can also tell you that since God loves His people, the world is allowed to endure. The world cannot fail until all of His people have come to Him. "**The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance**" (II Pet. 3:9). The parable of the wheat and the tares tells us that the tares continue until the wheat has come to fruit; and then the tares will be destroyed. In essence, the tares are preserved by the presence of the wheat. We also read in Hebrews 11:39-40, "**And these all, having**"

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# Salt

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**obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.**" Paul also explains to Timothy in **"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth"** (I Tim. 2:4). Now we know that the **"men"** that are spoken of here in this verse, are not the entire world of men but the **"men"** that would believe on Him. These will all be saved and none of them will be lost. The world must be preserved until all of these are born into the world and then born again in newness of life. So we see that the people of God act as a preserving salt in that they add flavor to the world and they preserve the world.

## SALT AS AN OFFERING

Another feature of salt, as it is used in the Bible, is found in the Old Testament. **"And every oblation of thy meat offering shalt thou season with salt; neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat offering; with all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt"** (Lev. 2:13). It is an overlooked fact that the Children of Israel offered salt with all of their meat offerings. In fact we find that of all their offerings, the only offerings that did not have to be salted were the offerings of blood, wine, incense, and wood. Even offerings that were not to be eaten by the priests must be offered with salt. In the book of Ezra we read of two separate rulers giving command that salt be given to the children of Israel that they might effectively make sacrifice to the God of Heaven. First Darius makes a decree in Ezra 6:9-10, **"And that which they have need of, both young bullocks, and rams, and lambs, for the burnt offerings of the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the appointment of the priests which are at Jerusalem, let it be given them day by day without fail: That they may offer sacrifices of sweet savors unto the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king, and of his sons."** It must even be given to them **"day by day without fail."** The salt is a part of making offerings of **"sweet savors"** unto God in Heaven.

We also find the king Artaxerxes making the same requirements of his servants – that they should give unto the children of Israel that which they needed to make sacrifices unto God. We read in Ezra 7:21, **"And I, even I Artaxerxes the king, do make a decree to all the treasurers which are beyond the river, that whatsoever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, shall require of you, it be done speedily, Unto a hundred talents of silver, and to a hundred measures of wheat, and to a hundred baths of wine, and to a**

**hundred baths of oil, and salt without prescribing how much."**

I see the salt here symbolizing the grace of God. There can never be too much of the grace of God. No matter the depths to which we sink; no matter the filthiness of the flesh; no matter how sore the trial, the grace of God is sufficient. There is no limit to this prescription. It can be filled time and time again. It never expires, and it can never be depleted. It also can never be overdosed, but there is always a place for even more of the grace of God. How beautiful is this picture that we have in the Old Testament! The offerings that the children of Israel offered were only pictures of the offering that was to come. The perfect, flawless, lambs that they offered were only poor imitations of that Lamb which was to come. This salt that preserved their offerings; this salt that made their offerings palatable to the Lord, was only a picture of the grace that God would bestow upon His people. Oh, what a sweet savor was emitted by the gracious Son of God as He hung upon the cross of Calvary as our offering! Just like the salt, He is incorruptible, inviolable, and durable! He alone could fulfill the picture that the salt pointed us toward. Surely this salt was indispensable as a part of the sacrifices that were offered up by the children of Israel.

## SALT AS A HEALING AGENT

Notice another feature of salt. Salt has medicinal purposes. As we noticed in our introduction, salt is necessary for a healthy existence here on this earth. We know from our own scientific knowledge today, that salt can be a part of many remedies for many afflictions. It can be used to draw out infection. It can be used to purify. It is used in re-hydration products after much exercise. We see examples in the Scriptures as well. **"And he said, bring me a new cruse, and put salt therein. And they brought it to him. And he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and cast the salt in there, and said, Thus saith the LORD, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more death or barren land"** (II Kings 2:20-21). In this example we see that the waters were healed or purified by the salt. Of course we know that it was the healing power of the hand of God, but as a tool, He used the salt.

In another instance, we read of the use of salt in caring for a babe. **"And as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all. None eye pitied thee, to do any of these unto thee, to have compassion upon thee"** (Ezk. 16:4-5). Any person that would have **"pitied"** this baby or any person that would **"have compassion"** on this baby would have done these things for the baby. In the Biblical times, a baby would have his **"navel"** cut; the baby would be **"washed in water;"** the baby

would be **"salted;"** and the baby would be **"swaddled."** As far as these people were concerned, the salt was a necessary part of the new babe's existence. The salt would be quite effective in purifying the young child and deeply cleansing the flesh. How appropriate it is that we compare this salt, again, to the grace of God. How it would behoove us to be swaddled in His love! How we would rejoice in being washed in His blood! How wonderful to have the old man cast away and to be set free from the sins we were once guilty of! And how amazing to be purified and preserved by the grace found in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ! Surely the purifying power of our Lord far exceeds that of salt! Surely the preserving power of God Almighty is greater than the preserving power of all the salt in the world! Yet this is the picture that we are seeing displayed for us in the Scriptures.

## SALT AS A COVENANT

We can also read in the Scriptures about the use of salt as a covenant. We already noticed in Leviticus 2:13, **"neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking."** I think now, about the fact that the covenant of the God of hosts is perpetual. He cannot break covenant with man. Now we know that man can fail God, and man can break covenant. But the salt symbolizes the perpetuity, or preserving power, of the covenant that God would make with His people. **"All the heaven offerings of the holy things, which the children of Israel offer unto the LORD, have I given thee, and thy sons and thy daughters with thee, by a statute for ever: it is a covenant of salt for ever before the LORD unto thee and to thy seed with thee"** (Num. 18:19). William Tyndale, in his translation, has this as **"a salted covenant."** In other words, this covenant is preserved. And in truth, the people of the Middle East did consider salt to be a part of a covenant. And when they shared salt one with another, a covenant was formed between them. This was a tradition not only amongst the children of Israel, but even in the heathen people around them.

Look at another covenant. **"Ought ye not to know that the LORD God of Israel gave the kingdom over Israel to David for ever, even to him and to his sons by a covenant of salt"** (II Chron. 13:5). Again, Tyndale translates this **"a salted covenant."** In this instance, we look at a covenant that is unconditional. This covenant shall surely persevere. There is no chance that man can break this covenant, because he has no duty to perform in it. Refer back to II Samuel 7:8-16. Here we read of the Davidic covenant. Like the Abrahamic covenant, it is unconditional. Remember that God makes many conditional promises. These He will not break, but man may fail to live up to the requirements of the

promise.

Notice the covenant that He made with Solomon in I Kings 9:1-9. The covenant made with Solomon is full of **"if's."** There were many things that Solomon and the people were required to do, and they failed to meet those requirements. The covenant with Abraham, and the covenant with David, was unconditional. These covenants were promises made by God to do certain things on the behalf of man. **"And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever"** (II Sam. 7:16). This surely is a covenant of salt. This will surely be fulfilled, and the One that will fulfill it is the Root and the Offspring of David. It is the Lamb of God. Praise God that this covenant cannot fail! Because tied up in this covenant is the salvation of all mankind. The Saviour must come and He must judge the world. He will rule the world from the throne of David. This covenant is salted. It is preserved. And it is flavorful in the eyes of God.

## SALT AS A SIGN

In the Scriptures, we also see salt used as a sign. We see salt made use of as a symbol. The pillar of salt. Notice first the wife of Lot. As the angels delivered Lot and his family from the destruction of Sodom, Lot's wife could not resist the temptation to look back. **"But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt"** (Gen 19:26). This verse certainly is a message in itself. But I would like to briefly discuss what happened here. It seems that Lot's wife was about to escape to safety. She was escaped from the destruction of Sodom. Yet she was not content. She could not resist one final look back at the sins of the flesh. She was caught up in the things of the flesh and could not give them up. Here she was, seemingly in the grace of God, and she longed for the things of the lust and things of the flesh.

I think of two verses here. **"Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance"** (Rom. 2:4)? We can certainly see that the Lord had been good to Lot and his family. They alone were saved alive out of the city of Sodom. We can certainly see that the Lord had forbearance and was long-suffering towards Lot and his family. They had lived amongst the sinners. They had looked the other way as lusts and perversions were fulfilled all around them. Yet God had been merciful unto them and had been long-suffering unto them. And now, God in His goodness was leading them to safety; He was removing them from the sin-cursed city that was about to be destroyed. And Lot's wife could not see the goodness of God. Not only that,

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# Salt

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but she also despised the **“riches of his goodness.”** This pillar of salt is a sign to all, that God was long-suffering, but that He would judge. Surely grace is present even here. We can see that because Lot and his two daughters escaped. None of us in our natural condition deserve to escape the fire and brimstone that were poured out upon the city of Sodom. Yet here are three that are preserved by the God of Heaven. This pillar of salt stands as a testimony to the goodness, and the graciousness of God, in the face of an undeserving people.

Let's read also in Acts 13:46, **“Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.”** What an opportunity Lot's wife had! She had been given a second chance to live her life as she should – serving the Lord, separated from the filthiness of the sinful city of Sodom. Yet by her actions she declared herself **“unworthy.”** This pillar of salt that she would become is a symbol of man's unworthiness and the grace of God. What could save a people that were so vile as these, but the grace of God?

This pillar of salt is an enduring symbol to the perpetuity of the love of God, and to the eternal security of the elect of God. Even the destruction of the entire city, could not destroy the life of Lot. Here is a man that is called 'just' so we know that he is saved. The Lord would not allow him to die at this time, and He would preserve him. Just as the salt is a preserving agent, so the love of God preserved Lot from certain destruction.

Uninhabitable land. Notice also the references to the salt lands. **“And that the whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, and burning, that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein, like the overthrow of Sodom, and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, which the LORD overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath”** (Deut. 29:23). Also we read in Jeremiah 17:6, **“For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited.”** Surely this would be an apt description of the lands of Sodom and Gomorrah after their destruction. This would be an apt description of the land of Israel after they have left their first love and have joined themselves to the harlots of the lands around them. This is a befitting description of any land that is devoid of the grace of God. Sodom and Gomorrah, even before they were destroyed, were spiritually

destitute. The outward destruction that was poured upon them only pictured the spiritual destruction that had already encompassed them. Oh, the terrible destruction that awaits so many today! In these times of prosperity and outward riches, how truly poor and wretched, in the spirit, are so many cities and nations today. I pray to God, that our country would not be considered in the same category as Sodom and Gomorrah. The people of Sodom and Gomorrah did not expect to be overthrown. They did not believe that total destruction could happen to them, but it did. Maybe Lot had preached to them, and maybe they were aware that what they were doing was wrong, but they did not expect to have to pay the consequences in the manner that they did.

Our nation and world today is going down the same path. We blindly pursue our selfish interests, and fulfill the lusts of the flesh. We, too, could be destroyed at any time. I pray that God would grant repentance to our country. I pray that the **“goodness of God”** would lead us **“to repentance.”** Perhaps this salt is in these lands as a reminder of what had been, when they were faithful to God. How could anyone live in these lands now? How can we survive without the grace of our God? We have no existence without Him. We have no sustenance without Him. We have no hope without Him. Surely the salt in these desolate places can picture the desperate condition of any without the love of God. He alone is the Preserver. He alone is the One who can make us flavorful.

## SALT MUST HAVE SAVOR

**“Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his saltiness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another”** (Mark 9:50). There is a salt that is not salty. We can exhibit a salt that is not effective. **“Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men”** (Matt. 5:13). We can see that the Lord tells us on two separate occasions, that salt can lose its savor. Salt that has no savor is **“good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.”** Really, there is a third occasion as well. **“Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; but men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear”** (Luke 14:34). Here we see that salt that has no flavor is **“neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; but men cast it out.”** I think salt that has lost its savor, in the time of Christ, was only used as some sort of gravel. It could only be used to walk on. Its only use was as traction under the foot of men. Just as we saw at the beginning of this study, salt is

necessary to the human body. So also, the grace of God is necessary to the spiritual body.

There is no salvation outside of the grace of God. If we teach that one can earn an entrance into Heaven, then we are teaching a grace that has no “flavor.” If we teach that one can lose his salvation, then we are teaching a grace that has no “preserving power.” **“Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work”** (Rom. 11:5-6). There is no combination of grace and works that can be acceptable when it comes to salvation. Salvation is of the Lord. If we attempt to mix our works with the grace of God, then the result is a grace that has lost its savor. The only grace that has savor is the sovereign grace of an almighty God. This grace is both flavorful and preserving. Praise God that we don't have to rely on the works of any man, including ourselves, to receive this salvation! Praise God that we don't have to rely on the works of any man to keep this salvation!

## CONCLUSION

We have seen in this study, that salt is necessary in both the physical and spiritual realms. We have looked at some of the attributes of salt. We have looked at salt as a preservative, offering, healing agent, covenant, and as a sign. We have finally noticed that the salt that we partake of today, and that we exhibit as the children of God, must have savor. Let's close by looking at one more verse. **“Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know**

**how ye ought to answer every man”** (Col. 4:6). We see here that **“grace”** and **“salt”** are mentioned together in one verse. I believe this verse is telling us that not only our **“speech,”** but also our conversation or daily walk should be with **“grace.”** Our conversation should also be **“seasoned with salt.”** I believe that this verse is linking these two together. Paul is only reinforcing the thought that a speech which is with grace will also be seasoned with salt. Salt pictures the grace of God. Oh, that God would bless me in my ministry that I would exhibit a life that is **“with grace, seasoned with salt.”** The grace of God is my only hope.

If we partake of the grace of God, and if we are seasoned with salt then Paul goes on to tell us that we will **“know how...to answer every man.”** Without the grace of God we cannot give a good answer to those that would ask us a reason of the hope that is in us. Without the grace of God, we cannot give forth a good testimony. I pray that the grace of God would be upon me and upon all those who would be under the sound of my voice.

If you don't know the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour, then you need Him today. He is the embodiment of the grace that we have talked about today. Confess your sins, and acknowledge your need of Him now! He will not fail you. In fact, He is your only hope.

If you do know the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour, then beseech Him today to use you in His service. Ask Him that you, too, could be seasoned with salt; that you could be a witness and a testimony of Him and of His grace.



## 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.

## HIGH COURT MAKES NARROW RULING REGARDING TELEVISION INDECENCY LAWS

(WNS)--The Supreme Court on June 21 dodged a decision on whether the Federal Communications Commission's laws regulating indecency on public broadcast television and radio are good or not. Instead, a unanimous court simply said the federal agency could not fine two networks in the case because it had not given the networks sufficient notice on the rules. "Here the court rules that Fox and ABC lacked notice at the time of their broadcasts that the material they were broadcasting could be found actionably indecent under then-existing

policies," Justice Anthony Kennedy wrote for the unanimous court. "It is unnecessary for the court to address the constitutionality of the current indecency policy." Upon the release of the decision, the Associated Press—and other news outlets—reported that the court had “struck down” the indecency law. But saying profane words and showing nudity on broadcast television or radio still isn't acceptable—the high court just said the FCC had to give “fair notice” to broadcasters about what counts as “indecent.” The opinion was narrow, saying its scope was limited to the two cases and encouraging the FCC to review its regulations in light of the ruling.

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## SAME-SEX MARRIAGE DECISION COSTS OBAMA NORTH CAROLINA

(WNS)--North Carolina was a state in play until President Obama made his May 9 announcement saying he favored same-sex “marriage.” Now, it looks to be solidly in the Republican camp. Public Policy Polling (PPP), a liberal-leaning survey firm, said the President is losing “a stunning amount” of African-American backing in North Carolina over the SSM decision. Romney has almost doubled his support from the black community (from 11 percent to 20 percent). This is a remarkable shift when you consider that more than 95 percent of blacks voted for Obama in 2008. It’s also significant because Obama won North Carolina by only about 14,000 votes in 2008. It won’t take a big swing in the African-American vote to turn the state from blue to red.

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## HIGH COURT UPHOLDS MOST OF HEALTHCARE LAW

(WNS)—On June 28, in an outcome very few court experts predicted after hearing the oral arguments, the court left the Affordable Care Act of 2010 largely untouched. The majority also encompassed an alliance that no one predicted of Roberts and the liberal bloc of the court: Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Stephen Breyer, Sonia Sotomayor, and Elena Kagan. But Roberts, penning the majority opinion, limited the ruling to say that Congress had the power to tax, and the individual mandate’s penalty for not having health insurance counted as a tax increase. Even though Congress described the penalty as a “shared responsibility payment,” Roberts said, “It functions like a tax.” The court did declare the individual mandate unconstitutional under the Commerce Clause, because Roberts said Congress could not create activity to regulate it. But the mandate had faced two questions for the court to consider—whether it was constitutional under the Commerce Clause and under Congress’ power to tax. It only had to survive one of the two for the court to uphold it.

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## ERIC HOLDER CITED FOR CONTEMPT OF CONGRESS

(WNS)--The House on June 26 voted to cite Attorney General Eric Holder for contempt of Congress for withholding documents requested in its ongoing investigation into Operation Fast and Furious. The 255-to-67 vote marks the first time Congress has held in contempt a sitting member of a president’s Cabinet. Seventeen Democrats supported the contempt resolution, but more than 100 Democrats boycotted the vote. A group of African-American lawmakers led the walkout, which also included Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi. “When we asked legitimate questions about ... Fast and Furious we

were lied to,” Rep. Darrell Issa, R-Calif., said moments before the vote. Issa is chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, which has spent the last 18 months investigating the gun-walking scandal. “We are here today,” Issa continued, “for the first time in over 200 years to deal with an attorney general who has flat refused to give the information related to lies and a cover-up exclusively within his jurisdiction.”

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## COLORADO TO CONSIDER LEGALIZING MARIJUANA

(WNS)--On Nov. 6, Colorado voters will decide whether or not to make marijuana legal for recreational use. Amendment 64, also known as the Regulation of Marijuana like Alcohol act, will permit adults 21 years of age or older to carry and use up to one ounce of pot without fear of arrest. Opponents fear growing support for the amendment, which they say seems likely to pass, or at least come close. The possibility of legal marijuana has parents, school officials, and church leaders debating how to approach the subject with children, teens, and young adults, who are generally more accepting of marijuana use. “I think many young adults in the church are bombarded by people at their workplace or school who think legalization is a no brainer, and wonder why won’t they get on board,” said Aaron Britton, pastor of young adults at Calvary Bible Church, in Boulder, Colo.

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## ANALYSIS: DADS MATTER IN LIVES OF CHILDREN

(WNS)--According to an analysis of parenting studies published in *Personality and Social Psychology Review* in May, kids who feel rejected by their fathers show higher rates of behavioral problems, delinquency, depression and substance abuse than those who feel rejected by their mothers. The analysis was conducted by Ronald P. Rohner, Ph.D., a professor emeritus at the University of Connecticut and director of the Ronald and Nancy Rohner Center for the Study of Interpersonal Acceptance and Rejection. Rohner analyzed 36 studies, from 1975 to 2010, involving almost 1,400 adults and 8,600 children in 18 countries. The children ranged in age from 9 to 18, and adults were between 18 and 89.

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## STUDY CHALLENGES ROSY ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT HOMOSEXUAL PARENTING

(WNS)--A new study by Mark Regenerus in the Social Science Journal challenges a notion that many already find untenable: Growing up in a homosexual household doesn’t carry significant disadvantages for children. That’s what the American Psychological Association declared in 2005. By 2010, another pair of social scientists went further: Judith Stacey and Timothy Biblarz contended that lesbian households were better for children than heterosexual homes. Sociologist Mark Regenerus was dubious. The University of Texas professor noted that research as recently as 2001 declared opposite findings. “Scientific

truths are seldom reversed in a decade,” he said. Regenerus conducted his own study and published the results in June. Researchers found that respondents with parents involved with homosexuality were more apt to report “being unemployed, less healthy, more depressed, more likely to have cheated on a spouse or partner, smoke more pot, had trouble with the law, report more male and female sex partners, more sexual victimization, and were more likely to reflect negatively on their childhood family life, among other things.” Regenerus wrote that the findings didn’t prove that “sexual orientation is at fault,” but said “social scientists, parents, and advocates would do well from here forward to avoid simply assuming the kids are all right.”

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## CALIFORNIA LEGISLATORS CONSIDER GROUP-PARENTING MEASURE

(WNS)--A bill that seeks to radically redefine the term “parent” is edging closer to becoming law in California. SB 1476, authored by San Francisco Democrat Mark Leno, seeks to allow any number of adults to share legal custody of a child. The bill already passed the Senate and at least one committee in the General Assembly, and could soon come up for a floor vote. According to the text, “This bill would, in the case of a child with more than 2 legal parents, require the court to allocate custody and visitation among the parents based on the best interest of the child, including stability for the child.” Leno — who is openly homosexual — says his bill is meant to help children who have unconventional family arrangements, such as gay parents, as well as sperm donors and surrogate mothers. But California Family Policy Council Executive Director Ron Prentice said, “Just about any bill that Senator Leno puts out specific to the nature of family really has behind it a bearing on deconstructing traditional marriage and traditional families.”

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## JUDGE RULES THAT NYC CHURCHES CAN MEET IN PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES

(WNS)--A 17-year battle over the right for New York City churches to rent and use public school buildings for weekend worship services appears to have come to a close. On June 29, U.S. District Judge Loretta Preska issued a permanent injunction against the New York Department of Education, calling its policy that prohibits church access to school property after hours a violation of the religious groups’ First Amendment rights. “Today is a day of victory for religious freedom and religious liberty in the city of New York,” said Bill Devlin, a New York pastor and outspoken supporter of the city’s affected churches. “Houses of worship of all faiths can now breathe a sigh of relief due to today’s ruling.” Preska’s order could be the final verdict in a legal battle that began in 1995 when The Bronx Household of Faith filed suit against New York’s Board of Education after the church had been evicted from its

public school meeting place. City officials believed the rental arrangement violated the separation of church and state. The city can appeal the injunction to the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, and the Alliance Defense Fund, which has represented the Bronx church in court, fully expects the city to do so.

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## JUDGE ALLOWS THOMAS MORE SOCIETY TO DEFEND ILLINOIS’ MARRIAGE ACT

(WNS)--Circuit Court of Cook County Judge Sophia Hall granted intervenor status to the pro-family Thomas More Society Tuesday to do what Cook County State’s Attorney Anita Alvarez and Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan won’t do: Defend the state’s 1996 Marriage and Dissolution of Marriage Act, which reserves marriage for opposite-sex couples. The Thomas More Society filed the request June 29 on behalf of Effingham County clerk Kerry Hirtzel and Tazewell County clerk Christie Webb. They are intervening in the lawsuit that the American Civil Liberties Union and New York-based Lambda Legal filed last month on behalf of 25 gay and lesbian couples after Cook County officials denied their marriage applications. Legal observers have suggested Alvarez and Madigan are legally bound to defend state laws, regardless of whether they agree with them, but both have said they will not because they agree with the plaintiffs that the act violates the state constitution’s equal protection clause.

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## NORTH CAROLINA PULLS PLUG ON PLANNED PARENTHOOD

(WNS)--North Carolina has joined a growing list of states that don’t want to support Planned Parenthood with taxpayer dollars. Under a new budget approved in early July, the state will send the \$434,000 that was formerly sent to Planned Parenthood to county health departments in the next fiscal year. Though Gov. Beverly Perdue vetoed the budget, lawmakers banded together to override her. In 2011, eight states passed legislation that diverted a combined \$61.7 million in family-planning funds from Planned Parenthood to state or county agencies for health screenings and other services that don’t include abortion; today, the Obama administration bypassed the law in Tennessee to directly fund Planned Parenthood Greater Memphis. This year, Arizona, Iowa, Ohio, Oklahoma and New Hampshire joined North Carolina, according to the Susan B. Anthony List (SBA), which has aided all the states defunding the abortion seller.

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## SOUTHERN BAPTISTS SEE MEMBERSHIP DECLINE FOR FIFTH STRAIGHT YEAR

(WNS)--Membership numbers for the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) reflect disturbing trends for the nation’s largest Protestant denomination. Although the SBC saw slight increases in baptisms

♦ (Continued on page 157)

# Bible & the Newspaper

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and the number of congregations in 2011, its overall membership dropped for the fifth straight year, to just under 16 million. Duke Divinity School professor Curtis Freeman counters that the SBC's traditional commitment to evangelism had forestalled the numerical freefall experienced by mainline denominations, but that growth in any church is simply becoming more difficult. "The tide is going a different way," Freeman said. "[America is] increasingly becoming a secular culture, not a Christian culture."

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## SCHOOL WINS CASE AGAINST COUNSELING STUDENT

(WNS)--A Georgia student has lost another round in her battle with Augusta State University over her expulsion from the school's counseling program. School administrators demanded Jennifer Keeton complete a remediation plan to correct her views on working with homosexual clients. When she refused, they kicked her out of the program. Last week, a state district court judge dismissed Keeton's case against the school, concluding administrators did not violate her constitutional rights. The case hinged on whether the policies governing the counseling program were neutral and generally applicable to all students, regardless of their religious beliefs. Judge J. Randall Hall, of the Southern District of Georgia, determined that they were. Attorneys on both sides have declined to comment outside the courtroom because Hall prohibited public statements about the case.

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## MISSISSIPPI MASSACRE

(WNS)--A judge ruled July 13 that the state's only abortion center can remain open while a court case requiring all abortion doctors to have hospital attending privileges proceeds. Gov. Phil Bryant signed a law earlier this year that also requires abortionists to be board-certified obstetrician/gynecologists. The bill was scheduled to go into effect on July 1. It would have made Mississippi the first state without a single abortion center. Mississippi's sole remaining facility is run by Diane Derzis, who also runs abortion facilities in several southeastern states. Recently, the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) found 76 pages' worth of health code violations at the clinic she operates in Birmingham, and has said it can only remain open if it's run by someone with no ties to Derzis. Operation Rescue President Troy Newman called the decision "reprehensible" and said Derzis's facility will allow "fly-by-night" doctors to continue to endanger women's lives.

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## U.S. EPISCOPAL CHURCH APPROVES GAY-UNION BLESSINGS

(WNS)--The U.S. Episcopal Church (TEC) on July 10 became the largest American denomination to put its stamp of approval on same-sex unions, as delegates

at its triennial convention adopted a provisional liturgy for such occasions. The "Witnessing and Blessing of a Lifelong Covenant" will debut in December, and can be used for commitment ceremonies for same-sex weddings in states where such unions have been declared legal, according to the church. David Virtue, president of Virtue Online, the Anglican communion's largest orthodox Evangelical Anglican online news service, minced no words in describing the vote. "It's shocking, it's terrible. They're doing something that's never happened in 2,000 years of church history," he said. "They are legitimizing a behavior and offering rites to that behavior that is untenable, unbiblical, unscriptural, theologically unacceptable to both Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Evangelical Protestant churches."

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## TEXAS OPTS OUT OF OBAMACARE

(WNS)--In a letter sent to U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius on July 9, Texas Gov. Rick Perry announced that the Lone Star State won't be moving to enact sweeping changes dictated by the new federal health care law. According to the law, all states must either devise their own insurance exchanges or accept one created by the federal government. States have also been asked to put more low-income people on Medicaid, but the Supreme Court ruling said the federal government can't punish states that refuse to do so. Perry is defying both measures. "I look forward to implementing health care solutions that are right for the people of Texas," Perry wrote. "I urge you to support me in that effort. In the meantime, unsound (federal) encroachments will find no foothold here."

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## PCUSA REJECTS SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

(WNS)--The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) narrowly rejected, for now, a proposal to abandon the traditional definition of marriage, a year after it struck down a barrier to ordaining homosexuals. The PCUSA General Assembly, meeting in Pittsburgh, voted 338-308 against changing how marriage was defined in the church constitution from a "civil contract between a woman and a man" to a "covenant between two people." The assembly also rejected measures that would have affirmed a traditional definition of marriage or sought more theological study of the issue. Some of the opposition to the change was based on conservative interpretations of Scripture. "I must affirm definition of marriage as between one man and one woman," said Jodi Craiglow, of the Miami Valley Presbytery in Ohio. She directly addressed gay PCUSA members, saying, "As much as my heart breaks for your pain and frustration, I must simply hold to the standard of the God I love."

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## U.S. MILITARY HOLDS FIRST GAY PRIDE EVENT

(WNS)--The U.S. military broke with history on June 26, holding its first celebration of homosexuality at the Pentagon.

Jeh Johnson, general counsel of the U.S. Department of Defense, delivered a keynote address before a panel discussion titled "The Value of Open Service and Diversity." Johnson co-wrote the report that eventually led to the Obama administration's dismantling the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy last September, which prevented homosexuals from serving openly in the military. Johnson said the CIA held its first gay-pride event 12 years ago, and that repealing Don't Ask, Don't Tell has not affected the military in any tangible way. Elaine Donnelly, president of the Center for Military Readiness, said that statement is false.

"There have been signs of discontent with the situation," she said, citing a U.S. Army study on stress and sex-crime trends. "The most important thing is, people in the military follow orders, and one is you don't go out and question policy once it's been changed. So there's no vehicle for people in the military to register discomfort with the new LGBT law." Contrary to the event's title, Donnelly said "diversity" actually weakens the military, and that civilian activists are using it as a crucible for social engineering.

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## TENNESSEE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS KEEP PRAYING

(WNS)--Commissioners in Hamilton County, Tenn., approved a formal policy to continue opening their meetings with prayer, despite a lawsuit being waged against them in federal court. Under the policy — which the nine commissioners approved unanimously on July 3 — a countywide clergy database will be created, and officials will invite them to lead "prayer, reflective moment of silence, or a short solemnizing message" before each week's meeting.

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## ARIZONA APPEALS DOMESTIC-PARTNER BENEFITS CASE TO U.S. SUPREME COURT

(WNS)--Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer is asking the U.S. Supreme Court to decide next term whether the Grand Canyon State will be forced to offer spousal benefits to the same-sex partners of state employees — adding to the growing list of cases that could force the Court to define marriage once and for all in the near future. The case stems from 2009, when Arizona — seeking ways to cut state spending and close a \$1.6 billion budget hole — passed a law cutting the benefits for non-spouses of state employees. Gay activists sued, saying that because they cannot marry in Arizona, the new law discriminates against them. Since then, it's been blocked as legal proceedings have gone forward. Both a federal district court judge and a three-judge panel of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the state must continue offering the benefits to domestic partners of gay state employees. In April, the 9th Circuit denied the state a re-hearing by a full 11-judge panel, prompting Brewer's appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.

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## INTERNATIONAL BRIEFS CHINA'S ONE-CHILD POLICY

## BANKRUPTING FAMILIES

(WNS)--Chinese authorities released a woman facing a forced abortion in China's northern Hunan province on June 10 after human rights activists and at least one U.S. official called for her freedom. Cao Ruyi—a mother in her fifth month of pregnancy—still faces outrageous fines for allegedly violating China's one-child policy, and said that she and her husband can't afford to pay a "social burden compensation fee" that exceeds \$25,000. She fears that authorities may return and attempt a forced abortion again. Advocacy groups say the exorbitant fine highlights China's ruthless tactics to maintain population control by pressuring women to abort their unborn children or bankrupt their families.

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## EGYPTIANS GET NEW ISLAMIC PRESIDENT AS CHRISTIANS WORRY ABOUT FUTURE

(WNS)--For Christians living in predominantly Muslim Egypt, a heavy question: What does the election of an Islamic-fundamentalist president mean for the future of Christians in the country? That question rings as loud as the cheers that erupted from Cairo's Tahrir Square when Egyptian officials announced that Muslim Brotherhood candidate Mohammed Morsi narrowly won a presidential runoff against former regime member Ahmed Shafiq. Meanwhile, minority groups—including Christians that make up as much as 10 percent of the population—wonder what Morsi's win means for them in the long run. Kasr el Dobara—the largest evangelical congregation in the Middle East—has had a front-row seat to the massive demonstrations over the last year for a simple reason: The church sits just off Tahrir Square. Like many Christians, some in the church hoped that the government and presidency would take a secularist direction, and allow greater freedoms for Christians already facing oppression.

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## EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION STRONGLY CONDEMNS FORCED ABORTION IN CHINA

(WNS)--The European Parliament has just adopted a resolution strongly condemning forced abortions and sterilizations under China's One Child Policy, including the forced abortion at seven months of Feng Jianmei, which occurred last month in Shaanxi Province, China. The resolution "strongly condemns the decision to force Ms. Feng to have an abortion and condemns the practice of forced abortions and sterilizations globally, especially in the context of the one-child policy." The resolution further states that "the EU has provided, and still provides, funds for organizations involved in family planning policies in China," and "urges the Commission to ensure that its funding of projects does not breach" the European Parliament's commitment against coercive population control.







## Path to Destruction

By Andrée Seu Peterson

(WNS)--Enough about my wedding: The big news is Marvel Comics X-Men superhero Northstar got married this June to his longtime boyfriend Kyle, prompting DC Comics to push its own Green Lantern character out of the closet.

Things are moving faster now. In the early days homosexuals came hat in hand, kissing up to the media, testifying gravely on NPR that they were gay by an accident of birth. Their gayness was as fixed and ineluctable as gravity.

Fast-forward 30 years and the "fixed" part is so passé: Now we swing both ways and it's all good. The cheat is never pointed out, of course, nor even brought to mind. We were had, but like Jeremiah said: **"They were not at all ashamed; they did not know how to blush"** (6:15).

I know of a woman who left her family for another woman, having evidently discovered some latent gene for lesbianism that had slept quietly through four pregnancies and decades of a normal marriage. I'm nostalgic for the simpler genetics of the '70s.

No, all that is over now. All the charade of apologia, pseudo-science, nature-nurture discussions, ginned-up experts, and pandering to social sensibilities—none of it is necessary anymore. At some point philosophy was tossed in the dumpster on the way to the bathhouse. Everybody suddenly looked at each other and said, "Hey, let's just all be bad, OK?"

I had an uncle by marriage who lived in the poor side of town and insinuated his way into the family. I was a child and remember him standing in the doorway of my grandparents' grand old house, not daring even to step over the threshold without permission. In the end, when he had married my plain-featured aunt and my grandparents had died, he was running the family business (into insolvency), and his wife braved cold mornings to warm his Cadillac so he could get into a heated car, as he bedded half the town.

**"If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?"** (Psalm 11:3).

How are the foundations destroyed? I pondered. Think termites. First come legions of them, and their best work goes on behind the scenes. By the time you

notice your house is honeycombed with holes, it is as brittle as a sugar confection.

Think avalanches. The stresses of weight and shear and gravity are building a long time before some natural trigger finally overloads the snowpack; then it all comes tumbling down. God only knows when the tensile strength of a corrupted nation is reached.

Once they would have been indignant at the suggestion of a connection to the dungeons and fantasy rooms of mid-town Manhattan; now they celebrate it on mainstream programming. See how easily, Wormwood, without the slightest resistance, LGBT became acceptable, the "B" and the "T" riding the coattails of "L" and "G" on nothing more than an acronym.

Homosexuals had to win the winsome word "community" by a thousand numbing repetitions on a thousand talk shows, yet the BDSM crowd co-opted it overnight. Once a shock barrier is broken, the subsequent ones fall like dominoes and shame parades brazenly in the land.

Karl Marx was high-minded and philosophical. The end of his vision was the crass spectacle of looting Russian manor houses and raiding the larder.

"The land that you are entering, to take possession of it, is a land impure with the impurity of the peoples of the lands, with their abominations that have filled it from end to end with their uncleanness" (Ezra 9:11).

When One Million Moms complained about homosexual appropriation of comic book superheroes that their children might read, the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) replied: "From Christian churches to sports fields, to now even fictional comic book worlds, our culture overwhelmingly supports gay and lesbian Americans and that's what anti-gay groups like this are working against."

GLAAD got that impression about churches from somewhere. Let us not imagine ourselves impervious to the forces that have brought the collapse of the supporting beams around us. Things are moving at breakneck speed now. "Wham! Bam! Slam!" The only escape from the avalanche is Christ. But "if you are not firm in faith, you will not be firm at all" (Isaiah 7:9).



## - A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS -

By Timothy Hille  
of Ashland, Illinois

### Chapter Eighteen – Laws of Separation: Unclean Lusts

This chapter begins a section of the law under which God gave commandments of personal, public, and national separation unto Israel. By observing these commandments, Israel would be holy unto the Lord and kept from the abominable practices and customs of the ungodly nations. **"Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people"** (Prov. 14:34). These laws instituted a personal and national character which was fitting for a people whom the Lord had redeemed to Himself and among whom He would dwell (Tit. 2:11-14; I Pet. 2:11-12). The standard of Christian living and conduct is revealed in the commandments of God. God's viewpoint has not changed: the things which He hated and called sinful in Moses' day He still hates and calls sinful. Sin still ruins and destroys all things with which it comes into contact. God's Word is the only preventive and curative agent to keep and to heal a person from sin (Ps. 119:9-11).

#### Chapter Outline

- i. The basis of these commands – God's Person and Sovereignty: vs. 1-5
- ii. Abominations to be avoided: vs. 6-23
  - (a) Unlawful and incestuous marriages and relationships: vs. 6-18
  - (b) Unlawful lusts and unnatural affections: vs. 19-23
- iii. Consequences of committing these sins – defilement and disinheritance: vs. 24-30

#### I. VERSES ONE THROUGH FIVE.

God now imparts these sanctifying instructions unto Moses, which he was to **"speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them."** These things were the commands of God. Much of the teachings of Scripture on the subject of godly living and Christian conduct are being ignored today by Baptists; and the ensuing problems which come of sinful conduct and worldly relationships are being experienced in abundance. The basis of all that was commanded here was the personal character and



sovereignty of God: **"I am the LORD your God."** The commands of God are all founded upon this truth. Man despises all forms of interference in his own personal affairs.

Man despises God's commands because they come from God who claims and exercises all rights and all authority over all things. Nevertheless, these precepts are rooted in the eternal love and unchangeable sovereignty of God (Deut. 10:12-15).

**"After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do: neither shall ye walk in their ordinances."** The customs of the world are not to be the practices of God's people. What is acceptable and approved with man and society is not the rule of the Christian life (Ex. 23:2; Rom. 12:1-2; I Thess. 4:1-8). The commandments of God are the rule of the life of every child of God. So many excuses are being made today for why people cannot live the way God says. You who are saved can live the way God says He wants you to live, and you must live the way God says He wants you to live in order to enjoy the peace, joy, security, and contentment that He gives. We are not to be caught up with the spirit of legality, but we are to acknowledge the authority of God as our Saviour and King, and obey His commandments (John 13:17; 14:15; James 1:25-26). The way we live will either point to the fact that Jesus died to save us out of the world, or to the fact that we love the world and the world's ways. **"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him"** (I John 2:15).

Several times in these beginning verses, as well as in this chapter and the chapters which follow, God reasserts and reiterates His eternal, unchanging divinity and deity: **"I am the LORD your God."** The conduct of any people reflects the character of the God (or "god") whom they serve. The idolatrous heathen nations with whom Israel had and would come into contact took pleasure in the basest and most vile vices and immoralities. Rejection of the truth of God is always connected with cleaving to unrighteousness and lewd iniquity. Righteousness cannot be separated from true faith in and worship of JEHOVAH; nor can sin and corruption be separated from idolatry, which is the worship of anything other than the true and living God. The children of Israel had already at one point been tempted to accept

◊ (Continued on page 159)

## A Study in Leviticus

(Continued from page 158) ♦

the moral standards of the pagan and heathen nations with whom they were familiar, and in whose midst they were living (Ex. 32:1-6, 15-29). Pleasing the flesh and the carnal mind, the desire for the world's friendship, and the pull of popularity are snares which can only be avoided by remembering God's saving grace, His sovereignty over us, His knowledge of us, and His good pleasure toward us.

The nature of the law is here communicated. **"Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the LORD."** The nature of the law is righteousness through perfect obedience; but through the gospel God imputes righteousness and communicates the Spirit by faith (Gal. 3:2-12; Rom. 7:9-14). The law reveals man's depraved nature, for he is neither able nor willing to obey the commandments of God which are contrary to his own lusts and appetites. The nature of the law is perfectly conjoined with the purpose of the law, to reveal man's sin and point to Christ as the only Saviour (Gal. 3:19-24).

### II. VERSES SIX THROUGH TWENTY-THREE.

That the sins outlined in these divine regulations have been, are, and will continue to be practiced by men all over the earth until Christ returns to establish His literal, visible kingdom and all things are put under His feet is a manifest sign of man's utter depravity. The sins described and forbidden herein include incestuous marriages and behavior, unnatural lusts, adultery, homosexuality, idolatry (especially involving infanticide), and bestiality. The first section, incestuous marriages and relationships, is thus introduced: **"None of you shall approach to any that is near of kin to him, to uncover their nakedness."** The injunction is given upon these grounds, and ought therefore to be obeyed: **"I am the LORD."** The disregarding of the Person and Sovereignty of the true and living God is the cause of these sins having entered, and being yet found in, the world (Rom. 1:18-32). Wherever God is despised and His authority rejected, sin will prevail and men will be like unto brute beasts in their behavior (Ps. 49:20; II Pet. 2:12).

Upon consideration, all of these sins should seem shocking and revolting to every believer. Nevertheless, they are prevalent in the world because the thought of iniquity is prevalent in the heart of man. These were the doings of the Egyptians and the Canaanites. Children of God ought to have no part in these sins. Jesus said, **"But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery**

**with her already in his heart"** (Matt. 5:28). The wicked heart of man is the seat and the fountainhead of all sin. The children of Israel were not to have marital or sexual relations with those who were near of kin to them, whether father or mother, stepfather or stepmother, sister, brother, grandson, granddaughter, stepsister, stepbrother, half-sister, half-brother, aunt, uncle, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, brother-in-law, or sister-in-law (I Cor. 5:1). These relationships were to be considered binding in life and in death. For instance, a man was not to take to wife the woman who had been the wife of his father (Deut. 22:30; 27:20-23). All such relationships are against natural affection and feeling.

Also forbidden were marriages of near kin, as **"a woman and her daughter"** were not both to marry the same man, nor a woman and her granddaughter: **"for they are her near kinswomen: it is wickedness."** This command respects both polygamy and remarriage: a man was not to marry the daughter or granddaughter of the woman who had already been his wife. A man was not to marry two women who were sisters, as they would become rivals in the same house. Whatever the other nations might do, Israel was to abstain from all these practices and customs. Many look at the world and then desire to follow the way of the world. Sin has ruined many things which God created for man's benefit upon the earth (Matt. 19:3-9).

Included in the divine regulations are restrictions against intercourse with a woman in her time of impurity, committing of adultery, putting one's children **"through the fire to Molech,"** homosexuality, and bestiality. These things were characterized as defiling, profaning God's name, abominable, and confusion (Prov. 6:32-33; Jer. 32:35; Ps. 106:37-38; I Tim. 1:8-11). Many things are being called acceptable and being encouraged by man today, by society, and by the leaders (and those who would be leaders) of this world. Nevertheless, God's law remains true, and all men will give account of themselves unto God.

### III. VERSES TWENTY-FOUR THROUGH THIRTY.

**"Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things."** These sins were to be considered defiling. All sin corrupts and

destroys (Rom. 6:23; James 1:15; Gal. 6:7-8). The nations of the land of Canaan were guilty of these sins and committed them habitually, so that they had become customs among them. God said, **"And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants."** The reason that God destroyed the nations of the Canaanites in bringing Israel into the land was because of their sins (Gen. 15:16). Sin causes the whole creation to groan and be in agony (Rom. 8:20-22). We ought not to be committing sin, because God's wrath is revealed against all unrighteousness and His wrath will one day be poured out upon the disobedient inhabitants of the earth (Deut. 9:4-5; 12:29-32; 18:12; Rev. 21:27).

The only way in which Israel might keep themselves from the abominable customs and sins of the heathen was to keep the statutes and judgments of the Lord (Ps. 17:4). The only way for a child of God to avoid sin and the ruinous consequences of sin is by taking heed to God's Word and being obedient thereto. If Israel disobeyed God, they would defile themselves and the land would spew them out as the nations before them were spewed out. **"For whosoever shall commit any of these abominations, even the souls that commit them shall be cut off from among the people"** (Heb. 10:26-27, 31; I Cor. 3:16-17). God's Word is the only preservative against sin, and the only source from which cleansing from sin can be found. Let us always live in mindfulness of Him who has saved us and called us to glory and virtue. **"I am the LORD your God."**



### BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 6-1-2012 to 6-30-2012

Beginning Balance .....\$3,930.78

#### RECEIPTS:

Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS .....225.00  
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY .....100.00  
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY .....200.00  
Calvary B. C., Everson, WA .....200.00  
.....725.00  
TOTAL .....4,655.75

#### EXPENDITURES:

Radio Time (US) .....360.00  
TOTAL EXPENDITURES .....\$360.00  
.....\$4,295.78  
Interest .....+.03  
.....4,295.81  
Less Corbin, KY des. ....-1,563.72  
ENDING BALANCE .....\$2,732.09

### CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT

Beginning Balance .....\$1,723.72

#### RECEIPTS:

.....0.00  
TOTAL .....1,723.72

#### EXPENDITURES:

WCTT .....160.00  
ENDING BALANCE .....\$1,563.72



### BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 6-1-2012 to 6-30-2012

Beginning Balance .....\$1,460.93

#### RECEIPTS:

Amazing Grace B. C., Stockdale, TX .....25.00  
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS .....300.00  
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL .....60.00  
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV .....313.45  
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY .....300.00  
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL .....25.00  
Faith B. C., Lynn, FL .....12.50  
Gail Knowles, Scarborough, ME .....20.00  
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY .....100.00  
Grace B. C., Winston-Salem, NC .....50.00  
Grace M. B. C., Marion, IL .....50.00  
Grace M. B. C., Tulsa, OK .....35.00  
Harold Flynn, Craigsville, WV .....50.00  
Indore B. C., Indore, WV .....100.00  
Landmark M. B. C., Moncks Corner, SC .....50.00  
Leroy Bullard, Albuquerque, NM .....100.00  
The Lord's Church, Goose Creek, SC .....50.00  
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH .....100.00  
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN .....50.00  
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL .....100.00  
Portland B. C., Plumerville, AR .....50.00  
Southside B. C., Fulton, MS .....50.00  
Sovereign Grace B. C., Indianapolis, IN .....85.00  
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL .....100.00  
Sovereign Grace B. C., Silsbee, TX .....30.00  
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA .....25.00  
Subscriptions .....274.00  
Anonymous .....\$2,200.00  
Dividing checks .....300.00  
Sub Total .....\$5,004.95  
TOTAL .....\$6,465.88

#### EXPENDITURES:

Printing .....581.00  
Postage .....666.22  
Wages .....2,300.00  
FICA .....175.96  
Supplies .....241.60  
Dividing checks .....300.00  
Total Expenditures .....\$4,264.78  
ENDING BALANCE .....\$2,201.10



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Silsbee, TX and Pastor Jose' Serrano would like to announce their upcoming 27th Annual Bible Conference on October 19th thru 21st, 2012.

Service time is Friday at 7:00 p.m. with a meal provided at 5:00 p.m. Lunch and dinner will be provided on the 20th and dinner on the 21st.

For more information contact Pastor Serrano at (409) 385-9344 or Email pastor@sovereigngracebaptists.org.

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The Grace Baptist Church of Gladwin, Michigan will be having their 23rd Annual Bible Conference August 3-5, 2012.

For more information or if you need accommodations call Pastor Sam Wilson at (989) 426-9019 or (989) 701-5564.

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The Little Sewell Baptist Church of Crag, West Virginia has called Elder Ray W. Sexton as pastor. He has accepted the call and moved on the field.

His new address is 317 Ohio Avenue, Rainelle, WV 25962. His new phone number is (304) 438-5917.

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The Amazing Grace Baptist Church of Stockdale, Texas is in need of a pastor. The church believes in preaching and teaching the doctrines of grace and the Lord's church. Any interested brother my contact Bro. Charles Reddin at (830) 401-0310, if there is no answer please leave a message.

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

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

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The Liverpool Independent Baptist Church of Liverpool, New York (north of Syracuse) is searching for a sovereign grace pastor. The church believes in the doctrines of grace, the local church, and is pre-trib and pre-mil. Interested brethren should contact Bro. Greg Sigworth at (315) 677-3819.

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

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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.

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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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## Who Knows What Pleases God Better Than Himself?

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Each individual knows what pleases him or her better than anyone else. Things which may bring enjoyment to one person may not interest another at all. Since this is true of each human



person, surely God knows what pleases Him better than anyone else. The Bible says, **"For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God"** (I Cor. 2:11). We human beings cannot know what pleases God, but the Holy Spirit of God knows what pleases Him. The Holy Spirit gave us the Bible. One reason the Bible was given is so that we can know how to please God.

Men often have their own ideas as to what will please another, but are often wrong. You may buy a gift for another person thinking it will please him or her and find out the person did not care for your gift at all. The same thing is true with God: Often men think what they do pleases God when in fact God has never indicated in His Word that we are to do such things. Remember: **"There is a way which seemeth right**

**unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death"** (Pro. 14:12). Someone may say something like this: 'I feel in my heart that I am pleasing God when I worship in this way, etc.,' but God's Word says, **"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"** (Jer. 17:9). Who would dare trust the feelings of their own heart in the light of this verse?

There are two attitudes we can take regarding obedience to the Bible. We can say something like this: If the Bible does not specifically forbid a thing, we are free to do it. Or we can say that we are to be obedient to the Bible and go no farther than God tells us to do. Consider the following illustration. A young mother is busily preparing a meal for surprise dinner guests. She has several things cooking, but finds herself missing some ingredients needed to prepare her best dessert. So she sends her 10 year old boy to the neighborhood store with the following instructions: 'Go straight to the store and buy a bag of sugar and a package of cocoa.' He is told that his mother needs these things in order to prepare for the special meal. Let us say that he buys sugar and cocoa, and also a coke and candy bar, and stops to play with friends in a park on the way home. He enjoys playing so much he remains in the park a long time. While he was not specifically forbidden to buy coke and candy, nor was he forbidden to stop and play in the park, he was told to do very specific things. He did not please his mother by coming home too late for her to get the dessert made. Had he done no more than his mother had told him to do, she would have been pleased. The principle is that obedience to a command means doing what is commanded and nothing else than what was commanded. So it is with the Bible. We are to do what God has instructed us to do. We are not to add our own ideas or seek to please ourselves in our worship and service to God. We are to seek to please Him.

What are some innovations that men have brought into modern religion by which they think to please God? Our list can include, but is not limited to, "mourners benches" or "altars," giving



"invitations" for people to come down front and pray "the sinner's prayer," sprinkling babies or children and calling it "baptism," "dedication" of babies, buildings, pews, stained glass windows, robes, etc., the celebration of pagan holidays like Lent, Easter and Christmas, etc. The list could be larger, but these are things that God never commanded to be done in His congregations. Neither do we find Christ or His apostles doing these things in their worship. They fall into the category of buying a coke and candy and stopping in the park to play with friends. Doing such things was never commanded in the Bible! They may seem good in the eyes of the people doing them, but consider Isaiah 55:8, 9: **"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."** In the light of this last quotation, how dare we human beings think we are qualified to decide what will please God rather than simply doing what He told us to do?

Paul made this position clear in I Thessalonians 4:1, 2 where he wrote: **"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."** Paul and his co-workers had personally taught the people in Christ's congregation in Thessalonica how they were to walk and **"to please God."** Here he exhorts them to abound more and more in obedience to what they had been taught. He states that they knew the commandments they had been given – commandments that came **"by the Lord Jesus"** though uttered by Paul and those with him. These commandments have been preserved for us in the Bible. Followers of the Lamb are not to obey the voice of another whether it be pastor, deacons, pope, cardinals, convention, or church or associational dictators. **"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me"** (John 10:27). Either they do, or they do not. Jesus said they do! Whose commandments do you follow? Do you follow the commandments of God in the Bible, or is yours a home-made religion? Do you follow the Bible, or do you go farther and follow men's ideas in your worship?



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