

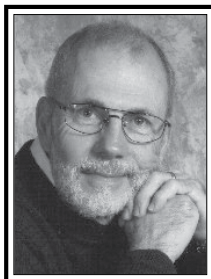
The Berea Baptist Banner

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

The Humanity of Christ

By James L. Reynolds
of Cornersville, Tennessee

"And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever. And he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them. When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: That it might be



fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.

Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side. And a certain scribe came, and said unto

◊ (Continued on page 166)

An Open Letter for Sinners Searching for Peace

By Matthew Stepp
of Wayne, West Virginia

"Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:14-15). Dear reader, greetings in the name of Jesus Christ the Saviour of the world!



I have pondered your position and have been praying that the Holy Spirit will give me the right words to answer your questions.

I can do no better than to tell you what Paul and Silas told their jailor in Acts 16:27-32, "And the keeper of

◊ (Continued on page 173)

The Fall and Ruin of Mankind

By Paul Stepp
of Indore, West Virginia

"For Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen: because their tongue and their doings are against the LORD, to provoke the eyes of his glory" (Isa. 3:8).

I have a simple message for us all. This is a message that revolves around the first of the doctrines of grace, as they are most often described for us – "total depravity." I think our text verse – though it is originally directed towards



the fallen nation of Judah – is something we can take and apply to all of mankind. What a terrible condition Judah was in!

Well, we might also say, "What a terrible condition all of mankind is in!" Mankind is fallen from the original condition in which we were created. Mankind is ruined,

◊ (Continued on page 174)

The Whole Truth

Milburn Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:11-13).

Many churchgoers live in open



rebellion to the moral teachings of the Bible, yet they expect to be saved when the roll is called up yonder. Most of these people

joined the church in what is called an old-time meeting. They experienced some emotional excitement as they prayed through on the mourner's bench

◊ (Continued on page 171)

Every generation needs regeneration.
None needs it more than the present.

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

August 5, 2014
Volume XXXIV, Number 8
Whole Number 421

Editor: Christopher Cockrell

Staff: Sheron Cockrell, Marsha Kiser, Virginia Cockrell

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

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

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

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATES - U.S.

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATES - FOREIGN One Year \$45

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

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

CHURCH PHONE: 1-662-282-7794.

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

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

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him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead. And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him. And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep. And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm. But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him" (Matt. 8:14-27)!

I would like to focus our attention on a question which is found in verse 27 of this portion of Scripture which we just read.

"But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him" (Matt. 8:27)!

In Mark 4:41 and Luke 8:25, as well as in Matthew 8:27 which we just read, the King James Version reads identical in all three instances with the phrase, **"What manner of man is this?"**

"And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him" (Mark 4:41)?

"And he said unto them, Where is your faith? And they being afraid wondered, saying

one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him" (Luke 8:25).

There are at least two points for consideration which we can glean from the above Scripture. First, **"What manner of man is this"** or 'what type of man is this' is the question which the disciples asked and it is certainly a point for consideration. Then from that question we get a second point for consideration which will be our topic for this brief article. To the child of God it should be a source of joy that the Scriptures are here declaring, as they do elsewhere, that the Lord Jesus was indeed a man, that He had a human nature.

Before proceeding any further I must, for clarity's sake, emphatically declare unto you that when I say that the Lord Jesus Christ had a human nature I am also declaring that He was totally exempt from the sin nature that every mortal is born with!

Because of space constraints I will not consider the point which the question asks, **"What manner of man is this?"** or what type of man is this. It is my plan at this time to address that point in a future article.

To begin this brief article I declare unto you that the individual to whom this question pertained, that is the Lord Jesus Christ, was indeed a man, that He did definitely have a human nature.

Perhaps there are those who, with a misinformed sense of respect or honor, will deny that the Lord Jesus was indeed a man.

Many years ago while in a conversation with a young man who had just recently made a profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as his Savior and Redeemer I used the word "man"

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(in its proper Biblical context) with reference to our dear Lord. He was quick to point out to me that the Lord Jesus is God. I rejoiced that he had been divinely enabled to see that blessed fact, a Scriptural fact which so many of the cults deny. Yet, this young man mistakenly believed that being God somehow prohibited or excluded the Lord Jesus from also being a man.

The deity of the Lord Jesus Christ is a blessed and wondrous doctrine which is taught throughout the inspired Scriptures. It brings great joy and comfort to those who have been redeemed by His sinless blood to mediate upon the fact that their Lord is also their God. This Scriptural fact was declared by Thomas in John 20:28 after seeing the risen Savior.

“And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God” (John 20:28).

However, it is not the deity but the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ that I wish to take note of in this brief study.

I would like to take a few minutes and show by the inspired Scriptures that although He is indeed God He was also indeed very much a man.

As with many things declared unto us in the Bible it is likewise true of this great fact of our Lord possessing two distinct natures, a human nature and a divine nature, that our inability to fully understand these deep things of God in no wise negate their validity.

The theological term which is used to denote the union of our Lord's human nature and His divine nature is “the hypostatic union.”

Like many of our English words

the English word hypostasis (from which hypostatic is derived) comes from a Greek word. In this case it is the Greek word υποστασις (hupostasis). There are only five instances of some form of this word being used in the New Testament. Those various grammatical forms were translated in the King James Version as “**confidence**” twice, “**confident**” once, “**substance**” once, and “**person**” once. A notable instance of a grammatical form of this Greek word υποστασις (hupostasis) is found in Hebrews 1:3.

“Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Heb. 1:3).

Funk & Wagnalls defines the term hypostatic in this theological context as meaning: “Of, pertaining to, or constituting a distinct personality or substance: distinctly personal.”

What this simply means is that the Lord Jesus was distinctly human and distinctly God. There was no blending of the two natures of our dear Lord. Both of His perfect natures were evident as He walked upon the earth which He created.

We can see a type or a picture of those two distinct natures in many of the furnishings of the Old Testament tabernacle, which furnishings were pictures or types of the Lord Jesus Christ. One of those furnishing which we will briefly comment on is the “**ark of the covenant.**”

“And they shall make an ark of shittim wood: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof. And thou

shalt overlay it with pure gold, within and without shalt thou overlay it, and shalt make upon it a crown of gold round about” (Ex. 25:10-11).

The ark or chest was made from shittim or acacia wood, which is a very close grained and incorruptible wood. The ark was overlaid with pure gold, inside and outside.

In his book, *The Priesthood, The Tabernacle, And The Offerings* I. M. Haldeman comments on the typology of the ark.

“The ark was a perfect symbol of our Lord Jesus Christ as the enthronement of God in humanity. The incorruptible wood speaks of him as the sinless one, sinless in conception, sinless in life and character. The pure gold above the wood - inside and outside - speaks of that nature which was above His humanity and yet resided in it - His Deity. The ark with its two materials and yet, the one chest, repeats the continuous testimony, the two natures and the one indivisible personality of our Lord.”

The ark, which was a picture of Christ, was made from these two distinct materials. Neither of those materials ever lost their distinct nature or blended with the other. So it is that our Lord has two distinct natures yet He is but one person.

William Shedd comments on the two natures but one personality of our Lord in his *Shedd's Dogmatic Theology*.

“That the two natures constitute only one person, is also proved by the fact that in Scripture human attributes are ascribed to the person designated by a divine title; and divine attributes

are ascribed to the person as designated by a human title. This interchange of titles and of attributes in respect to one and the same person proves that there are not two different persons, each having its own particular nature and attributes, but only one person having two natures and two classes of attributes in common.”

Though our Lord had two distinct natures, human and divine, it is His humanity which I wish to turn our attention to in this brief article.

If there were no Scriptures which declared the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ by precept (although there are indeed many) there is certainly one Scripture which declares it by clear and plain words.

Speaking of the meditorial position of the Lord Jesus Christ the Apostle Paul declared unto the young preacher Timothy the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

“For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (I Tim. 2:5).

So then let us now continue in the Scriptural declaration that the Lord Jesus Christ was indeed a man, that He had a human nature. We will attempt to show, certainly being successful only by the Spirit's enablement, that many of the things revealed to us in the Bible about Christ are only applicable unto a human.

1.) First, we maintain unto you that the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ declares that He was a man, that He had a human nature.

The first reference to the incarnation of God is given to us in Genesis 3:15, **“And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed**

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and her seed; He shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel."

When the fullness of time was come God sent His Son into the world in a human form.

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law ..." (Gal. 4:4).

The seed of the woman **"made under the law"** was a man, **"the man Christ Jesus."**

The angelic messenger appeared unto the young virgin named Mary and he declared that she would **"bring forth a Son"** who was to be conceived of the Holy Spirit. In time she did indeed give birth to that Son, she did indeed call His name Jesus as she was instructed by the angel and He did indeed save His people from their sins, all of which was declared of Him by that angel.

Though conceived by supernatural means our Lord was **"brought forth"** by the virgin Mary just as any other human was. She **"brought forth"** her son, she gave birth to Him. He was delivered in the same manner that billions of other children have been brought forth. Discounting any surgical procedures, modern or ancient, our Lord was born just the same way every other human has been or shall ever be born. Therefore we conclude that our Lord had a human nature.

Mary was the mother of the human nature of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Catholics greatly err, and that blasphemously so, when they say that Mary is the mother of God. She is the mother of the human nature of the God Man but she is not the mother of God, for God has neither mother nor father.

2.) Secondly, I proclaim unto you that the maturing of the Lord Jesus Christ declares that He was a man, that He had a human nature.

Shortly after the Lord Jesus Christ was born He was visited by a group of shepherds who had been given an angelic announcement of His birth.

"And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger" (Luke 2:12).

"And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger" (Luke 2:16).

The Greek word here for **"babe"** is βρεφος (brephos) and it means "an infant" or "a babe."

Sometime later, probably about two years or so, the Lord was visited by a group of μαγοι (magoi) or wise men who had seen a star in the East guiding them unto Him.

"When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh" (Matt. 2:10-11).

They found a "young, or little child," Greek παιδιον (paidion), in the house, not a babe in a manger as is so often depicted by the religious world.

When He was twelve years old our Lord went into the temple to hear the doctors and to question them. When Mary had searched for Him and found Him there in the temple He told her that He must be about His Father's business. He then returned to Nazareth with them and was subject unto them as any child ought to be unto their parents, and He grew and He matured.

"And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man" (Luke 2:52).

Some form of Greek word here translated **"stature,"** ηλικια (helikia) is found eight times in the New Testament. It means maturity (in years or in size) being translated as **"age"** three times and as **"stature"** five times in the King James Version.

When He was about thirty years old our Lord began His public ministry after being baptized by John the Baptist.

So we see that the Lord Jesus Christ matured from a babe, to a young child, to a young man, and then to an adult. In His humanity the Lord Jesus aged. As God He is the ancient of days, He is ageless, He has always existed, but as **"the man Christ Jesus"** He was born, He matured and He aged.

We can also greatly rejoice that for the benefit of His eternally beloved people He died!

3.) Thirdly, we affirm unto you that the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ is declared by the Scriptural record of His becoming physically tired or weary.

While traveling from Judaea into Galilee the Lord traveled through Samaria. Because of that journey He became physically tired and He stopped for a rest.

"Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour" (John 4:6).

The Lord Jesus also took rest in sleep as it is the nature of humans to do.

"And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that

we perish" (Mark 4:37-38)?

Therefore I declare unto you that because He became tired, because He rested and because He slept the Lord Jesus had a human nature. A divine nature does not get tired and does not require sleep.

4.) Fourthly, I submit unto you that the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ is declared by the Scriptural record of His becoming hungry.

After His baptism the Lord was forty days in the wilderness in communion with the Father prior to beginning His ministry of seeking out His sheep, building His church, and preaching the gospel. During those forty days He fasted, and as a consequence of that fasting He was hungry.

"And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered" (Matt. 4:2). As a man the Lord Jesus Christ ate and drank.

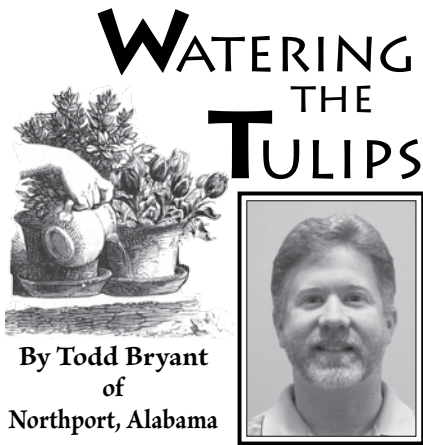
The account of the barren fig tree being cursed begins with the proclamation that the Lord was hungry.

"And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry: And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet" (Mark 11:12-13).

After His resurrection He ate in the presence of the apostles to demonstrate that He was not a spirit but that He was their resurrected Lord.

"And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them" (Luke 24:40-

♦ (Continued on page 169)



Encouragement in Witnessing

“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out” (John 6:37).

What encouragement do we really have in spreading the Gospel? Is there any? We have been sent forth into a world full of depraved, wicked sinners. Is there a possibility that nobody will ever be saved? Does the preaching of the Gospel just make it possible for people to be saved? Or, is there more? We want to consider some of these questions in today's lesson.

Jesus' words here are plain and powerful. The Father has given Him a people. Incidentally, these are those whom He was sent to save (Matthew 1:21). Every one of these without exception **“shall come”** to Him. His words here leave no possibility of one of these not coming. Every one that comes to Him by faith will not be cast out. How is that for encouragement?

Is it any wonder that God said through Isaiah, **“So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it”** (Isa. 55:11). When we take the Gospel into the world, the effects are not dependent on

the fickle will of man (John 1:13). The effects are not dependent on our ability to frame the sentences in a way that is attracting to people. In fact, the things of God are not naturally attractive to man (I Cor. 2:14). When we share the message of Jesus with people, the increase is given by God's power alone – not ours (I Cor. 3:6).

Though a man may boast of how many people he has saved throughout his ministry, his boasting is unwarranted. It is God that saves (Jonah 2:9). The messenger cannot change the nature of those he delivers the message to. And naturally, those receiving the message are at **“enmity against God”** (Rom. 8:7). Only God can open a heart and give a depraved sinner a desire to come to Christ (Acts 16:14).

Paul knew something of this encouragement when the Lord told him, **“Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city”** (Acts 18:9-10). Though these people were yet in unbelief, God told Paul to preach because He was going to save many in the city. We can be sure that Paul had a similar experience as we read about in Acts 13:48, **“And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.”**

Child of God, do not be afraid to share the Gospel with those you come in contact with. Be like Paul when he said, **“I am ready to preach the gospel...”** (Rom. 1:15). Why was he ready? Simply, he knew God was mighty to save in spite of him.



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43).

5.) Fifthly, we propose unto you that the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ is declared by His death.

As our sovereign Lord and Savior was pleased to take upon Himself the human nature of life through His natural birth He was also pleased to lay down that life as a ransom for His eternally beloved people through His cruel and unnatural death.

The death of the Lord Jesus Christ is prophesied in many places in the Old Testament Scriptures and each of those prophetic Scriptures were fully and perfectly fulfilled in the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, which death is also recorded for us in the New Testament Scriptures.

The Holy Spirit has recorded for us in the New Testament several detailed accounts of the death of the Lord Jesus.

When we read of how the religious leaders of Israel schemed for almost three years in order to bring to pass their wicked designs on the Lord Jesus and of how cruelly they did pursue those designs we are, or certainly should be, appalled. The Lord Jesus did not die from any illness, for He was in perfect health. He was brutally murdered by those who professed to be followers of God, but who in fact had a record of killing God's prophets.

Speaking to the Thessalonians in reference to those religious Jews the Apostle Paul declares that they had also killed their own prophets.

Those Jews claimed to be followers of God but Paul refutes that claim and further says that their actions which they boasted of as being in God's service were in fact not pleasing to God.

“Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets,

and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men” (I Thess. 2:15).

These Jews were totally responsible for their sinful and wicked actions against the Lord Jesus. However, those actions were fully within the scope of God's **“determinate counsel and foreknowledge.”**

“Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain” (Acts 2:23).

After paying Judas to betray the Lord those Jews apprehended Him under the darkness of night and sought false witnesses against Him in an effort to legitimize their sinful actions. Finding no two false witnesses whose lies agreed they continued on in their depraved conduct and sought permission and approval from the Roman political leaders to kill the Lord Jesus. Pilate knew that it was envy which motivated them but he spinelessly succumbed to their evil desires and ordered the Lord to be killed in a most cruel, barbaric, and painful manner.

Now while it is true that the Romans and Jews were guilty, accountable, and responsible for the death of the Lord Jesus Christ I must hasten to point out that it was not done in opposition to the eternal will and decree of the Holy Trinity. Nor was it an action that was in anywise not preventable if the Lord Jesus had wanted to prevent it.

“As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd. Therefore doth my Father love me, because

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I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (John 10:15-18).

It is a clearly taught Scriptural fact that the Lord Jesus died. What a tremendous joy it is for us to know that the reason He died was for the full payment of our otherwise un-payable sin debt, a debt we owed from birth to the thrice holy God.

The Scriptures declare that the Lord Jesus died, that He was buried, and that He was raised from the dead.

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (I Cor. 15:3-4).

There can be no resurrection from the dead if one has not died.

The Scriptures clearly and plainly teach that after suffering the full wrath of the Father which was due unto each of His eternally loved children the Lord Jesus dismissed His spirit and that He died. Then at the appointed time He rose from the dead to openly proclaim His victory over Satan and over death.

"And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Col. 2:15).

In His declaration that He has power to lay down His life and also power to take it up the Lord Jesus was asserting His divinity.

He was raised from the dead

and it was God Who raised Him. At least eight times it is declared in the inspired Scriptures that God raised the Lord Jesus from the dead. I note but three of those times.

"But God raised Him from the dead" (Acts 13:30).

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. 10:9).

"Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;)" (Gal. 1:1).

Please be assured that I am in no wise suggesting that because of the physical limitations of His human body that Christ was not divine. But I am saying that He had a human nature and that it was distinct and separate from His divine nature.

Both of those natures are perfectly joined together in **"the man Christ Jesus."**

He is indeed the God Christ Jesus and He is also **"the man Christ Jesus."**

In closing we would like to take note of a few practical considerations that should give the child of God comfort in knowing that their Lord and Savior is both God and man.

As a man the Lord Jesus Christ knows what it is to be sorrowful. He was sorrowful for others but never for Himself.

In Isaiah 53:3 we are given a divine prophetic statement concerning the Lord Jesus, **"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not."**

The grief of Lazarus' sisters and

those with her caused the Lord to be sorrowful.

"Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled, And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept" (John 11:32-35).

As a man the Lord Jesus Christ knows what it is to be tempted.

"And Jesus being full of the Holy Spirit returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered" (Luke 4:1-2).

As the Lord was preparing for the work which the Father had sent Him to do Satan tempted Him in a futile effort to hinder or to defeat that work. At the end of the forty days Satan showed himself openly in an attempt to sway our sinless Lord from His mission of redemption. Our Lord rebutted each outward temptation with a proclamation of what God's inspired Word taught on the subject of that temptation.

Should we not follow our Lord's perfect example and flee to the Word of God when we are tempted?

Our Lord was tempted in all of the same temptations in which we are tempted yet He never surrendered to any of those temptations.

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb.

4:15).

What a wondrous and glorious thought that we have a Savior who is fully acquainted with our frailties and Who cares so much for us that He took upon Himself our human nature.

He lived that perfect life and then He laid His life down for our sins.

He then rose from the dead for our justification and now is seated at the right hand of God where He is making intercession for us.

Well did the hymn writer P. P. Bliss pen those words about our Lord and Saviour in the hymn, *Hallelujah! What a Saviour!*

Man of sorrows what a name -

For the Son of God who came,

Ruined sinners to reclaim -

Hallelujah what a Saviour!

Bearing shame and scoffing rude -

In my place condemned He stood,

Sealed my pardon with His Blood -

Hallelujah what a Saviour!

Guilty vile and helpless we -

Spotless Lamb of God was He,

Full atonement can it be -

Hallelujah what a Saviour!

Lifted up was He to die -

It is finished was His cry,

Now in heaven exalted high -

Hallelujah what a Saviour!

When He comes our glorious King -

All His ransomed home to bring

Then a new this song we'll sing -

Hallelujah what a Saviour!

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (I Cor. 15:3-4).

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (I Tim. 2:5).



The Whole Truth

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because of a graveyard tale told by a famous evangelist. Many of these people have not been to church since they were baptized. They live as they did before uniting with the church. They drink, smoke, curse, lie, cheat, and steal like those who make no profession of faith. They seem to be religious, but they are really not saved. They do not attend church unless someone dies or gets married. They never pray or read the Bible. Such persons have never been born again!

Some Baptists tell sinners to just believe and everything is all right. They say, "Just let Jesus come into your heart and be saved forever. It does not matter how you live or what church you belong to." To tell the lost sinner such without additional instructions is to preach a lie. It is dangerous to preach a lie. Such unscriptural practices have given critics a perfect right to accuse Baptists of preaching a dangerous gospel. Sad to say, this accusation is not without some foundation, for the Arminian evangelism of our day practiced by some Baptists has produced a great religious body which has a name to live but is dead.

So many ministers seem so intensely anxious to make everything so easy and simple for the sinner that their preaching becomes extremely one-sided. The gospel the average person hears nowadays is nothing more than a carnal, earthly, worldly gospel which offers false peace. The gospel preached in the average pulpit is not a delivering gospel. It leaves people in the world to live instead of changing them into new creatures. It lulls the conscience and leaves the

soul in its old habits and old ways of living. It fixes it so there is no difference between the church and the world. Everywhere you can see the great number who make professions under such preaching and who live low as a consequence.

In this message I want to present the whole counsel of God. I desire to set forth salvation by the free and sovereign grace of God. Then I further seek to present the kind of life a child of grace lives.

SALVATION BY GRACE

Titus 2:11 declares: "**For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.**" How wonderful is the word salvation in the ears of a condemned sinner! Salvation is a miraculous work performed by the Holy Spirit. It is an inward work. It is God speaking into existence a new creation. It is passing from spiritual death to spiritual life, from darkness to light. It is being born again.

When we are saved Christ rescues our soul from Hell. He plucks us as a brand out of the burning. He takes us out of the miry clay of condemnation and out of the pit of our sins. He sets our feet upon the Rock of Ages and establishes our going. He puts a new song of prayer and praise in our mouths (Ps. 40). He sends forth His Holy Spirit to dwell in our hearts and to teach us all things. He raises us up and causes us to sit in heavenly places.

The man who has not come to see salvation to be wholly by the free grace of God is a stranger to the Holy Writ. Our text says the grace of God brings salvation. It does not offer it to men upon certain conditions as Arminians teach. The sovereign grace of God brings salvation from sin and wrath. The free favor and the good will of God, not any merit

or desert in the creature, gives deliverance from death and Hell. The gospel of grace is preached unto all nations for the obedience of the faith (Rom. 16:25-26).

Ephesians 2:5 says: "**. . . by grace ye are saved.**" Peter said in Acts 15:11: "**But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus we shall be saved, even as they.**" Salvation is by grace that it might be by faith. It is of grace that it might not be of works.

The Bible is plain. Men are saved by grace separate and apart from human merit. We often hear the expression "grace plus nothing." This is true if you understand it is only to apply to the matter of salvation. But the whole sphere of the Christian life and walk are not included under this description. The grace of God that brings salvation hath appeared indeed, but that grace certainly is not grace plus nothing. Instead, it is grace teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.

Some say that every child of God is under the most sacred obligation to live a righteous life. It is said that he ought to exert himself to live the best life possible in the flesh, but it is added that if he does not live a righteous life he will be saved by grace anyway. It is this misinterpretation of salvation by grace which constitutes the dangerous gospel.

THE GREAT CHANGE WHICH SALVATION MAKES

The Bible expressly teaches that a child of grace will live a righteous life. II Corinthians 5:14-17 says: "**For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live**



Quotes from Brother Ritechus N. Dignation

by Joseph Harris

Unforgiveness hinders, hurts and halts the Spirit of God moving among His people and has caused many a split in families and churches. Brethern, these things ought not to be. When the Devil tells you the other person should forgive, you just ignore the father of lies, forgive, forget, then keep on walkin' and don't look back.

unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. . . Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. . .

Those who partake of the life of Christ do not live unto themselves. Those saved by grace "**live. . . unto him which died for them, and rose again.**" Christ died that they who share with Him the new life may cease living to themselves. Their love for their Redeemer constrains them to live a Christian life.

The child of grace is not a victim of self-love, for the old life of sin passes away. Grace makes a great change in the soul, so great a change that the believer is "**a new creation.**" Regenerating grace makes a new world in the soul. The recipient of saving grace can say with Paul: "**For me to live is Christ**" (Phil. 1:21). He can truly say: "**I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of**

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God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20). The child of grace is "always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in" his body (II Cor. 4:10).

To the Corinthians Paul wrote: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." Then after speaking these plain words, he went on to say about the Corinthians: "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (I Cor. 6:8, 9-11). Some of the Corinthians before their conversion were adulterers, thieves, drunkards, and revilers. Paul said: "And such were some of you..." But this was not true of the Corinthians when Paul spoke, for they had been saved by God's grace and washed in the blood of Christ. These were no longer adulterers, thieves, drunkards and revilers!

But someone will say I know a man saved by grace who is a drunkard and adulterer! You may know of such a church member in this permissive age, but you do not know of a man saved by grace who habitually drinks and commits adultery! Paul said such people had never been washed in the blood of Christ. They are, according to Paul's own testimony, deceived persons who

will miss Heaven as far as Hell is from Heaven!

KEEPS THE COMMANDMENTS

I read in I John 2:3-4: "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." Those who know the God of all grace do not live a life of disgrace. There is within them a desire to keep the Lord's commandments and there is some degree of action accordingly. The child of grace does not disregard the spiritual duties which Christ imposes upon His disciples. The professed disciple who lives in open rebellion to Christ's commands is living a lie. In chapter 3, verse 22, John in positive language says: "We keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight."

DOES RIGHTEOUS DEEDS

I John 3:6 tells us that those saved by grace do not make a practice of sinning: "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him." A man saved by grace does not belong to the sin sphere. Sin is not the law of his life: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil..." (I John 3:9-10). This is not the language of sinless perfection, but it is language which indicates a man saved by grace does not live a wicked, sinful life. The general course and tenor of a redeemed man's life is toward righteousness.

WHAT THE GRACE OF GOD TEACHES US

Jude warned centuries ago of



ungodly men who "turn the grace of God into lasciviousness." They taught that as men were saved by grace, and not by works, they could continue to gratify their evil desires and yet be saved by grace.

The Apostle Paul is the great expounder of the doctrine of grace. All other Bible writers put together did not use the word grace half as many times as he did. But Paul never did teach that a man could believe in Christ for salvation, then go on living an unrighteous life, and finally be saved by grace. He ably disputes this idea in Romans 6:1-2: "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" The grace of God does not relieve any man of

the necessity of living right. The truth is that it is the grace of God which saves a man which causes him to live right. If one who professes to know Christ does not live right, he is a stranger to the grace of God.

According to my text, the grace of God teaches us three things. First, it teaches us to abandon sin. It causes us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. The saving grace of God teaches us to "put off the old man with his deeds" (Col. 3:9), to crucify "the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal. 5:24), to reckon "yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin" (Rom. 6:11), to not let sin "have dominion over you" (Rom. 6:14), to mortify the members of our body (Col. 3:5), to "make not

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provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof" (Rom. 13:14), and to turn away our eyes from beholding vanity (Ps. 119:37). God's grace teaches us to put off anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communications and to keep our body in subjection.

The grace of God which brings salvation teaches us to make a conscience of that which is good. Verse 12 of Titus 2 says: **"To live soberly, righteously, and godly."** The child of grace refrains from evil that he might perform good works. We are commanded in Romans 12:9: **"Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good."**

Nearly all the great texts of salvation by grace through faith are accompanied by a definite insistence upon good works which only a new creature in Christ can produce. Ephesians 2:8-9 is followed by these words in verse 10: **"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."** Titus 3:5-7 is followed by verse 8 which reads: **"This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works."** I would sooner expect to see the Devil in Heaven than a man who is saved by grace and has no good works! A man is not saved by good works, but those who have been saved by grace are careful to maintain good works!

The grace that saves us will teach us to love, fear and obey God, to depend upon Him, to devote ourselves to Him, to observe all those religious duties

He has appointed, to pray to Him, to praise Him, to meditate on His Word, to attend public worship, to be baptized and to observe the Lord's Supper. The saving grace of God teaches and requires such deportment. It is obligating and constraining. It constrains us to love God and live for Him, to lose our life for the gospel's sake, to be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, to put on the Lord Jesus Christ, to do all for the glory of God, to put the kingdom first, to seek the salvation of the lost, to make a fair show in the flesh, to be blameless and harmless the sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, to go on to perfection, to keep His commandments. If the grace of God does not cause a person to do these things, then grace would be disgrace!

Do not misunderstand me. These things are performed by those who are saved by God's grace. It is worse than foolish to prescribe all these good works to the alien sinner as a means of being saved by grace. To do this is like prescribing actions to a person unborn as the means of being born. Good works are seen in the lives of those who are already saved by grace. These good works are the evidence of spiritual life, not the causes of it.

The grace of God teaches us to look for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Verse 13 of the text says: **"Looking for the blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."** Those saved by grace are living in expectation of seeing Christ at any moment in the clouds of Heaven. The man who does not daily look for the Redeemer's return knows little about God's grace.

I'm not what I want to be. I'm

not what I'm goin' to be, but I thank God I'm not what I was before He saved me by free grace.



Searching for Peace

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the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house."

Beloved reader, you are not alone in your sin. Each and every one of us are descended from Adam and Eve and are under the condemnation of judgment, because each of us have sinned, just like our parents. **"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes"** (Rom. 3:10-12, 16-18).

Dear sinner, we ALL need a Saviour to take our place in the everlasting judgment of Hell. **"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him"** (I John 4:9). Jesus Christ then, is the only hope we have of finding

peace.

If you read very many of those articles in the *Berea Baptist Banner*, then you will know that it is the work of the Holy Spirit of God to convict lost men of their sins. And if He has gone beyond just making you feel bad about your sins, to the point of making your heart burdened with your sin (singular, not plural) of being a rejector of God, then you have come to the point the Philippian jailor was brought unto: **"Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"** And you have a direct instruction from the Scripture, repent of your sins and believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that His work on the cross of Calvary is sufficient to rescue you from the damnation of your sin penalty.

What we can not do- God can do! And God alone, can do. Trust Him and His Word! Read it! Meditate upon it! Do not let go of it! **"And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works"** (II Tim. 3:15-17).

Pastor Matthew Stepp
Big Creek Baptist Church

"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters" (Rev. 14:6-7).



The Fall and Ruin

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and no longer resembles that wonderful, beautiful, and righteous condition in which we were created.

Today, we will discuss “the fall and ruin of mankind.” We will first consider the glorious position of man, as he was first created by God. Then, we will notice the sin of Adam in the Garden of Eden. And we will reflect on the effects of Adam’s sin, and how that all of mankind is plunged into sin and depravity because of Adam’s fall. Finally, we will contemplate the current condition of the race of mankind. As we go through this sermon today, I want you to ask yourself some questions. “Is mankind really all right? Can mankind save itself? Is mankind ever going to get better than it is now, or improve upon its past? Is there hope or good news to be found from within the ranks of mankind’s best scholars, teachers, and policymakers?”

THE ORIGINAL PERFECT CONDITION OF MANKIND

In the beginning, Adam was made perfect and upright. **“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them”** (Gen. 1:26-27). There was no sin in mankind, as he was created by God. There was no flaw in man, as he was made **“in the image of God.”** **“And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the**

morning were the sixth day” (Gen. 1:31). Man was perfect and good, because he was made by God.

The Bible teaches us that God is not the author of sin. It is, therefore, ludicrous to imagine that God made man a sinner. Rather, man was made perfect and upright, and man is responsible for the sin which he would later commit.

There is a passage in the book of Isaiah, which some folks may use to (incorrectly) teach that God made Adam with inherent sin; or, that God made man with a built-in propensity to do evil. **“I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things”** (Isa. 45:5-7). Since this passage tells us that God did **“create evil,”** some will imagine that God created Satan and the fallen angels as evil entities; and, that God created Adam with an evil taint in him that must inevitably surface. However, what the Lord is really claiming in this passage of Scripture, is that He is sovereign, and He is the Creator of all that is. Though He is not responsible for the evil turn that Satan and the fallen angels took; and, though He is not the instigator in the case of the sin that Adam committed; still, since God is the creator of these (and all) beings, He is, ultimately, the creator of these who have turned to evil.

We could also say that God is the creator of evil based on the fact that He allows disasters, trials, and afflictions – both from

the natural and the human perspective – to afflict His creation. These times and conditions and situations that men perceive as evil, are all brought about by the hand of God; or, they are allowed by the permissive will of God.

Whatever understanding you may glean from the Scriptures, I think that you will find that it is safe to say that God is not the author of sin. Sin did not naturally occur in His creation. None of His creatures were created “sinful.” In particular, any sin that we find amongst men, is of, through, and by men. And yet, as the sovereign God of all creation, our God is certainly able to allow sin, as He sees fit; and, He is certainly able to pour out evil times on men as punishment of sin; and, He is thoroughly capable of making use of man’s sinful nature and sinful actions to further and accomplish His eternal purpose and will. John Calvin once said, “Undoubtedly the Lord is no representative of evil as such, but He does make use of evil so that it may bring forth good.”

Man was made perfect and upright. **“Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions”** (Eccl. 7:29). However, the condition of mankind after Adam’s sin – indeed, the condition of mankind today – is far from the condition of Adam and Eve, when God first placed them in the Garden of Eden.

So, we say that God made man perfect, and any failure or flaw – even the coming ruin and fall of mankind, is not the fault of God, but the fault of man. And this leads us to our next point.

ADAM’S SIN

Though Adam was made perfect, he soon fell from his sinless perfection. We have an account of Adam’s fall in the Book of Gene-

sis. First, Adam was told what he could do, and what he could not do. The Lord gave Him duties and guidelines to live by. **“And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die”** (Gen. 2:15-17). God even specifically warned Adam against certain behavior – He instructed him to refrain from eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

However, as Moses records for us in the next chapter, we find that Adam did eat of this forbidden tree, and He did sin and fall from his perfect condition: **“And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons”** (Gen. 3:6-7). Adam had sinned. He had eaten of the forbidden fruit. He now had knowledge of good and evil. He now had partaken of sin and wickedness and was well-acquainted with the destructive powers of sin and destruction.

As a result of his actions, Adam was now in a fallen and corrupt state, and punishment would be applied, and justice must be answered. So, initially, his peaceful and perfect condition is marred and ruined; he is cast out of the

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The Fall and Ruin

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Garden of Eden, and the curse of sin is brought into the world. The Lord speaks of these things this way: **“Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return”** (Gen. 3:16-19). And then, at the end of this same chapter, we read, **“And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life”** (Gen. 3:22-24).

It is a matter of fact, that Adam was created perfect, but not immutable. He was capable of change, and he did change. Since he was created perfect, any change that took place in him, must be for the worse. Sadly, he

did change – he did sin, and he did fall from perfection.

THE INHERITANCE OF SIN

The Scriptures reveal to us, that once Adam had sinned, he died spiritually. This involved not only Adam's fate, but also the fate of his descendants. This spiritual death that had afflicted him – this fallen nature that he had obtained – was something that he would pass on to his descendants. **“And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD. And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him. And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him”** (Gen. 4:1-8).

Since Adam's children were born in a fallen condition, there was no change required in them, so that they might sin. They were born sinners. Therefore, they would commit sin, and we find in the 4th chapter of Genesis that Cain even slew his own brother.

Of course, this act of fratricide took place after Cain had disobeyed God, and after Cain had offered an unacceptable sacrifice unto God, and after Cain had exhibited jealousy towards his brother who had offered an acceptable sacrifice unto God. Sin was already rampant, and mankind was only one generation removed from the Garden of Eden, and the perfect state of Adam's original existence!

A couple of chapters later we read these words: **“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”** (Gen. 6:5). Now, we find that sin has become so prevalent, that there is no good to find in men. And, in fact, God will now destroy the world of men, because of their sinfulness, and because of their evil behavior. Truly, the words of Solomon ring true: **“Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions”** (Eccl. 7:29).

History reveals to us, that man has existed in his fallen and sinful condition, ever since the fall of Adam in the Garden of Eden. It is apparent that sin and death entered into the world of mankind, through the sin and fall of Adam. It is also apparent that this is a humanly irreversible condition. **“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned... Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedi-**

ence of one shall many be made righteous” (Rom. 5:12, 18-19).

THE CONDITION OF MAN TODAY

So, what about the condition of mankind today? Are we better off than we were before? What, exactly, is our standing before God? What, exactly, is our nature and our condition as we walk the face of this earth that God has created? We are now, as a race of human beings, 6000 years removed from Adam. Are we any better than we were then? Is our generation any better or more upright than Cain's generation? Have we improved our lot? Or, is it possible, that we have even gotten worse and more sinful and more depraved than our fathers? **“This is an evil among all things that are done under the sun, that there is one event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead”** (Eccl. 9:3).

Without question, the current condition of mankind, is that we are fallen creatures; and, as a race of human beings, we are still yet ruined. There is **“madness”** in our hearts – which madness drives us to sin. As a race of human beings – when we compare our condition and our attributes and our characteristics with those of God; we are ruined. There is not any potential for good. There is not any merit that we can point to. There is not any worthiness of our own that we can proclaim. We stand before God – naturally speaking – as a race of men who are undone, unfit, and ready to be destroyed. We read in the book of Ephesians, **“And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked accord-**

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. Why do we insist on calling the assembly or congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ a church when it is not no such thing? - North Carolina

Tom Ross
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South Point, OH
45680

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Instead of using a double negative (not no such) I think the question would be better translated: "Why do we insist on calling the assembly or congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ a church when it is not? Or it could be rendered: "Why do we insist on calling the assembly or congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ a church when it is no such thing?"

The answer is relatively simple. The Greek word "ekklesia" is translated church 114 times in the King James Authorized Version. This has been the preferred English translation among Baptists since the 1600's with few exceptions. The KJAV is the only English translation of the Holy Scriptures that I read, memorize, and preach from. I realize that I am not a Greek or Hebrew scholar, and not nearly as enlightened or as educated as many of my brethren. As far as I know I have never disparaged or corrected the Bible I read and preach from. I am hoping and praying that the Word will correct me. I am also trying to instill a respect for the Word of God among the members of our church.

The word church simply

means a local, visible called out assembly of baptized believers responsible for carrying out the Great Commission of the Lord Jesus Christ. This has been the accepted definition of the word church among English speaking Baptists for centuries. In fact I can not recall ever seeing a Baptist church named First Immersion Assembly or Grace Immersion Congregation. Until the Lord instructs me otherwise I will continue to thankfully remain a member of Mt. Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church.

TOM ROSS

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"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). Christ built an "ekklesia," not a "kuriakon." A "kuriakon" is a Greek word for a building. A quick search in a Bible dictionary will start you on your way. Some digging around the rules that governed the writing of the KJV will expose that the translators of the KJV had an ulterior motive for this. We have been fed a lie and have swallowed hook line and sinker. Thank you, I remain student.

MIKE DEWITT

Matthew Stepp
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My online dictionary defines "church" as a noun; 1) A building for public, especially Christian worship. 2) The company of all Christians regarded as a spiritual body. 3) A specified Christian denomination. ie- The Presbyterian Church.

Easton's Bible Dictionary says that the word Church: "Derived probably from the Greek 'kuriakon' (ie, 'the Lord's house')." Also related is "kyriakos" which means "belonging to the Lord." From my studying and understanding of the English language, the word church has been part of the English lexicon since the 12th century. Meaning almost exclusively what it means today. 1) a CHURCH building. 2) a SPIRITUAL body. 3) a specified DENOMINATION.

So by the time the KJV was translated, the word was more than common, it was rooted in the English language. People KNEW what a church was (or thought that they did!) So when the 1611 translators took the task in hand, they superimposed this well-known ecclesiastical word wherever the Greek New Testament spoke of the Lord's House, the Body of Christ, namely whenever they saw the Greek word "ekklesia." (Also, in force was Instruction #3 of King James to the Translators!)

So what are we speaking about, when we say that we are "going to church"? Or say that I am a member of Big Creek Baptist Church? Or someone asks if you

are a church member? Actually, if you ask 10 people what a "church" is, you would likely get ten different answers! I guess that is part of the problem, is it not? Hence the questions...

Well, beloved reader, let us go to the Bible! It is always best to let the Bible define itself... So how does the Bible define this congregation of Jesus Christ? **"But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth"** (I Tim. 3:15). Simply put, the church is "God's house." "God's building." That is what "kuriakon" means, and it is what "ekklesia" ULTIMATELY means, as the Holy Spirit, HIMSELF defines it here! No, it is NOT a physical structure! That is the "sanctuary" where we mostly meet. The church is the PEOPLE! called-out by God to worship Him! And He promised, **"For where two or three are gathered (ASSEMBLED) together in my name, there am I in the midst of them"** (Matt. 18:20). That is what God has always constructed for His people- a "place" to put HIS Name where He would meet with them! The Lord's house!

In the days of the Exodus, He authorized the construction of the tabernacle. "God's house"! Where He would accept their worship and come to meet with them! Then David and Solomon built the temple at God's command! Again, "God's house!" A more permanent dwelling place for God on this earth! Behind the temple veil, He would be their God... Then finally, the LORD came and used the baptized material of John the Baptist to build "His Baptist house"- His Baptist church- His Baptist ekklesia/assembly! A

◊ (Continued on page 178)

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. In light of current news events, is it possible that the new pope in Rome could be the false prophet spoken of in the book of Revelation?
- Email

Roger Reed
20 Ledgewood Dr.
Mansfield, Ohio 44905



Missionary of
West Jefferson
Missionary Baptist
Mission
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43162

The answer that I gave in June's issue of the BBB forum I stand by and will answer it the same here.

I believe the current pope is the most evil and wickedest of all popes that have ever lived, and if you want to know how evil he is, look up and read about the Jesuits. They are about as evil as it gets; this pope is from the Jesuit order. Try this web site: http://one-evil.org/content/entities_organizations_jesuits.html

I do not want to assume anything here, but I believe that this pope is the "false prophet." But if he is not, then I believe he is going to play a major role in the Catholic Church when THE Antichrist comes on the scene.

I take in the fact that the "great whore" in Revelation 17:1; 19:2 is the Catholic Church. Therefore it would only make sense that the pope has a major role in the things yet to come. Who else would the people trust and follow in the Catholic Church? It has been said by some that we are living in the last days of the last days, I concur! With that said there can not be too many more days left.

Dear reader, Christ is coming back soon, that is what I believe. Whoever THE antichrist is, or the false prophet, is not my

concern. But what is my concern and should be the concern of every Christian is lost souls and fulfilling the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20 until He comes. God Bless!

ROGER REED

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Since I believe that the pope will be the ultimate false prophet who will promote the worship and agenda of the antichrist, it is definitely within the realm of possibility. I believe that the coming of Christ is imminent. After the Rapture of the saints the false prophet and the antichrist will rise to global religious prominence during the tribulation period. The false prophet will be used by Satan to unite religions behind the agenda of the antichrist. The popes have been trying to accomplish this to some degree over the past 50 years. The current pope is even reaching out to those of the Muslim faith, perhaps to prepare the religious masses for a one world religion under the dominion of the antichrist. This religion system will be short lived as Revelation 19:20 declares, **"And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them**

that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." How I long for this prophetic event to be fulfilled! It will mark the beginning of the 1,000 year reign of Christ on the earth with His saints (Rev. 20:1-6).

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I remember back when I was younger certain presidents, and popes, or leaders around the world were considered to possibly be the antichrist or false prophet. I will tell you I do not adhere to newspaper theology. I look to my Bible, and I look for Christ. I wait for my Savior to come "in" the clouds. **"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. 4:17). **"And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be"** (Rev. 22:12). That word quickly means at any moment, are you watching for "Him?"

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The Book of Revelation speaks of an unholy trinity that will be

revealed in the Great Tribulation (or Daniel's Seventieth Week). Satan, the Anti-Christ and his false prophet make up this deadly trio. Their end is seen following the Battle of Armageddon, **"And the beast (Anti-Christ) was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. ...And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years"** (Rev. 19:20, 20:1-2).

If (as I believe) our days are indeed the last of the last days, then walking the earth this day are two men that will be two of these figures found in prophecy in Revelation. (Satan also truly is walking this earth as a roaring lion- I Peter 5:8). Prophecy is very clear that IMMEDIATELY upon the outset of the Great Tribulation the Anti-Christ will be given authority to rule by ten powerful "kings." **"And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast"** (Rev. 17:12-13). A one-world government will be quickly set up, using the framework of both the United Nation and the European Union. **"And in the latter time...a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power**

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Forum #1

(Continued from page 176) ♦

fulfillment of prophecy, by the way if you will read John 4:20-24.

“For we are labourers together with God: ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man’s work shall be made manifest: ...Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are” (I Cor. 3:9-17).

We can go into detail with anyone we meet or that wants to understand, that the church is an assembly or congregation local to the community. But in reality, that is exactly what we are still doing centuries later. We are defining a church! -as the house of God! Where God dwells in a very unique and exclusive way!

“This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church” (Eph. 5:32). Read all the wonderful passages about the Lord’s true New Testament Baptist churches! They will ALWAYS be a mystery to the world, but how marvelous they are to God’s saints! Yes, they are ekklesias- that is Bible! We have to know that they are individual, independent assemblies, perpetuated from mother church to daughter church, responsible

to their only Head, Jesus Christ! But THEY are also uniquely and simultaneously the spiritual AND physical house of God- a church, where God meets with His people, whether in a sanctuary on Big Creek Road, or baptizing in the river at Twelve Pole, or in a future-persecuted world in a deacon’s house on Shoals Branch Road- a church.

There is nothing wrong with an assembly calling themselves the First Baptist Congregation of Antioch. That is wonderful! That is what they are! But there is also nothing wrong with calling themselves the First Baptist Church of Philippi. That is what they are, too! God’s congregation and God’s house! Both are Bible, both are descriptions of what we are! A church member of the Big Creek Baptist Church! That is what I am! I am not ashamed of the word; not interested in getting rid of it, until Christ Himself comes back and takes me home to be with Him in the next house of God- New Jerusalem... (Rev. 3:12-13)! Praise God! Bless His Holy Name! Selah! Think about it!

MATTHEW STEPP



I have read and reread the question that is before us to understand what the questioner is asking. And it is correct to say that assembly or congregation is the proper wording for what we know today as the church. And in here lies the problem. We have known the word church for so many years that it would be difficult to

change our terminology.

Allow me to give the answer that T.P. Simmons gives. This is not a direct quote, but in part; we know that the Greek word for “church” is “ekklesia.” And that the English word “church” is not a translation of the Greek word; it is a substitute, not that he needs my approval but I agree.

Baptists quote “ekklesia” as an assembly of baptized believers gathered together to do the Lord’s business or to something like that, but “ekklesia” does mean plainly and simply “assembly.”

I am not so sure we (Baptists) insist on calling it a church, when the English word is used by everyone to mean that very thing. When I was baptized into the “assembly” (ekklesia) I knew it to be a Baptist Church and then later learned what the word church meant. I will not say it is a little late, but if the “assembly” voted to change Big Creek Baptist Church to Big Creek Baptist Assembly or Congregation that would be Scriptural. But right now when people hear that I belong to the Big Creek Baptist Church they know what I am talking about, they can identify with that English word.

Immerse is another word that I wished would have been used instead of baptize, but when we use the word Baptist, or baptize, people identify with that word. Though I would find no fault in changing it to immerse, people would be confused! If I would speak of my home church as Big Creek Immerse Church or Big Creek Immerse Assembly, the questions would certainly come, WHAT? What in the world is an Immerse Assembly? I know what it means, but most would think it is a new cult because they are used to the words Baptist Church.

Again, I am not opposed to it, but we have enough problems

being Baptists without adding to it, to me it would just be confusing. And, too, if God wanted it different, then I believe He would have seen to it about four hundred years sooner.

I hate the word “easter.” It does not belong and I do not care what some say, it is a transliterated word not a translated word. It should be Passover. There again God allowed it. Why? I do not know! But I believe that is why Paul told Timothy, **“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth”** (II Tim. 2:15). God wants us to study, that means everyone. He did not just give us the Scripture to be lazy about them, we need to search the Scriptures to see if these things are so, **“And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so”** (Acts 17:10-11). We seem to have a younger generation (some) that do not adhere to the older (mine included) generation when it comes to Biblical truth. They want to adopt new ways and doctrine, God is allowing that as well. For me, I believe in the old ways, **“Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein”** (Jer. 6:16).

Like I said earlier, Baptists have enough problems, but if the questioner wants to change the word “church” to assembly

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Forum #1

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or congregation on their church sign, then that is for their church (assembly) to decide.

One last thought, every church building I have ever been in has on their wall or in their Doctrinal Statement of Faith a Church Covenant, and in that Covenant it states "In the presence of God and this assembly" and it goes on to mention the word "church" several times. Be careful that we do not do harm, for the purpose of what we think is right or wrong. God Bless!

ROGER REED



Forum #2

(Continued from page 177) ♦

shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. And...he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand" (Dan. 8:23-25).

Along with this one-world government, the Anti-Christ (or man of sin) will also consolidate all of the religions of the earth into a one-world religion. The key front man for this merger will be the false prophet detailed in Revelation 13:11-18, **"And I beheld another beast...and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he...causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast...And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And deceiveth them**

that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do...And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And...his number is Six hundred threescore and six." Selah! Think about it!

In view of the further rise to supreme power by the Roman Catholic church prophesied in Revelation 17-18, the pope is the likely candidate for this false prophet. So ANY new pope will naturally be the recipient of speculation that he is THE one foretold. But as I brushed up on my current events, Francis the First, who was elected pope in 2013 is an intriguing prospect for this damning character. Please note the following singularities concerning him...

He is the first Jesuit pope. Among this order's dogma is the fact that they will never take the popery! And for one to accept it NOW? Satan could be making his allotted move! The Jesuits are known as power brokers and militant disciplinarians, that could ruthlessly make the Anti-Christ's power grabs and unite the world's religious leaders. He is the first American (South or North) pope. This widens the scope of the ecumenicalism to embrace a WORLD religion more easily than another European would have. He is the first to take the name Francis (from the "sainted" Francis of Assisi). Another consolidation, bringing together liberal and conservative branches of both Jesuits and Catholics alike.

As I further studied his roots, theology and potential policies, I was struck by his amenability to Protestantism. Perhaps the first Protestant pope? How is that for a one-world religion...?

Whether Francis I is eventually revealed as the false prophet is yet to be seen. But if he is not, then he is surely (again) setting the stage for that Revelation. Selah! Think about it!

MATTHEW STEPP



The Fall and Ruin

(Continued from page 175) ♦

ing to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others" (Eph. 2:1-3). The history and the condition of men – even the current state of mankind, is only that we are **"dead in trespasses and sins."** As we are born into this world physically, we are born as ruined men. The soul and body is alive, but the spirit within us is dead. We will now, as human beings in the ruined condition of our birth, grow up and walk and live **"according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience."** What a sad state of affairs! What a horrible and wretched state we are in!

Mankind, today, likes to think of himself as an improving and progressive being. Mankind, today, imagines that he has somehow gotten better and brighter - smarter and wiser. However,

just as has been the case in every generation since Adam, we are all failures, ruined persons, and wicked sinners in our natural conditions. **"What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes. Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God"** (Rom. 3:9-19).

Do not let the world of religion convince you that mankind is good, or that there is some spark of good in men that can be cultivated. Do not let the false Christianity of today seduce you into believing that every man can demonstrate a faith and belief in God – if only he will say the right words and perform the right deeds. We are hopeless and helpless in our current condition. We need a Saviour. This is integral in the propagation of the gospel. This is indispensable in the proclamation of the salvation that is displayed in the Word of God. Men must know that they

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The Fall and Ruin

(Continued from page 179) ♦

are sinners, or else there would be no need for a Saviour. Men must know that there is no hope from within the ranks of humanity, or else there would be no need for a Saviour from Heaven. The sad words of Jeremiah describe the plight of that people which trusts in itself: **"The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved"** (Jer. 8:20).

CONCLUSION

Though we are all helpless and lost, there is hope in Jesus Christ. Though we are all dead in trespasses and sins, there is life in the Word of God. Though we are all bound for Hell and the lake of fire, there is a Saviour Who can bring us into Heaven. We read about the quickening power of the grace and Spirit of God in the book of Ephesians. Now, let me point your attention to the famous words of salvation that Paul wrote to Titus: **"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works"** (Titus 2:11-14). Though we are sinners, He can cleanse us! Though we have fallen, He can lift us up! Though we are ruined, He can purify us!

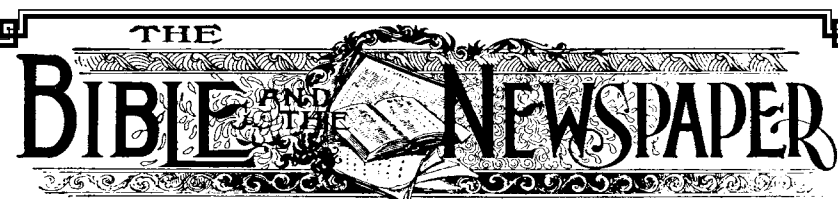
I hope that this sermon will cause you to be even more thankful for the salvation that God has granted unto you – especially as you consider the sinful and wick-

ed condition that you were once in. I also hope that this sermon will inspire you to have more compassion on the lost. What a miserable and sorry condition mankind is in! Millions and billions of soul are plunging headlong into Hell – and they are oblivious of their condition! We need to tell the world about "the fall and ruin of mankind." We need to shout to the world that men are sinners, and God will judge the wicked and damn them for all eternity in the lake of fire. And then, after we establish the fact that men are wicked and sinners, may God give us the grace to proclaim the sweet words of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. **"I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture"** (John 10:9). **"And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved"** (Acts 2:21).



**Quotes
from
Brother
Ritechus
N.
Dignation**
by Joseph Harris

Preacher, when you preach against sin, worldliness, alcohol, adultery, and such like, there is always someone who will say, "Well there he goes, harping on that stuff again." Problem is, everybody else's harp is broken. It's high time men of God begin to follow the words of the Old Testament prophet. **"Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins"** (Isaiah 58:1).



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.

HISTORIC LEAVE-TAKING

(WNS)--The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)—in a move long expected but nonetheless momentous for the 1.8-million-member denomination, the nation's sixth largest—approved full endorsement of same-sex marriage with passage of two overtures on June 19. First, the commissioners voted to approve an Authoritative Interpretation of the constitution, giving PCUSA pastors discretion to conduct same-sex ceremonies in states where the practice is legal. The results were not close: 371 (61 percent) to 238 (39 percent). This action goes into effect immediately. Next, the assembly approved an amendment to the Book of Order, changing the definition of marriage from "a woman and a man" to "two people." This vote was even more lopsided: 429 (71 percent) to 175 (29 percent). The amendment now goes out to the denomination's 172 presbyteries for ratification, a process that normally takes a year.

PRO-LIFERS WIN SUPREME COURT BUFFER ZONE CASE

(WNS)--The U.S. Supreme Court spoke plainly and unanimously in striking down a Massachusetts law placing a 35-foot buffer zone around abortion centers: The law "violates the First Amendment." The zone excluded anyone but abortion center employees and clients. Chief Justice John Roberts, writing the decision for the court, refused to describe buffer zones in general as unconstitutional, leaving an earlier Supreme Court decision upholding

buffer zones in place for now. Justices Antonin Scalia, Anthony Kennedy, Clarence Thomas, and Samuel Alito wrote concurring opinions arguing that buffer zones should be declared unconstitutional altogether.

PETITION URGES AIR FORCE ACADEMY TO HONOR RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

(WNS)--The Restore Military Religious Freedom Coalition teamed up with the Family Research Council to deliver a petition with 105,000 signatures to the Air Force Academy seeking to have First Amendment freedoms, particularly religious liberty, restored to its cadets. Religious freedom and the First Amendment have been a source of recent conflict at the Academy. In 2011, administrators issued an apology for mentioning the organization Operation Christmas Child. Most recently, in March of this year, a cadet leader voluntarily removed a Bible verse from the whiteboard on his dorm room door after someone complained to the Military Religious Freedom Foundation and Air Force Academy Superintendent Lt. Gen. Michelle Johnson. The verse, Galatians 12:20 reads, "I have been crucified with Christ therefore I no longer live, but Christ lives in me."

POPULAR FINANCIAL GURU CHARGED WITH DEFRAUDING CHRISTIANS

(WNS)--A former financial advisor who allegedly defrauded ♦ (Continued on page 181)

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megachurch parishioners out of more than \$11 million was arrested and indicted June 17 by a federal grand jury. Ephren Taylor, 31, and business partner Wendy Connor are charged with conspiracy and multiple counts of fraud. Taylor, former CEO of City Capital Corporation, and Connor are accused of swindling churchgoers across the country, often by convincing them to make fraudulent investments in small businesses, and using their money to pay personal expenses. Between April 2009 and October 2010, the two defrauded hundreds of investors out of millions of dollars, according to prosecutors. Taylor traveled across the country giving "Building Wealth Tour" seminars at churches, telling investors a portion of their profits went to charity. According to ABC News, the Department of Justice reported more than 80 people from Georgia alone "lost more than \$2 million because of Taylor's scheme." Investors included congregants from Bishop Eddie Long's New Birth Missionary Baptist Church in Lithonia, Ga., and Joel Osteen's Lakewood Church in Houston.

FEDS OPEN TAXPAYER-FUNDED INSURANCE TO SEX CHANGE SURGERY

(WNS)--Taxpayers could soon be paying for federal employees' sex reassignment surgeries after the Office of Personnel Management lifted its ban on insurance coverage for the procedures. The June 13 directive surfaced quietly as a letter to insurance providers, citing an "evolving professional consensus" on whether the surgery is "medically necessary." Carriers of Federal Employee Health Benefits plans have until June 30 to decide whether to change their policies regarding the procedures, which can cost up to

\$50,000. The bureaucratic change came just two weeks after the Department of Health and Human Services authorized Medicare to cover the same surgeries. For men, they can involve castration and genital reconstruction. For women, they can involve mastectomy and the implantation of a prosthetic.

GAY MARRIAGE PASSES FIRST APPEALS COURT TEST

(WNS)--A federal appeals court declared Utah's same-sex marriage ban unconstitutional in the first appellate ruling on state marriage laws as the issue makes its way to the U.S. Supreme Court. The three-judge panel of the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals decided the issue by a 2-1 vote, with Judge Paul J. Kelly Jr. dissenting. "We should resist the temptation to become philosopher-kings, imposing our views under the guise of the Fourteenth Amendment," Kelly wrote in the dissenting opinion. The 14th Amendment guarantees all persons equal protection under the law. The 10th Circuit includes Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Utah, and Wyoming. All of those states except New Mexico also have bans on same-sex marriage. The decision will not take effect immediately because the court stayed its ruling until the nation's highest court can consider the case.

DEMOCRATS UNVEIL LEGISLATION TO OVERTURN HOBBY LOBBY RULING

(WNS)--Barely a week after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled the federal government cannot force closely held corporations to pay for employees' abortifacient drugs in violation of their religious beliefs, Senate Democrats on Wednesday announced legislation to reverse the Hobby Lobby decision. "After five justices decided last week that an employer's personal views can interfere with women's access to

essential health services, we in Congress need to act quickly to right this wrong," said Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., who crafted the legislation with Sen. Mark Udall, D-Colo. The Protect Women's Health From Corporate Interference Act would override the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA)—legislation that passed the House unanimously, passed the Senate 97-3, and was signed into law by Democratic President Bill Clinton in 1993. The new bill would require most for-profit businesses to provide health insurance covering all forms of contraception mandated in the Affordable Care Act, regardless of religious objections. It would exempt houses of worship and some religious nonprofit organizations.

COLORADO TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE LAW LATEST TO FALL

(WNS)--A state judge in Denver overturned Colorado's traditional marriage law in early July, but he put same-sex marriages on hold pending an appeal. Judge C. Scott Crabtree said the state's voter-approved ban "bears no rational relationship to any conceivable government interest." Attorney General John Suthers plans to appeal, but a three-judge panel of the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals already staked its position on the issue when it ruled last month on Utah's marriage case. Utah officials announced yesterday they plan to take their appeal directly to the U.S. Supreme Court, rather than asking the full 10th Circuit to rehear its arguments.

INTERNATIONAL BRIEFS BEING A CHRISTIAN MEANS BELONGING TO THE CHURCH, POPE AFFIRMS

(CNS)--Pope Francis's general audience address in Vatican City on June 25th drew attention to how God formed the Church to unify

humanity, emphasizing that no one is saved on their own, but rather through the help of others.

"Dear Brothers and Sisters, in our catechesis on the Church we have seen that God gathered a people to Himself in the Old Testament and in the fullness of time sent His Son to establish the Church as the sacrament of unity for all humanity."

"We are not Christians as an individual, each one on his own," he said. "None of us become Christians on our own," but rather "we owe our relationship with God to so many others who passed on the faith, who brought us for Baptism, who taught us to pray and showed us the beauty of the Christian life." Pope Francis then encouraged those present to give thanks to "our parents and grandparents, our priests, religious and teachers" who helped bring us into the Church.

CANADIAN LAWYERS RALLY AGAINST CHRISTIAN LAW SCHOOL GRADS

(WNS)--By a 3-to-1 margin, member lawyers of the Law Society of British Columbia voted June 10 to reverse a previous decision to recognize future graduates from the planned Trinity Western University School of Law. Although thousands of lawyers participated in the nonbinding vote, it was a purely symbolic measure: The ultimate decision to approve Trinity Western's law school lies in the hands of the society's governing "benchers," who are similar to a board of directors. In April, the benchers voted 20-6 to authorize the country's first Christian law school, even though the university requires all students, faculty, and staff to sign a community covenant restricting sexual activity to traditional marriages. Religious liberty advocates in the United States and Canada believe the fate of Trinity Western's law school is a

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bellwether for religious freedom in North America.

is given as the chief saving grace and unbelief is given as the chief damming sin. We know that repentance and faith are inseparable graces and we cannot have one without the other, but in this passage our Lord is addressing faith. Salvation depends upon it. We are either believers or we are unbelievers. Anything that comes after faith is only an accessory to it. The negative phrase in verse sixteen is proof enough of this. No matter how good our religious act might be after we believe, it does not save. Salvation is by grace through faith. The words of Jesus here tell us very clearly that when it comes to salvation, everything is worthless but faith. This being so, it would behoove us to be diligent in seeking the truth about saving faith.

This preacher has become more convinced that Satan is pedaling a false faith, and a counterfeit conversion today and many may be "trusting Jesus" with a faith that does not save. The Apostle Paul indicated under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in I Corinthians 15:2 that it is possible to believe in vain. Think about that. Is your faith a true saving faith?

Certainly, a mere historical faith will not save but neither does all faith based on Scriptures. The devil will manipulate Scriptures to inspire a vain faith. A vain faith cannot save. The propagation of God's Word is needful indeed for the salvation of sinners but hearing the gospel alone is not enough. We need the Holy Spirit of God to bring the gospel home to our heart in a life giving way. It does no good what so ever to believe some diabolical twist of a Scripture. We need to have our heart prepared to receive the good seed of God's Word according to His elective love. Consider the parable of

the wayside, stony ground and thorny ground hearers. **"Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away. And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection. But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience"** (Luke 8:11-15).

There are two verses of Scripture that are often used for those outside the ranks of Christianity (and rightfully so) but why limit them to there? The first is Proverbs 14:12, **"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."** The second is Proverbs 30:12, **"There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness."** No doubt, these two verses also apply quite well to the untold thousands of carnal, worldly, so-called Christians who are aliens to saving faith. These are those among us, who want a Savior but not a Lord, They want Christ's peace but not His yoke. They will take justification but forget about sanctification. They want freedom but no responsibility and a crown but not a cross. **"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution"**

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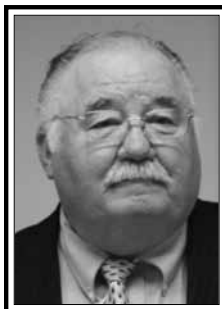


Saving Faith

By Larry J. Killion
of Tacoma, Washington

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

These words of Christ merit our undivided attention. They tell us the terms of eternal bliss or misery. Faith



Saving Faith

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(II Tim. 3:12). **“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).

Saving faith involves a yielding to God's authority, which pitifully few ever do. There are a great many pretended comers to Christ in the world. How is it with you on this point dear reader? If you are still on a course of self-will and self-pleasure, you are only fooling yourself if you think you are in Christ. **“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new”** (II Cor. 5:17).

Saving faith is both judicial and experiential, or practical. It has many evidences both inwardly and outwardly. The inward evidences have to do with your heart, and your attitude, and character in all the things of your everyday life. Only God can really see these but you have a definite sense that He has, and continues to work His amazing grace in your inner most being. The outward evidences have to do with your walk in everyday life. This is what others see. It is your Christian testimony in what you do rather than merely what you say. Let us consider a couple of things from the New Testament on these points.

Saving faith brings with it the inward evidences of a humble heart and a loving heart. Matthew 8:8: **“The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed.”** **“For in Jesus Christ**

neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love” (Gal. 5:6).

Saving faith brings with it the outward evidences of an obedient walk and a steadfast walk. **“And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked”** (I John 2:3-6). **“For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith”** (I John 5:4).

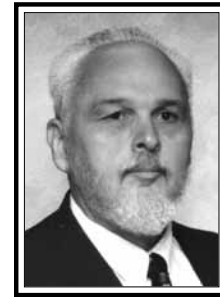
As we end this little study, we must remember some things. There is a vain faith that looks to the wrong object. It is a faith in someone or something that does not save. There is a historical faith. It does not save either because it is only assenting to facts similar to believing that George Washington was the first U. S. President. There is a natural and rational faith too. It, also, is not saving faith. This faith might even be based on Scriptures but brings with it no evidences of salvation because it is not a work of God's grace. Too many are resting confidently with presumptuous faith in Christ. They claim Him as their fire escape from Hell. All the while, they are plunging headlong toward everlasting destruction. Dear reader, PLEASE consider the solemn words of Christ in our text. Is your faith a true saving faith?



A Verse They Cannot Make Fit

By Curtis Pugh
of Poteau, Oklahoma

When a child of God begins serious Bible study he or she soon discovers that there are some verses that just do not “fit” with the popular doctrines as preached by most of today’s “evangelicals.” If you are satisfied with only skimming the Bible and listening to “topwater preaching” and can ignore much of what the Bible says, the popular scheme of decisional salvation will satisfy you. To be clear in this matter, let us agree that the popular doctrine regarding salvation today is this in a nutshell: God loves everyone and wants to save everyone, but He cannot unless they will let Him. God must not only have man’s cooperation, but lost individuals must make the first move toward God and only then will He do the rest. They must of their own freewill reach out and take Christ by “making a decision” or “praying the sinner’s prayer,” or “opening their heart’s door to Jesus,” or whatever term is popular at the time. Let us say it in one sentence: today’s popular scheme says that man has a free will and must exercise that free will in choosing Christ. Today’s “evangelicals” believe that based upon the proper human act, God has promised to save those persons who do whatever it is that they must do – i.e. “believe,” “pray,” “make a decision,” etc. We believe this is a plain and fair assessment of what most professing believers in Christ believe today. Stated another way, most of today’s “evangelicals” (including most people called Baptists) believe



that man has the ability to come to Christ for salvation. They believe that he is able to come of his own free will if he can just be

persuaded to do so.

But what did the Lord Jesus Christ say about this very thing? First of all, did He not make it clear that all are welcome to come when He said, **“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest”** (Matt. 11:28)? Certainly He did. But our point is not who is welcome to come, but rather who is able to come. A great banquet may be prepared for a multitude of people. All are welcome, but it may be that there are some who – though perfectly welcome to come – are unable to do so. So the issue here is not whether all are welcome to come to Christ or not, but rather do all have the ability to come? Being welcome – indeed being invited – has nothing to do with possessing or lacking the ability to come. We would be left to our own theories and ideas if Christ had not revealed the truth about this matter in His Word. In John 6:44 we read these words of the Savior: **“No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day”** (John 6:44). Now that is a plain statement. All the words are of one syllable except two. And those two have only two syllables and are simple and frequently used by the average English

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speaker. There is no excuse for not understanding what the Lord Jesus said here. The meaning of the words Christ uttered in our text are easily understood. We could furnish other verses which teach the inability of men to come to Christ, but for the purpose of this article we will cite only this verse and examine it. (Perhaps we should ask how many times God has to say a thing for it to be true, but surely every honest person will admit that one time is enough.) We think also that all thinking people will agree that in order to arrive at Bible truth we must (1) gather all the passages that bear upon a particular subject, (2) make a proper exegesis of each passage – i.e. draw out the meaning of each of all those passages, and (3) only then can we make a statement of truth that is in harmony with what is said in all those passages. In this way we can know and say what God says about a thing. It will not do to ignore any verse or passage that bears upon the subject of our study whatever it may be. In our study of the Bible regarding man's ability to come to Christ we dare not ignore John 6:44, our text quoted above. We shall briefly make an honest exegesis of this verse as follows.

First of all let us make four observations about the meaning of this verse. (1) Number one, consider this: while in contemporary speech we sometimes use the words "may" and "can" interchangeably, they do not mean the same thing. "May" means to have permission to do something while "can" means to have the ability to do something. This preacher's high school English teacher, in

response to, "Can I sharpen my pencil" often replied, "You can, but you may not!" (Yes, we really did use pencils in high school back then!) She was teaching us the difference between the two words "may" and "can." She said in effect, "you have the ability, but you do not have permission." Christ said, "**No man can come to me.**" He did not say "no man may come to me." He was not dealing with the matter of permission or of being welcome to come. In this verse Jesus speaks of ability and says that no man has the ability to come to Him. His words can mean nothing else, now can they?

(2) The second thing here is that man's inability to come in a saving way to Christ can only be overcome by the Father drawing the sinner. Christ said "**except the Father which hath sent me draw him.**" The Merriam Webster Dictionary gives some synonyms for "except." Let us see if we can use some of them to make the meaning clearer. We could say, "apart from the Father drawing," or "aside from the Father drawing," or "except for the Father drawing," or "outside of the Father drawing," etc. So then, the term "**except**" is exclusive. We could say unless and until the Father draws a man he cannot come. The word "**draw**" is the Greek word "helkuo" (pronounced hel koo – o). In John 18:10 this word is translated "drew" in the following context: "**Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.**" Peter did not just attempt to draw his sword. Neither did the sword make the first move and somehow jump into his hand. He actually took hold of that sword and exerted enough power to pull it out. Another usage

of this Greek word is in Acts 21:30 where it is written, "**And all the city was moved, and the people ran together: and they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple: and forthwith the doors were shut.**" Again we would point out that there was not merely an unsuccessful attempt made to drag Paul out of the temple. They actually took hold of him and pulled on him with sufficient force to move him from one place to another. There are other instances of this word in the New Testament, but these two are sufficient to show that the word "draw" means pulling something by sufficient force as to move the object. Neither the sword nor Paul expended energy in moving. We could say that both the sword and Paul were overcome of a power greater than themselves. In drawing men to Christ we do not mean that God violates the will of the individual or that He does violence to anyone. But God can and does act upon whom He will in an inward way effectively drawing men to Christ. This is made clear by Philippians 2:13 where we read: "**For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.**" God's Word also says, "**Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power....**" (Ps. 110:3). The Spirit of God that moved upon the face of the waters in Genesis 1:2 and shook the earth so that Mount Sinai was moved (Ps. 68:8) is able to give life to the dead spirit of a man "**and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?**" (Dan. 4:35) for "**The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit**" (John 3:8).

The God of the Bible is able to draw whom He pleases to Christ. To deny that is to blaspheme God and slander His name!

(3) We come to the third thing about John 6:44: notice the phrase, "**No man.**" This inability is universal. No good man, no wise man, no rich man, no nobleman, no politically powerful man – indeed all Adam's race are included in this negative statement. This is an absolutely universal statement: no person can initiate his or her own salvation nor do anything towards causing it. In order to be saved the sinner must come to Christ, but he cannot. The Savior told Nicodemus, "**Ye must be born again**" (John 3:7). Just as an infant in its birth process exerts no causative power towards its own delivery because it does not have that power or ability, so it is in the matter of coming to Christ. Indeed, it is not the unborn infant that initiates his own birth, determines the time of his birth, or acts in any way in the birth process. In fact, while the infant is a participant in the birth process, it is the mother who goes into labor: not the infant. So it is clear, then, that no offspring of Adam has the ability to come to Christ.

Consider the old New Hampshire Baptist Confession of Faith written in 1833. This confession was once very popular among Baptists especially in the South and West. It states clearly the cause and effect of the new birth or regeneration. Article 7 says: "We believe that, in order to be saved, sinners must be regenerated, or born again; that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind; that it is effected in a manner above our comprehension by the power

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of the Holy Spirit, in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel; and that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance, and faith, and newness of life." The old Baptists across America believed that regeneration was the cause and that "voluntary obedience to the gospel" was the result. They believed that in order to be saved, a sinner must be born again, or regenerated. They believed that regeneration, or the new birth, resulted in "repentance, and faith, and newness of life." There is no place here for man doing something in order to be born again. Most modern Baptists teach just the opposite of what the old Baptists believed. Today's Baptist believes that "exercising your faith" by believing in Christ causes God to birth you into His family. Today's Baptists have reversed the order according to the Bible and according to this old confession. They have substituted an effect for the cause. And so it is that many people are deceived. They think by producing "faith" themselves they will be born again. The Bible teaches that the new birth is a work of the Holy Spirit (John 3:6) and that faith is a gift given only to certain individuals (Ephesians 2:8; II Thessalonians 3:2). Salvation by human effort – the product of man's hands – is as old as Cain who sought to sacrifice a bloodless offering that was the product of his labor. First he, and then his offering, were rejected.

(4) So we come to the fourth thing we wish to observe in our exegesis. Christ said, **"and I will raise him up at the last**

day." Here is the Savior's sacred promise: those who are drawn by the Father to the Son will be raised by Christ in a blessed resurrection. Praise be to God! What man cannot do in the matter of salvation, God does for him! Since man can do nothing toward his salvation, God does all! And those upon whom God acts in drawing them to Christ shall enjoy a blessed resurrection in a glorified body like unto His glorious body. Such a promise does not allow the fanciful interpretation that the Father only attempts or "pulls on" men in an unsuccessful manner. No! Those whom the Father draws will be resurrected by Christ! God is not to be reckoned as some colossal failure who cannot do what He tries to do! Never consider such a blasphemous thought! It is as true as the eternal Word of God: Paul wrote, **"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ"** (Philippians 1:6). What God begins He finishes!

In conclusion we can boldly affirm that **"...Salvation is of the Lord"** (Jonah 1:9). The total inability of every fallen son of Adam is no obstacle to Jehovah. It is He who works all things **"together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"** (Rom. 8:28-



**Quotes
from
Brother
Ritechus
N.
Dignation
by Joseph Harris**

Maybe the reason there are hardly any Christians being persecuted in America today is because no one is doing anything worthy of martyrdom.

31). Those verses do not "fit" the modern scheme either, but they are nevertheless true! God has given those whom He has drawn to Christ an "understanding-faith" for the Bible says **"Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear"** (Heb. 11:3). And so it is that through faith we also understand that it is God who chose **"...us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved"** (Eph. 1:4-6). And in time, His time, even as He arrested Saul of Tarsus, so He arrests each of His elect in the midst of their mad fleshly oriented careers, drawing us to Christ in an effectual or successful way. His was not a mere attempt to get us to come to Christ – but He brought us to Christ whom having not seen we love (see: I Peter 1:8). As the shepherd came home successfully bearing his lost sheep upon his shoulders (Luke 15:5) so our Good Shepherd found us when we were hopelessly

and helplessly lost. We charge you! Glorify not man's supposed ability in our hearing! We do not want to hear such thing! Our experience of grace will not allow us to boast of things beyond our measure. Our glory is in Christ and our rejoicing is in God who laid hold upon us and worked in us, drawing us to Christ in such a way that we gladly followed on. Take whatever credit for your salvation that you dare, but we ascribe all our change to Him! You who hold to human ability – consider John 6:44. This one verse cannot be made to fit with your humanistic, freewill scheme. For if your scheme is to work, man must have the ability to come in a saving way to Christ apart from Divine intervention. For if there be even the slightest intervention by God in those who come to Christ then we must raise this question: why does God intervene in the spiritual lives of some and not in all? And we know that those who subscribe to the freewill scheme seldom wish to enter upon that area: namely a discussion of God's election of some to eternal life while bypassing others. Why? Because what the Bible says about unconditional election does not fit with their scheme either. But to return to our point: while there are many other verses which modern "evangelicals" cannot make fit with John 6:44, if God be pleased to enlighten a man, this one verse is enough to prove that it is God who does the saving – that man has no ability and cannot contribute one particle to his salvation. As the songwriter of a past generation put it: "'Tis done: the great transaction's done! I am the Lord's and He is mine; He drew me and I followed on, charmed to confess the voice divine."



When Men Become Nothing Jesus Christ Becomes Everything

By Richard H. Heatherly
of Wingo, Kentucky

"I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing" (II Cor. 12:11).

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing" (I Cor. 13:1-3).

"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not" (Rom. 7:18).

The Apostle Paul was so blessed with ability and given so many revelations from God that he was given a thorn in the flesh, (some physical malady) as a messenger from Satan to buffet (remind) him lest he become proud and exalted in himself (II Cor. 12:7). To the credit of God's grace operating in him he remained humble and usable in God's service. Circumstances did require him to defend his qualifications and worth as an apostle; but he did



it with humility and reservation giving God all the glory.

Though he had seen the resurrected Christ, performed miracles, was highly educated, was single handedly used of God to bring the gospel to the Gentile nations, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit wrote thirteen books of the New Testament, he never forgot that he himself could do nothing and all of his accomplishments were totally by the power of Christ. Listen to how he put it in verse 11 of II Corinthians 12 when he said, **"I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me."** He said he felt like a fool having to speak of his worth and credentials knowing his only worth was Jesus Christ. Normally to be proud about nothing is to be a fool; and to speak lowly of yourself is not necessarily humility. And to deny great gifts of talents and accomplishments is many times, not true humility. It is not humility to pretend that ten talents are only one talent. Some who try to convince everybody that they are nothing will become angry if anyone takes them seriously. The act of public praying is something that must be guarded closely lest it become an act of trying to show how spiritual one is. There is many times a lot of put on, in audible praying. Sometime people will say in public prayer that they are sinful; but woe to the person who reminds them of what they

said.

Paul did not say he was not an apostle, or that he had not suffered much for Christ. If he had said that he would have been guilty of lying, and that is not humility, it is sin. Unspiritual people looked at Paul as nothing and as being nobody; and they will look at you in the same way if your only interest is to glorify Jesus Christ and not in building up yourself by bragging on your accomplishments. Sometime those who are young in their salvation and are very zealous for Christ are called nobodies and nothing; but do not let that disturb you. Sometime those who are old, and physically worn out, and cannot accomplish much in the work of God that is visible are considered by the proud and unspiritual as nothings. Then, too, those who are religious but hate Jesus Christ will hate anyone who loves Jesus Christ and call us nothings.

That is what Paul was dealing with. When he was a Pharisee persecuting Christians, they loved him and called him great. But when Christ saved him and called him to serve Him, they spit on him and called him a troublemaker. That is the practice of egotistical, pragmatist, religious leaders of our day. If you agree with them, and promote them in their efforts to be great and admired as leaders of other preachers you are wonderful. However, if you do not agree with their religious carnival tactics to build crowds they say, "Do not bother with him; he is nothing. Look what a small church he has." Those who love the preeminence see us as nothing.

Some despise God's people and call them nothings, because of the very things which make them truly great. Let me give you an example of what I am speaking of. The preacher or Christian layman

who can serve God, worship Him, and stay faithful in spite of small crowds and little or no visible results are the truly great ones.

Those who want the flesh and works of men to have glory in salvation considered Paul as nothing. They think human wisdom and fair speech is greatness. So, they said, **"For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible"** (II Cor. 10:10). Paul denied any worth of religion completely. He shot down all of its gaudy trappings and ceremonial behavior, and said; "salvation is all of God by grace, and man is so vile and wicked his works can have nothing to do with it." So those who were proud of their own merits and abilities called him nothing, and said he was nobody. So remember when the works religion crowd calls us nothings and nobodies just remember God's judgment will have the final say.

They did not have to tell Paul he was nobody. He considered himself to be that. This was greatly different than the opinion he had of himself when he was on his way to Damascus to kill Christians. Then he was a proud Pharisee bragging of his greatness and religious service to God. Oh, but when he was brought face to face with the glorious Son of God he was totally changed and quickly saw himself as nothing. This new evaluation of himself came from being born again. People who are truly born again have a completely different picture of their worth. Many argue of their value and worth before they are born again, but none ever do so after.

Paul saw himself as nothing in the light of the doctrine of grace. If you want to find the so called free

♦ (Continued on page 187)

When Men Become

(Continued from page 186) ♦

will of man lifted up and praised you will have to leave the writings of Paul. He wrote concerning sinners that they were **“dead in trespasses and sins,”** and he wrote of them **“being justified freely by grace,”** and of our election in Christ as **“not according to our works.”**

Paul saw himself as nothing when he looked inside himself and saw the battle of the two natures, which all born again believers have. In describing that battle of the spiritual man and the fleshly man he said in Romans 7:24, **“O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”** In spite of all his accomplishments, and God given abilities he said he had nothing to boast of. Listen to how he put that in Galatians 6:14, **“But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.”** In speaking of the salvation of Abraham Paul said; **“For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God”** (Rom. 4:2).

Paul said of his evaluation of right or wrong, and of death and life was determined only by that which glorified Jesus Christ. **“For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s”** (Rom. 14:8).

To see one’s self as nothing in relationship to Christ and His Word and will, has great practical value in the battles of daily life. It will greatly help us obey the commands to put others before ourselves, and to avoid the sin of pride, greed, and selfishness.

Because, why would we always be putting ourselves first if we see ourself as nothing and Christ everything? There is no use seeking greatness when we understand that we are nothing. If Christ is everything and we are nothing it is easier to seek first His kingdom and His glory; since He has promised to supply all our needs according to His riches in glory.

A nothing like David, counts it the greatest honor to be just a door keeper in God’s house. **“For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness”** (Ps. 84:10).

When we see ourselves as a nothing it is a lot easier to be content with what God gives us than to be constantly pushing for that which everybody says we deserve. Paul said in I Timothy 6:6-8, **“But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.”**

But remember, when we take our place as nothing in Christ, we must remember that I am His and He is mine, and that all He is we are, and all He owns we own. **“And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together”** (Rom. 8:17).

So, Paul closed out the book of I Corinthians chapter fifteen with; **“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”**



GLEANNINGS



The Love of Jesus

By James Smith
(1802 - 1862)

“I have loved you” (John 15:12).

Whom does Jesus love? Every believer whatever his outward circumstances may be. Every one that loves Him, or loves His saints because they are His. How wonderful that Jesus should love us, who are so mean, so debased, so ungrateful! It is; but it is a fact, and He has proved it in a variety of ways.

He displayed His love before we knew Him, or were even capable of doing so, in preferring our nature to the angels: they fell as we did, but their nature was more noble, their fall was from a greater eminence, yet He did not assume their nature to save them, but He became man to save us: and why? He tells us, **“I have loved you.”** In making a full atonement for our sins, He satisfied justice to the full. He removed the curse entirely. He produced for us a righteousness, sparkling with glory, beyond the rays of the morning sun; and why? He tells us, **“I have loved you.”** In conquering all our spiritual adversaries, that had overcome our nature, and had taken captive our entire race. No human arm was strong enough to overcome them, no mere creature could escape from them: but He came, He fought, He conquered, He triumphed in our nature, in our name, for our sake; and why? He tells us, **“I have loved you.”** In

♦ (Continued on page 188)

BEREBA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 6-1-2014 to 6-30-2014

Beginning Balance	\$6,999.41
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	225.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	100.00
Calvary Ind. B. C., Everson, WA	100.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	200.00
.....	625.00
TOTAL	7,624.41
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio Time	363.98
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	363.98
.....	7,260.43
Interest06
ENDING BALANCE	\$7,260.49



BEREBA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 6-1-2014 to 6-30-2014

Beginning Balance	\$1,913.07
RECEIPTS:	
Amazing Grace B. C., Stockdale, TX	50.00
B. C. of Brimfield, Brimfield, IL	25.00
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	300.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL	60.00
Berea M. B. C., Ashland, OH	600.00
Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX	50.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	150.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV	313.45
Carol Willitt, Edgewater, FL	50.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL	25.00
Darin Wiley, Wellington, KS	50.00
Faith B. C., Lynn, AR	12.50
Fred Mink, Happy, KY	50.00
Gail Knowles, Scarborough, ME	20.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	200.00
Grace B. C., Winston-Salem, NC	50.00
Grace M. B. C., Marion, IL	50.00
Grace M. B. C., Tulsa, OK	35.00
Indore B. C., Indore, WV	100.00
The Lord's Church, Goose Creek, SC	50.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH	100.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN	50.00
Parkway Landmark B. C., Springfield, OR	100.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL	100.00
Portland B. C., Plumerville, AR	50.00
Southside B. C., Fulton, MS	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Silsbee, TX	30.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA	25.00
Subscriptions	86.00
Anonymous	210.00
Dividing checks	150.00
Sub Total	\$3,266.95
TOTAL	\$5,180.02
EXPENDITURES:	
Printing	490.00
Postage	654.67
Wages	2,300.00
FICA	175.96
Dividing checks	150.00
Total Expenditures	\$3,770.63
.....	1,409.39
Bank charge	-13.00
ENDING BALANCE	\$1,396.39

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Grace Baptist Church of Rural Hall, NC and Pastor Andy Proctor would like to announce their 35th Annual Labor Day Weekend Bible Conference. The conference will be held at the Caraway Conference Center at 4756 Caraway Mountain Road, Sophia, NC 27350.

Services are scheduled from Friday, August 29th until about 4:00 pm Sunday, August 31st. Breakfast, lunch and supper will be provided for all who attend the conference.

The conference theme is: "Profitable Doctrine" taken from II Timothy 3:16.

Scheduled speakers are Elders Chris Wallace, Jeff Short, Leroy Pack, Justin Meier, Doug Newell III, Pete Horn, Paul Jackson, Doug Newell IV, Peter Halliman, Al Lyons, Troy Sheppard, Mike Prater, John Pruitt, Matthew Stepp, David Green, Rick Perdue, Stephen West, Sam Wilson, Wayne Reynolds, Joseph Prater, and Al Malo.

All are invited to attend. For any questions, please call pastor, Brother Andy Proctor at (352) 895-1437.

The Calvary Baptist Church of Paris, TN is in need of a pastor. The church believes and preaches the doctrines of grace and local church. Any interested elder may contact Paulette Owen at (731) 641-6172 or Nathan Tucker at (270) 217-0030.

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

The Glade Creek Baptist Church, Summersville, WV., is in need of a pastor. This church believes and preaches the doctrines of grace and church truth. Any interested Elder should call Bro. Rodney Perkins at (304) 742-3050 or Bro. Allen Frame at (304) 742-5775.

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

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

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

The Twinbrook Hills Baptist

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

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



Gleanings

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going to Heaven as our forerunner. He has carried our nature into the presence of the Father, He has shown that the path to glory is practicable, and He is now actively employed in Heaven providing places for us; and why? He tells us, **"I have loved you."** In sending the Holy Comforter, who comes in His name, to quicken, call, cleanse, and sanctify. By Him we are converted to God, prepared for glory, rendered useful in the

present world, and comforted in all our tribulations. He was sent by Jesus into the church when first enthroned at the right hand of the Father, He was sent by Jesus into our hearts; and why? He tells us, **"I have loved you."** In acting as our Intercessor and Advocate before the Father. **"He made intercession for the transgressors."** He has pleaded for us, He does plead for us, He will continue to plead for us; and why? He tells us, **"I have loved you."**

He has displayed His love in His dealings with us. He found us cruel, determined, unfeeling enemies; but He reconciled us, made us friends, and filed us with wonder at His love. He keeps us by His power and Holy Spirit, for we cannot be trusted for one solitary moment. He only chastens us in love, when He might justly punish us in wrath. He restores us from all our wanderings, and freely forgives our follies. He carries on His work within us, and generously supplies all our needs. He rejoices to save us, though mean as worms, and viler than the earth. He does all for us, and does all gladly, notwithstanding our ingratitude, perverseness, and rebellion; and why? He tells us, **"I have loved you."**

His love is displayed in what He intends to do for us. He will come in glory and majesty as our Bridegroom, to fetch us home. He will fill us with joy unspeakable and full of glory, and give us to possess more than eye has seen, or ear heard, or the heart of man has conceived; and why? He tells us, **"I have loved you."** What will not love do? What has not the love of Jesus done, or promised to do? Behold, how He loved us! Behold, and wonder! Behold, and praise! Behold, and love Him in return!



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