

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

Marred Vessels

By Wayne Cox
(1913 - 2003)

"The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD saying, Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words. Then I went down to the potter's house and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good



to the potter to make it. Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel" (Jer. 18:1-6).

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The Great Work

By Paul Stepp
of Indore, West Virginia

"And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you? (Neh. 6:3). The work that Nehemiah had, was a great work. The work that he had before him, was given unto him by God.

I would like for us to think about the great work that was given unto



Nehemiah, and I want us to consider the fact, that, we, too, are given a work by God almighty – and our work is just as great as was

Nehemiah's.

WHY IS THE WORK GREAT?

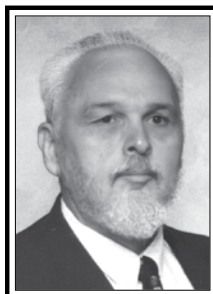
Let's examine some reasons why the work is great. And, in giving

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Volunteers For Jesus

By Curtis Pugh
of Poteau, Oklahoma

Most so-called evangelical Christians preach and practice what they erroneously call "soul winning." They can be likened to recruiters for the military service. They have a sales pitch prepared by which they try to get sinners to volunteer for salvation: whatever it takes, by hook or by crook! If these religious recruiting officers can just get sinners to make a move they can turn it in on their



report. They can carve another notch on their gospel gun. A one-time prayer for salvation is all it takes with most of them.

Others try to include making some kind of commitment which they often call 'making Christ Lord.' Still others have in their recruitment scheme a necessary

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The Union of the Two Natures of Christ

By Milburn R. Cockrell
(1941 – 2002)

"Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1:3-4).

The controversy concerning



whether Christ had a genuine human nature as well as a divine nature is no novelty. Very early in the history of the church

heretics attacked the Person of Christ. These assaults upon our Savior are being perpetuated by

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A bird is known by his note,
and a man by his talk.

"For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Matthew 12:37).

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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.

The Great Work

(Continued from page 1) ♦

some reasons why the work is described as "great," I want to basically give you three synonyms for the word "great:" important, large, and glorious.

IT IS IMPORTANT.

First of all, we must notice that the work of God is great because it is important. Surely, what Nehemiah was doing in building up the walls of the city of Jerusalem was very important. I mean, what Nehemiah was doing was far more important than what those folks that were left behind in the cities of Persia were doing. When King Artaxerxes asked Nehemiah what he desired of him, Nehemiah replied, "... **If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it**" (Neh. 2:5). Surely, this was a great and important work that Nehemiah was about to take up. Those other Jews, scattered around the world, were busy taking care of their families, growing crops, doing business, and various other activities that consumed all of their time and effort. But here, in the land of Judah, and in the city of Jerusalem, Nehemiah was doing the great and important work of building up the walls of the city of Jerusalem.

If we translate this line of thinking into our day to day service unto God, I believe we will find that what we are doing in the cause of Christ is also very great and very important. Our work, too, is great and important. While others are busy about the affairs of this life and of this world, we, the people of God, are about the important work of serving the

Lord Jesus Christ. There is nothing more important in this life! Sure, Nehemiah had an important job when he was the cupbearer before one of the mightiest kings on the face of the earth. (See Neh. 1:1, 11-2:1.) However, his job as the overseer of the building of the wall of the city of Jerusalem was far more important. You and I might occasionally occupy some very important secular job. But, even if one of us were to be called upon to take up the job of being the president of the United States, even that job could not be as important as the job that we already have of serving the Lord Jesus. Indeed, to serve Him, is to be a part of a great and important work.

IT IS LARGE.

Second, we should see that the work of God is great in that it is very large. Surely, in the case of Nehemiah and the Jews, it was a daunting task, especially when they were so few in number, to consider building up a wall around the entire city of Jerusalem – and yet they set themselves to the task. In fact, Nehemiah admitted that this work was great and large. We read in Nehemiah 4:19, "**And I said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, The work is great and large, and we are separated upon the wall, one far from another.**" The wall around the city of Jerusalem was large, and therefore, the work to repair it was a great and a large work.

In the case of the Christian servants of God today, we, too, must see that the work that God has set for us is a very large work. During His earthly ministry, the Lord Jesus Christ told those He sent out before His face, "... **The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray**

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The Great Work

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ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest" (Luke 10:2). And then, after the Lord had arisen from the grave, and just before He ascended into Heaven, He told His first church, **"...Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature"** (Mark 16:15). If you think about it, Nehemiah had only to encircle the city of Jerusalem with a wall of stone and wood. We have to encircle the entire globe with the gospel of Jesus Christ! This is indeed a great and a large work!

IT IS GLORIOUS.

Third, we ought to also see that the work of God is great because of its inherent glory. Consider that the work of Nehemiah and the Jews was to build up the wall of the city of God, which is the city of Jerusalem. Remember, at the beginning of this particular great work of the building of the wall of Jerusalem Nehemiah had said these words in a prayer that he offered up to the Lord: **"Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandedst thy servant Moses, saying, If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations: But if ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them; though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there"** (Neh. 1:9). You see, out of all of the cities of the earth the Lord had chosen to set His name upon, and in, the city of Jerusalem. We read the words of Solomon as he addressed the people of Israel in II Chronicles 6:6, **"But**

I have chosen Jerusalem, that my name might be there; and have chosen David to be over my people Israel." Solomon is making reference to the fact that God had previously chosen David to be the King, and Jerusalem to be the place where the Lord God would set His name. So, as we return to the time of Nehemiah, we must realize that the wall that he is building up is a wall that surrounds the very city that was chosen of God.

Let us make application to our day and time, and to our great work which we are laboring in. We, too, are concerned about the name of God. In fact, the city of Jerusalem, is not just the place that glorifies the name of the Lord God of Israel; but the city of Jerusalem is the city where Jesus Christ shall reign! And, the city of Jerusalem is involved, also, in glorifying the name of Christ. From thence came the apostles and the first church. And from Jerusalem was spread the gospel of Christ to every corner of the world.

Notice something interesting about the history of Jerusalem: Just as the world sought to destroy Nehemiah and the Jews as they labored in the city of God, even so, some centuries later the Jews would seek to destroy the apostles and the first church as they labored in the city of God. We read in Acts 5:26-28, **"Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned. And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them, Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your**

Little Hills

By Nathaniel Hille of
Plant City, Florida



The New Birth #9

Evidences of Having Been Born Again—Part 2

We noted that those who are born again are to be **"laying aside"** sin—**"Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings"** (I Peter 2:1). First note, that he uses the word **"all."** This word could easily be rendered "each and every." We are NOT entitled to one single vice; rather, we are to "lay aside each and every" sin.

The child of God will be laying aside all malice. Malice is when we desire ill-will towards another. Malice finds its root in jealousy; its fruition in desiring for something untoward to take place. All guile is to be cast aside. Guile is to trick or deceive another. It was Satan

who deceived Eve in the garden (I Tim. 2:14). Hypocrisies are to be set aside. Hypocrisy is pretending to be something that one is not. Christ rebuked the Pharisees for their hypocrisies (Matt. 23:13-39). Envy is to be jealous of another. The child of God is not to be envious because he/she knows that all things come from God and that they possess the greatest possession of all, eternal life in Christ Jesus (James 1:17; Heb. 13:5). Lastly, we are commended to lay aside all evil speakings, all defamation, all back-biting is to be cast aside.

By laying aside these sins we evidence Christ living in us (Gal. 2:20). Have you been born again? Then we must evidence it in laying aside all malice, guile, hypocrisies, envies, and evil speakings.

doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us." The world sought to keep the Jews and Nehemiah from building the wall of Jerusalem to the glory of the name of God. Centuries later, the Jews sought to keep Peter and the apostles and the first church from filling Jerusalem with the name of Christ. In Nehemiah's time, it was a great and a glorious work to build up the walls of the city of Jerusalem. In the time of the apostles, it was a great and a glorious work to fill that same city with the name of Jesus Christ and the gospel of salvation. Now, in our time, it is a great and glorious work to fill our place and time with the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The great work

continues!

THE WORK SHOULD OCCUPY OUR TIME AND ATTENTION

So, we have just noticed some ways in which the work of Nehemiah was great, and we have noticed how that the same word could be used to describe the work that we are involved in today. Next I want us to notice the practical application of that great work.

In the verses that surround our text verse, we notice that Nehemiah and those who worked with him were very diligent about the great work they were involved in. In fact, it seems the great work that they were employed in served

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The Great Work

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to occupy their time and attention. We read about the diligence of Nehemiah and his fellow-laborers in Nehemiah 4:6, **“So we built the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to work.”** These folks in the time of Nehemiah were willing and diligent workers upon the wall of the city of Jerusalem. I only pray that the Lord would make all of us who serve Him today to be just as willing and diligent as they were – that the people today would also have **“a mind to work”** – as we perform the great work that must be accomplished in the cause of Christ.

Consider, that though there were dangers, still the great work of the wall of Jerusalem went on. We read in Nehemiah 4:7-8, 14-18, **“But it came to pass, that when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites, heard that the walls of Jerusalem were made up, and that the breaches began to be stopped, then they were very wroth, And conspired all of them together to come and to fight against Jerusalem, and to hinder it...And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses. And it came to pass, when our enemies heard that it was known unto us, and God had brought their counsel to nought, that we returned all of us to the wall, every one unto his work. And it came to pass from that time forth, that the**

half of my servants wrought in the work, and the other half of them held both the spears, the shields, and the bows, and the habergeons; and the rulers were behind all the house of Judah. They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon. For the builders, every one had his sword girded by his side, and so builded. And he that sounded the trumpet was by me.” Now, I suppose that I could spend a lot of time here talking about how these laborers in the great work of the wall labored all in one accord. They worked together, and they each performed their duty. Of course, it would be appropriate if we would do so today in the churches of Jesus Christ. However, in this message I want us to mainly notice that these laborers were willing to commit themselves to the cause of the great work without concern for their own well-being. I mean, no matter what the danger, and no matter what the opposition, they were going to perform the great work. Again, I pray unto God that you and I today; and, indeed, all of those in the churches of Jesus Christ, would be willing and able and diligent to work in the cause of Christ. Oh, if God would only lead us and guide us so that the great work of God would occupy all of our time and attention.

WHO WILL DO THE WORK IF WE CEASE?

Next, I want us to notice the importance of the laborers in the great work of the time of Nehemiah. I do not mean to glorify any man or group of persons; but, I do want us to notice that God has ordained that men and women are necessary in the working out of the accomplishment of His will

and purpose. Certainly, in the time of Nehemiah, if Nehemiah and the Jews were to quit, there would be no one else to do the great work of the building of the wall of Jerusalem. Now, in the conclusion of this message, I will point out to you that if we do not do the work, then God will raise up someone else from amongst His people to do that great work. However, the point that I want to make here, is this: If the people of God do not have a desire to do the great work of God, then who from amongst the children of men will do it? Certainly the world of men does not desire to perform the great work of God. And, if we are to cease, we can only expect that the great work will suffer harm.

Listen to what Nehemiah told the Jews in Jerusalem when he first spoke to them about the great work, **“Then said I unto them, Ye see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire: come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach. Then I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me; as also the king’s words that he had spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for this good work”** (Neh. 2:17-18). These folks did not set back and wait for someone else to accomplish the great and “good work” which must be done. Instead, first Nehemiah said, **“...come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem...”** And then, the people said, **“...Let us rise up and build...”** You see, Nehemiah and these others knew the wall of Jerusalem would not build itself. They knew God would use them in the great and good work, and they knew workers and laborers were necessary so the great work

could be accomplished.

Again, I hope and pray that all of us today would be reminded of this very same principle: the great work is meant to be performed and worked out by men. God will use us and others, just as He has throughout history, to accomplish His purpose and His great work. Let us respond just as these Jews responded, by saying, **“...Let us rise up and build...”**

THOSE THAT DISTRACT US, WOULD ONLY SEEK TO BRING US DOWN

Finally, at the end of our text verse we read these words, **“...why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?”** Nehemiah understood that those enemies of the Lord that sought to distract him from the work of the Lord, only desired to bring him **“down”** to their level. You see, the workers of darkness hate the workers of light. And those that follow the darkness hate the light. And, the more we seek to be about the great work of God, the more the world will oppose us and distract us. We read the words of the Lord Jesus Christ in John 3:18-21, **“He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov’d. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.”** When the evil men that surrounded Nehemiah and the other Jews saw what a

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The Great Work

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good and glorious work that they did, they sought to discourage and distract these workers of God because they did not want the light to succeed. They fought against that great work, and they sought to bring it to nought.

The same thing is true in our lives today. The more we seek to do the work of God; and the more we seek to glorify our God; and the more the evil men and women of this world can behold our works of light; then, the more the world of men will seek to distract us and discourage us from doing this work of God.

Why is this so? Well, this is so because, even today, the world still hates God and all the light that He has brought into this world. You see, it was not just that Sanballat and the others hated the Jews; in reality, they hated God. And the same is still true today. Those that are in the world hate God and the things of God. Therefore, it is no wonder that the world will hate the servants of God who labor in His great work. And the world, with Satan as its prince, would like nothing more than to bring the workers of light down to the level of the workers of darkness. For this reason, the evil men who surrounded Nehemiah and the Jews sought to bring them **"down."** And, for this same reason, the evil world that surrounds you and I today, if we shall be faithful to God, will constantly and forever seek to bring us **"down."** The world wants to blot out the light of God! The world hates the light, and cannot tolerate it without seeking to destroy it. It was no wonder that the people of the land sought to destroy Nehemiah and the Jews. Remember they had done the

same thing to Zerubbabel and the other Jews who had previously returned from captivity – which Jews, by the grace of God, had built up the temple. And now, they would fight against Nehemiah and the great work of the building of the wall of Jerusalem.

CONCLUSION

Let us not forget that our work which we are doing in the cause of Christ, is a great work. It is important, it is large, and it is glorious. However, at the same time let us remember that though it is our work, if we fail, or if we fall by the side, then the work will continue, and the Lord will raise up someone else to do the work. You see, the great work will continue – with or without our participation. Remember the words of wisdom that Mordecai had for Queen Esther, when he had asked for her help

in defeating the plan of wicked Haman to destroy all of the Jews, **"Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther, Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews. For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this"** (Esther 4:13-14)? The Lord would deliver the Jews from the hand of Haman – if not Esther; then He would use someone else. His great work would be done, but, from Esther's perspective, it remained to be seen whether she would be a willing participant in that great work, or not.

To bring this point home to all

of us, let me say this: The Lord will deliver His children from the hand of Satan and from the bondage of sin – if not you and me, then He will use someone else. Just as Joseph was sold into Egypt so he could be the savior of his father's house and of all Israel – so Esther was raised up and set up as queen so she could deliver all of the Jews. Remember, Mordecai said unto Esther, **"...and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"** Well, in our case, **"Who knoweth?"** Perhaps you and I are set here, in this place and **"time,"** to do the work of God in the saving of souls, and in the work of the church. I believe this is the case, and that we have this great work before us. But, do not forget, if we do not do the great work, God will use someone else to perform it – for His great work shall be accomplished.



The Union of the

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modern liberals and the various false cults in our generation. But it is a well-known historical fact that there have been true churches from the beginning of the Christian Era who believed the orthodox doctrine about the Person of Christ. This is seen from their writings, hymns, and confessions of faith.

The union of the two natures of Christ continues to be an area of discussion. Theologians still ask, "How can the same person be both God and man?" Some seek to avoid these difficulties by denying either His Divinity or humanity. This accounts for the various Christological errors across the centuries. The cause of such heresy may be traced to

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WHAT SPIRITUAL IGNORANCE REALLY IS



The Union of the

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the failure to clearly distinguish between the two natures, or failure to hold tenaciously to the unity of His Person.

Some churches and pastors would lay great stress upon the humanity of Christ, while others would do just the reverse. Some of these errors about the person of Christ deserve a brief study from Church history.

EARLY ERRORS

One of the first errors to disturb the early churches was Ebionism which appeared in the first century. The word "Ebionism" is supposed to have originated from a Hebrew word which means "poor." These ancient heretics denied the Divine nature of Christ. They entertained a low, humanitarian view of His Person.

This error came from a fraction of Judaic Christianity. These people could not reconcile Christ's Godhood with their doctrine of monotheism. While they believed Christ was distinguished from other men by holiness and the fullness of the Spirit, the virgin birth was looked upon as a heathenish fable. This error died out about the close of the first century.

As the Ebionites denied Christ's Divinity, so the Gnostics denied His humanity. This sect arose in the first century (I John 4:1-3) and flourished during the second century. In later times it was called Docetism and Manicheism.

These heretics held that all matter is inherently evil, an idea borrowed from heathen philosophy. Since Christ was pure and holy, they reasoned He could not possess a human body. They maintained Christ merely

appeared in fashion as a man; His earthly manifestation in human form was a phantasm.

ERRORS IN THE FOURTH AND FIFTH CENTURIES

In the fourth century Arius, a bishop of the church at Alexander, Egypt, denied the deity of Christ and His eternal generation from the Father. This error arose from a misunderstanding of the Scriptural account of the incarnation. Some consider Arianism a reactionary movement to other heresies. This dogma was condemned at the Council of Nice in A.D. 325.

Also in the fourth century, Apollinarius, bishop of the church of Laodicea, denied the completeness of Christ's human nature. Justin Martyr preceded him in this view. Apollinarius admitted Christ had a true body and animal soul, but no rational spirit or mind. In Him the eternal Logos supplied the place of human intelligence. The Council of Constantinople condemned Apollinarianism in A. D. 381.

In the fifth century, Nestorius, bishop of the church at Constantinople, made the two natures into two distinct persons. This was a reactionary theory to Apollinarianism. Nestorius made Christ into a defied man. This heresy was condemned at the Council of Ephesus in A. D. 481.

Also in the fifth century Eutyches, an abbot of Constantinople, denied the integrity of our Lord's two natures by combining them so as to form a third nature. This doctrinal error was condemned by the Council of Chalcedon in A. D. 451.

MODERN ERRORS

Modern errors are very numerous. The false cults of our time have revived and revamped

many of the old heresies of the church. Unitarianism is a revival of the old Arian heresy, for it denies the Deity of Christ.

Then there is Christian Science, a religious group which does not follow either Christ or the facts of science. This group has revived Docetism which denies the humanity of Christ.

Millennial Dawnism or Russellism denies the present and personal existence of Christ. Charles Taze Russell, its founder, wrote: "The human Christ is dead, and forever dead" (*Studies in the Scriptures*, V. 454). This error reduces Christ to a myth. They would properly be called "Jehovah's False Witnesses."

Let us continually bear in mind that the great body of people from the beginning of church history believed that Christ was truly a man, was truly God, and in one Person. They could not read and believe the Bible without having these truths engraved on their hearts. Even in the Dark Ages there were true believers and active churches who did not succumb to any of these heresies.

Thank God, even today we still have true churches who contend that in the one Person, Jesus Christ, there are two natures, each in its completeness and integrity, and that these two natures are organically and indissolubly united, yet so that no third nature is formed thereby.

IMPORTANCE OF THE TWO NATURES

Jesus Christ is a true man, not a phantom or abstraction. He is not the complex of properties without the substance of humanity. He is in every sense of the word a true man. In like manner He is truly God with all His Divine attributes.

These two natures, so widely different as to their attributes,

are brought together into a personal union which will last forever. This is the overwhelming testimony of the Holy Scriptures. This is what is called by theologians the hypostatic union, meaning personal union of the two natures.

In thinking, preaching, and writing upon the Person of Christ, we must be careful never to consider Christ as a dual personality. Christ's Divinity is never objective to His humanity, nor His humanity to His Divinity. Christ uniformly speaks of Himself as a single Person. Others spoke of Him in the same manner. There is no interchange of "I" and "he" between the two natures in Christ.

Jesus Christ is the God-man. Students of Christology speak of His theanthropic Person. This word is formed from "Theos," the Greek word for "God," and "anthropos," the Greek word for "man."

THE RELATION OF THE TWO NATURES

Christ, by assuming the human nature, united it to His Divine Person. He who became flesh was still the eternal Word (John 1:14). Being in the form of God, He took to Himself the form of a servant (Phil. 2:6-7). Christ gave up no Divinity when He became a man. He merely laid aside the manifestation of His glory. He could not cease to be God. The properties of each nature remained distinct, notwithstanding this union. The human nature is no loser in not being a person subsisting of itself, for it had a superior subsisting in the Person of the Son of God.

Jesus Christ is one indivisible personality throughout, but His human nature always remained human and His Divine nature

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always retained its Deity. These natures were united but never mingled or confounded. Peter tells us that He was **“put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit”** (I Pet. 3:18). He **“was made of the seed of David according to the flesh”** and remained **“the Son of God with power”** (Rom. 1:3-4).

Divinity cannot cease to be. It is impossible to make an infinite Being into a finite creature or to make a finite creature into a infinite Being. To rob the Divine nature of Christ of one single attribute would result in the destruction of His Deity, or vice versa. No attribute of one nature was ever transferred to the other.

HIS CONSCIOUSNESS OF THESE

Liberal theologians entertain the idea that it was very late in the life of Christ that He suddenly discovered His Divinity. I reject such reasoning as unscriptural. I believe the Divine nature of Christ was fully operative even when He was a babe in Bethlehem.

My Savior was conscious at all times of His Deity. There was no point in His life when He suddenly realized He was God. At the age of twelve He knew God was His real Father (Luke 2:49). Self-consciousness developed only in the human nature. He had both a Divine and human self-consciousness. He sometimes spoke and acted from the Divine and at other times from the human.

CONSEQUENCE OF THE HYPOSTATICAL UNION

One of the most obvious consequences of the hypostatical union is the communion of attributes. He so partook of the

attributes of both natures that whatever may be affirmed of either nature may be affirmed of His Person. Christ was finite and infinite; ignorant and omniscient; He was less than God and equal with God; He existed from eternity and was born in time. Many Scriptures explain this truth.

There are some passages which use titles of Him that apply to His whole Person. Some of these are Redeemer, Lord, King, Prophet, Priest, Shepherd, and Mediator. These titles speak of the actions and work true of the God-man.

Second, other Scriptures make His Person the subject, but the predicate is true of the Divine nature. Our Master said: **“Before Abraham was, I am”** (John 8:58). In John 17:5 He spoke of the glory He had before the world was.

Third, there are texts in which the Person is the subject, but the predicate is true only of the human nature. On the cross He said: **“I thirst”** (John 19:28). It is written in John 11:35 that Jesus wept over the death of Lazarus. All of those verses which speak of the Savior walking, eating, and sleeping fit into this category.

Fourth, there are Scriptures in which the Person is denominated from the human nature when the predicate is true only of the Divine nature. Observe the words of John 6:62 which reads: **“What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?”**

At other times the reverse is true. In these the Divine nature is denominated when the predicate is true of only the human nature. In Revelation 1:12-18 there is a revelation of Christ's glory and Deity. Yet in verse 18 He is called the One who **“was dead,”** an attribute possible only for the

humanity of Christ.

Such Scriptures can only be explained by the mystery of the union of His two natures. the attributes and powers of both natures are ascribed to the one Christ. The work and dignities are ascribed to one Person in a way inexplicable, except upon the union of the two natures.

THE VALUE OF THIS

Jesus Christ was not two separate persons. All His acts were ascribed to the whole Person. It is this truth which gives merit and efficiency to His work. This is distinctly seen in the New Testament writings.

The suffering of the Savior at Calvary were the sufferings of a Person who was Divine. Those who put Him to death **“crucified the Lord of glory”** (I Cor. 2:8). Such a title as **“the Lord of glory”** is too great for any creature to bear. This title implies the inseparable connection of Christ's humanity and Deity. The One who had a glory with the Father before the earth was created was nailed to the tree (John 17:4, 24).

The blood which was shed at Mount Calvary was the blood of God. Acts 20:28 speaks of **“the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”** Jesus Christ is God. The union between the two natures was so close that the blood He poured out is called the blood of God. This is what really put dignity and worth to the atonement which He made.

It is because Christ was possessed of an eternal Spirit that He by one offering perfected forever those who are sanctified (Heb. 10:13-14; 9:14). This is why His sacrifice never needs to be repeated and why it is infinitely more efficacious than those in the Old Testament times. Let

all redeemed men eternally cry: **“Jesus, my God, thy blood alone has power sufficient to atone.”**

If only a mere man died on the cross of Calvary, then we have no Savior and are yet in our sins. It was not a martyr who died at Mount Calvary. It was God the mighty Maker who died for man's sins. If a real atonement has been made for our sins, then Divinity suffered in our place. Away with the modern notion that Divinity could not suffer, even if it desired to do so. The full penalty of the sins of the chosen people could only have been borne by a Divine Being. To deny this is to rob the cross of its Divine Christ.

Our justification before God is a product of the union of the two natures in Christ. Believers are **“made the righteousness of God”** in Christ, for the righteousness of Christ is the righteousness of the great God. The gospel of Christ reveals **“the righteousness of God”** (Rom. 1:17). By the obedience of the God-man all who believe are justified from all things (Rom. 5:19).

If it were not for the union of the two natures in Christ, He could not be the object of worship. To worship a mere man would be blasphemy and idolatry. He who Thomas worshipped was both Lord and God. The saints in Heaven worship the God-man (Rev. 5:9). To deny the Deity of Christ is to dethrone the Slain Lamb from the throne in Heaven and fill the vacant seat with a man for the homage of the redeemed and the adoration of the elect angels.

*Jesus, my God, I know His name,
His name is all my trust;
Nor will He put my soul to shame,
Nor let my hope be lost.*





Why We Should Love the Jewish People

By Ivan Foster
of Northern Ireland

"Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:1-3).

It is clear from the first words spoken to Abraham, from whom sprang the Jewish people, that he and his descendants would be those about whom there would a division of opinions. There would be those that would **"bless"** them and there would be those who would **"curse"** them! Those that **"bless"** them would be blessed of God and those that **"cursed"** them would be cursed of God. They were, in Heaven's eyes, a very special people.

On this day in 1945, there took place the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau Nazi concentration camp. With that event the world was given irrefutable evidence of the cruel and satanic attack upon the Jewish people by Nazi Germany. It has been set as a day to remember that dreadful wickedness.

Today I want to tell you why we should and must love the Jewish people.

1. Our Blessed Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, was a Jew.

We are given the Saviour's ancestry repeatedly in the Holy Scriptures.

"The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham" (Matthew 1:1).

"Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh" (Rom. 1:3).

"Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen" (Rom. 9:4-5).

The Lord Jesus was the Son of God but He took into union with His divine nature, spotless human nature, being born of the Virgin Mary. By race, He was a Jew! How can we not love that people of whom our blessed Redeemer sprang?

2. The Jews Gave Us the Holy Scriptures.

The Bible you hold in your hands is a Jewish book. The writers, inspired by God, were almost all Jews. Since we do not know who wrote the book of Job, we make that the only exception.

What a blessing has come to the world from these blessed Scriptures!

"What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God" (Rom. 3:1-2).

"For what nation is there so

great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God is in all things that we call upon Him for? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day" (Deut. 4:7-8)?

3. They Became God's

Missionaries to Us in Europe and to All the World.

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). The eleven men thus commissioned with the task of telling the world the glorious message of salvation were all Jews. How we rejoice in their obedience and in their sacrifice, for each one with the exception of John died as a martyr for the cause of Christ.

"And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; there stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them. Therefore loosing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis; And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony; and we were in that city abiding certain days" (Acts 16:8-12).

Here is the entrance of the gospel into Europe.

"After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem,

saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome" (Acts 19:21).

The gospel is moving further west and nearer to us here in Ireland.

"Whosoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your company" (Rom. 15:24).

The westward movement continues and the light was soon to dawn in the British Isles.

Today we salute those, chiefly Jews, whose labours brought us that light.

4. We Should Love the Jews

Because of the Terrible Suffering They Must Yet Face.

While marking the sufferings under Nazism, we sadly note what the Saviour tells us regarding the future of the Jewish people. The Lord Jesus tells us that the Jewish people will go through great tribulation under the Antichrist. It must be said that by rejecting their Messiah and by uttering those dreadful words, recorded in Matthew 27:24-25: **"When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children,"** the Jewish nation brought upon their heads the terrible wrath of God.

Of this the Saviour had warned. **"Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall**

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ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city; That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation. O Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Matt. 23:34-39).

The Saviour warns of future suffering, greater than any yet endured, which will come upon the Jewish people in the days of the Antichrist. "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house; Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day; For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of

the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened" (Matt. 24:15-22).

5. God Will Yet Bless the World Through the Jew.

They who were the means under God of bringing the gospel to the world 2000 years ago, will yet be used of God in an even greater way in the future. God is not yet finished with the Jews!

Listen to these words of Paul. "I say then, Hath God cast away His people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which He foreknew..." (Rom. 11:1-2).

"I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid; but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness" (Rom. 11:11-12)?

"For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead" (Rom. 11:15)?

"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins" (Rom. 11:25-

27).

There is a future, a great and glorious future for the Jew!

"And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. 19:28).

"That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Luke 22:30).

6. A Promise of Blessing is Given to Those that Love Israel.

"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee" (Psa. 122:6).

Peace will one day come to Jerusalem as a result of the prayers of God's people. The peace that will come will then fill the world.

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publish peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth" (Isa. 52:7)!

"Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her: That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory. For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees. As one whom his mother comforteth, so will

I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem. And when ye see this, your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb: and the hand of the LORD shall be known toward his servants, and His indignation toward His enemies" (Isa. 66:10-14).

It will be a day of peace for the world.

"And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isa. 2:4).

"He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire" (Psa. 46:9).

"They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. 11:9).

This, very briefly, is a setting forth of the glorious future God has planned for the Jewish people and through them for the world.

Ought we not therefore to love them and pray for them now that God would hasten the day of their redemption and that of the world?

"Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things, And blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen, and Amen" (Psa. 72:18-19).

(Watching And Waiting, Oct. - Dec. 2016).



Volunteers for Jesus

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step they call baptism. Whatever their requirements, their aim is to secure volunteers for Jesus: hence our title. They think by their methods to make disciples for Christ. They think their scheme produces genuine Christians headed for heaven.

As a boy growing up in Oklahoma I attended various “singings,” community “homecomings,” cemetery “decoration days” and “revival” services as well as regular church meetings. I remember singing the song “As A Volunteer.” The chorus of that song goes “A volunteer for Jesus, A soldier true, Others have enlisted, Why not you? Jesus is the Captain, We will never fear, Will you be enlisted as a volunteer?” That song is probably out of fashion today as so called “gospel music” has gone through various phases in its downgrade. But the philosophy behind that song is as popular as ever. After all the Bible says “**evil men and seducers shall [continue to] wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived**” (II Tim. 3:13 – brackets added). And volunteerism for Jesus is a deception! All this volunteerism, of course, is based upon the notion that sinners are capable of volunteering. We say again: volunteering for Jesus is based upon the misconception that sinners have the ability to come to Christ in a saving way without any interference from God.

Today, most of what is called “evangelical Christianity” has done away with the draft. They no longer believe that God has a conscription policy by which He selects and inducts into His service whom He pleases. Various objections as to the fairness of God’s conscription program

continue to be raised by those who believe individuals have the ability to volunteer for Jesus. God’s answer to such as object to the way He drafts His soldiers was written by Paul in Romans 9:20-21: “**Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?**” In other words, if we may paraphrase, Paul says to all those volunteers for Jesus, ‘Just who do you think you are, daring to question God? God has the right to do whatever He wants with His creation.’ Paul had just previously stated these words: “**What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy**” (Rom. 9:14-16). But modern Christianity has espoused the idea of individuals volunteering for Jesus. They will not be divorced from that notion even by God’s Word! They think the new birth comes about by an act of man’s will. It matters not to them that the Bible says, “**it is not of him that willeth.**”

Is there Scripture to substantiate our claim that God does not accept volunteers? We believe that there is. Christ’s rejection of volunteers was complete. As far as the New Testament record is concerned, there is not a single instance of Christ accepting a volunteer. Let us look at four instances of volunteerism in the Gospels. In each of these the Lord Jesus spoke words –

demanding words – which caused the volunteer to go away from Him. Jesus did not mistakenly say things that caused these men to give up their volunteerism. We can say that with full assurance because the Lord Jesus “**needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man**” (John 2:25). His words were direct, pointed and achieved what He intended them to accomplish.

First consider these excerpts from the meeting of the rich young ruler with Jesus. “**And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?... Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions**” (Matt. 19:16, 21-22). This young man claimed to be blameless as far as the Old Testament law was concerned. (Paul made that same claim in Philippians 3:6). He was no doubt a fine young man. He was volunteering to do whatever Jesus told him to do – he thought. But the Lord Jesus, knowing his heart, told him to do that which the young man could not bear to do. Christ told him to sell all that he owned, give the proceeds to the poor and then come and follow Him. The young man’s volunteerism was short lived. The Scripture says “**he went away sorrowful.**” Christ never required any other person in the Scripture to sell all their possessions. But He pointed His words at the true love of the young man: his riches. Many professing Christians today – volunteers – are willing to follow the Lord as long as they can keep their comfortable affluent

lifestyle. As long as their kind of following after Christ does not affect what they have, they are willing to volunteer for Jesus. But Christ did not accept that kind of volunteerism then and we have no reason to believe that He accepts it today.

Another instance of volunteerism which Jesus rejected is seen in these verses: “**And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head**” (Luke 9:57-58). Here was a man who seemed quite enthusiastic. He openly declared that he would follow the Lord wherever it took him. But he seemed to think that following the Lord would eventually result in ease. Perhaps he was expecting the Lord to immediately receive His kingdom. Perhaps he thought he would be elevated to a higher position: one of power and wealth. The Lord’s pointed words about His own poverty seem intended to cause this man to reconsider and leave. The context gives us every reason to believe that this man gave up his volunteerism.

In proximity to the last two quoted verses we have another two which tell of a similar volunteer. We read: “**And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God**” (Luke 9:61-62). This man had such ties with family and friends that he was willing to put off following the Lord for a time of farewells

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with them. Perhaps he expected a going-away feast or party. Again we point out that the Lord Jesus knew all about this man. And based upon what He knew, He spoke pointed words of rebuke to him. It seems clear that this was the end of his volunteerism.

A fourth instance of volunteerism in which the words of Jesus caused would-be followers to leave Him is seen in this passage: **“But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father. From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him”** (John 6:64-66). These words of Jesus were spoken to some who were actually viewed as His disciples. They are called that. Again the supernatural knowledge of the Son of God is stated. Jesus knew not only that Judas would betray Him, but He also knew from the beginning who believed not. Some of these unbelievers were viewed as disciples of His, but they were not true believers. No doubt they considered themselves to be followers of the Lamb. Notice the word “therefore.” The adage is “whenever you read a wherefore or a therefore ask yourself what is it there for.” The word “therefore” connects what Jesus said with what He knew in this case. In other words, it was because Jesus knew those who were unbelievers that He aimed His words at them. He knew what the results of His words would be. And He said them in light of that knowledge. And what were the results of

Jesus speaking of man’s inability to volunteer to be His disciple? They left Him and never came back! Volunteers for Jesus do not stick! They are not genuine!

Revelation 17:14 speaks of those who will be victorious over the ten kings. It says **“they that are with him [Christ] are called, and chosen, and faithful.”** (Brackets added). No volunteers in that army! God called them. God chose them. And as a result of His working in them they are steadfast! Neither do Paul’s words speak of volunteering for Jesus. He wrote in II Timothy 2:4: **“No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.”** No volunteering for Jesus in this army either! Paul wrote that God’s soldiers are chosen: chosen by God. To the congregation at Rome Paul wrote: **“Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ”** (Rom. 1:6). The saints at Rome had not volunteered for Jesus. They had been called! Their call had been effective – it resulted in their true discipleship. The words of assurance in the first part of Romans 8:28 are **“to them who are the called according to his purpose.”** Volunteers for Jesus have no assurance that all things work together for good to them! The words of the Lord Himself in Matthew 20:16 are these: **“So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.”** No volunteers for Jesus among those who shall be first. They are chosen! Paul himself certainly was not a volunteer for Jesus. God spoke about Paul to Ananias saying, **“Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me...”** (Acts 9:15). Anyone who reads the account of Paul’s arrest on the Damascus road cannot seriously attempt to say that

Paul was a volunteer for Jesus! God told Ananias that He (God) had chosen Paul! Furthermore there was not a single volunteer for Jesus who saw Him after His resurrection. Proof: **“Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead”** (Acts 10:40-41). All the witnesses of Christ’s resurrection were before that time chosen by God! The disciple Rufus was not a volunteer for Jesus for we read Paul’s words: **“Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine”** (Rom. 16:13). In fact, as far as both Paul and Peter are concerned, those who are saved are not volunteers for Jesus. They are all chosen ones! Paul wrote in Ephesians 1:4: **“According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.”** Peter’s words are similar in I Peter 2:9 where he wrote: **“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.”** Jude summed it up thus in the first verse of his letter: **“Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called.”** Jude wrote to Christians, saying that they were set apart, preserved, and then called. No volunteers for Jesus there! God called them!

Can there be anything plainer than the words of Christ Himself in John 6:44-45? He said: **“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. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.” A sinner can volunteer to go forward. He can voluntarily pray the sinner’s prayer. He can volunteer to be baptized. He can volunteer to preach. He can volunteer to teach, and to witness, and to pass out tracts. He can volunteer to be a missionary. He can voluntarily do a lot of things. But he cannot be a volunteer for Jesus. He might think that he can. But he cannot! Unless God draws him, he will not, and cannot come to Christ in a saving way. Only those who have heard the effectual (effective) call of God which gives life to the spiritually dead – unless he has learned of the Father – unless God has chosen to teach him – to deal with him – he will be just a volunteer for religion. He may think he has volunteered for Jesus. He may sing about it. He may go to hear preaching that tells him that he can be a volunteer. But the truth is, he cannot! Merriam Webster defines the word volunteer as “a person who voluntarily undertakes or expresses a willingness to undertake a service.” No sinner ever did that relative to Christ! Not apart from the working of God in him. No sinner ever came in a saving way to Christ of his own accord – that is, apart from the work of God in his heart – the work of regeneration. In this thing the theologians call regeneration – the new birth – a holy disposition is given to the mind. That mind of man which by natural birth is enmity against God must be changed so as to cause the sinner to see himself

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. Could you please comment on I Timothy 1:8? -Mississippi

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I Timothy 1:8 declares: **“But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully.”** Paul’s introductory admonitions to the young preacher named Timothy involved warning him against false and ignorant teachers. They sought to divert attention away from the glorious Gospel of Christ and the holy doctrines associated with it by focusing on fables, genealogies, unprofitable questions, and a false interpretation and use of the law. There were many false teachers and heretics in the early days of Christianity who desired to sow discord and heresies in the Lord’s churches. These folks needed to be identified (Rom. 16:17-18) and their mouths that were full of poisonous heresy had to be stopped (Titus 1:9-14).

One of the most prevalent heresies was the wrong or unlawful use of the law. There were many who insisted that the law had to be observed and obeyed in order for someone to be saved, thus diminishing the finished work of Christ as revealed in the Gospel. The law was never intended to save or justify anyone! Galatians 2:16 and 3:11-13 clearly reveal the law is powerless to save or justify a guilty sinner. Salvation is bound up entirely in the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord

Jesus Christ (Rom. 10:43; 13:38-39; I Cor. 15:1-4). Therefore any attempt to add to the perfect work of Christ either to be saved or stay saved must be viewed as heresy. Salvation, forgiveness, redemption, and justification are all of free grace received by the guilty sinner through the unmerited gift of saving faith (Rom. 3:24-28; 4:1-8; 5:1-2; 5:6-10; Eph. 2:8-10; Titus 3:4-7).

Just because someone misuses or falsely interprets the nature and use of the law in no way should diminish the goodness and holiness of the law. God’s moral law is a revelation of His holiness, perfection, and righteousness (Rom. 7:12; Psalm 19:7-9). The Lord Jesus Christ loved, obeyed, fulfilled, honored, and magnified the law. Those who are born of the Spirit, created in Christ Jesus, and desirous of being conformed to His image ought to love and delight in the law (Rom. 7:22; Psalm 1:1-3; 119:1-4). Believers ought to love that which God loves and hate that which He hates. In a very real way the law reveals the holiness of God and His hatred for sin, therefore the law should never be viewed as an enemy of the child of God.

John Gill had an interesting comment on I Timothy 1:8:

“A lawful use of the law is to obey it, as in the hands of Christ, the King of saints, and lawgiver in His church, from a principle of love to Him, in the exercise of faith on Him, without any mercenary selfish views, without trusting to, or depending on, what is done in obedience to it, but with a view to the glory of God,

to testify our subjection to Christ, and our gratitude to Him for favors received from Him.” (Vol. 9, p. 274).

To use the law unlawfully would involve interpreting it falsely as revealed by two heretical extremes. To disregard the importance of the law altogether as it relates to Christ and the believer is antinomianism. To teach that obedience to the law in any way saves or preserves salvation is legalism or works salvation. Because of my inseparable Union with Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit I love God’s law so I am not an antinomian. Because I am trusting only in the perfect life, sacrificial death, and glorious resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ to save and justify me, I cannot be a legalist. This is the acknowledgment that the law is good. It is also a right use of the law in my estimation as revealed in Holy Scripture.

A word to lost sinners is in order with regard to the law. The moral law of God reveals your sin, corruption, and rebellion against God. The law demands perfect obedience every moment of every day with no allowance for failure. The law reveals just how wicked you are in the sight of a holy God. The law reveals how far short you are from fulfilling God’s perfect standard of righteousness (Rom. 3:23). The law condemns you and pronounces you guilty and deserving of an eternity of wrath. Your only hope is in Jesus Christ alone. Acts 13:38-39 declares: **“Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.”**

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“But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully” (I Tim. 1:8). Actually, the law is always good from God’s perspective. It is when man’s flawed intellect and depraved heart enters the equation that God’s eternal law(s) becomes something other than unqualified “good.” Selah! Think about it!

And that is the purpose of these first thoughts of the Apostle Paul to Timothy. **“Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned”** (I Tim. 1:5). The end, or purpose, of the commandment/law is love. The law has always been a good thing for men and women. Love is the purpose of it, and the end goal of its being written, either on paper, or in the hearts of men. Primarily it is the love of God toward us, in that He is instructing us through the law how to live righteously and with holy awareness of God’s desires for our lives.

But it is also a reciprocating love toward God and a reverence of His will. His commandments are not grievous to His children, but rather they are a rejoicing of giving us purpose, fulfillment and acceptance among the beloved. Holy living according to God’s law will affect multitudes of our fellow men in the most positive and loving way, and a nation that aligns its statutes and ordinances after the Bible’s commandments will be a most blessed nation.

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. What is the meaning of the curse of David in Psalms 69:22-23 and also in Romans 11:9-10? – Idaho

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“Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none. They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink. Let their table become a snare before them: and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap. Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not; and make their loins continually to shake. Pour out thine indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful anger take hold of them. Let their habitation be desolate; and let none dwell in their tents. For they persecute him whom thou hast smitten...” (Ps. 69:20-26). Psalm 69 is a powerful Messianic psalm that has many prophecies fulfilled at Calvary itself. Imagine those soldiers, etc. that offered our Lord the gall and vinegar, not knowing they were fulfilling a centuries-old prophecy. Selah! Think about it!

However the psalm goes on in this passage to pronounce a curse upon the generation of Jews that rejected their Messiah. His own people that had the **“oracles of God”** (Rom.3:2); that had a **“table”** of bounty (our text) and

those that He had come to present salvation unto, both as individuals and a nation (should have been for their welfare)- rejected Him. **“He came unto his own, and his own received him not”** (John 1:11). Dark and terrible words are pronounced here by David, the sweet psalmist, for those that refused to believe in the words and works of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. **“He is despised and rejected of men; ...he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God (see text), and afflicted”** (Isa. 53:3-4).

“And he said unto the disciples, The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it. ...But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation” (Luke 17:22, 25). **“The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here. The men of Nineve shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here. ...That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation; From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which**

perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation” (Luke 11:31-32;50-51).

In Romans 11:9-10, this curse is quoted by the Apostle Paul and he reveals to the Gentiles that the season of salvation for them is occurring between Daniel’s 69th and 70th weeks. **“And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself...”** (Dan. 9:26). **“I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. ...For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in”** (Rom. 11:11, 25). The conclusion (end of Matt. 24:13) of the fullness of the Gentiles will be the PriTrib rapture of the saints of the church age, where God will start the clock on Israel’s 70th week as the last trump is sounded.

That this terrible curse has followed the Jews is commonplace reading in the history books. Except for the grace of God, this rejection curse would have destroyed them. But God has not cast away His people forever, but will return as promised to save them. **“And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced...”** (Zech. 12:9-10). **“And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven:**

and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory” (Matt. 24:30). **“And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. ...And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God”** (Rev. 19:11, 15). Selah! Think about that glorious day!

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The passage in Psalm 69 is part of a Messianic prophecy relating to the Jews original rejection of Christ in the First Advent and the horrific judgments they would suffer as a people as a result. John 1:11 declares: **“He came unto his own but his own received him not.”** The Jews were so blinded by their depravity, self-righteousness, and legalism they could not see or embrace the glories of the Messiah. Instead, when Pilate tried to reason with them of the just Christ they demanded His death by crucifixion and cried out, **“Let his blood be upon us, and upon our children.”** The curse of this prophecy has had a stark fulfillment over the past 2000 years as the Jews for the most part have been blinded to the glories of the Gospel. They are

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Forum #1

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"The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations. Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD" (Ps. 33:11-12).

In our text passage, the Apostle takes into account that this wondrous law of God might be considered "bad" in the sense that it might be abused by sinners and particularly, those in positions of authority. Ignorant users of the law were trying to teach an abominable "version" of the truth. **"From which (the Law-tms) some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling; Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm" (I Tim. 1:6-7).** This is where our text verse comes in, following this aberrant rendering of God's holy law into something it was never meant to be. **"But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully" the Apostle asserts.**

Certainly, the Pharisees did a monstrous job of corrupting the commandments of God. **"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. ...Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! ...Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity" (Matt. 23:23-28).** The Lord continues His scathing denunciation of

them in Mark 7:7-13, **"Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. ... Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye."**

"Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers" (I Tim. 1:9). The Apostles conclude their defense of the law with a clear picture of its value and application. **"What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet" (Rom. 7:7).** **"Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed" (James 1:21-25).** That is a

lawful use of the law. Selah! Think about it!

MATTHEW STEPP



Forum #2

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snared by their unbelief, view the Gospel as a stumbling block, and are unable to see the free grace revealed in the finished work of the Messiah.

In spite of the stiff neck, rebellion, and blindness of the Jews, Romans chapter 11 provides a ray of hope for God's elect nation. God will not cast them off forever. After the fullness of the Gentiles be come in (Rom. 11:25) God is going to pour out the Spirit of grace and supplications and will regenerate elect Israel enabling them to enjoy the blessings of the new covenant (Zech. 12:10). God will grant elect Israel repentance and give them the grace to believe the Gospel (Rom. 11:26-29).

TOM ROSS



Volunteers for Jesus

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as hopeless, and helpless, and to sorrow for his sins. The sinner comes to see himself as an offense to God! That godly sorrow results in repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. (See Rom. 8:7-8; II Cor. 7:20; Acts 20:21). So it is God who takes the initiative in those who come to Jesus. If there is any volunteerism in the new birth, it is that the triune God volunteers to save unworthy sinners.

If you, reader, are only a volunteer for Jesus you are yet in your sins. Cease trusting in what you have done. Your prayers, decision, religious rituals, self confidence, and all that goes along

with volunteerism – cast it upon the dung-heap! The only hope of any sinner is Christ! Cast yourself upon the grace of God! Trust only in the finished work of Christ! If you are able – if you are enabled to do so – come to Christ as you are, trusting only in His finished work – it will be God working in you. Consider: **"...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).** And may **"the Lord give thee understanding in all things" (II Tim. 2:7).**



The Faith, Faithfulness, Failures, and Fate of Moses

By Christopher W. Burke, Sr.
of Catlettsburg, Kentucky

Our message consists of four points about the man Moses, which I hope will both honor our subject as well as be a blessing to God's people.



I. CONSIDER THE FAITH OF MOSES (READ HEBREWS 11:23-27).

I want to consider 5 thoughts from this passage...

1. By faith Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

Moses did not care about

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Faith, Faithfulness

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earthly titles, and he did not care about Pharaoh's throne! He did not want to be called an Egyptian, even if it meant being the king of Egypt! Moses wanted to be called the son of his own mom and dad, Mr. and Mrs. Moses. He wanted to be numbered with his own people, even if that meant suffering reproach as a Jew – so what is new? That has always been the way of life for God's people...the way of suffering, the way of reproach, and the way of persecution.

2. Secondly, by faith Moses chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

Moses had plenty of opportunity in Pharaoh's palace to be familiar with the many pleasures of sin. But by faith in his God, he cared nothing for it! Yes, beloved, there is a pleasure of sin, but it is only for a season. It is only for a short time, and then the pleasure turns to pain, and heartache, and misery, and finally death...and that without remedy! And yes, it takes a lot of faith to choose to suffer affliction with the people of God, rather than enjoy all the pleasures that sin has to offer!

3. Thirdly, by faith Moses esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt.

What is more valuable, beloved, all the wealth in Egypt or the eternal wealth of Christ? Well, where is the wealth of Egypt now? Where is the wealth of great Babylon now? And some day men will be asking, where is the wealth of America now? Where is the wealth of rich men when they die? It is gone, and it is soon forgotten along with them.

But where is Moses' wealth

in Christ today? It is eternal in the Heavens where moth or rust cannot corrupt, and thieves cannot break in and steal. Beloved, labor not for temporal wealth that perishes, but for the eternal riches of Christ in glory! Remember Moses, the man who had it all, and threw it all away in favor of Christ, and the true, lasting riches of glory!

4. Fourthly, by faith Moses forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king.

Moses did not want anything to do with Egypt. He wanted out of that place. He wanted to be in God's country with God's people. He told old Pharaoh that **“there shall not an hoof be left behind.”** They were getting out of Egypt and they were not comin' back no more, no more, no more! And Moses did not leave anything behind when he left!

God help us to get out of Egypt and to stay out of that cursed place. God help us to find our home and happiness in God's country with God's people. It takes faith to do this, beloved!

5. Fifthly, by faith Moses endured as seeing Him who is invisible.

Moses, how can you do all these things? How can you deny earthly power and wealth, and the pleasures of sin for a season? How can you endure reproach and persecution as a child of God? The answer; by seeing Him who is invisible! Is that not really what faith is? We believe in the Almighty God of Heaven, Who can do all things, Who has power to save us, and power to keep us, and power to bless us – and yet we have never seen Him! Lord give us the faith of Moses, that we, too, might see the invisible God, and win the victory over Egypt!

II. CONSIDER THE FAITHFULNESS OF MOSES.

We have seen the faith of Moses, now we want to observe that faith produces faithfulness. People are inclined to be devoted and committed to things they really believe in, and things they believe are really worth their time and effort. A child of God with great faith, who really believes that Christ is worth their time, and worth their substance, and worth their labor, will exhibit great faithfulness to the Lord and His cause. Well, Moses was just such a man of great faith, and consequently he was a man of great faithfulness to his God.

The Bible says in Hebrews 3:5 that Moses was faithful in all his house.

Moses was very faithful over all that God put in his charge. When Miriam and Aaron challenged the authority and leadership of their brother Moses in Numbers 12, God told those 2 rebel rousers that His servant Moses was faithful in all His House. Why is it that people in the church who are far less faithful to the Lord, are the ones who challenge God's faithful ministers who have given their entire lives, and all their substance, and everything they have to serving the Lord? Probably because they are envious and jealous of the man of God whom the Lord has set over His work.

First, Moses was faithful to the people of Israel, who were God's household.

For 40 long years Moses was faithful to God's people by committed and dedicated service to them.

He was faithful to provide for God's people. He gave them manna from Heaven and water from the rock. Now, we know it was the Lord, but He used Moses to give them all these things.

He was faithful in judging God's people to insure that justice was

done among them.

He was faithful to lead God's people and direct them in the way the Lord would have them to go.

He was faithful to mediate for them when they sinned against God, when God would have utterly destroyed them on numerous occasions, but Moses stood in the breach and pleaded for them.

Yes beloved, Moses was faithful over all the household of God over which God had made him the overseer. Would to God that this could be said of us pastors who have been given a similar charge over the flock of God!

And even more importantly, Moses was faithful in all the House of God. That is, he was faithful in all the holy things pertaining to God's House.

Moses was faithful to the Word of God. He was faithful to write the inerrant Word of God as he was inspired by God, and then he was faithful to administer the Word of God to the people of God. Moses taught the truth of God's Word just as he received it from the Lord. He did not alter it; he did not embellish it; he did not pick and choose what he would teach. But Moses was faithful to teach all the Words that God gave him, exactly as He gave them. God help us to do the same.

Moses was faithful in his duties to build God's House exactly according to the pattern given to him by God in the mount. He did not change or alter one single stitch! Everything God told Him to do was necessary and important, and that is how Moses built it. Christ built His House, His Church in the New Testament, exactly according to His pattern, and it is our duty to continue building His churches exactly according to the pattern

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Faith, Faithfulness

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He gave us in His Word. God help us to be like Moses, and faithfully build the House of God today!

Moses was faithful to intercede for God's people in prayer; to seek God's forgiveness for their sins, and to seek God's loving favor in their behalf. May God give us a heart to pray for God's people today, and to intercede in their behalf. That should be the heart of every pastor!

He was faithful in revealing the Messiah to God's people. Remember, people were saved back then the same way they are saved today. There has only ever been one way of salvation. People had to hear about Christ, and I am confident that Moses was faithful in preaching the Gospel to them.

In all these things, Moses never faltered in His faithfulness in all his house. Pastors and church members would do well to consider the faithfulness of Moses, that we might emulate him, and strive to be faithful over all our house; especially we who are pastors, whose responsibilities are similar to those of Moses. May it be said of you and I that "he was faithful in all his house."

III. CONSIDER THE FAILURES OF MOSES.

Moses had great faith, and Moses was very faithful in all his house. And yet, Moses was still a sinner saved by grace. He was subject to sinning just as other men are. He was a man of like passions, and at times he sinned, and did things that were displeasing to God.

Moses questioned God at times. He questioned his own calling and his own ability to be the leader of God's people...as if God did not know what He was doing when He called Moses to lead His people!

Moses also questioned why God

called him to lead such a rebellious people, who constantly murmured and complained about God's provisions, and about Moses. Maybe we pastors have questioned God for the same reason! But it is not our place to question God!

Moses sometimes complained to God when the children of Israel rebelled against God, and rebelled against his God given authority to lead them. Oh boy, how pastors today can relate to this!

Moses got angry at times, and all too often he let his anger show in ways that were harmful to his own cause, and to the cause of God.

In anger he broke the tables of stone, when Israel worshipped the golden calf which Aaron had made. Although God did not charge Moses with a trespass in this case, Moses' anger still got the better of him.

In anger Moses smote the rock twice. We read in Numbers 20, verses 10-12, **"And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also. And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them."**

In this case Moses was charged with sin because he failed to sanctify the Lord in the eyes of the people. This cost him and Aaron their entrance into the promised land.

So then we see that Moses was not perfect. He was said to be **"...very meek, above all the men**

which were upon the face of the earth" (Num. 12:3), yet he got angry, and he complained, and he questioned God. He was a sinner still. Moses was a great man of God, but He also had his share of shortcomings.

So when you consider your pastor, and you look to him for an impeccable example for you to follow – just remember that Moses, one of the greatest leaders in the history of Israel, also had his failures and his shortcomings. The best of men will fail us at times. Only Christ is a perfect example for us to follow.

IV. CONSIDER THE FATE OF MOSES (READ DEUTERONOMY 34:1-7).

"And Moses the servant of the Lord died." This is the sad end of Moses' life, because he died before he could enter the promised land. He saw it from Pisgah's lofty heights, but God would not let him go in. Why? Because of that one sin when he smote the rock twice. Moses wanted to go in so badly. He tried to talk the Lord into letting him go in, but the Lord would not let him. **"And I besought the LORD at that time, saying, O Lord GOD, thou hast begun to shew thy servant thy greatness, and thy mighty hand: for what God is there in heaven or in earth, that can do according to thy works, and according to thy might? I pray thee, let me go over, and see the good land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain, and Lebanon. But the LORD was wroth with me for your sakes, and would not hear me: and the LORD said unto me, Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto me of this matter"** (Deut. 23-26).

Moses asked God for many things in his lifetime, but this was one thing God would not let him

have. One sin kept both Moses and Aaron out of the promised land. This was truly an example of the saying, "so close, yet so very far away." From Pisgah's lofty heights Moses could see all the good land God promised His people. He had spoken so much about it to God's people, how they would conquer the inhabitants of the land, and how they would inherit the blessings of this rich and fruitful land and divide it among themselves for an inheritance forever...but because of one sin, Moses was not allowed in.

Moses died there in the land of Moab, and God buried him. God brought Moses to life to save His people from their bondage in Egypt. God preserved his life when Pharaoh would have had him killed as an infant. God made Moses a great leader, a compassionate intercessor, an obedient servant, and a faithful friend of God and His people. And at the end of his life, God buried him. Moses is the only man that I know of that God buried. I do not know what significance there was in God burying Moses, but if I have to be buried, I would not mind if God buried me.

It is kind of odd, but no one knew where God buried Moses. But had they known, they probably would have made a shrine out of his tomb and worshipped it. I suppose that is why God buried him.

And it said in verse 7 that Moses' natural force was not abated, and his eye was not dim. In other words, he was in perfect health at 120 years of age. It was just God's time for him to die, plain and simple. Even perfect health will not prevent us from dying when it is our time to go!!!

Finally, we want to see Moses one last time. **"And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and**

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Faith, Faithfulness

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James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them. And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them. And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus. And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias” (Mark 9:2-5).

The final appearance of Moses was here in the New Testament on the mount of transfiguration. Moses, what more could you ask or hope for, as you stand with the blessed Lord Jesus Christ and behold His glory? Not the back parts of God as you saw once before, but face to face with Christ your Saviour. Now he had seen everything any man could ever hope to see...he saw the glorified Son of God!

CONCLUSION

What lessons might we learn from this message?

1. Remember the faith of Moses and get out of Egypt and stay out!
2. Remember the faithfulness of Moses and be faithful to what God has called you to do.
3. Remember the failures of Moses and learn from his mistakes to be a better Christian.
4. And remember the fate of Moses, that one day we, too, will see the glory of the Lord face to face! Not in the promised land of Canaan, but in the promised land of Heaven itself.

May God bless the message to your hearts is our prayer!



THE

BIBLE AND THE NEWSPAPER

Readers of the BBB are urged to submit religious news items which they may read in their local paper or some other publication. In sending these please give the name of the publication as well as the date it was printed. We will not be able to print all which are submitted, but we welcome any item you may feel we should read.

Send them to The Berea Baptist Banner, PO Box 39, Mantachie, MS 38855-0039.

FEDS PUSH BACK ON STATE DEFUNDING OF PLANNED PARENTHOOD

(WNS)--The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) closed public comments Oct. 7 on new regulations that would keep states from defunding Planned Parenthood. In its proposal, HHS said that state attempts to channel Title X funding away from the abortion giant to other qualified healthcare entities led to “deleterious effects.” After the Center for Medical Progress released videos revealing that Planned Parenthood sells the body parts of aborted babies, 14 states attempted to strip Planned Parenthood funding. Title X of the Public Health Services Act, an allocation of taxpayer dollars to family-planning services, stipulates that “projects” must not be abortion providers and may not even promote abortions to patients. But Planned Parenthood receives roughly \$60 million a year through Title X by certifying that no federal dollars fund their abortions.

MASSACHUSETTS CHURCHES SUE OVER ‘ANTI-BIAS’ LAW

(WNS)--Four Massachusetts churches and their pastors filed a pre-emptive lawsuit in October in an attempt to halt application of a newly amended state law requiring pastors to temper their speech and churches to allow transgender persons to use the bathroom of their choice. In July, Massachusetts legislators amended General Law 272, known as “Crimes against Chastity,

Morality, Decency and Good Order,” to add gender identity to the list of protected classes. Neither the law nor the amendment offer religious exemptions from compliance or name religious institutions as places of public accommodation. But in their interpretation of the law, the Massachusetts Commission against Discrimination (MCAD) and Attorney General Maura Healey declared “houses of worship” can be subject to the rule and its penalties if they host a “secular” event. The law also prohibits speech that “discriminates” or “incites” discrimination, which could apply to church staff offering biblical teaching about God’s design for men, women, and human sexuality. Violators could be fined up to \$2,500 and face up to one year in prison—or both.

COLORADO APPEARS SET TO APPROVE ASSISTED SUICIDE

(WNS)--Efforts to legalize physician-assisted suicide in Colorado move from the legislature to the ballot box in November. Proposition 106, also called the “End of Life Options Act,” comes on the tail of two failed attempts to pass a similar bill through the state legislature in 2015 and 2016. Despite those defeats, an aggressive campaign, deep-pocketed backers, and a libertarian-leaning electorate point toward success this time. A September poll found 70 percent of Colorado voters plan to support the measure, compared to just 20 percent who said they oppose it.

P&G REFUSES TO JOIN FIGHT AGAINST RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

(WNS)--Procter & Gamble shareholders shot down a proposal recently to join the surge of corporate backlash against religious freedom and restroom laws. NorthStar Asset Management, which owns P&G stock, proposed at an investor meeting the company should join Apple, PayPal, Disney, and others in the political fight against religious freedom laws in Mississippi and Tennessee and should take a stand against North Carolina’s transgender restroom policy. The consumer goods giant overtly rejected the idea, with 94 percent of shareholders voting against it. “It is one less major corporation fighting against religious freedom,” said Justin Danhof, director of the free enterprise project at the National Center for Public Policy Research. “This is a great victory for freedom and for common sense.”

DOCTORS, LAWMAKERS EMBRACE GENDER DYSPHORIA TREATMENTS

(WNS)--New York legislators and Johns Hopkins University doctors are reversing course and advocating for unproven hormone treatments and surgery for patients with gender dysphoria (GD). And in New York, lawmakers want taxpayers to foot the bill. A policy under public review in New York proposes the state use Medicaid funding to pay for hormone treatment and, in some cases, sex-reassignment surgery for minors diagnosed with gender dysphoria. In Baltimore, Md., Johns Hopkins reversed its policy and notified the school’s “medicine community” it would begin offering “gender-affirming” surgery. Both policy statements, issued last week, are being advanced despite the absence of Food and Drug Administration approval or long-term studies

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Bible & the Newspaper

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demonstrating the effectiveness of those treatments in minors.

GEORGIA DEMANDS PASTOR'S SERMONS IN DISCRIMINATION FIGHT

(WNS)--The state of Georgia has demanded sermon notes and transcripts from a part-time pastor and public health expert who sued for discrimination after losing his job with the state Department of Public Health (DPH). Eric Walsh contends the state revoked his job offer because of his religious beliefs, and he has refused to turn over religiously related materials. "I really do not want that precedent set in this country," Walsh told reporters during an Oct. 26 press conference at the Georgia Capitol. "I do this for the purpose of, hopefully, protecting someone who comes after me." According to the Sept. 27 subpoena, Attorney General Samuel Olens called for Walsh's sermons and "all documents relating to your service as a pastor." Walsh believes those sermons cost him his appointment as district health director of Northwest Georgia in May 2014. His attorney said the sermon subpoena was the second of two illegal inquiries by the state of Georgia into an employee's private speech and public faith.

FEDERAL JUDGE: IOWA CHURCHES SAFE FROM ANTI-BIAS LAW

(WNS)--An Iowa church is dropping its lawsuit against the state and the city of Des Moines after a federal judge issued a ruling protecting the church's religious liberty. The District Court judge ruled Oct. 14 that churches do not count as "public accommodations" under the Iowa Civil Rights Act and are not subject to censorship of their views on marriage and sexuality.

Fort Des Moines Church of Christ filed suit earlier this year seeking protection from nondiscrimination laws in its city and state. Amid growing debate over the use of public restrooms by transgender people, the church wanted to publish clear guidelines that men and women should use the restrooms and showers corresponding with their biological sex. But the church feared repercussions from the state after it read statements from the Iowa Civil Rights Commission.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA OKS ASSISTED-SUICIDE BILL

(WNS)--Washington, D.C., City Council members advanced a measure to allow terminally ill residents to get lawful help to kill themselves. "While I still have religious reservations as to the ending of a life, I have an even greater reservation telling a terminally ill resident that he or she must continue to fight while knowing that to the best of medical ability there is no recovery," said Councilman Brandon Todd, who voted Nov. 1 to legalize assisted suicide. The 13-member Council voted 11-2 to legalize the Death With Dignity Act in a public hearing room packed with advocates from both sides. The law allows terminally ill adults given six months or fewer to live to obtain lethal drugs from their doctor that they can self-administer. The measure must still pass a final vote and be signed by Mayor Muriel Bowser, who has indicated her support for it. Five other states—California, Montana, Oregon, Washington, and Vermont—allow physician-assisted suicide.

INTERNATIONAL BRIEFS DANGER FOLLOWS CHRISTIAN REFUGEES TO GERMANY

(WNS)--The situation of Christian refugees in German shelters is

"unbearable" according to an updated report released in October and co-authored by Open Doors Germany. The report documents 743 cases of discrimination, death threats, and physical assaults against Christians by Muslim refugees between February and May of this year and claims the findings are only "the tip of the iceberg." The study also highlights the challenges of reporting about religiously motivated attacks. European politicians have cultivated a climate with two extremes: Much of the political and media establishment ignores or whitewashes attacks carried out by Muslim refugees under the guise of political correctness, while the far-right wants to exploit the statistics for its own political gain. Open Doors said those risks should not lead to silence: "The human right of religious freedom and protection of victims in a country like Germany—that is a constant admonisher of human rights abuses on an international scale—should not be sacrificed for political objectives or the interests of individual groups."



Marred Vessels

(Continued from page 1) ♦

The text is found in Jeremiah 18:6, Jeremiah has been called the wailing, lamenting prophet of God because of two things: Israel's sins and her impending doom and judgment. He was easily discouraged and would lose heart and hope when he thought that surely Israel had transgressed until God must of necessity break His covenant with Abraham. He did not stop to consider that in spite of Israel's sins God would consummate His covenant with Abraham, that the consummation of the covenant with Abraham did not depend upon Israel's obedience or disobedience, but

merely upon the faithfulness of God to Himself.

While Jeremiah was in this frame of mind, God sent him down to the potter's house to learn an object lesson there. He watched the potter as he worked a work upon the wheels and made a vessel, and the vessel of clay became marred in the hand of the potter; he made another vessel as it seemed good to him.

Now you will notice that he did not say that he remade or improved upon the marred vessel, but he made another vessel as it seemed good to him to make it. He made a new vessel, and it did not say that he overhauled the marred vessel, but he made "another as it seemed good to him to make it." And God likens Israel to the clay and He, Himself, to the potter, pointing out in verse 6, **"O, house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel."**

Now I realize this has to do with Israel as a nation and Israel's future, but God deals with Israel as a nation; and God dealt with nations of old even as He deals with individuals as such. We are, therefore, going to discuss this in the light of what God does for, to and on the behalf of individuals.

There are three things suggested in the text, and if you forget everything else I might say I beseech you to remember these three thoughts:

- (1) God's power demonstrated.
- (2) God's love manifested.
- (3) God's purpose defined.

I believe if you will study these particular verses I have read you can readily see that all three points I have mentioned are certainly set forth in these passages.

I. GOD'S POWER

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DEMONSTRATED

God asked the question, or made the statement, that Israel is like clay, and He likens Himself as the potter. As the clay is subject to the molding of the potter's hand, God said, "Even so are ye, O house of Israel, in my hands."

God made man in the beginning for His own honor and glory, but man, like the vessel, became marred in the Potter's hand, or in the hands of his Maker. God made man and placed him in the Garden of Eden with only one restriction: he was not to partake of the fruit of the forbidden tree (Gen. 2:17), the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and said, "The day you partake of it, that day is the day ye shall surely die."

God pointed out to him that he might eat of the fruit of all the garden save this one tree. Man disobeyed God and brought sin, death, and degradation upon himself and his posterity. The "vessel became marred in the hand of the potter." This, therefore, teaches that man, the creation of the Potter, became marred in the hand of the Creator, and God had to make him again.

Now, I am not preaching on total, inherent depravity---although I believe it. If the Word of God teaches anything in the world it teaches that man is totally depraved in the sight of God. The whole man, the total man is depraved; and there is, nothing good, nothing holy in man. We do not mean to imply that men are "as mean as they can become," for II Timothy 3:13 says, "**Evil men and seducers shall wax WORSE and worse, deceiving, and being deceived**" (emph. WC). What we mean by total and inherent

depravity is that the total man is corrupted and polluted by sin. All his faculties are depraved. The "do-gooders" say there is something good about all men, and in every man. But the Word of God declares, most emphatically, there is nothing good in man. **"I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no GOOD thing."** (Rom. 7:18) (emph. WC).

Paul said there was nothing good in the flesh; nothing but corruption. Man is depraved, cut off from God, without God and without hope, spiritually dead, with a "heart that is deceitful above all things" (Jer. 17:9). With an imagination that is evil only continually (Gen. 6:5). He is even depraved before he is born, and he is born in sin (Psalm 51:5). And the mind is enmity against God; so **"they that are in the flesh cannot please God"** (Rom. 8:7).

I will go one step further and say with Paul in Ephesians 2:1 that the man outside of Christ is dead, dead, and man's nature, his whole being, his entire make-up is corrupt. Paul said, we **"were by NATURE the children of wrath, even as others"** (Eph. 2:3) (emph. WC).

Man, therefore, the creation, became marred in the hand of the Creator, and it takes more than the reformation of life to get him out of that condition. It takes more than joining the church; it takes more than an empty profession of faith; it takes more than the church ordinances (Baptism and the Lord's Supper). It takes more than the world claims: It takes the power of God.

If the vessel is to be remade, reshaped, remolded it takes the power of God to do it. Men cannot remake, rebuild themselves. Notice that the sweet singer of Israel said in Psalm 100:3, **"Know ye that the LORD he is God: it**

is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture."

David said, "The Lord is God and he will, he must do something. He hath made us, and not we ourselves."

Men may talk about working their way into the good graces of God: it can not be done. Men may say they can pull themselves up by their boot straps, or reform until they are acceptable in the sight of God; but I tell you, it can not be done. It takes the power of God. To refashion men's lives, the power of God must be demonstrated. This great verse, Psalm 100:3, says, "It is God that hath made us and not we ourselves." Thus, this is conclusive proof---is it not? **"It is HE that hath made us, and not WE ourselves"** (emph. WC). He is talking about the spiritual rebirth and not the physical birth.

"It is God that hath made us..."

Jesus said to Nicodemus that a man must be born again, and in John 3:8, **"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 everyone that is BORN of the SPIRIT"** (emph. WC). The Spirit of God takes over and regenerates, rebuilds, reshapes, remolds men. They can not do it themselves; it takes the power of God.

Then the third thing under the heading God's Power Demonstrated is the making of a new vessel which God will fashion as it pleases Him. Not as it pleases men now, but as it pleases God.

You know, I get out of patience with God sometimes. Don you not? You might say to me: "Brother Cox, what a thing to say." But I say again that I get out of patience with God sometimes. I pray and pray and God seemingly is not aware that I am praying. I

plead with God and He seemingly ignores me. I grow impatient when God seemingly turns a deaf ear toward me. When I get up here in the pulpit and preach my heart out and no one comes, I want to go down into the audience and do the work of the Holy Spirit in compelling them to come. I grow impatient with God when no one is saved, but I am drawn irresistibly to the conclusion that God works and none can stay His hand. Everything He does is to please Himself, and it is not to please you. God is a jealous God, you remember that.

We are going to see that God does not save men to provide them with a fire escape. Although, that is wonderful on our part, but saving men from Hell is secondary, incidental to the real reason men are saved.

Psalm 115:3: **"But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased."**

The man that gets things from God is he who waits upon the Lord. Sometimes I feel like getting out into the audience, but I can not do the work of the Holy Spirit. He works as He pleases; God does as He pleases, and not to please us. I know this is hard for us to accept, but it is true, nonetheless.

In Ephesians 1:4, 5 we read: **"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will** (What God does is according to His own pleasure and will, and for what?) **to the PRAISE of the GLORY of his grace, wherein he hath MADE us accepted in the beloved"** (emph. WC).

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Now I know the carnal mind does not accept that; nevertheless, it is according to God's Word. Everything God does is according to His will and pleasure.

II. GOD'S LOVE MANIFESTED

If God did not remake, remold, reshape men's lives, His love would not be manifested in what He has done for us. Well, what has He done for us?

In I John 4:10, we read: **"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his SON to be the PROPITIATION for our sins"** (emph. WC). And in the 9th verse: **"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"** (emph. WC).

That is how the love of God was manifested toward us. He sent His only begotten Son to be the propitiation for our sins. John said that we did not love God. The reason God loved us is not because we loved Him first, and God did not love us because of any unforeseen love or faith on our part. But God loved us and "gave his only begotten Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Beloved, that is the love of God manifested toward us. God gave Him to be a sacrifice for us. That vindicated the law and satisfied the justice of God: He gave Him because He loved us.

Do you know that the most astounding thing in all history is the love of God? There is not a man alive who can define this love: It is boundless, eternal, limitless and shall never cease. "He loved us and gave his Son that we might have life."

A boy was helping me in a

meeting one time and he told me that he was in a college where the instructor taught them that Jesus' death was the death of a martyr and denied the substitutionary death of Christ, the Bible doctrine of the atonement. I asked him if he were quite sure of this, and he replied: "I ought to be, I heard it for twelve months." I then asked him if it had made any difference in his own life, and he told me that it had not on his part, but it had for others. I again asked him if he were sure the professor had said this, and he told me he was certain.

Can you feature that for one moment of time that Jesus did not have to die? If Jesus had not died upon the cross for our sins there would not be one soul saved. He died for our sins that God might be propitiated and the law vindicated in the sight of God. That is why Jesus died. God's love was manifested how? By what He did for us. what did He do? He sent His Only Begotten Son to die for our sins, that God might be propitiated and we might be reconciled.

In John 10, Jesus said repeatedly, "No man taketh my life; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again." Over and over Jesus said that He had the power to lay down His life, and had power to take it up again. "I give my life for my sheep," saith the Master. And in the golden text of the Bible: **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life"** (John 3:16).

I believe that--do you not? I certainly do not believe that one sheep for whom Christ died is finally lost in Hell. I do not believe that God loves men who are in Hell. If His love did not avail for

them, then it might not avail for you and me.

The world thinks that God loves every man without exception, and that everyone is the object of God's affection. But that is not true; there is not one word of truth in that. There is a world of believers and the world of unbelievers. Do you feature Christ dying the most cruel, inhuman death and not availing for every last sheep for whom He died? I do not believe that. God loved the world of believers, those who do believe or will yet believe; His elect. He is **"long suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that ALL should come to repentance"** (emph. WC).

That is how His love is manifested toward us.

In II Timothy 2:10 we read Paul's words: **"Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory."** Paul said that he endured much to preach the Gospel whereby the elect are brought to a saving knowledge of Christ.

II Peter 3:9: **"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."**

If you will go over the context you will see what he is talking about. He is not talking about you and yours, but about us. There is a great deal of difference between you and "us." He is talking about the elect--look at I Peter 1:2: **"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ..."** (Cf. II Peter. 3:1, 9).

Then God's love is manifested in the rebuilding of broken lives. What He has done and what He is doing for men, women, boys and girls in every walk of life is the manifestation of His love.

One of the greatest examples of a rebuilt life is found in the Gospel according to Luke, chapter 7. This poor outcast woman came and anointed the feet of Jesus, washing them with her tears and drying them with the hairs of her head. Jesus only spoke a few words: **"Thy sins are forgiven; Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace."** And she went; her life having been remolded by the Master.

Now I come to the last thought: **III. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF MAN'S SALVATION?**

I said in the beginning that God does not save men just to keep them out of Hell: that is secondary, a result or "fruit." Some men think that they can just use God for a fire-escape. Naturally if you are saved, God is going to keep you out of Hell, but that is not the purpose of your salvation.

Well, then, for whose sakes does God save men? I will tell you right now, it is not for your sake, but for the sake of Christ.

Ephesians 4:32: **"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."**

Paul said that God forgave the Ephesian brethren for the sake of Christ. When men get that through their heads and hearts Christ will come to mean a great deal more to them, and they will not be so egotistical; their life will be less self-centered and more Christ-centered.

Again, in I John 2:12 we read: **"I write unto you, little children, (speaking of young Christians) because your sins are forgiven"**

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you for his name's SAKE" (emph. WC).

God saves men for Christ's sake. He cannot do otherwise; for Christ died for the sake of vindicating the law of God on behalf of His sheep; therefore, God must save for the sake of Jesus. He saves for the sake of Christ, and that is the only reason He does. Jesus died to satisfy the justice of God on the behalf of His sheep and God for Christ's sake saves those for whom Christ died. You remember that.

We have already seen for whom or for whose sake God saves men; now why does He save folk? Romans 8:28, 29 tells us: **"And we know that all things work 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"** (emph. WC).

God saves men that they may be conformed to the image of His Son. That is the purpose; that is the why of salvation, that it might be to His honor and glory; **"that we should be to the PRAISE of his GLORY, who first trusted in Christ"** (Eph. 1:12) (emph. WC). That is the purpose. God made man that man might be to the honor and glory of God; but man, the creature, the clay, became marred in the Potter's hands, and God made another vessel as it seemed good in God's sight. God determined that man was to be to the praise of His glory in His sight, and it shall be so. It is going to be to the honor and glory of Christ.

In conclusion, may I ask you this simple question, and please

listen closely: if you have come to see the fact that you are just the clay and God is the Potter, if you have been made to see why the vessel has to be made afresh, and God must do it, if you have sometime in the past trusted in works or ordinances to save you, please learn now that there is no life in those things. If you are trusting in your works to save you, if you are trusting in moral life, good character, anything else but Jesus, there is no life in those things. God must remold, remake, rebuild you, and may God help you to see that today. Amen.



The Short Pews



Brief
Articles
by Curtis
Pugh

THE SUCCESS OF JESUS CHRIST

Jesus Christ is the greatest success of eternity! He came for a specific purpose and He accomplished that purpose. He was named Jesus for one reason: **"thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins"** (Matt. 1:21). The Lord Jesus was ethnically a Jew. The Jews were in a sense "His people." But He did not come to save the Jews. He was given another people. They are referred to by Him as His "sheep." The statements of the Lord Jesus regarding His sheep teach us about the successful work of the Good Shepherd. Consider the following verses: John 10:11: **"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."** John 10:14: **"I am the good shepherd, and know**

my sheep, and am known of mine." John 10:15: **"As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep."** John 10:16: **"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."** John 10:26: **"But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you."** John 10:27-28: **"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."**

All the different shades of free-will religion would have us think it is the sheep who are successful. But these verses all speak of the success of the Shepherd! It is not the sheep that seek the Shepherd, but rather the Shepherd seeks the sheep. And so in light of this Paul wrote: **"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"** (Rom. 3:11-12). If you initiated your own salvation whether by your own home-grown "faith" or by the supposed obedience of baptism for salvation or by some other work, you were not seeking God. You may have sought an escape from God's just punishment. You may have sought peace of mind. You may have sought a better life for you and your family. You may have sought perhaps a dozen other things – but you did not seek God.

Only the new birth – literally the birth from above – or as theologians say, "regeneration" – this sovereign work of the Holy Spirit of God makes a spiritually dead sinner alive. Nothing you

do or any other human being does has anything to do with God making His elect alive. As John wrote, **"Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God"** (John 1:13). Jesus said: **"..Ye must be born again"** (John 3:7).

BROKEN OR GROUND TO POWDER?

Many saying's of Jesus made Him unpopular with the religious people of His day. He is still unpopular today. Most people ignore or distort or try to explain away what Jesus said. For instance, consider these words spoken by the Lord Jesus: **"And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder"** (Matt. 21:44).

Addressed to those religionists in Israel who had rejected the preaching and baptism of John the Baptist, in this verse the Lord speaks of Himself as a great stone – a cornerstone. He said there are only two alternatives. Either you will fall upon this stone or this stone will fall upon you. Either you will be broken or you will be ground to powder. There is no other alternative: being broken or being ground to powder.

Most everyone wants to go to Heaven: they do not want to go to the other place. So they try turning over a new leaf. They try religion. They go forward in a religious meeting or they try being baptized or praying the magical prayer that is supposed to save them. Some continue in that way for awhile. Some for many years. Preachers assure them that they are saved because they did something. Most religion today is based upon the idea that doing this or that will cause God to save

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the doer: works religion.

But our text indicates that there is much more to being saved. The thing to remember is this: works has nothing to do with salvation: salvation is **“Not of works, lest any man should boast”** (Eph. 2:9). In our text the Lord Jesus said that whomever falls on Him will be broken. He speaks of a total broken-heartedness over personal sin. He did not speak of mere sorrow over the prospect of going to Hell, but something more and something different than that. Paul wrote about this same thing: he wrote, **“For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death”** (II Cor. 7:10). This is a work of God in the sinner.

In order to escape being ground to powder, that is, being judged by Christ for sins, the sinner must experience being “broken” in “godly sorrow.” This is not man made sorrow. This is brokenness or true sorrow worked by the Holy Spirit in the new birth. It is an experience of grace. It is something that God does to the sinner whom He wills to save. It is not the experience of mere religion or religious enthusiasm. It is not the experience of many, but it is the experience of God’s elect: those whom He has chosen to save. Jesus also said, **“For many are called, but few are chosen”** (Matt. 22:14). What is your relation to the Stone? Have you experienced brokenness over sin? Have you turned to Christ, trusting Him alone?

LED TO REPENTANCE

It is the goodness of God that leads sinners to repentance. Proof: **“Or despisest thou the riches of**

his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance” (Rom. 2:4)? Notice the following things.

First of all, repentance is necessary if a sinner is to be saved from eternal punishment. Jesus said, **“...except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish”** (Luke 13:5). Paul preached everywhere **“...repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ”** (Acts 20:21). The question is, have you repented (turned from sin to God) and trusted Jesus Christ?

Second, sinners have to be led to repentance. Those who repent are brought to that place by the power of God. They do not come by their own ability to repentance and faith. If they did, sinners could please God, but the Bible says, **“...they that are in the flesh cannot please God”** (Rom. 8:8). Sinners must be drawn to Jesus – drawn like Paul was dragged out of the city and like Peter drew out his sword – a superior power must act upon sinners. We know this because Jesus said, **“No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day”** (John 6:44).

The third thing to notice in the phrase **“the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance”** is this: it is not the knowledge of the goodness of God that leads sinners to repentance. No indeed! Some folk think that if sinners just knew about the goodness of God they would repent. But Paul cautions against despising – looking down upon – the goodness, patience and longsuffering of God. Do not think it insignificant that God has not already cast you into the lake of fire. You deserve it. God tolerates your sins for a time, but you will never get away with

them. The knowledge that God is good does not bring repentance. No! It is not the knowledge of the goodness of God that leads to repentance! It is **“the goodness of God that leadeth thee to repentance.”** That is what the Bible says! Sinners are not led to repentance because they are good. They are not led to repentance because they deserve it. They are not led to repentance because they are basically good people. It is God in His goodness that leads sinners to repentance! It is His goodness in action!

The fourth thing is this: God in His goodness does not just attempt or try to lead sinners to repentance. The Bible does not teach that God ever tried to do anything! He does as He pleases! Having determined to lead some sinners to repentance, He does it! God is seen to be **“Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure”** (Isa. 46:10). Has God been pleased to lead you to repentance?

ONE CONSTANT IN A WORLD OF CHANGE

People, politics, religion, opinions, morals, economics, laws – you name it and it has changed, is in process of changing, or will soon change. Is there nothing that remains constant? Is there no solid rock among the ever changing waves crashing around us?

Yes, there is one unchanging constant. In Malachi 3:6 we read: **“For I am the LORD, I change not...”** Jehovah is always the same, always dependable, always constant. Again we read, **“God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and**

shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good” (Num. 23:19)? A similar statement is made in I Samuel 15:29 where it is written, **“And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he is not a man, that he should repent.”** James contrasts God with the sun which is constantly producing moving shadows, calling Him, **“...the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning”** (James 1:17).

Because He never changes we can depend upon what He has said. Because of this Paul wrote, **“For all the promises of God in him [Christ] are yea, and in him Amen”** (II Cor. 1:20). God does not change. He does not need to change either His mind or His actions. (He may be said to repent - change or turn – only in that He may proceed in a certain direction for a time and then after arriving at a predetermined point move in a different direction, but this is all to achieve His predetermined purpose which has never changed.)

Joseph was instructed concerning the name of Mary’s firstborn, **“...thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins”** (Matt. 1:21), and He is doing just that. In the Old Testament it was prophesied of Christ that, **“He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law”** (Isa. 42:4). Neither God the Father, God the Son, nor God the Holy Spirit has ever failed nor will failure ever be known to God! He is dependable. His Word is sure.

His Word reveals His Son, the Savior, the Messiah, the Christ, God’s Anointed. Christ is called by God, **“...mine elect, in whom**

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my soul delighteth... (Isa. 42:1). The One in whom the Father delights is the One who is **"the firstborn from the dead"** (Col. 1:18). God's foreknowledge of certain individuals and His predestination of them shall eventually conform them to the image of Christ, thus making Christ "the firstborn among many brethren." We learn this from Romans 8:29 which says, **"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."** So it is that God, without failure, is constant and dependable in successfully carrying out His plan of salvation – which is the only plan of salvation.

GOD DOES WHAT HE PLEASES

The Bible teaches that God created man. Some people think that God created something greater than Himself. Man is so powerful, they say, that God cannot do what He pleases: God cannot control what He created. This they call free will. No right thinking person denies that man has a will, but to say that man's will is stronger than God's will is contrary to the Bible and to logic. Yet that is exactly man's idea. They say that God cannot save a man unless that man is willing to let God save him. They say: "let God" meaning that God cannot do what He pleases: He cannot save whom He wants to save.

The Bible teaches Divine sovereignty. God is all powerful. He is not controlled by anything outside of Himself. He is all powerful. He is all sufficient, lacking nothing. Isaiah 46:9-10

says, **"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."**

This text says there is **"none else:"** no other god like the true God. **"...The former things of old"** prove this. The tower of Babel, the flood, – in short, all the judgments of God upon sinful men prove that God is in control. The phrase **"declaring the end from the beginning"** has to do with not only the end time judgments, but also the people whom He chose from the beginning. Paul tells us **"...he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him..."** (Eph. 1:4). God's choice of those who shall be **"holy and without blame"** is a part of God's **"counsel"** and His **"pleasure"** or will. It pleased Him to choose some to salvation.

Man hates even the idea of a sovereign God – the God of the Bible – the God who chooses – the God who does as He pleases. Man refuses to admit that God is in control of all things. This because **"...the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be"** (Rom. 8:7). Lost men, then, must be viewed as rebels against God. They love a god of their own manufacture, but hate the God of the Bible Who says **"I will do all my pleasure."** Man is on dangerous ground! James wrote, **"...God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God..."** (James 4:6-7). God is well able to resist the proud man. He has demonstrated throughout

history His ability to successfully deal with His enemies. Of such men God says **"...they willingly are ignorant of..."** God's past acts (II Pet. 3:5). Such willingly ignorant rebels hate God and object to His sovereignty rather than submit themselves to Him.

FOUR THINGS ABOUT THE ELECT

The Bible teaches election. Some people are called "the elect." Paul wrote of these saying, **"Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory"** (II Tim. 2:10). Election is not salvation. Election is unto salvation. God uses means such as Paul's example and his preaching during sufferings in bringing the elect to salvation.

First: the elect were chosen before the world began. Paul wrote: **"According as he [God] hath chosen us [those He planned to save] in him [Christ] before the foundation of the world, that we [the elect] should be holy and without blame before him in love"** (Eph. 1:4). God does not choose sinners because they first chose Him. Election does not mean that God votes for you, the devil votes for you and you cast the deciding vote. This is totally contrary to the Bible! In the first place you were not around when the election was held and, secondly, the devil did not vote. God chose!

Second: election is not based upon any foreseen faith or action of the individuals chosen in order **"...that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth"** (Rom. 9:11). Again, Paul writing about **"...the election of grace,"** continued saying, **"And**

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BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 10-1-2016 to 10-31-2016

Beginning Balance	\$2,792.19
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
Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX	50.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV	313.45
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	150.00
Carol Willett, Edgewater, FL	50.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL	25.00
Emmanuel B. C., Oldtown, KY	100.00
Gail Knowles, Scarborough, ME	20.00
Grace B. C., Rual Hall, 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
James Carr, Sandy Hook, KY	98.10
Janet Stevens, Marion, KY	40.00
The Lord's Church, Goose Creek, SC	100.00
Michael Sherman, Ashland, KY	40.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH	100.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN	50.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL	100.00
Portland B. C., Plumerville, AR	50.00
Southside B. C., Fulton, MS	25.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Silsbee, TX	30.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA	25.00
Subscriptions	60.00
Anonymous	400.00
Dividing checks	150.00
Sub Total	\$2,746.55
TOTAL	\$5,538.74
EXPENDITURES:	
Printing	490.00
Postage	662.30
Wages	2,300.00
FICA	175.90
Dividing checks	150.00
Bank charge	13.00
Total Expenditures	\$3,791.20
ENDING BALANCE	\$1,747.54



BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 10-1-2016 to 10-31-2016

Beginning Balance	\$6,665.24
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	225.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	100.00
Calvary I. B. C., Sumas, WA	100.00
.....	425.00
TOTAL	7,090.24
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio Time	400.00
Program production	195.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	595.00
.....	6,495.24
Interest05
ENDING BALANCE	\$6,495.29

The Short Pews

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if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work" (Rom. 11:5-6). Election is entirely by grace: a bestowal completely free and unobtainable by any works, deed or act of the sinner.

Third: God's elect cannot be charged with sin. The elect do sin, but, **"Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth"** (Rom. 8:33). God justifies, i.e. He declares His elect to be righteous in His sight based upon Christ's finished work. Paul goes on to explain: **"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us [children of God]"** (Rom. 8:34). The only person that ever had a right to cast stones at sinners was the sinless Christ. But instead of condemning, He died, rose from the grave, and is presently enthroned at God's right hand as Priest and Advocate for God's elect.

Fourth: false teachers cannot permanently deceive the elect. Jesus prophesied of a time period filled with false religion, saying, **"For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect"** (Matt. 24:24). "If it were possible" means that it is not possible to deceive the elect! Christ's sheep may be taught error for a time, but they will eventually come to the truth of the Gospel. They were chosen to be saved and shall be saved!

THE BELIEVER'S KNOWLEDGE

The man Job lived in the earliest of times. He lived before there was a Jewish nation: before any of the Bible was written. His story is the story of believers in all ages. He endured the chastening hand of his Father in those times just as the true children of God have experienced all through history: just as they do today. We know this from such Scriptures as: **"For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all [God's children] are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons"** (Heb. 12:6-8). While we hear much today about people "receiving" the Lord, notice that is it God who **"receiveth"** all His sons.

Job was a man that was "picked out to be picked on." Job was involved in a confrontation between God and the devil. It was not a contest for there can be no real contest against God. Job was unaware that God had cited him as a true son of His and an example to the devil. So it is with true children of God today. They are unaware of all

that is taking place in their lives and in the lives of those looking on. We can be assured that God knows exactly what He is doing although we do not.

James, pastor of the Jerusalem congregation, wrote the following: **"..Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy"** (James 5:11). The Greek word translated "patience" means endurance or staying under the load. Job did not "buck and run" even when his wife suggested to him that he curse God and die. Job had a heart-knowledge, that caused him to endure his trials. He said, **"For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins [inmost being] be consumed within me"** (Job 19:25-27).

Job had a Redeemer, a Kinsman-Redeemer, and he knew that this God-man would one day stand upon the earth to measure out justice and take unto Himself His redeemed ones. Not possessing the fuller revelation of the New Testament, nevertheless, he knew his

body would be resurrected to be with his Redeemer. After writing about this very subject, Paul in the New Testament concludes, **"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"** (I Cor. 15:58). Child of God, **"Ye have heard of the patience of Job..."** Job's God-given heart-knowledge will enable you to endure as he did!



ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Lord's Baptist Church in Tacoma Washington is in need of pastor. For more in formation please contact Gaylen Russell at 360-879-5565 (home) or cell 253-495-4567 (cell) or by Email: gaylenr@rainierconnect.com.

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Caldwell, KS is in need of a pastor. For more information please contact the church in writing at SGBC, 400 N. Main St., Caldwell, Ks. 67022 or by phone Brother Darin Wiley 620-863-2431.

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

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

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