

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

Some Characteristics of Jesus as a Preacher

T. P. Simmons
(1898 - 1969)

Jesus was the greatest preacher of all time. He is God's perfect pattern for preachers. The Gospels are the greatest books ever written on how to preach. There is great need today that preachers make a fresh study of Jesus as a preacher. But not only do preachers need to study Him; churches need this study also. Churches need to be acquainted with God's standard



of preaching so that they will endorse and support a faithful ministry. Let us note the following characteristics of Jesus as a preacher:

He did not have the inordinate desire for numbers that some

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The Tale of the Tempter

By Joseph M. Sidders
of Guntown, Mississippi

James 1:13-14 "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: ¹⁴ But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."

For my first point let us identify who the Tempter is. From the most ancient of times the origin of evil has baffled proud human philosophy. The Bible account of



it is both simple and satisfactory in that it originated with the angels. We see in scripture that these angels were created free, moral agents, under law, on probation, with power to determinate choice, and thus liable to fall. The greater number of them stood the test as proven in Paul's letter to Timothy "...those who stood the

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When They Heard This

By Glenn Gilbreath
of Decatur, Alabama

"Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, **Men and brethren, what shall we do?**" What a wonderful verse we have from the Word of God. The occasion is the Day of Pentecost. The church was gathered together and all were of "one accord" (Acts 2:1). The Holy Spirit was upon them "...as of a rushing might wind, and it filled all the house..." (Acts 2:2). When this was "noised abroad," a great multitude of people came



to see. The Holy Spirit gave men the ability to speak in "other tongues" and the multitude was amazed at what they heard. There

were also those that mocked them saying they were "full of new wine." At that point Peter stood up and began to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also

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What Does My Dream Mean?

By Matthew Stepp
of Wayne, West Virginia

Understand first of all, that dreams are just a reflection of your subconscious mind, without your conscious will controlling what you are thinking about. So most dreams are reflections of what we have been thinking about, meditating on, watching on television, or reading in a book, etc.

Knowing this basic premise of dreams, it should make us more careful what we read, watch, and think about. If we are thinking bad thoughts because we are watching or reading bad stuff, then we should expect our dreams



to have filth, sinful lusts, and other worldly elements in them. It is very common for parents to warn their young kids not

to watch scary movies. Why? Because they "will" have nightmares! Whoever or whatever you are consumed with, you will very likely dream about.

If there is a hidden meaning, therefore, it still is not necessarily a good thing, as our flesh is still sinful. Therefore we must

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

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

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Tale of the Tempter

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test are called the elect angels" (I Timothy 5:21). The others who fell from their state of innocence have not been spared the wrath of God: "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment" (II Peter 2:4). These are referred to in Jude 6 as "The angels which kept not their first estate." The leader and chief among them was Satan, who "stood not in the truth" (John 8:44), falling through pride as again Paul describes as the "Condemnation of the devil" in I Timothy 3:6.

Lucifer, the Tempter of whom I write today, has his fall detailed by the prophet in Isaiah 14:12-27 "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; That made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners? All the kings of the nations, even all of them, lie in glory, every one in his own house. But thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch, and as the

raiment of those that are slain, thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; as a carcase trodden under feet. Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial, because thou hast destroyed thy land, and slain thy people: the seed of evildoers shall never be renowned. Prepare slaughter for his children for the iniquity of their fathers; that they do not rise, nor possess the land, nor fill the face of the world with cities. For I will rise up against them, saith the LORD of hosts, and cut off from Babylon the name, and remnant, and son, and nephew, saith the LORD. I will also make it a possession for the bitter, and pools of water: and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the LORD of hosts. The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand: That I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot: then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders. This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth: and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations. For the LORD of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?"

The Tempter is known by many names. He was first called Lucifer, which means "son of the morning." He loses that name and takes the name Satan. This chief of the fallen angels has many Bible names. As expressive of his primacy and supremacy over other evil spirits he is called Beelzebub, which means "lord

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Brief Truths

By Randy Johnson of
Texarkana, Texas

"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation" (Ephesians 1:13).



Why Do People Not Understand?

"But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:8-17).

Sometimes it befuddles me why so many cannot understand the truth of salvation. Why is it that men and women with PhD's

cannot grasp the simplicity of salvation? I must ask, why do they work so hard to obtain a salvation that is humanly unattainable? The second misunderstanding is that people can control their own salvation by human will. Human choice, whether it is by a personal decision, personal choice, or a personal work of any sort is not found (in context) in the entire Scriptures. It is clearly evident in the Scriptures that God saves sinners through the death, burial, and resurrection of His own Son Jesus Christ and cleanses our sins through His blood. Now we live in a world that has minimized God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, and made God into a worthless Being in salvation. In their belief they falsely believe a lie but the Bible clearly states the opposite, that salvation is of God. **"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places"** (Eph. 1:17-20). Even Jesus Himself verified this in His

own words, **"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. 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"** (John 6:63-65).

However, let us not forget that the most biblical people on earth in the Old Testament times (the Jews) did not understand the Scriptures at that time, even missing the coming of the Messiah. So, please do not be confused when I talk about our most educated people on earth not understanding the truth of the Bible. The Jews could not then, nor two-thousand years later understand the truth about being saved by God's grace and through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Therefore, let us understand when people do not understand biblical truth, then they teach non-truths changing the truth of salvation into a lie. Taking God out of salvation only to glorify themselves instead of God who truly does save lost sinners. With this in mind, people must create many false ways for people to be humanly, not spiritually saved. This passage is called "the Romans Road" and it consists of 1. A human choice, 2. A person changing their mind and quickening their own dead spirit, and 3. A lost soul with a dead spirit praying to God. But none of these three are possible, because God does not communicate with a dead spirit person, this is why the Holy Spirit first quickens the human spirit.

Humanistic teachers use Romans 10:9 out of context, **"That if thou shalt confess**

with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

Alone it appears that if you quote a prayer that God will accept you as a child and you will be saved because of verse 10 **"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."** However, this is taught without a proper understanding of God, true salvation, or of the power and workings of the Holy Spirit. God said **"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins"** (Eph. 2:1). The word dead literally means - a corpse - and anyone and everyone understands a dead corpse does not make themselves alive by their own choice or power. They cannot speak, make a request, nor make choices, nor cause themselves to live by their own power.

Now let us look at the real context of Romans 10. Verse 12 tells us that all people are the same and salvation is the same, **"For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek..."** Next, verse 14 clearly says **"How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed..."**? A person will not call on God for salvation if they do not believe to start with. The hearing is not with a physical ear but a spiritual ear that must be quickened or made alive before they can hear in their spiritual heart, remember it was corpse dead. The Gospel message is powerless without a proper sender, deliverer, and power to make it heard. Therefore, verse 15 tells us of a proper sender, **"And how shall they preach, except they be sent..."**? The true gospel message is in the hands of the churches, true churches. What is the absolute true gospel?

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Tale of the Tempter

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of the house.” As indicative of his hostility to man he is called Satan, which means adversary. As descriptive of his methods of malignity against man his name is devil. It is in this word is the idea of one who sets at variance. Those whom he seeks to set at variance are God and man; when he approaches man, he slanders God and when he approaches God he accuses man. Hence, in his work of variance he is both an accuser and a slanderer; when he approaches Eve he slanders God and when he approaches God he accuses Job.

In view of the result of his work he is called Apollyon, the destroyer. He does not build; he demolishes. Because of the form he assumed in the temptation of man, he is called the Serpent or the Dragon. On account of his rage and predatory character he is compared to a roaring lion. He is called the tempter, as indicated by our title, because he incites to evil. He is called the deceiver because he tempts by lies. That he may deceive he comes as an angel of light, and that he may trap the unwary he sets cunning traps as a fowler who ensnares birds but all the time he is a liar and a murderer, and the father of lies and murders.

He is the father of all false religions. He uses the lusts of the flesh, the pride of life, and the course of the world in turning men away from God. B.H. Carrol “He first blinds, then binds and then stupefies, and so he keeps his goods in peace. He is an awful and hideous reality, apart from God the most stupendous factor in the universe. He is limited in power and in the time allotted him to work his evil deeds.”

Secondly let us look to the origin of sin and see its introduction to

man. Genesis 3:1-7 **“Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.”**

Matthew Henry “The tempter was the devil, in the shape and likeness of a serpent. Satan’s plan was to draw our first parents to sin, and so to separate between them and their God. Thus the devil was from the beginning a murderer, and the great mischief maker. The person tempted was the woman: it was Satan’s policy to enter into talk with her when she was alone. There are many temptations to which being alone gives great advantage; but the communion of saints tends very much to their strength and safety. Satan took advantage by finding her near the forbidden tree. They that would not eat the forbidden fruit, must not come near the forbidden tree.

Satan tempted Eve, that by her he might tempt Adam. It is his policy to send temptations by hands we do not suspect, and by those that have most influence upon us.”

We are commanded to **“abstain from all appearances of evil”** in I Thessalonians 5:22 and Jesus gives us an example in Matthew 5:28 **“...I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.”**

In Proverbs 6:16-19 **“These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.”** In this third chapter of Genesis we see these six things start from the mouth of the serpent and runneth over our ancient ancestors. Through the serpent the tempter promises advantage from their eating this fruit. He aims to make them discontented with their present state, as if it were not so good as it might be and should be. We must take this warning to heart beloved reader that no condition will of itself bring contentment unless the mind be brought to it. He tempts them to seek what they ‘want’ or desire, as if they were fit to be gods. Satan ruined himself by desiring to be like the Most High, and as a result we see that he sought to infect our first parents with the same desire, that he might ruin them too.

The devil, as he is a liar, so he is a scoffer from the beginning; and his demon children are scoffers too. It is the craft, even his main profession, for Satan to speak of the Divine law as uncertain or unreasonable, and so to draw

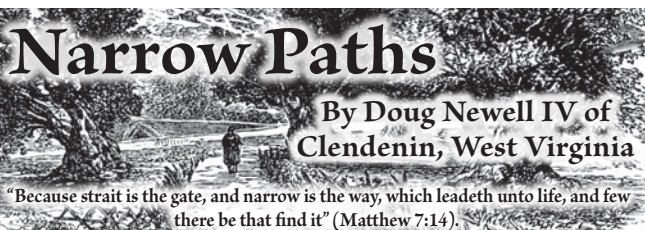
people to sin. “Ye shall not surely die...” he says here insinuating that they should surely act without care. “If thou be the Son of God” he says later insisting that Jesus, the second Adam, tempt God in like manner. It is to our benefit to firmly believe and know the commands of our God and to have a high respect for them! Has God said, “Ye shall not lie, nor take his name in vain, nor be drunk, and so on?” Let us respond with certainty, proving as the Bereans that it is so, and insisting that it is well the He has said so. Then let us, by His grace, abide by His Word.

Which brings me to my final point, which is how we are to resist the devil and abide by the Word of God. In short form we are to do so by faith, just as those listed in Hebrews chapter 11.

Over in James 4:7-10 we read **“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.”**

I believe this mirrors very well what we read previously in Proverbs 6:16-19 **“These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.”** As we have mentioned, these seven abominations occurred in the garden and even continually in

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Uncharitable Charity

It is that most wonderful time of the year. The season when organizations guilt people into giving to their non-profit organizations. Soon, we will start being reminded of "tax-deductible gifts" as we near the end of the calendar year and that without your partnership, the world may end, or something like that.

Am I a Scrooge? A heartless rascalion? A cynical scoundrel with a heart as black as coal and twice as hard? I am certainly not against charity, nor against (some) charitable organizations. I am opposed to entities who are more concerned with the organization than they are with the charity. It is hard to talk about missionaries and money, or how charity work is not always charitable, or social justice is not usually justice without sounding cold. But, allow me to mention all three topics.

In II Thessalonians 3, Paul, a missionary, had a job. He worked **"...night and day..."** so that he would not be chargeable to anyone as he ministered to them. This was not always the way he operated and is not the best way (I Tim. 5:17-18) but Paul sacrificed for the furtherance of the gospel. So, he practiced what he preached, and he preached on working. In verse 10, Paul said, **"...if any would not work, neither should he eat."**

Is Paul also a Scrooge and heartless rascalion? Did Paul not have a dime to spare a brother? Anyone who has ever read the Bible knows God's people are to care for those in need (James 2:14-17). Jesus Himself fed the

hungry multitude. He could have fed the multitude every day if He had wanted to, but He did it only twice. We are to care for widows and orphans, but orphans do grow up and sometimes widows do not need charity (I Tim. 5:11). Paul is not saying that if an octogenarian widow with two bad eyes and a missing leg is not working 80 hours a week, she is lazy and should starve (I Tim. 5:3;5).

Social justice says to take money from the wealthy and give it to people who do not have as much. But that is not justice at all. If a man is able-bodied and does not work, justice is for him to be hungry because he is the rascalion. I am all about helping those who need it, but giving to a lazy man is not charity. The word charity means love, and it is not loving to let a man live in sin, and a man ought to be ashamed if he does not provide for his own (I Tim. 5:8).

I want to be loving. I want to give (II Cor. 9:7). I want to help people. But we should ask ourselves, what is it to help people? Is it helpful to perpetuate sinful behavior? Is it loving to allow men to continue in the patterns of life that keep getting them into the messes they are in? The "charity" in Charleston seems to have increased the homeless problem. Is that loving? Sometimes, justice and love require saying no and letting a man suffer enough to change or at least to see there is a problem.

(Doug Newell IV is pastor of the Buffalo Valley Baptist Church of Clay, West Virginia.)



Jesus As A Preacher

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preachers and churches have today

On many occasions great multitudes followed Jesus. But He was not thereby flattered into petting and pampering the multitudes so as to win them as His disciples. Rather He was wont in the presence of the multitudes to lay down the severest tests of discipleship and to utter the most scathing denunciations of sin. Some single instances in point here are to be found in John 6:22-71; Mark 8:34-38; Luke 12:1-53; Luke 14:23-33. Christ sought after quality rather than quantity. He continually magnified the sterner side of discipleship and thus sloughed off the fickle multitudes.

What a comparatively few of the great multitudes ever became actual disciples! A Billy Sunday would have had all of Palestine "hitting the saw-dust trail." And many a Baptist preacher would have had multiplied thousands of professions to report. Judged by modern standards, Jesus was a colossal failure as an evangelist! Baptist churches today are overwhelmed by the unregenerate principally because we, unlike Christ, have had an inordinate desire for numbers. It is right to have a passion for the lost. Jesus had it to an infinite degree. But it is a sad mistake to allow our zeal to make us try to take the place of the Holy Spirit in the saving of souls. For the most part this inordinate desire for numbers has worn the cloak of a sincere and commendable, but misguided, evangelistic zeal. Nevertheless it has been tragical in its results. It has brought Baptist churches to where most of them have about as little regard for a preacher that will declare the whole counsel of God

as the Pharisees had for Christ.

It has practically obliterated the line of demarkation between the church and the world. B. H. Hillard once said: "The blighting curse has been, and still is, that BapCats have gone in a mad race for members until there are thousands swept into our churches with no more religion than a heaquen Hottentot. This is no pessimistic "whine," but a tragic fact. Tell me that a saved man can have absolutely no concern for the cause of Christ? Tell me that a saved man will spend his entire earnings on himself and his and absolutely forget the cause of the Lord? Tell me that a saved man will desecrate the holy Sabbath day without the slightest restraint? Tell me that a saved man will habitually indulge in every form of worldly and sinful amusement, especially when his church stands against it? Tell me that a saved man will close his heart to the appeal of sin-cursed and dying humanity, in the face of the plain scriptural command—the last words of our Lord? I do not believe a word of it. Jesus said: **"By their fruits ye shall know them."** That is enough. It tells a sad story. It will condemn men in Hell unless the grace of God intervenes."

Estimates of the lost in our churches today range from fifty to seventy-five per cent. Of course, no one knows the exact per cent. But surely he is blind who cannot see that it must be represented, so far as man can tell, by quite a large figure. Whence came this uncircumcised throng? Did God add them to our churches? Nay, not so. God adds to the church only such as are saved. Then whence came they? We may trace their presence to at least two underlying causes:

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Jesus As A Preacher

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(1) Forgetfulness that results belong to God; **“I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.”** It is not ours to be primarily concerned about results. Rather we would have all concern about being obedient servants of God and leave results wholly with Him. Especially do we need to be warned in this connection in this day when the commercial “world” is stressing results as never before. Efficiency of production is the great end sought today in the commercial world. This is the spirit of the age in which we live, and that spirit is as catching as smallpox. And a devout, open-minded study of the Word is the only vaccine that will render us immune to it.

(2) An abuse of the annual protracted meeting and outside evangelism. Note that I bring no charge against these things in themselves. I speak only of their abuse. The preaching of the Word is always in place, and when a church feels led to have a special period of preaching either to the saved or lost or both, it surely has scriptural warrant and precedent for doing so. And if a church and pastor feel led to call in an outside man to do the preaching, then they have scriptural precedent in the going of Barnabas to Tarsus in search of Paul to bring him back to Antioch to preach there in a protracted meeting. The evil has come in the abuse of these scriptural things. The wise solution of the problem lies not in their abolition, but in riding them of their evils. We have come to feel that we must have results during a protracted meeting. Commonly, if results or professions of faith do not begin to manifest themselves early in the meeting, then one

expedient after another is used—“hot air,” high pressure, radical emotionalism, long-winded invitations with many claptrap propositions and much begging. If the meeting goes on to a close and there are no “professions,” everybody usually feels that the meeting has been a failure. In such a case the evangelist is not likely to get much money out of the meeting. And if he has many such meetings, it is very likely to put a check in his evangelistic career. In these ways we have come unconsciously to adopt false and unscriptural methods in evangelism. Oh, when will we learn that it is ours to preach the Word publicly, privately, in season and out of season, and then leave results with God. This leads us naturally to the next characteristic of Jesus that we desire to notice.

He depended wholly upon the word to accomplish results

Jesus used but one method in evangelism! That one method was the preaching of the Word. There are many things that Christ did not depend on in his preaching to the lost. Let us note some of them:

(1) He did not depend upon personal magnetism. No doubt, He had personal magnetism. And perhaps many were attracted to Him by it. But they soon got their “cup” full. And the fact that so many were thus superficially attracted to Him explains why He did most of His severest preaching to the multitudes. He knew human nature, and He knew when multitudes attended upon His ministry it was time to do some sifting. Therefore He was wont to lay down His severest tests of discipleship in the presence of the multitudes. On one occasion Jesus said to a crowd of Jews: **“... Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood,**

ye have no life in you” (John 6:53). He could not have uttered a more offensive thing to the Jews. Why, the very idea of them becoming cannibals, especially in view of their strict regulations concerning clean and unclean meats and the divine prohibition against partaking of blood! Of course Christ was speaking figuratively and spiritually (v. 47), but they understood Him to be speaking literally on this occasion, as the fifty-second verse will show. And Christ took no special pains to explain His meaning to them. Thus He turned away from them those who had been attracted to Him by His mere personal Influence. On another occasion when a multitude was following Him, Jesus said to them: **“Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me”** (Mark 8:34). Thus He again applied the acid test. Again on another similar occasion He turned to the multitude and said: **“If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple”** (Luke 14:26). Then He exhorted them to sit down and count the cost. The preacher should strive to live so that his life will not discount his words. And God may manifest the reality and veracity of His Word in the life of the preacher. But mere personal magnetism or influence has never had the least to do with making one true disciple of Christ. It has made many false ones, but not one true one. The truth upon which discipleship rests is of divine revelation (Matt. 16:17). The attraction is not to be in the preacher, but in the Christ he presents. John 12:32.

(2) He did not depend upon

more human tact and diplomacy. Human tact and diplomacy would never have led Jesus into the temple to drive out the money changers, nor would He have been thus led to denounce the Pharisees as He did. Human tact and diplomacy would have led Him to avoid a break with the religious leaders of His day. If He had been a diplomat, He would have reasoned that He could accomplish the most by staying on the inside of the religious society of His day and reforming it instead of violently breaking with it. This is the reasoning of sonic today with regard to corrupt churches and associations. But they are dead wrong. God has not commissioned us to go out and reform corrupt institutions. When a church or institution takes its stand against truth and righteousness, then God’s command to every believer is **“... Come out from among them, and be ye separate...”** (II Cor. 6:17).

It is true that on some occasions Christ’s conduct and approach may be conceived of as being tactful and diplomatic even from a human standpoint, but the fact that it was not always so shows that with Him it was not a question of what was tactful and diplomatic, but what was according to the Father’s will. It should be the same with us. We should ever ask what God wants said and done, and not what is tactful and diplomatic. If the will of God is our criterion, we may, on some occasion, act tactfully and diplomatically, but on other occasions we will act oppositely.

(3) He did not depend upon high-pressure and intense emotionalism. He sought no hasty decisions. Instead He exhorted the people to sit down and count the cost before deciding to become

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Moderate Steps

By Paul Stepp of
Indore, West Virginia

"The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD:
and he delighteth in his way." (Psalm 37:23).



Praying for Kings

I Timothy 2. "Praying for Kings." **"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty"** (ITim. 2:1-2). Prayer is an important and indispensable part of every Christian's life. In fact, I believe that prayer unto God – accompanied by a ready and regular knowledge and study of God's Word – are inseparably linked to the life of every successful Christian. In other words, if we desire to be faithful unto God; if we desire to be a good witness for Jesus Christ; if we are to ever bear much fruit in the Kingdom of God; then, we must study often, and pray unceasingly.

In our text passage, I want us to note that we are particularly encouraged (commanded) to pray, **"For kings, and for all that are in authority."** In our day and time, it seems that the ones in power, and the ones who rule over us have taken more authority upon themselves than their elected offices actually permit. These demagogues and tyrants have done much to take away the liberties of the American people – and they will do even more if the American people do not resist, and if God will allow them the opportunities. As Christians in America, maybe we have gone too far – or at least diverted more of our energies than we should

have – in seeking mortal relief from our predicament. Maybe we should get back to prayer? I know it may sound absurd (in the flesh), but let us pray for the souls and the salvation of our leaders. Of course we should pray for Donald Trump – I imagine that many of you do on a daily basis. We want him to be saved, and we want the Lord to guide him in his decisions, and to give him strength in his convictions. But, today, I want you to pray for Joe Biden, that God would save his soul. Pray for Anthony Fauci, that God would break his heart, and bring him to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. Pray for Nancy Pelosi – who knows the limits of God's grace? – God saved you, He can also save the Speaker of the House!

I submit to you today, that it would be better to have as our President, and as our leaders, men who are saved and led by God – no matter the Party they may have been affiliated with – than to have the most moral conservatives, who do not know the Lord, to be placed in authority over us. As a side, I do believe that it would be very difficult for any man or woman who is saved by God's grace, and who is openly and daily seeking to follow God and glorify Jesus Christ; it would be very difficult (if not impossible) for such a man or woman to openly ally himself to the Democratic Party – when that Party openly condones murder in the abortion of babies. But, who knows? (God Knows!) Surely God can save some from amongst these

who are placed in power over us despite their political party, or their former beliefs – he can change each of us as He sees fit! Surely, He can bring their will into submission unto His, and He could, if it were His Will, make these (formerly) wicked politicians into the bravest, the boldest, and the most fervent of His servants! Pray for those who rule over us. That their wicked agendas would be halted; that their evil desires would not be fulfilled; and, most of all, that they would be saved and converted into servants of Jesus Christ.

(Paul Stepp is pastor of the Indore Baptist Church of Indore, West Virginia.)

Jesus As A Preacher

(Continued from page 6) ♦

His disciples. See Luke 14:26-33. How many evangelists do that today? Instead most of them seek in every conceivable way to over-persuade. High pressure evangelism can be indicted not only on scriptural grounds, but also on sound psychological grounds. Charles S. Gardner, in his book on Psychology and Preaching, has some valuable remarks in this connection. He says: "It is noticeable that these who rely upon suggestion as a method of influencing others insist upon "immediate action", while those who instinctively resist this kind of influence insist upon postponement of action, "and it is a healthy instinct." The desire to postpone action may be, and often is, the result of moral inertia, or of a habit that has enfeebled the will, or a positive inclination in the wrong direction. This is so often the case that one hesitates to say anything to encourage the deferring of action in response to an appeal. But it

is nevertheless true that, if the response is not one of thoughtful impulse, "a mere nervous reaction under the power of suggestion", its ethical value is naught. The only antidote to an enfeebled will is to stimulate to voluntary action, the rational control of conduct. "And an immediate motor reaction induced merely by suggestion only adds to the enfeeblement of the will". . . . One is often thus precipitated into action which is subsequently deplored and can only with difficulty be reconsidered; or committed to a position from which he would gladly recede but cannot without self-stultification; and so goes on through life embarrassed and morally compromised by the consciousness of standing in false relations. "This exactly describes the situation of thousands who today are enrolled as members of Christian churches; and while it enables the church to make a brave show as to numerical strength, it is one of the chief causes of the comparative lack of power of organized Christianity. I make bold to say that the disastrous results of this false psychological method are more general and more immediate in the realm of religion than anywhere else." Nearly all evangelism today embodies this false method. Is it any wonder our churches are in the condition they are in? And if this method can be indicted on psychological grounds, how much more can it be indicted on scriptural grounds? Once I was very particular that the closing song be announced before I began preaching and that the singing start the moment I finished giving the invitation. But the Lord opened my eyes to see that the invitation has nothing whatever to do with the salvation of sinners. It is the Gospel blessed by the Holy

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Jesus As A Preacher

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Spirit that saves, and nothing else. New Testament preachers never gave what would be termed an invitation in modern parlance. All talk about “bringing sinners to a decision,” “drawing the net,” etc., betrays a dependence upon the arm of the flesh and shows that the preacher has fallen into the error that bears both a psychological and scriptural indictment.

(4) He did not depend upon salesmanship methods. One of the falsest notions that ever got hold of the mind of any one is that the preacher is to employ the methods of “popularship.” Popular salesmanship is based on the suggestion method which has been discussed already. Picture a salesman saying to a prospect: “Sit down and count the cost and see if you are able to buy the thing I am trying to sell you.” In substance this is what Christ said to the multitude. Most salesmen would starve to death if they used this method.

Salesmanship methods in the ministry are responsible almost altogether for the lost being in our churches. Joshua Gravett once said: “The Lord deliver us from artful men.” Salesmen-preachers are the artful men from which we need deliverance.

(5) He presented the Word to men and women and left them face to face with it. He did not tamper with the soul and try to help the Holy Spirit out. Had many a present-day preacher been in Christ’s place when Nicodemus came to Him, he would have said: “Let us get down here and settle this matter on our knees.” And then he would have artfully wrested a profession of faith out of Nicodemus by the corkscrew method. Why did Christ not do

this? I ask again, why did he not do it? And I wait for some user of this method to answer. Many a present-day preacher would have used the same method with the woman at the well of Jacob. And in preaching to the multitudes many a present-day preacher would have concluded something like this: “Now all you people who want to be saved come forward for prayer.” But Christ and the apostles never used that method. Again I ask why. Were Christ and the apostles model preachers? Or did they leave out some very essential things? Is the Bible an all-sufficient rule for faith and practice? If it is (and it most certainly is: **“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works”** (II Tim. 3:17), then let some advocate of the mourner’s bench give us his authority for his practice. We offer him one page in this paper on which to do so. We make bold to say, and challenge any one to disprove it, that a Baptist preacher has no more authority to invite sinners to come to him and other Christians to be prayed for than a Roman Catholic priest has for having people come to him and confess their sins. Baptists borrowed the mourners’ bench from the Methodists—and it is about time for it to be taken back home. It is the offspring of the Roman Catholic idea of salvation through human effort.

Moreover, the custom of inviting sinners forward for prayer misplaces prayer. Acceptable prayer must be accompanied by faith, for **“How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed”** (Rom.

10:14).) If the sinner can reach God other than through Christ, then the mediatorship of Christ is not a necessary thing, but only arbitrary. Christ said **“...I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me”** (John 14:6). This being true, we know that every man who has ever reached God has done so through Christ. And to reach God through Christ means to reach Him through faith in Christ. A sinner may go through the form of calling on God, but his prayer will never reach God until he puts his faith in Christ. Therefore the prime need of the sinners is not to be told to pray. He will do that without being told when his conviction reaches the proper point. The thing the sinner needs most is to be told how he can find acceptance with God. There is only one instance in the New Testament where a sinner was directly and personally exhorted to pray, and in that instance repentance was placed before the prayer; **“Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee”** (Acts 8:22). And, when mentioned alone, repentance involves faith. They are inseparable graces.

He did not try to preach so as to please the people

And He did not please all of them. He did not even please a majority of them. Neither will any other preacher that is faithful in his calling. Christ reprovved and rebuked. So will every other preacher that fulfills the charge that has been given him. **“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine”** (II Tim. 4:2) Not only did Christ rebuke, but sometimes He rebuked

sharply. The preacher of today is commanded to do the same when need arises. **“This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith”** (Titus 1:13). Christ had the hatred of the world—even the religious world. He said all His disciples would have it too. **“If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also”** (John 15:18-20). Jesus said He came to send strife and division. **“Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man’s foes shall be they of his own household”** (Matt. 10:34-36) **“But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished! Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law”** (Luke 12:50-

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Small Drops

By Joseph M. Sidders of
Guntown, Mississippi

"My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: Because I will publish the name of the LORD: ascribe ye greatness unto our God" (Deuteronomy 32:2-3).



What to do with 2022

I was asked recently what the Bible has to say to someone in the times that we are in currently. Specifically, the year 2022 and our political climate here in America as well as globally, what are we to be doing about abortion, sex-trafficking, veteran neglect, school corruption and compromise, and so on. "The Bible speaks of redeeming the time, but how Pastor can we do such a thing in 2022?"

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (John 20:21).

Born-again believer, your calling is to be faithful. Your calling is to go! We were not granted a list of excuses that would be acceptable for our failing to fulfill the commission. We must share the gospel; it is the only hope, the only light this world will ever see! We speak often these days of how surprised we are at the wickedness of men, as though we truly do not understand the phrase "totally depraved." Do not ignore that very descriptive word "totally," this is to say completely or everything to the nth degree.

"They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Psa. 14:3).

"Every one of them is gone back: they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Psa. 53:3).

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

Every single one of us has the capacity to sin just as completely as those you will read of in today's headline news. If not for the grace of God, we would be involved in such things: **"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded..."** (Rom. 3:24-27).

He Who was set forth by God the Father to be our propitiation. Praise the Lord! Can you, dear born-again believer, make a difference in this world? If you live a Beattitudinal type life as described by our Lord and Savior during His sermon on the mount you shall be blessed! And those that see your walk shall glorify God the Father! This does not mean the world will be changed, God will be glorified either by their coming to know they have been saved by the blood of Jesus Christ, or He shall be glorified by their blood as they are carried off to eternal damnation.

What we see before us, all around us, in 2022 is no different than what was experienced at any other time in history. Man is totally depraved, extremely wicked **"...every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was [and is]**

only evil continually" (Gen. 6:5). **"See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is"** (Eph. 5:15-17).

(Joseph Sidders is pastor of the Berea Baptist Church of Mantachie, Mississippi.)



Brief Truths

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"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (I Cor. 15:1-4). Anything more or less is not the gospel by which we must be saved. And last, God must send a proclaimer of the gospel to that person, **"And how shall they preach, except they be sent..."** (Rom. 10:15)?

In the true and real context salvation is not a decision, choice, prayer or etc. It is a work of God from start to finish. Are you truly saved, were you saved the proper way or a humanistic way? God saves sinners, not man.

(Randy Johnson is pastor of the Sovereign Grace Missionary Baptist Church of Texarkana, Texas.)



What Dreams Mean

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determine to put aside those dreams, as such just fleshly temptations from our sinful flesh.

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I John 4:1).

The best dreams can be when our conscious thoughts are put aside and we receive clarity about something we are concerned and thinking much upon. An example might be when someone asks us a name or date, and we "know" we know it, but cannot think of it on the spot. After we quit thinking about it, our subconscious releases the information to us, and we can call the person back and say, "Now I remember!"

As pastor, sometimes God gives me a part, or all of a sermon outline in a dream. This is linked, again, to a topic that I might have been meditating on or reading in Scriptures about during the conscious part of the day. Typically, it is clarity, not confusion or unintelligible puzzles that these dreams will reveal.

Interpreting dreams is something we must be very careful about. It is easy to get caught up in emotions and also in trying to make everything in the dream mean something tangible. In the past, God has given folk like Daniel and Joseph a gift of interpretation, so it is not inherently evil to interpret dreams, but again, it should be done in the context of Scripture. A "very" important passage concerning this type of a gift is I Corinthians 13:8-13, **"Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I**

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Jesus As A Preacher

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53). These will accompany the ministry today of those preachers who withhold none of the counsel of God. The popular cry is for the preacher who can unite churches. But God has not called preachers to hold the saved and lost together in churches. Only a compromising ministry will unite the vast majority of churches today in their present condition. They are sadly in need of division to the breaking point between the saved and lost in them. They need the old leaven purged out of them, (I Cor. 5:7). The vast majority of Baptist churches today do not want a faithful ministry. They want a soft-peddler, a pussy-footer, a compromiser, a diplomat, a smooth-tongued spouter who knows how to eschew the most objectionable things and season and sugar coat the rest so that they will be palatable to the perverted and worldly taste. The cry from the modern pew is the same as of old—"Prophesy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits" (Isa. 30:10). But God's command is: "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression" (Isa. 58:1).

Some time ago "The British Weekly" brought an indictment against the clergy of the Church of England, in which it said that their sermons never "sting and stab" and that they deal with "blurred uncertainties, foggy ambiguities and clumsy evasions." This is more or less true of lots of preaching in Baptist pulpits. This is the kind of preaching, and the only kind, that will keep things in harmony and the machinery well oiled in the vast majority of Baptist churches today. Christ's

preaching was not of that kind. It evoked much and bitter opposition and drove the Sword of the Spirit into the hearts of sinful men. It caused a stir of division.

He fitted His methods to the attitude and needs of His hearers

With the adulterous woman He was very gentle, but with the Pharisees He was froward. Thus, like God, to the gentle He showed Himself gentle: but to the froward He showed Himself froward. "With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright; With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward" (Ps. 18:25-26).

He spoke with positiveness He did not deal with "blurred uncertainties, foggy ambiguities and clumsy evasions!" He spoke with authority. The preacher today may speak with authority because he has an authoritative Book to speak from. Positive preaching is not popular today, but it is scriptural! The preacher who has no convictions that are strong enough to cause him to speak with positiveness needs to acquaint himself with the Book. To be certain, no man can rightfully speak with the finality and positiveness of Christ, but a man of the Book will be able to speak with a large degree of positiveness. (This article was taken from *The Baptist Examiner* Vol. 1, No 7 from July 15, 1931)



What Dreams Mean

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was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass,

darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

This passage says that "prophecy shall fail," "tongues shall cease" and "knowledge shall vanish away". Prophecy and knowledge, in particular, is speaking of such a gift as dreams and dream interpretation. The Apostle Paul says that when that which is perfect is come (meaning the totality of Scripture; the Old Testament and New Testament), all of those partial gifts that only allow us to see "through a glass, darkly" will be put away as things of our childhood. Now, he says, we will "grow up", and use the perfect tool of God's Holy Word and it will give us all the clarity we will need. Praise the Lord for our Bibles! As we study the Scriptures, they will give us guidance, answers and hope!

However, that is not to limit God, the Holy Spirit, in that He might use the dreams of our subconscious to validate or bring home a point to us. God loves us, and sometimes He acts outside of the box, to ensure that we receive His blessings. Surely, He did not have to answer Gideon's requests for dry or wet fleeces, but He did patiently work those signs out both to assure Gideon, and also to show His great love and power. If God chooses to speak to us in a dream, that is His prerogative. I do not think any of us should be so vain, as to "expect" Him to do so, because as the Apostle showed us, the Bible will be daily (and nightly) sufficient! Reflect upon the following short list of Rules in Dream Interpretation.

Rule #1 in Dream Interpretation: We must remember

that any conclusions we arrive at "must" be in line with the revealed Scripture of our King James Bibles. Useful dreams will just support what Bible Scripture we have been reading and studying. A dream from God (remember to try the spirits!) will "never" lead anyone away from the Holy Bible, the Lord's Baptist Church and God's revealed will.

Rule #2 in Dream Interpretation: Go to the pastor with the dream that is bothering you. Ignore what the worldly psychologists teach, for the most part. Every person is different, and one shoe does not fit everyone! Cultures differ across continents and across times, and what a corn sheaf meant to Joseph, would be very different from my perception. If you feel like God has given you a dream in answer to your prayer and study, I would advise you to continue praying and studying, and God will give you a very excellent answer, without any help from Dr. Phil or any person outside of the Lord's church that you are a member of. Your pastor will know you, and God's will for you, better than anybody in the world!

Rule #3 in Dream Interpretation: It is okay to say, "I do not know!" Sometimes dreams really are just simply a result of eating too late, or too much! And that is okay! Most dreams will fade away in mere moments and be difficult, if not impossible to recall. If it reoccurs, or you simply can not forget it, then you and your pastor can sit down to dissect it.

Rule #4 in Dream Interpretation: If it is from God, it will probably be just personal and only for you. Otherwise, He would have used a more open way to work out His will. Usually it is a warning. Had one fellow that

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What Dreams Mean

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dreamed he met Jimmy Swaggart and confronted Jimmy that he was a fake. I can interpret that dream! I told him, "That is you!" You are the hypocrite, and your subconscious "knows" that "you" need to repent! He definitely did not need to send you a dream to go tell Mr. Swaggart off, there is plenty of ammunition already from the Book of Truth.

Again, if there is bad stuff in your dream, remember that the dream can only represent "personal" experiences unto you! Typically, we are too proud and stiff-necked to just do the right thing, so that is what the dream is warning us about.

Rule #5 in Dream Interpretation: It is not going to be something new, or something revealed about your future. Again, your subconscious can only parley unto you what you already know. So look back in the Scriptures and see what you have been missing that your dream is trying to tell you. The dream is not for the "other" person, but it is for you!

Rule #6 in Dream Interpretation: Give God the glory. No real dream is going to give you glory, or is meant to make you famous. It will probably abase you, remind you, repent you, strengthen your faith, make your heart more tender, etc. But it will give God the glory. Otherwise, it is just a fleshly dream, and we need to be reminded to fill our thoughts and heart with godly reading and video watching. May God bless you with sweet dreams, beloved reader!

When They Heard

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know: Him, being delivered by

the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it" (Acts 2:22-24).

After Peter had finished preaching, there was a miracle of grace bestowed on those that "heard." In the King James Bible, the word "this" is in italics, meaning it was not in the original writings but was added for clarification, speaking of Peter's sermon. In the KJV, the word "heard" is found 641 times in 622 verses. The meaning is pretty much what you would think: hear, perceive, and understand. But here in verse 37, it means more than just hearing with the natural ear; there was a miracle about to take place, in that they would be "pricked" (pierced violently through) (Strong's) in their hearts. Does this mean that all that were there received this pricking? No! "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:41). Those that "gladly received" were baptized. It does not say that all received – it says "they" that gladly received.

Now let us look at why they "heard." In the previous paragraph we touched on the fact that the Holy Spirit was the One Who "pricked" their hearts, but why these? "For the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:39). "You" and "as many as" are God's elect chosen ones. If you want to get a full definition of the elect of God, go to Ephesians chapter one and read verses 1-14. Look also

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Tale of the Tempter

(Continued from page 4) ♦

the lives of each of us "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). What we have here from James however are seven answers to this truth for which we can be found humble before the Lord. First, submit yourself. Withdraw from your memory your great deeds and accomplishments for which you might boast and present yourself before God. Secondly, resist the devil. Oh that Tempter is going to work hard to remind you that you are able and deserving but do not believe it dear friend! Thirdly, acknowledging your need for him, draw nigh unto God.

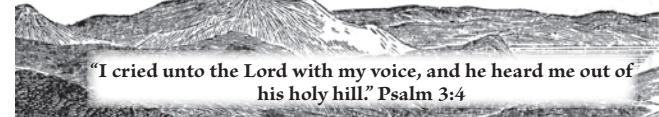
How we should long to be closer to Him dear friend! We should be eager to do the next three in James' list if we truly know our need for Him: cleanse your hands (repent for you cannot be doubleminded nor serve both God and mammon), purify your hearts for nothing should be precious between you and God, and be afflicted. Morn and weep over your sins that you might better rejoice of your deliverance dear saints of God! Lastly humble yourselves before God.

When we see our true condition and position before Him, how could we boast for the way of Salvation could only come from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.



Selahs

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Provoked to Jealousy

"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" (Rom. 11:11).

"But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they" (Acts 15:11).

As I was pondering about this verse, just by first reading, it seems there is nothing noteworthy about this blessed scripture. But take note, Peter said, "we shall be saved, even as they," the Gentiles. Instead of, "they shall be saved even as we are"; the order is the opposite.

The gift of faith of the Gentiles in Christ, made them least in knowledge and

salvation. Truly, the first shall be last, and the last shall be first. Selah! The Jews, including the apostles, are learning from the Gentiles. Is this not fascinating and even mind-blowing?

We are blessed as Gentiles, as God is using us to fulfill the prophecy; "They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation (Gentiles)," (Deut. 32:21).

Though once weak, poor, outcast, without God, aliens, and whom the Jews call "unclean," they are now their model in salvation. God does all things well. Selah!



The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. Please comment on Numbers 21:5 and how it applies to us today.

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"And they journeyed from mount Hor by the way of the Red sea, to compass the land of Edom: and the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way. And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread. And the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died" (Num. 21:4-6).

Probably the most succinct cycle of the trials and hardships of the children of Israel is seen in this familiar chapter of the discouraged "murmuring" of God's people, followed by the judgment of the fiery serpents. We remember the "cure" of the next three verses, which the Lord appropriates in his night school education of Nicodemus: **"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life"** (John 3:14-15). The physical salvation of Israel would be also the spiritual salvation of Israel... have faith in God! **"Look unto me, and be ye saved, all**

the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else" (Isa. 45:22). Selah! Think about it!

The applications of this Old Testament story of **"...discouragement because of the way"** is very akin to the Christian (particularly Baptists) in 2022 America. It is not easy to live godly and to stand firm for the truth in such an era of divisiveness and abominable acts of treachery on every hand. It is actually easier to see God's hand of judgment with the advent of liberal socialism in our politics and the ravages of sickness and death because of a socially-distanced, perpetuated, man-made pandemic. The questions are "Why would God allow this?" "Have you deserted your people, Lord?" "Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness?"

We will have to bow our knees and **"...Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live"** (Num. 21:8). Let us go worship! I think it would do us good to look at the complaints of the Hebrews, and it might give us a clue as to where we go wrong when we find ourselves discouraged over the blight of abortion, and the curse of gay marriage that have combined with easy divorce to destroy so many of our families.

It is on a material level that most folk find their contentment, which is the reverse of the discouragement of our text. A familiar phrase coined during a presidential campaign not long ago was, "It's the economy,

Stupid!" The political adage was remarkably true, as folks voted with their pocketbooks and not with their moral consciences. If there were enough "potatoes in the pot" and their two-headed households were "bringing home (enough) bacon," then the folks felt comfortable in voting for increasingly socialistic candidates (the Clinton's and Obama's). Never mind that the Bible instructions required faithfulness to the conservative values of our forefathers, the children of America were set to wandering in the wilderness of sin, as well as our Israeli counterparts of yore...Selah! Think about it!

The criticism brought by Israel is almost as comical as listening to a modern politician trying to hype transgenderism and feminism at the same time! It is illogical, oxymoronic, and impossible! **"And the people spake against God, and against Moses, ... for there is no bread...and our soul loatheth this light bread"** (Num. 21:5). Was there bread, or not? There was Bread! It was the sweetest "light" bread that was ever provided, but the carnality of their memories made the grass greener on the other hills, the forbidden hills. Just as Eve had the bounty of Eden, but craved the one forbidden fruit, so, too, do we have the bounty of "Sea to shining sea" yet are constantly being deceived by Satan into looking at the blessings of God with jaundiced eyes. **"We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick"** (Num. 11:5).

Excuse me? **"Freely"** it says there! You all were slaves! God gave you liberty! God gave us a nation! God is giving us everything we need! Need water? "Moses, speak to the rock!" **"He**

that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water" (John 7:38). I think just a daily reading of this bread of life called the King James Bible, will satisfy us and quench our thirst; but if we skip a few days? Here come the complaints and murmuring (and then the fiery serpents, eh?) Repent! Turn back! May God bless us today with a day of thanksgiving and a day of contentment! Selah! It is your choice!

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"And the mixt multitude that was among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick: But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes" (Num. 11:4-6).

The above verses pretty much show us what the problem was. If we look deep within our own selves, we can see Israel in us, you may not like that, but it is a fact. We are a whiney, and a very unsatisfied people, in the midst of God's wonderful grace and His many blessings.

Understand this, dear reader, Israel was in bondage (slavery) for four hundred years, they prayed, they cried and they moaned to be delivered from the chains of Egypt, **"And Moses told his**

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. What words of wisdom do you have for a single Christian today?

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"...It is good for a man not to touch a woman" (I Cor. 7:1). There is nothing scripturally wrong with being a single Christian today. I Corinthians 7 is truly a treasure chest of spiritual blessings regarding marriage, and also those that choose to remain single for the rest of their lives. The wisest thing a child of God can do is to be open to God's will via prayer and study. If God has a spouse planned for you, be ready and willing to give yourself fully unto a marriage of submission unto each other. Selah! Think about it!

The Lord God made man with a natural desire for an helpmeet, and to deny our need for that perfect complement in the opposite gender (yes, only two!) is foolish. Verse 2 says **"Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband."** If the Lord does give you a continuing desire, then He will supply the right wife/husband that will be "his own" or "her own" soulmate!

But every saint's marathon is different! **"For I would that all men were (single!) even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that.**

I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn" (I Cor. 7:7-9). The Bible says here that neither single, nor married is "wrong," but it is true that sometimes it can be "wrong" for God's purposes for us. Some are meant to be married for life, and some have been gifted with a life of being married to God only.

As the Apostle Paul develops this thought of single Christians being dedicated to the Lord, he uses the word "virgins," which we usually think of as being single and chaste ladies, but if you are reading this chapter as a single male, it might benefit you to translate it in your reading as single Christians...selah! Think about it! It is good stuff for both sexes! **"Now concerning virgins (single folk!) I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful. I suppose therefore that this is good for the present distress, I say, that it is good for a man so to be. Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife. But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin (single) marry, she hath not sinned..."** (vs. 25-28). Paul says there are no "broad-stroke commandments" in the matter, but it is to be as the Lord leads!

The last part of verse 28 says of marriage, the blessed ordinance of God: **"Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the**

flesh: but I spare you." It is not that marriage is bad, but that marriage is essentially going to be "two imperfect people living in one house!" Selah! Always! The three-fold cord of the wise preacher (Ecc. 4:12) is meant to work a miracle with Christ as 1+1+1=1, but in the flesh, the faithful apostle is letting us know that it is going to take a Super-abundancy of God's graces of love, faith, hope, and trust to have a successful marriage.

The heart of Paul's message to virgins/single Christians is: "Wait!" More completely, it is "Wait on the Lord!" If you are single, do not just jump into the first relationship that you find! Too many Christians have married too soon. It has caused many a wreck on the "Highway of life" with many tears shed as hearts and lives are broken.

"But I would have you without carefulness (worry-free!). He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord: But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife. There is difference also between a wife and a virgin...And this I speak for your own profit; not that I may cast a snare upon you, but...that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction" (vs 32-35). Even if you eventually do get married, you will look back on your bachelor (virgin) days as special times of growth, and opportunities to do things that you are no longer able to do. Do not miss the blessing of this "singlehood" time of serving God. More time to study, read, and pray, yes, but also more opportunities to travel, visit, help, teach, and actively invest yourself in mission works. Whether you are still unmarried,

or find yourself widowed into "singlehood" once again, the best advice I can give you is to repeat the apostle's admonitions to "invest yourself in Jesus"...until God brings marriage to you... and then invest your family in Jesus! Selah! Think about it!

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1. Learn to be content with God's providence as a single Christian as Philippians 4:11 states: **"Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."** God has ordained the end from the beginning, and the things that are not yet done (Isaiah 46:9-11), so you can rest assured that if He intends for you to have a spouse, He will bring it to pass in His time. God does all things well, so you will be most happy when you are resting in His sovereignty and submitting to His providence for your life.

2. While you are single, serve the Lord with every fiber of your being. Devote yourself entirely; body, soul, spirit, mind, will, and heart to the things of God. I think that is what Paul was saying to the unmarried in I Corinthians 7: **"For I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that. I say therefore the unmarried and widows, It is good for them that they abide even as I...Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God...But I would have you without carefulness. He that**

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Forum Question #1

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father in law all that the LORD had done unto Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake, and all the travail that had come upon them by the way, and how the LORD delivered them" (Ex. 18:8).

Before I continue, think about this, do you really believe God after four hundred years delivered His people Israel to take them into the desert and let them starve to death? Of course not! God gave them the best of the best in the desert, this **"light bread"** was **"manna"** from Heaven, angel food, you can not have anything any better, **"And the children of Israel did eat manna forty years, until they came to a land inhabited; they did eat manna, until they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan"** (Ex. 16:35).

But they were not satisfied, they said there in Numbers 21:5 **"and our soul loatheth this light bread."** Loatheth means they hated it and wanted to go back to Egypt where they were fed well. **"We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick."**

So, they were thinking with their stomachs and not their hearts, **"Understand therefore, that the LORD thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiffnecked people"** (Deut. 9:6).

Like so many of us, we complain when God is doing so much for us, and we just do not appreciate it. We can be, and probably are sometimes, just as hardheaded and stiffnecked as the Hebrews were. God Bless!

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Numbers 21:5 states: **"And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread."**

The setting we find this verse in occurs right after the death of Aaron while the children of Israel were wandering in the Wilderness. God had promised them a land flowing with milk and honey and the Israelites failed to heed the command to go into the good land. The consequence of their rebellion and disobedience would be 40 years of wandering in the wilderness (Num. 14:34). A reading of the Book of Numbers clearly reveals that the Israelites were often stubborn, rebellious, unbelieving, disobedient, and discontent.

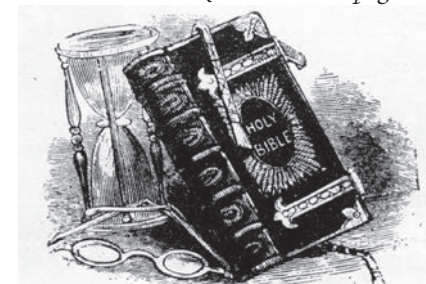
The passage under consideration provides us with yet another occurrence illustrating the discontentment and unbelief of the Israelites. God had just wrought a victory over the Caananites (21:2-3). They had become discouraged and weary in their journey (21:4). Their murmuring was directed at God and the man that God had appointed to lead them, Moses. In essence they were complaining against the authority, sovereignty, and providence of God. They voiced their complaints to Moses and blamed him for what they believed was an intolerable situation. They even

despised the manna that God had provided to sustain them during their wanderings. Their rebellion against God and their complaint against His authority brought God's judgment upon them in the sending of the fiery serpents (21:6). God, in mercy heard the intercession of Moses on behalf of the people and spared the lives of all those who looked upon the brass serpent lifted up by Moses upon a pole. All who looked were saved from the venom of the fiery serpents. This particular incident provides us with a type of the Lord's salvation as revealed in John 3:14-15, where sinners are exhorted to look to Christ upon the cross as their vicarious substitute as the only way of salvation, forgiveness, and eternal life. Those who look outside of themselves and believe wholly on the sacrifice, blood shedding, and finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ alone will have eternal life.

By way of present-day application, much is made of the Israelites complaining against God and especially against the man of His appointing, Moses. Many relate this to the relationship between church members and their pastor. There are definitely times that God's people get out of sorts with the Lord and complain against the pastor that God has called and appointed to lead and feed the flock of God. Discontentment and murmuring by God's people is the outworking of the fleshly nature that is not mortified. Sadly, when God's elect fail to crucify fleshly passions, even the most spiritual are prone to inward and outward displays of discontentment. I fear that often times pastors take these displays and complaints too personally. Elders get offended and sometimes develop grudges against the very people they

are called to minister unto. It is definitely a sin against God when hearers despise the Word of God and complain against the men called upon to preach it. Dear pastor, this is part of ministering to people who still have a fleshly nature. It will happen from time to time. My pastor told me years ago that preachers must have the heart of a mother and the hide of an alligator. Pastors must learn not to take the complaints so personally. I am not the sensitive sort to begin with, so most of the time when folks rail or complain against me I do not get all riled up or upset unless I am the one at fault. When I am at fault, I take the complaint to heart, repent, and seek to rectify the situation. However, when those who complain are at fault, I have learned that their real problem is not so much with me as it is with God. So I follow the example of Moses and begin to intercede for them in prayer asking God to intervene in their lives. In Numbers 21 Moses did not waste time on what the children of Israel were saying against him. Rather, he immediately went to God in prayer to intercede for those who were bitterly complaining. He was more concerned about their welfare than his own feelings. I think the conduct of Moses is a good example of how elders and pastors should react to murmuring church members. Pastors, earnestly intercede for your people before the Lord and trust God to work things out.

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Forum Question #1

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"And when king Arad the Canaanite, which dwelt in the south, heard tell that Israel came by the way of the spies; then he fought against Israel, and took some of them prisoners. And Israel vowed a vow unto the LORD, and said, If thou wilt indeed deliver this people into my hand, then I will utterly destroy their cities. And the LORD hearkened to the voice of Israel, and delivered up the Canaanites; and they utterly destroyed them and their cities: and he called the name of the place Hormah. And they journeyed from mount Hor by the way of the Red sea, to compass the land of Edom: and the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way. And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread. And the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died" (Num. 21:1-6).

In this passage, the children of God should find strong encouragement unto obedience unto God. There are at least five notable points that the children of God would do well to consider. First, God's people shall possess the promises of God. Next, there

shall be resistance to obedience for the people of God. Then, there shall be reminders along the way from God as encouraging faith files to move forward. Also, sadly, the people of God often get discouraged, with complaint against God. Last, **"There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it"** (I John 5:16).

God's people shall possess the promises of God. We know this, but do we really? How could the children of God complain against God if we really took Him at His word? Though all ungodly, yet welcomed and acceptable to Him in His infinite grace, we stand redeemed. Yet, all along the way we forget the surety of His promises. Forget the giants. Forget the armies. Forget the miles, the provisional needs, the sun, the rain, the starting and stopping, the in-fighting in the camp, and all the daily minutiae. God had promised them a land, had told them to go get it, and had promised to fight their battles for them. Children of God, the possession of Jesus Christ is certain! The details of this life are all simply momentary details that shall soon dissolve as a morning dew, with eternal possession of the promises of God at hand! Children of God, our dismay is triumphed over with any serious appreciation for the Lord and His promises toward us in Jesus Christ!

There shall be resistance to obedience for the people of God. Resistance from within and without. My flesh wars against me to serve the Lord. Many adversaries of God, which also happen to be our allies in the flesh, would advance to subdue us, fight against us, and have us fatigued and heavy hearted. Still yet, the Lord, who has never lost a battle, has declared the end from the beginning, and has

sworn by His own self the victory unto His people in the justifying resurrection of Jesus Christ (Rom. 4:25). Satan, the false prophet, and the beast shall be thrown alive into the lake of fire, along with all those who reject the Lord's Christ (Rev. 20). No matter what happens, child of God, even in death we have victory in Jesus Christ with hope of eternal life (I Cor. 15:57)!

There shall be reminders along the way from God as encouraging faith files to move forward. He [the Lord] called the city **"Hormah"**. This name is translated as devotion or devoted, and was to be a perpetual reminder that the Lord, the God of their salvation and deliverance, was to be trusted and served. The Lord is wonderful, that He gave them this city, and that He gave them reference moving forward to go into battle, yet again. The Lord is further gracious in giving us this file-folder of faith, that we can know and believe that the same God who fought this battle for His people fights battles still. Further, the Lord gives each child of God their own **"Hormah"**. Which child of God can honestly say that the Lord has never conquered on their behalf? For which of the children of God was there no battle at Calvary, a true war of holiness against sin, and that war without mercy? For which of the children of God shall not the Almighty be the Divine Warrior who will **"take vengeance on His adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for His enemies?"**

Sadly, the people of God often get discouraged, complaining against God. Tell me, reader, am I alone in sounding like one of the "three bears"? "This thing is too this..." "This thing is too that..." All the while never being content, rather, "rejoicing" in the Lord, in all His wondrous

blessings, and the joy and tender love that is set before us in Christ Jesus. "Well, our government is falling apart..." Does God yet reign?! "Our currency is failing..." Do you not have all things in Christ Jesus?! "My health, Oh, my health..." Is there no hope of eternal life?! Speaking of myself (perhaps some may relate), this writer becomes discouraged and downhearted the more I think of me, my circumstance, and the things of this flesh, and becomes more satisfied and encouraged the more that thoughts of Christ, salvation, love, and justification flood my soul. Please consider II Corinthians 4:17, **"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."** Knowing this, then, how or why should I "dare" to be discouraged in this brief course of life, while claiming to have such wondrous eternal hope in Christ Jesus?

"..There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it" (I John 5:16). The Lord Jesus Christ recited from Numbers 21 in His conversation with Nicodemus in John 3. Rightly, there is a wondrous presentation of the gospel in this text. There is also a straightforward example of how the Lord deals with His people who persistently rebel, stiffen their neck, complain, and speak out against the Lord and His men in both word and deed. The Lord was merciful to spare some, no doubt. He was merciful, also, in "taking out" some of the group, inciting urgency in repentance in the remainder of the group. Has the Lord changed? Are we so "wonderful" (sarcasm) that the Lord would not strike us down in our overt disobedience to cause others to fear? **"For this**

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Forum Question #2

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is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord: But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife" (7:7-8, 24, 32-33). When you are single make sure your focus is on serving and pleasing God in all that you do. Make God your portion and delight.

3. I would caution you not to partake in the modern "dating game" where you go out with multiple people in search of a good fit. If you are really desiring to be married, do not give your heart and affections to multiple people in a series of relationships that involve breakups and all the anxiety that comes with it. Rather, go to the Lord with a sincere heart and ask Him to send the proper fit for you. Do not begin a relationship unless there is a desired end of holy matrimony with that individual. I know this sounds serious and heavy, but marriage is one of the single most important choices you will ever make. It must not be done flippantly or haphazardly.

I was saved at the age of 21 and I determined not to start "going out" with girls as I had done when I was unsaved. I wanted to serve the Lord with my whole heart (Psalm 119:10). I was called to preach 6 months after I was saved and sought to devote myself entirely to the ministry of the Word. I was consumed with study, school, secular work, and the Lord's church. It was not until I was done with Bible college that I really began to entertain the idea that I may need a wife to be an effective pastor or missionary. I began to pray earnestly that God would send me a saved girl who

loved the Lord, who was a Baptist that believed the truth about sovereign grace and the Lord's church, and who had a virtuous testimony and a submissive spirit. I also prayed that God would bring her to the church I was a member of, Wilmington Baptist. I was really specific in my prayers and I would always include at the end of my prayer, "Lord, if there is any way you can make her a pretty girl, I would appreciate it." God brought Tammy Redmond from 50 miles away and in His time added her to Wilmington Baptist! I remember thinking to myself when she first started attending our church that she was the only girl for me, Lord willing. God made it happen. By God's grace, Tammy is the only woman I ever courted. God willing, this July 21st will mark our 38th year of marriage.

4. When you are serious about someone as a single, unmarried Christian, make sure you never put yourself in situations where you may be tempted to compromise your virtue and purity. Determine to save yourself for marriage. When courting, choose activities that revolve around church, family, and Christian friends. Avoid starting a physical, intimate relationship. Rather focus on talking to one another, writing to one another, getting to know one another. I Corinthians 7:1 states: **"Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman."** Save yourself for intimacy in marriage. Hebrews 13:4 states: **"Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled; but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."**

5. Do not let your peers, family, or friends pressure you into a relationship. You may find

that you love serving the Lord as a single Christian and that you are fully satisfied and content to serve the Lord without being in a relationship with someone. Seek the Lord with all your heart. Love Him supremely and put Him first. If it is God's will for you to be married He will bring it to pass in His time. Until then, learn to rest in Him and do not be anxious or worried about being single.



I can not do any better than to give you the words of Paul, **"I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I"** (I Cor. 7:8); **"But I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord: But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife. There is difference also between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband"** (I Cor. 7:32-34).

The verses above give some thought on divorce and remarriage and should or could a widow remarry after their spouse dies. But for me, I see that Paul is saying that to remain unmarried or single is far better for serving the Lord because you are not bound to a husband or wife and have to make a choice

in pleasing each other or pleasing the Lord. I would encourage the reading all of I Corinthians 7.

I believe the reason Paul says to be as he was and remain unmarried was because of the approaching persecution, **"I suppose therefore that this is good for the present distress, I say, that it is good for a man so to be"** (I Cor. 7:26). Paul urged Christians to refrain from marriage as he had done, if they could because of the persecution of that day. Read *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*. You will see that to get to the men their wives and children were brutally murdered in front of them, and Paul is saying that if you do not have a spouse, they can not put you through that kind of torture, **"I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I"** (I Cor. 7:8). Also, Paul says in (v. 9) **"But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn."** Here burn means emotions (sexual desire). The Greek tense indicates a command since a person can not live a happy life and serve the Lord effectively if dominated by unfulfilled sexual passion, this was especially true in the Corinthian society.

So, to the single Christian today I would say this, if you can control your emotions and passions, then be faithful to the Lord Jesus and as Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, the Lord will keep you from evil, **"But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil"** (II Thes. 3:3).

If people believe there will not be horrible persecutions in our day like in Paul's, then they have their head in the sand, **"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for**

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Light Contemplations

By Luke Austin
of Cadillac, Michigan

"Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the LORD" (Psalm 107:43).

Are You Changed?

What is sold in most churches today is a just do this Jesus. "Just accept Jesus." "Just believe on Jesus." "Just let Jesus into your heart." Then in a very popish, anti-christ manner that person is declared forgiven and free from their sins.

The question is not if you at one time in your life just did this or that: the question is did He save you? Consider the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Read them all and find me a sinner that came to Christ and left "just believing on Jesus." In other words, find me someone who came in one condition and left just the same. The blind man that left blind. Can you find him in there? I have searched and searched and cannot find one example of such.

The truth is that anyone that has ever come into contact with the Son of God always and every time leaves changed. So you have believed on Jesus, ok, but are you changed? And I do not mean reformed. I do not mean you have adopted some wacky religion of signs and wonders, tongues and chaos. I mean you have been radically transformed from the inside out. Now you hate the sin that you once loved. Now you love the God you once hated. Now you love the fellowship of God's people. Now you hate the sin and corruption of the world. Have you been given the mind of Christ?

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the

lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (I John 2:15-16).

You see the evidence of real saving faith is a changed life. That is why the term "conversion" is often used. It speaks of a change from one thing to another. And this is what the Bible describes as a saved person. They are not just saved and left to themselves. That is not salvation. What if God defeated Pharaoh but did not bring the children of Israel out of Egypt? Have they truly been saved and delivered? That is why the Bible says we have been sanctified unto obedience. We are not cleansed from our sin and left to ourselves. We are set apart and led by God all the days of our lives. Can you honestly say this is the salvation that you have? Or did you "just" do something at one point in time?

"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied" (I Pet. 1:2).

(Luke Austin is a member of the Cadillac Baptist Church of Cadillac, Michigan.)



When They Heard

(Continued from page 11) ♦

at John chapter 17, the prayer of Christ for the apostles and all believers. **"I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for**

they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them" (John 17:9-10). Jesus Christ is making a distinction here between one group and another that He is praying for: **"the world"** and **"which thou hast given me."** He makes it clear that He does not pray for the **"world"** (the non-elect). How can anyone read John chapters six and seventeen and not understand the true meaning of God's chosen elect?

What are the results of this "hearing"? **"...Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost"** (Acts 2:37-38). It has been brought out already that the Holy Spirit pricked the hearts of those present. The result is the acknowledging of what has been done, **"what shall we do?" "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation"** (Rom. 10:10). We can also notice from these verses that another result of the pricking of the heart is the act of repentance. The meaning of repentance is to change one's mind or purpose. How is this to be done? We are to turn away from the sinning nature we had before salvation and turn toward a life of following Jesus Christ and His instructions through the Holy Word of God. This turning is a result of a marvelous work of grace done through God's great love for us.

Baptism also is required of everyone who has been **"pricked."** Notice that baptism is not the cause of the pricking of the heart, but that baptism is **"for"** or **"because of"** the remission of sins. Remission means

pardon or forgiveness of sin. We realized our pardon of sin when we were pricked in our heart – not when we were baptized.

Through all that has been presented here, we must acknowledge that it is all done through the Holy Spirit. It is truly a **"gift"** given to God's people because of the work done on the cross of Calvary by Jesus Christ. Jesus told us that God would send the Comforter (Advocate) and we would be sealed (meaning to stamp for security or preservation) with His promises. **"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise"** (Eph. 1:13).

Being saved by the grace of God through His marvelous word that we **"heard,"** we also must acknowledge that we being one of His chosen ones, He also hears us when we are in need. **"In my distress I cried unto the LORD, and he heard me"** (Psa. 120:1). Oh, that we may be a faithful people that in our distresses of life, we can go to Him in prayer and know for sure that He **"heard"** us! Whatever distress we have, as we pray to Him, it should be a relief to us knowing it is in His hands and that He will answer that prayer. **"To him that rideth upon the heavens of heavens, which were of old; lo, he doth send out his voice, and that a mighty voice"** (Psa. 68:33).

My prayer is that you have **"heard"** the word of God, and that you have been **"pricked"** in your heart to know Jesus Christ as your Saviour. **"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also after that ye believed, ye were**

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The Short Pews



Brief Articles
by Curtis Pugh
(1944 - 2018)

Did Jesus Turn Water Into
Grape Juice?

“When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made WINE, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom. And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good WINE; and WHEN MEN HAVE WELL DRUNK, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good WINE until now” (John 2:9-10). [Emphasis mine: C.A.P.]

I do not suppose I could attempt a more controversial subject, although controversy is not my purpose. (My opinion is that the Lord's churches do not need more controversy among them!) I am aware that there are some among the Lord's Churches who will disagree with this article, but I ask for a fair hearing. I have selected this topic for I am convinced from personal experience and the words of others that the real problem they have with wine in the Lord's supper is that they cannot envision Jesus, the Holy Son of God, making wine or drinking wine. These are honest Christians as are those who hold divergent views. I can heartily sympathize with those who have a problem thinking about Jesus turning water into an alcoholic drink and partaking of the same for once I had the same difficulty.

The wine used by the Lord Jesus and made from water by Him as His first miracle is doubtless the

same as He used in instituting the Supper, it being the common beverage of His day. Therefore the matter of the wine spoken of in John chapter two directly relates to our observance of the Lord's Supper today for all sound Baptists will agree that we have no right to change the teaching or practice instituted by the Lord Jesus.

Let me say at the outset, and I can call to witness my family and those who know me, that I do not use beverage alcohol. We do not and have never kept such in our home. Neither do I frequent bars or other establishments where liquor is dispensed. Neither am I a member of any organization which has church money invested in mutual funds which own an interest in a brewery or distillery. Members of my family, my father being one, were ruined by drinking alcohol. I have observed the ruin of many lives and families because of the liquor traffic. I believe I oppose the use of hard liquor and alcohol as a beverage as much as any man. I was a teenager in “dry” Oklahoma and opposed the state going “wet.” I minister in communities where “alcoholism” is rampant, where drunks are seen staggering up and down the village streets, and where many boys and girls suffer from fetal alcohol effects and fetal alcohol syndrome. I hate the evils of beverage alcohol.

Such a question as the title of this article poses would not have even been countenanced among our Baptist forefathers prior to the Temperance Movement. It just was not a matter open for discussion. However, because some pastors and churches down through the years have felt it better to change to using grape juice in the Lord's Supper, such a question now arises. Please consider the following things as

they bear upon the subject at hand.

1. SOME THINGS ARE CULTURAL. In Jesus' day and culture, it was common for the host at a meal to tear off a portion of bread, dip it into the common bowl, fish out a tasty morsel and pass it to someone he wanted to honor. Except for “finger foods” such handling of food is considered bad manners today. Handling food someone else is going to eat is taboo and the idea of everyone eating out of a common bowl is repugnant to many, but such was not the case in Bible days. Cultures change!

The Baptist sub-culture today in the United States is opposed to drinking alcohol. I believe this is good! However, it colors our thinking to the point that some just cannot think that Jesus turned water into wine or used wine. I can testify to this personally for as a “teetotaler,” I wrestled long and hard with this matter. I recognized that I was indeed prejudiced against alcohol, even against using it in medicine because of its evil abuse in our society. That is what I call my “subcultural bias.” It colored my thinking. It seems to me, by the way, that such a bias exists only in the United States, for even in Canada the moderate use of wine is countenanced by many acceptable, even among so-called “evangelical Christians.”

Consider this little story told me by a pastor from England. A British pastor was to preach in a Baptist church in Holland. At the same meeting there was scheduled a Baptist church choir from the United States. Shortly before the service was to begin, the Dutch pastor came to the visiting British pastor. He was obviously very agitated and insisted that the British pastor speak to the American choir. There was a terribly serious

problem with the choir. It would never do for them to sing in a Dutch Baptist church. The ladies all were wearing makeup! This was regarded as sinful! The British pastor intervened and the ladies, rather than be an offense, meekly hurried to the washroom and scoured off their makeup. After the service all the visitors were invited to the Dutch pastor's house for refreshments. Everything was fine until the Dutch pastor's wife began to pass around great mugs of beer! Now it was the Americans' turn to be offended. While the Americans thought painted faces all right, to the Dutch such things were a sin. Conversely the Dutch felt that beer was proper, which was an offense to the Americans. While I do not advocate the use of beer, it must be admitted that some things are cultural!

Cultures change. Sometimes for the good, sometimes for evil. Let me give you a couple of illustrations. Brother Bill DeRossitt, pastor of the Grace Baptist Church of Georgetown, Ky., himself an opponent of the liquor trade, told me that the man who brought the technology for making sour mash whiskey to Kentucky was a Baptist preacher! Lacking roads to transport grain to the more populous areas of the eastern seaboard, much early day frontier grain was made into liquor which had a higher value and could be more readily transported over the mountains. History reveals that Baptists were not absent from the numbers who engaged in this type of commerce just as they were not lacking in the production of tobacco. (All who are acquainted with Virginia Baptist history are familiar with the statement that the Episcopal church “made great inroads into Baptist tobacco” inasmuch

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Short Pews

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as Baptists were then forced to support the established church and clergy.) Today, and I think rightly so, a sound Baptist church would not countenance members who engage in whiskey making!

David Benedict had this to say about U.S. Baptists shortly after 1800. "Our people then made a broad distinction between the church and the world, and if any of their members went over the line to the world's side, they were at once put under church discipline."¹ These churches are to be commended for their stand against worldliness. However, in discussing the conducting of Baptist associations of that time period (and in the same chapter), Elder Benedict says, "Then, in all places and among all people, 'the ardent article [liquor] was freely used,' and no one seemed conscious of any thing amiss in the practice, and to have failed to have had an ample supply of the popular beverage at gatherings of all kinds 'and especially at associations,' would have been considered an indication of parsimony or neglect."² [Brackets & emphasis mine: C.A.P.] Cultures change! Our Baptist forefathers during this time drank hard liquor and did not view it as worldliness, but they did oppose excess. While I believe they were wrong to use liquor, the point I wish to make is that our culture has changed today to the point that most Baptists regard the use of liquor to be a sin. This has colored their thinking about Bible wines and the use of wine in the Lord's Supper. Where once the moderate use of alcohol was "not" viewed as a problem among sound Baptists, today it is. Any candid observer, viewing the facts

of our history, must admit that Baptists have changed in their views toward the use of alcohol! Obviously cultures change and our culture has changed to the point that our view of Scripture may be unknowingly influenced! Every honest Bible student will surely admit to this danger.

2. THE TESTIMONY OF LEARNED MEN REGARDING THE WORD WINE. William Cathcart, Baptist, says, "The Lord's Supper, in its 'form', must be bread and wine. . ." ³ Philip Doddridge, whose hymns we sing, said Jesus made wine and that the phrase "when men have well drunk" does not refer to drunkenness, but rather 'to drink so freely, as innocently to exhilarate the spirits.'⁴ [Emphasis: C.A.P.] (Obviously Doddridge meant an alcoholic beverage since grape juice can hardly be said to "exhilarate the spirits.") The marginal notes in the Geneva Bible, the Bible used by English readers prior to the King James Bible, says it was wine Jesus made. John Gill, in his *Exposition of the Old and New Testaments* says it was wine that Jesus made.⁵ George Hutcheson (AD 1657) maintained, "Feasting, and better fare than ordinary, and calling of friends together at marriage, as lawful, providing the rules of sobriety, prescribed in the word to such feasts be observed; and it is not against Christian sobriety in any person to countenance their kindred or friends in marriage feasts, for 'there was a marriage' - or marriage feast, as the word importeth, 'wherein they had wine'." ⁶ [Emphasis mine: C.A.P.]

If we go to those renowned for their expertise in the Greek language, we find that W. E. Vine (*Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*) says the Greek word means wine. So

does Marvin R. Vincent, (*Word Studies in the New Testament*). Clearly A.T. Robertson, (*Word Pictures in the New Testament*) identifies the Greek as meaning wine. B. H. Carroll, longtime pastor of the First Baptist Church, Waco, Texas, and founder of Southwestern Baptist Seminary in his *An Interpretation of the English Bible* maintains it was indeed wine which Jesus made from water. So also does R.C.H. Lenski, noted Lutheran scholar in his *Interpretation of St. John's Gospel*.

3. THE TESTIMONY OF THE GREEK PEOPLE. It is a fact that the modern Greek church continues to use what she has always used in the "Eucharist," and that is wine. Specifically, the fermented juice of grapes is used. Although the Greek church has apostatized in many ways and is undoubtedly a part of the Harlot's daughters, she has never changed from immersion as the mode of her "baptism," nor from using wine. Why? Because the Greek people know the meaning of the words translated "baptize" and "wine" in your New Testament.

This is further illustrated by the following. I have been informed that the Oak Trail Baptist Church of Granbury, Texas uses grape juice instead of wine in the Lord's Supper. Interestingly enough, and to the point at hand, they have or at least did have a missionary from their Church in Greece. When questioned about their practice, their pastor admitted that their mission in Greece uses wine in the Lord's Supper! Obviously the meaning of the Greek words and the understanding of people whose mother-tongue has come down from the koine Greek of our New Testament writers compels the use of wine! Any preacher or missionary who sincerely believes that grape juice

is the proper element would insist on using that product if he could get by with it. The fact that the Greeks insist on using wine speaks volumes to me on the subject!

5. IS THERE SUCH A THING AS NON-ALCOHOLIC WINE? Lest someone try to maintain that there is such a thing as "non-alcoholic wine," it is clear from the context in the writings of the various authors cited that they, by the word wine, mean fermented, alcoholic wine. All the authorities I can find say that wine is alcoholic. After much research in those sources available, honesty compels me to admit there is no such thing as "non-alcoholic wine!"

The Columbia Encyclopedia in One Volume says, "wine, alcoholic beverage made by the fermentation of the juice of the grape."⁷ *The Oxford English Dictionary* - which is the standard work on the English language, and the basis for the King James Bible, lists eight headings for the word wine. The primary one is "The fermented juice of the grape used as a beverage."⁸ All the other listings relate to fermented beverages, such as ". . . A fermented liquor made from the juice of other fruits. . ." Two uses are scientific, but definitely relate to alcohol. One is listed as "pl. short for wine-glasses" and another as "A wine-party, esp. of undergraduates." We shall leave the reader to judge whether these last two are alcohol-related or not, but it is obvious to me that wine-glasses are designed to be used in the consumption of wine and I scarcely can imagine a group of undergraduates having a party where they imbibed grape-juice!

Words have an exact meaning and to try to change the meaning of a Bible word to suit or accommodate a preconceived idea

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The Kentucky Baptist and the Burning Coals of Truth



C. D. Cole
(1885 - 1968)

Will Worship Or The New Cart



“For because ye did it not at the first, the Lord our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due order” (I Chron. 15:13).

The passage before us contains principles of lasting importance and lessons greatly needed. May it be pondered as in the presence of God and in view of eternity. Christian activity is always engaged in either to please God or for fleshly gratification. All departures from the Word of God begin with a desire to please self—myself or some other self, rather than God. In Col. 2:23, Paul speaks of will worship, which has reference to people exercising their own wills in doing what pleases them religiously to the satisfying of the flesh. Yes, I mean to say that the flesh can find satisfaction in religious forms as well as in the course and immoral things of life. Feelingly and earnestly do I say it, will worship is the curse of Christendom. It has led away from God, and, therefore, away from happiness and power. Will worship has led into the wilderness of confusion and strife by the rejecting or ignoring of God's Word as the all-sufficient rule of faith and practice. Will worship has substituted human expedients for the Scriptures, which are not only able to make wise unto salvation, but to thoroughly furnish unto every good work. And, oh, how

degenerate does religion become when it is made to serve the lusts of the flesh; when the motive is fleshly gratification rather than the glory of God. It is so important to keep to His plan in everything, and to have a simplicity that hears His Word above all else. But some have said: “The main point is love to Him. We must not be occupied too much with the letter, lest love be cramped.” This is an unscriptural distinction, for has Christ not said: **“If ye love me, keep my commandments?”** It is as if a son should argue thus: “The main thing is to love my father, therefore I will not be particular to do what he bids.”

The surface lesson in the passage before us is that a right thing may be done in the wrong way. The thirteenth chapter of first Chronicles recounts the first attempt by David to get the ark of the covenant back to Jerusalem. It had been captured by the Philistines when Eli was judge. But the ark proved a curse to the Philistines, and, after moving it from city to city with varying misfortunes, they decided to send it home to Israel; and they did so on a new cart. The ark first came to Bethshemesh and then to Kirjath-Jearim, where it rested in the house of Abinadab during all the years of the reign of Saul. But after David ascended the throne, he sought to get the ark to Jerusalem.

Let us notice a few things in connection with the first attempt to get the ark to Jerusalem

1. There was much unity (v. 4). Much counsel was taken and many conferences were held. Everybody was of the same opinion. And we are told that in unity there is strength.

2. There was a great deal of enthusiasm (v. 8). There was enthusiasm even to the point of excitement. What manifest zeal and religious fervor! It was a gala day in Israel! What show would any man have in making protest against what was being done? Why, he should have been smothered with the cries of “fool” and “slacker.” He would have been branded as the enemy of both God and man.

3. There was apparent success. Everything looked favorable for a glorious climax. True, they were carrying the ark on a new cart. But the average church member would say: “Well, what is wrong with that? They are trying to get the ark back to Jerusalem and surely everybody ought to help?” We have heard this until our heart is sick. We hear folks saying: “Why, we are trying to get souls saved, and certainly everybody, even the devil, ought to help.” And so new words and phrases are coined to express and emphasize the need for and importance of co-operation.

UNITY, ENTHUSIASM, PAST SUCCESS! Surely the ark will soon be in Jerusalem. Look how smoothly the cart runs! What an improvement on the old way! What a timesaver the cart is! What a great idea! Hurrah! hurray! the ark is on its way; Come see the end of a perfect day. What? What did you say? Did you say Uzza was dead? Do you mean to tell us that this

wonderful undertaking has ended in failure? Do you mean to say that all that unity and enthusiasm went for naught? Do you mean to tell us that the saying: “In unity there is strength” has proved a failure? Yes, my friends, the whole thing was a dismal failure. Uzza, one of the men who drove the cart, lay upon the ground— (lead; joy was turned to mourning, and the procession was thrown into a panic. Confusion reigned, The king was both mad and scared. What was the cause of all this? It was disobedience. Let David tell you in his own words: **“... We sought him not after the due order”** (I Chron. 15:13). Enthusiasm is dangerous if it is not coupled with obedience. In the fourth chapter of Numbers there were explicit instructions concerning the movement of the ark. It was to be covered and carried on the shoulders of the Levites. No eye was to look upon it, and no hand was to touch it. But Israel disobeyed and followed the example set by the Philistines. God showed His displeasure by striking Uzza **dead**. If God dealt with his people today like he did in those days, there would be a lot of dead cart **drivers**. And in many a church there would be confusion and fear where there is now enthusiasm and unity coupled with a spirit of disobedience. But let the people of God not vainly imagine because God does not show His displeasure immediately that He will never do so. He most surely will show it in His own time.

Now, that our message may be practical, and that it may be a word in due season, let us inquire whether we have any new carts among us today. Let our hearts be exercised before the Lord that we may know whether we are seeking Him after the due order. Let

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Burning Coals

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us bring the matter to our own church doors. We will not, at this time, bring out all the new carts in our possession. We will examine only one of them at this time. The cart we will examine today is called: "The B. Y. P. U." I speak lovingly and tenderly, but I must speak truthfully and faithfully. I must warn of the danger of displeasing Him with whom we have to do. The B. Y. P. U. is a human substitute for the divine plan. It is being run in violation of I Cor. 14:34-38 and I Tim. 2:11-15. I do not greatly blame our young people. Little blame attaches to them as compared with the blame that would rest upon me if I did not warn and point to God's way. Our denominational leaders are to be blamed for their plot against God and His word in bringing in this new cart and pushing it on an unsuspecting people. Here is God's plan for His churches: **"He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive"** (Eph. 4:11-13). What dire results have come from setting aside God's expressed will.

But some say the B. Y. P. U. has been a great blessing to our churches. We are told that the public ministry of women has been

a great success; that multitudes have been saved through the public preaching of women. We are reminded that God has blessed the thing that I condemn. But wait! Such reasoning is leading to a dangerous precipice. Myriads today are encouraging a departure from the Word of God with such reasoning. This is justifying the means by the end. It is arguing that whatever is successful is right. God gave water from the wrongly smitten rock of Numbers 20. Many today, in order to be logical, would be forced to argue that the smiting was right and a thing to be copied. The movement of the ark from the country of the Philistines to Israel on a new cart was a grand success, therefore it was the right thing for Israel to do. Christian Science (so-called) has enjoyed remarkable growth and is still growing in favor with men therefore, it is right! With such reasoning it can be proved that every religion under heaven is right. If success is proof of righteousness, then non-Christian religions are more righteous than Christianity, and the devil is more righteous than Christ. Oh, that we **"...might learn...not to think...above that which is written"** (I Cor. 4:6). Oh, that God's people would "bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (II Cor. 10:5).

And let me remind you again that God does not manifest His displeasure publicly today against departures from His Word as He did in the former dispensation. God has not vacated His throne, but He is reigning through providence, and providence is mysterious. God is not executing judgment upon the wicked today. This is the day of His long-suffering; and the only person who has a right to execute judgment is now sitting upon the throne

of grace and intercession. **"...the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man"** (John 5:22, 27). **"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God"** (I Cor. 4:5). The appraisal of human thought and conduct is the prerogative of Jesus Christ. It is our blessed privilege and bounden duty to follow His Word in all things, and to patiently wait for His **"Well done, thou good and faithful servant."** May our hearts be greatly exercised before Him, and may we never have to confess that **"we sought him not after the due order."**



When They Heard

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sealed with that holy Spirit of promise Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory" (Eph. 2:13-14).



Short Pews

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or a personal aversion is merely to cloud the issue. The English word "wine" means a fermented (alcoholic) beverage, usually made from grapes. The King James Bible is an accurate translation and the translators chose the word "wine" knowing full well its meaning and understood, as do all competent Greek scholars,

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Forum Question #1

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cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world" (I Cor. 11:30-32). Has God changed? Would He not still correct with health issues, up to and including death, as chastisement against the willful disobedience of His people? Are you better than they? Child of God, serving the Lord is a privilege. Willful disobedience, complaining against God, and forgetting His promises (or holding them lightly) are dreadful offenses against the God of Heaven. Do not, reader friend, let this day expire without hearty repentance. Indifference or self-righteousness in this matter may prove to bring hard consequences.

God has certainly made wonderful promises to His people. There will be obstacles in this life for a believer, both in living out the promises of God and with expectation in Christ in obtaining them. God has given His people evidences in the Word of God and in our lives, specifically in salvation, and has given every believer a form of "Hormah", with specific dedication to serve God in all devotion. We will be discouraged, children of God, but may those seasons be few and light. May we desire to continually rejoice in the Lord, seeking His face, and desiring to please Him in our living. May God help us, that we would not fall into such discouragements and despondence, and that we would not, in word or deed, "speak out against" God or God's man. Such things could bring

♦ (Continued on page 22)

BEREA BAPTIST BANNER
Financial Report
12-1-2021 to 12-31-2021

Beginning Balance.....	\$4454.15
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	500.00
S.G. B. C. Silsbee Tx	30.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL	60.00
Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX	50.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV	200.00
Carol Willett, Cottonwood Shores, TX	100.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL	25.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
Grace B. C., Gladwin, MI	50.00
Grace B. C., Germantown, NC	50.00
Grace Missionary B. C., Tulsa, OK	50.00
Indore B. C., Indore, WV	300.00
The Lord's B. C., Goose Creek, SC	50.00
Michael Sherman, Ashland, KY	35.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Cheapeake, OH	100.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL	100.00
Portland B. C., Plumerville, AR	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Wellington, KS	100.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA	25.00
Beauty Mtn. B. C., Edmond WV	50.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	150.00
Southside BC, Fulton, MS	50.00
N. T. B. C. Goshen, IN	50.00
Faith B. C., Lynn, AR	12.50
Parkway L. B. C., Springfield, OR	100.00
Eld. Gary Howard, Eagle AK	500.00
Emmanuel BC, Oldtown KY	200.00
Janet Stevens, Marion KY	14.00
Eve Knowles, Scarborough ME	100.00
S.G.B.C., Plainfield IN	100.00
Eld Donald Parker, Millport AL	92.00
Allen McCarthy, Cameron MO	10.00
\$500 was given this month in memory of Brother Chris Cockrell. Thank you so much!	

Divided Checks.....	150.00
Subscriptions.....	91.00
Anonymous	300.00
Sub Total	\$3944.50
TOTAL.....	\$8398.65
EXPENDITURES:	
Postage	669.22
Printing.....	459.10
Wages	1550.00
FICA	118.58
Div Cks	150.00
Total Expenditures	\$2946.90
ENDING BALANCE	\$5451.75



BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST
Financial Report
12-1-2021 to 12-31-2021

Beginning Balance.....	\$3,692.06
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	225.00
Calvary Ind. B. C., Sumas, WA	100.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	100.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
.....	525.00
TOTAL.....	4217.06
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio time	261.99
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	261.99
.....
Interest	+0.03
ENDING BALANCE	\$3,955.10

Forum Question #1

(Continued from page 21) ♦

great chastisements, including death of ourselves, friends, family, or loved ones. If such is your case, dear reader, I strongly urge you to cry out to God in repentance. May the Lord bless.



Forum Question #2

(Continued from page 16) ♦

the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years (Rev. 20:4).

So, if you can stay true to yourself, and more so to be faithful to the Lord Jesus Christ then do so by remaining single. God Bless!

Joseph A. Newell
3484 FM 92
Silsbee, TX 77656



Pastor
Sovereign Grace
Baptist Church
3484 FM 92
Silsbee, Texas 77656

This writer, in his brief experience as a saved person (20 years as of September, 2021), has seen some very dear children of God go through much heartache and sorrow that is 100% self-inflicted. Such trouble, humanly speaking, could have been avoided, should the child of God had any care, concern, or interest at all in the position of God toward their relationships. Direct speech is called for, and direct speech shall be given.

Why should a child of God be upset when they engage with or marry a person, and then that

person "continue" behaving as an unsaved person? Parents have responsibility in this matter. We are to train our children to seek and maintain God-honoring relationships "according to His word". In a time when it is "cool" to be a "Christian", and that there is no accountability, responsibility, or scrutiny of Christians according to love and good works, many parents are satisfied with an answer something like, "well, he goes to church," or "he comes from a good family." This is sloppy, lazy, and rebellious parenting. Parents, according to God's word, are to teach their children, **"..Thus saith the Lord.."** and to maintain their positions accordingly.

Yet, it seems that parents offer little or no instruction as to who their child should interact with or entertain in any measure of courtship. "Do you like him/her? Does he/she like you? Date. See what happens. If it is the Lord's will, he might even save that person through your witness." True. The Lord may save an unsaved person through the witness of a saved person, "or," this could totally devastate someone's life through disobedience!

Child of God, the Lord expresses Himself very clearly in His Word. **"Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee: But ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves: For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God: Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice; And thou**

take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters go a whoring after their gods, and make thy sons go a whoring after their gods" (Ex. 34:12-16).

Then, there is the issue of fellowship (sharing and participation) for the child of God. One thing I have in common with everyone is the "flesh." The "flesh," that is, the "natural man," loves sin, the things of this world, and everything that would lead to death and rebellion against the majesty of God. Having fellowship in the flesh, then having feelings for that person in the flesh is a natural consequence of "indulging" the flesh with partnerships in the flesh. Yet, having things in common in the flesh is "not" biblical criteria for a relationship. In fact, we are to "crucify" (put to death) the flesh and walk after the Spirit. Consider Galatians 5:16, **"..Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh..."** So, then, a relationship patterned after "walking after the flesh" is a sinful one, and a relationship that provokes and encourages in the Spirit is one that will cultivate a spiritual walk "and" discourage "walking in the flesh."

Again, child of God, the Lord expresses Himself very clearly in His Word. **"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God,**

♦ (Continued on page 23)

Forum Question #2

(Continued from page 22) ♦

and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty (II Cor. 6:14-18).

Disobeying God pertaining to what manner of person a child of God ought to join themselves to can bring heavy and dire consequences. At best, the unsaved person will cultivate sinfulness, idolatry, lust, and worldly living. In extremes, broken and divided homes, chaos in the hearts and minds of children, and further cultivation of the flesh including hatefulness, bitterness, anger, wrath, malice, and evil speaking, and perhaps "most painful of all," the Lord will chastise His child for the disobedience.

Child of God, you are better off being single, then to put a "snare" around your own neck with an unbeliever. You would be better off being single, then to be "unequally yoked with an unbeliever." You would be better off single, than to live a life of sorrow, tragedy, heartache, and chastisement. If you are already married, may God be merciful in dealing with you in such disobedience. "I do not advocate divorce." If this writer could hug you telling you these things, he would. In begging, please hear the words of God as recorded from scripture. Please seek the Lord. Please only consider a "verifiable" child of God unto marriage. Please do not take someone's word for it, the stakes are too high. Please verify if that person you are interested in, "before dating" (and especially "before marriage"), is a

child of God. Walk in the Spirit. If you only have things in common "in the flesh," then run away. You are looking for someone who will be a help to you in serving God and "walking in the Spirit."

May the Lord bless.



Short Pews

(Continued from page 21) ♦

the meaning of the Greek words employed by the original writers.

6. THE TESTIMONY OF THE STRICT AND PARTICULAR BAPTISTS IN ENGLAND. Several years ago (1988) sometime after I began to study the subject of wine in the Lord's Supper, I wrote to the Strict and Particular Baptists in England. It is my understanding that they are the most conservative of British Baptists. They are the Baptists with whom Charles Philpot and William Gadsby (the hymn writer and compiler) were connected. My correspondence was with Baptist Elder J. J. Rayner of the Gospel Standard Trust Publications. He wrote me, in part, the following, "...The question of whether wine or grape juice is used is not really a point of controversy amongst sound Baptist churches. The comments on your questions are as follows:- 1. Wine is used by the majority of our churches, although there are some churches changing to grape juice. 2. Wine has been historically used by our churches. 3. As far as we can tell wine was used by Gadsby, Philpot etc., 4. The question has not been a major point of contention amongst us, for many years at least. ...As I see it, the whole point is rather simple. It is that the wine in its natural fermentation sets forth the sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ, whereas there is no

fermentation in grape juice. In our churches we do not lay down a rule that only wine should be used. 'What is usually the case [is] that where a church decides to have grape juice it is a sign that that church is becoming more liberal and less strict'..." [Brackets and emphasis mine: C.A.P.]

I believe the position of these British churches as expressed by Bro. Rayner is worthy of consideration. Surely he is right in his appraisal. If a church is convinced and sincerely believes there are valid BIBLE reasons for changing from wine to grape juice, that is one thing, but if a church takes the position that it does not matter what the Bible teaches, they are free to do as they please, that is quite another and indeed a sign of unsound liberalism!

It is my opinion from my study of Baptist history that many churches changed from wine to grape juice years ago because of the influence of the largely-Methodist Temperance Movement. Regardless of the prevalent view of the religious people of this world, their movement, and their opinions of us, we "must" follow the practice of the churches of the New Testament if we could have the commendation of the Lord (I Thess. 2:14).

7. THE TESTIMONY OF THE SEASONS. Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper in the Spring. We know this because Passover, the season in which He instituted the Supper, occurs in our April. Grape harvest is in late August or September. Grape juice, because of its natural contents, when stored in a warm climate, such as that of Palestine, will naturally ferment. You do not have to do anything other than mash the grapes so that the yeast on the skins comes in contact with the natural sugars in the juice.

While the people of Jesus' day may or may not have known how to preserve grape juice without allowing it to ferment, it is said by some that there was a method used which involved the use of cold springs and or expensive jars carved from a certain kind of stone. (I have not been able to ascertain the plenteousness of cold springs in Palestine.) These had to be carefully sealed with a suitable substance and delicately cared for, according to those who maintain that such a process existed. (There is disagreement over whether or not this technology was known to the ancients. No archeological discoveries have supported the idea that grape juice could be preserved, as far as I can learn.) At any rate, such a process would have necessarily have been time consuming and tremendously expensive---far and away beyond the reach of the common people. The Bible way, the usual way, the cheaper way, the way of the Jews, was to put grape juice into freshly sown wineskins, which would be flexible and stretch to accommodate the fermentation of the wine: hence the statement **"neither do men put new wine into old bottles; else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish. ."** (Matt. 9:17). "Bottles" refers to wineskins. Old wineskins would be stiff and inflexible and would not stretch. Thus they would burst and be ruined and sustain the loss of their contents as well. Jesus used this which was common knowledge in His teaching of spiritual truths.

The Jews ordinarily, all scholars admit, preserved their grape harvest by fermenting it. This produced one of two products: either vinegar or wine. To attempt to maintain that Jesus had access to unfermented grape

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Short Pews

(Continued from page 23) ♦

juice some six or seven months after harvest-time is a difficult position, to say the least. While my library is necessarily limited, I can find no writer prior to the Methodist Movement who ever tried to maintain that Jesus had access to grape juice. On the other hand, to say that Jesus turned water into grape juice is to fly in the face of many reputable scholars as well as our knowledge of the customs of the time.

8. WILL YOU DO FOR YOUR BODY WHAT YOU WILL NOT DO FOR CHRIST? I have spoken with several sound Baptist brethren whose churches use grape juice. Many of them have voluntarily told me that they realize that there is as much alcohol or more in the cough medicine or the sleeping concoctions they purchase off the drugstore shelves and use as there is in wine. Thus I believe I am right in concluding that the majority of sound Baptist preachers do not object to the use of alcohol as a medicine. They have no problem with Paul telling Timothy to **“use a little wine for thy stomach’s sake and thine often infirmities”** (I Tim. 5:23). They will use alcohol for the natural body and they understand, necessarily, that “wine” in this verse is alcoholic. (“Wine” is also necessarily alcoholic in the story of the Good Samaritan for it is unthinkable that one would pour grape juice into the wounds of a man.)

Why, then, not use alcohol for the spiritual purpose the Lord instituted? I do not advocate the use of beverage alcohol because I believe there are valid Biblical and social reasons to abstain from its use. May I add that nothing in my experience makes me believe that

our Sovereign-Grace, Landmark Baptist pastors who advocate wine in the Supper are given over to the use of beverage alcohol, and I have visited in many of their homes. (I understand the so-called “Reformed Baptists” often use alcohol as a beverage. Reader, if you are unfamiliar with our kind of Baptists, please, please do not confuse us with the “Reformed” kind. We think the terms “Reformed Baptist” to be a contradiction of terms, but that is another subject!) If it is proper and pleasing to the Lord to use alcohol for medicinal purposes, why is it not proper and pleasing to the Lord to use wine which contains alcohol for spiritual reasons? Surely obedience to the Lord is more important than the care of these temporary bodies in which we dwell!

There is no evidence, as far as I can learn, that Jesus turned water into grape juice. As wine was the common beverage of Jesus’ day, I can find no valid reason to think that He instituted the Lord’s Supper using grape juice. If He used wine, then we are bound to continue the Supper using the same elements.

The evidence is cumulative and, I believe, compelling! The Greeks know what wine is. The English language experts who

compile our dictionaries know what wine is. The King James translators knew what wine was and chose their word accordingly. The Greek language experts tell us that Jesus turned the water into wine. Wine was the common drink among the Jews. Our old Baptist forefathers knew what the word wine meant. They were not prejudiced against the use of alcohol and used wine in their observance of the Lord’s Supper. Nobody, as far as I have been able to learn, ever tried to maintain that Jesus turned water into grape juice until after the Temperance Movement of the 1800’s had changed, for the good, the drinking habits of many Protestants and Baptists. Let us keep the good that came of the Temperance Movement, but let us not allow our aversion to beverage alcohol to color our views of the Bible and what Jesus did and instituted.

Thank you for considering my views. I am convinced that Jesus turned water into wine and not into grape juice. Not all Brethren agree, I know. While we seek to remain open to the truth of God’s Word, let us agree to follow Christ according to the light He gives us and walk charitably toward those who may not see things as we do.



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ANNOUNCEMENTS

We have been blessed here at West Jefferson Baptist Church, in that besides myself we have two other ordained ministers. They are both available to preach for anyone that may need them too! Brother Ray Sexton (304) 207-6521 and Brother Chuck West (734) 709-8366! They are eager and willing to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ!

Grace Baptist Church of Gladwin Michigan is seeking to start a mission work in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. We are also seeking a sound preacher to go there. If you are interested and feel led of the Lord please contact Pastor Sam Wilson at 989-701-5564. You may also contact Brother Tom Coffee, who is currently working in the area at 843-254-3018.

This ministry currently has a blog written by Bro Coffee that can be read online at <https://thefaithfulofgod.com/blog/>

Due to the length of our articles this month we had to reduce the space allotted for announcements. What is presented this month is our newest listings. We will add the older listings back in for the March issue. Should you have church announcements to share with the community please feel free to email them to us at request@bereabaptistchurch.org or you can call us here at 662-282-7794. Thank you and God bless!

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