

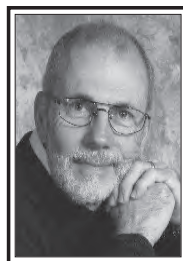
# The Berea Baptist Banner

"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." Matt. 21:22

## Idle Words: Whose Church Is It?

By James L. Reynolds  
of Cornersville, Tennessee

"Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw. And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David? But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils. And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them,



Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand:

And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand? And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your

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## What Has Happened to Sin?

By Jonathan Bailess  
of Edmond, West Virginia

"Fools make a mock at sin: but among the righteous there is favour" (Prov. 14:9).

As you can probably tell by the title, we will really only be using the first portion of this verse for this sermon: "**Fools make a mock at sin**". The world in which we live is a fool's paradise; sin is no longer exceedingly sinful but is



often overlooked and sugar-coated as to no longer be recognized as sin. I find that quite often folks, both saved and unsaved to our shame tend

to: make light of our sin, view sin as our liberty and freedom, jest at sin by saying we did not really mean to commit it or that it was "basically harmless," we pass sin

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## How Should I Forgive?

By Joseph M. Sidders  
of Guntown, Mississippi

"Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven" (Matt. 18:21-22).

"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay



any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather,

that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day

◊ (Continued on page 3)

## What Is Your Idol?

By Glenn Gilbreath  
of Decatur, Alabama

"Ye shall make you no idols nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up any image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I am the LORD your God" (Lev. 26:1).

When we mention idols, we tend to think about the ones that the Bible speaks about. The one most familiar is about the golden calf of Exodus chapter 32, when Moses came down from receiving the Commandments of God and found the children of Israel worshipping this calf. When Moses asked Aaron what



had happened, Aaron told him that the people gave him some gold, he threw it in the fire and in Aaron's words, "...and there came out this calf" (Ex. 32:24).

There are many different types of idols found in the Word of God – statues, images, nature, sun, moon and stars, other people. Whatever men can think up, they will make as idols. The word "idol" has many different meanings in the Bible: a likeness, a terror, an earthen vessel, an image. Webster's gives this definition: the

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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.
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7. To condemn and expose error wherever it may rear its ugly head.
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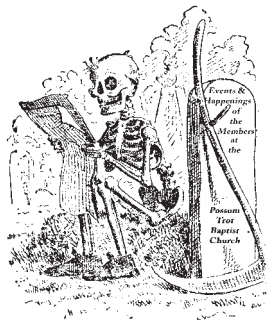
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## Idle Words...

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**judges. But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house. He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad. Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come. Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit. O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned"** (Matt. 12:22-37).

Those divinely inspired words of Matthew give us the account of words which were spoken by the Lord Jesus Christ to a group of Jews who had just witnessed Him completely heal a man who had been possessed of a demon, a man

who was also blind and unable to speak. A portion of those who saw this miracle realized that it was by divine power that the Lord had done this wondrous healing and accepted Him as the Messiah, the long-awaited son of David.

**"And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David?"** (Matt. 12:23)?

However, there were also present in that group some hypocritical Pharisees who refused to acknowledge the obvious holy and divine source of this miracle and they attributed it to the devil.

**"But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils"** (Matt. 12:24).

So although that portion of Scripture which we just read was spoken in the presence of all those who were assembled and who had witnessed the miracle, it was primarily directed to the Pharisees who, in envy and jealousy, had refused to acknowledge that it was by God's power that the Lord Jesus (as He is God) had performed this healing. They further greatly sinned by attributing that act of mercy to the devil.

At this time I am not going to further discuss the circumstances which preceded the Lord's words nor of His rebuke of those wicked Pharisees.

However, I do wish to spend the remainder of this short article concentrating and contemplating on one verse of that portion which we read. **"But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment"** (Matt. 12:36).

We desire to present to you in this article some thoughts on the ♦ (Continued on page 8)



# 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).



## Saints of God and Sin

**"We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not"** (1 John 5:18).

When God saves a sinner, they are "translated" from Satan's power to the Power of Jesus Christ. This is called being birthed or being born of God. A soul is changed from being enslaved and controlled by sin to being controlled by the Holy Spirit of God. As children of God, we now belong to the King of kings and the Lord of lords. We are no longer wanderers in a lost and dying world, but children of God. We belong to God, He wanted us before the world was ever created, long before anything was created, way back in eternity past when only God existed, He wanted us. Not to be just created beings, but to be His children, to be like unto His True Son Jesus Who is the Christ. When God says we are "born of God" the word "born" means - to procreate - it also means we are "begotten" of God. While a sinner might have been born of a woman, and have an earthly father, those of us who have been saved have been re-born or experienced a second birth. We have been rebirthed by God to be His children. This is what Jesus was explaining to Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews in John 3 when Jesus told him, **"... Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."**

The words "born again" means being born a second time but this time from above. Most people hate this terminology because it is "exclusive" but if it were not for the re-birthing of God, all would be excluded from salvation. The re-birthing is by God's power, we have nothing to do with it except being blessed by it.

We, as children of God are made holy by the earthly works and blood of Jesus Christ our Saviour. **"Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high"** (Heb. 1:3). Jesus has "purged our sins" meaning He, thru His blood has purified all our sins. This is the reason for the re-birthing, for God to make us as though we have never been sinners. To make us holy as Jesus is Holy, as the Father is Holy, we as children can also be holy. We could never be holy in our natural state because we were born sinners. What a blessing to everyone that God has re-birthed by the power of the Holy Spirit and through His Son Jesus Christ. As children, God expects things of us, like recognizing Him as our Father, us wanting to be like Him, and us following His authority and power. If we are **"begotten of God"** then as children, we are to keep ourselves from sin. This is impossible without the power of God because Satan

tempts us, and we simply cannot overpower Satan's temptations. However, with that said, it is our responsibility to our Father because we reverence Him not to fall into temptation. While our power is limited, we are to resist the devil and his sly temptations. This is not an option; it is a command from our Father. Sometimes some of God's children treat the commandments of God like options, but commandments are certainly not options. Your Heavenly Father is nothing like your earthly father, your Heavenly Father does not "overlook" your disobedience. He forgives them through the blood of Jesus, but He is never "ok" with disobedience. Sin is the breaking of God's law, any of God's commandments broken is sin. God is gracious in that He has forgiven our sins thru the blood sacrifice of Jesus, but please do not mistake that as justification for sinning. God said, **"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent"** (Rev. 3:19). It is never good to have God our Father chastening us! While we may argue that without the power of God, we cannot resist the temptations and power of Satan, us folding and surrendering is our fault. God said, **"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you"** (Jam. 4:7). Again, this is not by our power, but we must resist Satan with all the power we do have, and God will give us the power to succeed. How do we do this? By drawing closer to God. **"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded"** (Jam. 4:8). Beloved, sin is not "ok" with the saints of God, if you do not resist Satan, you will fall into temptation, and God will chasten

you.

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



## Forgiveness

(Continued from page 1) ♦

**long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter"** (Rom. 8:31-36).

A while back I was asked to preach a sermon entitled "Urgency of Forgiveness." In this message we discussed why we should forgive; the short answer, of course, being "because Jesus forgave us." What I did not cover in that message, and honestly what I have labored over ever since, was the how.

In asking this question there in Matthew, Peter comes across as attempting to be "extra-spiritual." After all, the Jewish rabbis taught that three times was enough, his offer to do so seven times was over twice as many times, surely better is "good enough." Is that what we should truly strive for, "good enough"? Jesus, who Paul writes to us about in Ephesians 3:20 **"...is able [and willing] to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think..."**, was not spared but rather **"delivered"** up so that we might be forgiven all things. It is with that perspective that I would like for us to consider how it is we are to forgive.

First, we are to forgive without limitation. Jesus put no limit on forgiveness, for true forgiveness comes from a heart of love, and love keeps no record of wrongs. It is unconditional. **"...though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Charity suffereth long,**

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## Forgiveness

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and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. 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 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 [remain or endureth] faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity" (I Cor. 13:2-13). At the root of everything we do, shall be charity or love. With love as its roots, our forgiveness should know no limits!

Let us also consider Colossians chapter 3. In the first 15 verses we read "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Mortify [put to death for love's sake]

therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all. Put on therefore [because you are risen with Christ vs 1], as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye [God the Father forgave His elect for love's sake...for His own names sake...because He loved His son who took the cross willingly]. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness ["moral and spiritual perfection" – Strong's]. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." Paul writes "I am nothing" and love is perfect!

Then we go back into being filled with the Spirit, which also has no limits (praise God!): "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom [expressed in the following actions];

teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged. Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ [If indeed ye be risen with Him]. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons."

Secondly, beloved, we are to forgive without delay. Ralph Waldo Emerson once wrote "You cannot do a kindness too soon because you will not know how soon it will be too late." **"And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou**

**be with me in paradise"** (Luke 23:39-43).

As we consider how we are to forgive, I must admonish you that forgiveness should be immediate, your good as well as another's! As we consider the two malefactors I want you to note that both died that day. The one took his pride and arrogance to hell with him that same day; mocking the Lord Jesus, as his rebellion failed not even on that final day! The other admitted his guilty plea before the Lord of lords and found himself in paradise that same day! There was no sacramental atonement for this man to perform, He simply looked to Jesus, who had been risen before him, repented, believed and was saved unto paradise that same day. Look to Jesus beloved, **"...as Christ forgave you, so also do ye."** (Col 3:13 above). He did not wait until His ascension to forgive this one anymore than He had waited for such an event to forgive the adulterous woman, or the leper, or the "tombstone terror" of Matthew chapter 8!

Lastly, we are to have and present no problems when forgiving others. How often have we heard and even said "I will forgive you but I can never forget"? When we fail to forgive as Christ forgave we do not actually assume control over the unforgiven parties...we actually forfeit control of ourselves. Forgiving "instantly" is a sign of sincerity. Do we follow Christ Jesus sincerely or insincerely? The father of the believers, Abraham, rose up early to serve faithfully. Do we? This is a heavy question, a hard saying, but one that each must examine themselves and consider. **"...whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men"** (Col. 3:23). This word **"heartily"** is the same Greek

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# What is Your Idol?

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worship of a physical object as a god or immoderate attachment or devotion to something. Oxford's Dictionary says: the practice of worshipping statues as gods or too much love or admiration for someone or something. The best definition of idolatry is: when something becomes more important to us than God.

Why is mankind so focused on disobeying God's commandments? Exodus 20:3 – God made this His first commandment because if you put God first, all the other commandments will be easy to follow. It specifically states that we are not to have any other gods. Yes, you may say, "I do not have statues or pictures of Christ or candles or jewelry in my home." That is all well and good, but what the definition above that states those that may have "too much love or admiration for someone or something." We all have some of those "idols." What about power, fame, wealth, or popularity? Are these bad things? No! Are they gifts of God? Yes! The problem is that we forget the Giver, and instead worship or idolize the gift. Power can be a good thing if used for the right reasons. Fame can be a platform to share hope. Wealth can be wonderful if it is shared generously. Popularity can be a good thing if using it to build up a community. It is normal to desire the gifts that God gives us, but we must keep God Himself as our greatest desire.

**"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon"** (Matt. 6:24). Jesus was talking about the

idol of wealth, but the concept in this teaching is broad-minded. You cannot serve both God and \_\_\_\_\_ (whatever – fill in the blank). We cannot have it both ways. Choosing idols means rejecting God, and choosing God means rejecting idols. When the Bible speaks of idols, it often talks about "turning away" and "turning to." Paul rejoices that the Thessalonians **"...turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God"** (I Thess. 1:9). Turning from God and trying to satisfy ourselves with idols is a substitute that will lead only to pointless and ineffective desires.

We all worship something. If we are not worshipping God, idols will naturally slip in to fill the void. **"Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen"** (I John 5:21). The key word of this verse is **"keep;"** meaning to be on guard or avoid. The best way to overcome the love of idols is to be overcome with a greater love. Take time to read Romans 7:12-25. The Apostle Paul is instructing God's people that even though we know the right thing to do, we often find ourselves doing the wrong thing. Notice Romans 7:18: **"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not."** It is a struggle to keep yourselves from idols, but by God's amazing grace, He instructs us on how to avoid the difficult times in our lives.

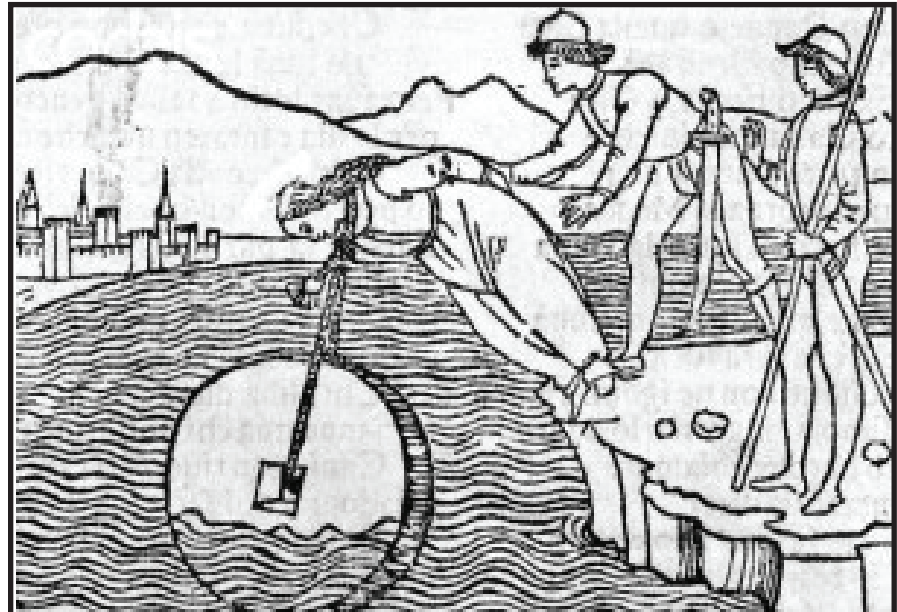
God is called a **"jealous God"** in the Scriptures (Exod. 20:5; Deut. 4:24). Man is commanded to worship God alone. God is omniscient, meaning He knows everything, including the fact that we will never find true happiness apart from worshipping Him. **"...thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron,**

**wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified"** (Dan. 5:23b). Idols cannot see, nor can idols do anything for themselves. Idols, whether physical (statues) or immaterial (power, fame, wealth), will unconsciously receive love and worship, but they will never give back or do they have any power to save their worshippers. They are an addiction and not a relationship. God loves His people and helps them in times of need. **"Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot**

**be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need"** (Heb. 4:14-16).

I would like to encourage all who may read this to prayerfully evaluate your life and make sure nothing has become more important than the Lord God. Ask yourself, "What is the idol in my life?" Be honest with yourself because we all have something in our lives that is considered an idol. Do not try to answer the way you think you should. Here are a few questions that may help you to identify current or potential

♦ (Continued on page 6)



Mark 9:38-42

**"And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbad him, because he followeth not us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me. For he that is not against us is on our part. For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward. And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea."**

## What is Your Idol?

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idols in your life:

- (1) Where do I spend my time?
- (2) Where do I spend my money?
- (3) Where do I get my joy?
- (4) What is always on my mind?

Think seriously about these questions and answer them honestly. Spend time in prayer seeking what is an idol in your life. Idol worship today may look different, but it still exists. We should not let anything take the place of God in our lives. When we look at idolatry in the Bible, that is the main message. Keep God in His rightful place.

Consider this list of just a few things that might be an idol in your life. Pagan holidays, jobs, sports, cell phones, TV, that favorite cross you wear around your neck, that (so called) picture of Christ you have displayed on your wall, anything that may keep you from attending church. Does your job take you away from attending church? Does your love for sports interfere with serving God? Do we spend as much time on the things of God as we do the things of the world? Answer the above questions for all of these examples.

I realize that Xmas, Easter, Halloween holidays are only once a year. But when you answer the above questions, how much time and money do you spend on these holidays? Read Mark 7:6-9: Christ says that the Pharisees worship Him (Christ) in vain, because they are teaching the commandments and traditions of "men." Verse 9 says: **"And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition."** Are not these pagan

holidays "traditions of men?" What does "pagan" mean? One who has little or no religion, and who delights in sensual pleasures and material goods. Why not consider using that money to help on the missionary field, or purchasing some Bibles and sending them someplace they are needed? During these holidays, how much of your joy is centered on the gifts more than God? How much of your mind is centered on the holidays rather than God?

These holidays are not Christian holidays! Study the history of when, where, and why these holidays came into existence. If these are Christian holidays, why do people who do not believe in the birth, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ celebrate them? Why do those who hate the Bible celebrate these days? The evidence is clear – Xmas is a pagan holiday! God does not want to be worshipped using pagan traditions, and Jesus Christ condemns as hypocrites those who ignore God's commands in order to keep traditions of any kind (Luke 6:46). I know there will be many who say, "These holidays are not an idol to me." Ok, I challenge anyone who celebrates these holidays to abstain from anything associated with them for two years. Use the time and money you would spend on these holidays and donate it to Godly causes in your community. No presents, no new church dresses, no Halloween costumes, etc. Do not do it in secret so that no one knows. Many will say, "I use these holidays to witness of Jesus Christ to those of family and friends." Truthfully, how many "actually" talk about Jesus Christ on Xmas morning? You can still witness; just do not use these pagan holidays as an excuse. Some will ask, "How can a religious holiday

be an idol?" You tell me, after you have truthfully and seriously answered the above questions and have declined to observe them for two years. If you do not put up your tree, send cards, hunt Easter eggs, go trick or treating for those two years, I believe you will realize just how much you have made the holidays an idol. You will miss these holidays. The question is, how much will you miss them? The reaction of your family and friends to what you are no longer doing will be the real test. Ask yourselves this question, "Do I observe these holidays because they are 'commandments of God' or 'traditions of men'?" These holidays are only traditions of men, and we are not instructed in the Bible to observe (celebrate) these days. I do not mean to hit so hard on the holiday idols, but idols are anything that we spend more time on than what we spend on the things of God. Use this same challenge (phones, TV, sports, jobs, etc.), and see what results you get.

Spend time to seriously pray about "What is your idol?" **"Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments"** (Ex. 20:3-6). Jesus Christ says in Mark 12:30: **"And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul,**

**and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment."** The question we must all ask ourselves is "What is my idol?"



## Forgiveness

(Continued from page 4) ◊

word we read at the beginning of this article from Ephesians 3 and is translated there **"abundantly"**.

Do not miss this, beloved, you are not forgiving those who have wronged you for their sake...so that they might be spared your wrath. You are forgiving heartily, or vehemently, or **"abundantly"** for the Lord's sake for you have been spared "His" wrath! **"For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off. Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction. For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it: for how should my name be polluted? and I will not give my glory unto another"** (Isa. 48:9-11). God deferred His wrath toward our sin-debt for His own names sake.

Where we find problems with forgiveness is just about always with our own pride. "Oh, but preacher you just do not know how this person is!" It does not matter, forgive as Christ forgave! Totally and without tarrying! As Christians, if we are looking for problems, harboring an unforgiving spirit will do it. It will eat away at your health! It will hurt other relationships through resentment! **"Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom**

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# What has Happened...

(Continued from page 1) ♦

off as a mistake, call evil good through sighting societal changes, we may even scoff and make fun of judgment. In each of these cases, we have removed the filth and wretchedness of our sin and made it less than what it is, which is an offense and rebellion against God. The word sin has been watered down and altered to the point that people can no longer define what sin is.

In society today, the lost have little to no concept of sin as the world does not wish to retain the sin problem in their knowledge. They have made sin a product of their surroundings or the product of someone else's failing them. In effect, they have removed the blame from themselves and placed it on another, just as Adam tried to do in Genesis 3:11-19 **"And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy**

**husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."** Notice in this reading that Adam, Eve, and the Serpent were all judged by God: the attempt to pass the blame did not allow them to go without judgement or responsibility before God. As I heard on a broadcast just before writing this: "Sinners may laugh their way into Hell but will not laugh their way out."

In addition to this, modernists have attached other words to cover the fact that sin is sin. Some examples include drunkenness is now alcoholism, which is now classified as a disease rather than sin; sodomy is now living an alternative lifestyle, or homosexuality, which is blamed upon being born that way. Murder is now legal in the form of abortion, which is viewed by some as mercy. In each case, that which God has deemed sinful is now normalized and accepted in the eyes of man. However, what God calls sin is still sin: we must be concerned only about what God thinks of it, not what mankind has to say.

We live in a world where some theologians can not agree upon what sin is. Allow me to simplify this. Sin is any offense against God, **"Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be**

**justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest"** (Psa. 51:4). Thoughts and looks as well as the act is sin as found in Matthew 5:27-28: **"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."** Also, Proverbs 24:9 states: **"The thought of foolishness is sin: and the scorner is an abomination to men."** Next, the Bible declares 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."** Lastly to this point, James 4:17 states: **"Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."** Therefore, to limit sin to the act is to contradict the scripture, as the scripture has concluded that to not do what you know is good is also sin.

Next for us, I would like to bring out the fact that we sin from the heart. We have original sin; we are born with a sinful nature and are by birth sinners contrary to what some people may believe and teach. In Acts 8:21 we find written the words: **"Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God."** Notice here that there was no pleading for choice or for works but plainly the statement that the heart is not right in the sight of God. In Matthew 15:19-20 this point is further driven home with the words: **"For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders,**

**adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man."**

Modern people do not see man as a sinful creature and limit sin to only that which is harmful to others, which is yet another example of trying to separate themselves from the problem of responsibility for their actions. We have replaced the word "sin" with error, mistake, oversight, and blunder, all of which are efforts to reduce the wickedness the word sin carries with it. In fact, the word sin has departed from society today and been replaced with weaker and less punitive words. Also, the world has reached a point that responsibility lies at someone else's feet. IE Society, parents, schooling, government. Sin has reached the point of being socially acceptable; for example, lying is now propaganda and is viewed as needed for popularity among political efforts; adultery, fornication, homosexuality, nudity, and profanity are paraded as normal and acceptable; murder has become legal in the type of abortion; drunkenness (alcoholism is a called a disease, not a sin). All of these have been so ingrained in us that we have now lost our sensitivity of sin, no one seems to care about how wicked the U.S. has become, and church members no longer believe it to be a sin to commit a sin. These things ought not so to be! We must take a stand against sin starting with ourselves and our churches!

Christians are capable of sinning after salvation contrary to what some churches are teaching. Romans 6:12 brings this fact out very well by saying: **"Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in**

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## What has Happened...

(Continued from page 7) ♦

**the lusts thereof.”** Also Romans 6:1-3, **“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?”** Sin is an active opposition against God that even His people are capable of committing. **“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us”** (I John 1:8-10). **“My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world”** (I John 2:1-2), and, **“Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law”** (I John 3:4). Each of these readings conclude that all are under sin.

Sin is what is wrong with the world, it is the root of every issue we see. Sin brings forth death, **“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord”** (Rom. 6:23), and sin warps the mind, soul, and body. Only fools make a mockery of sin. As God’s children we should realize and recognize that our sins cost the Savior His life, not just the “bad ones,” which I submit there is no such thing in the eyes of God as all sin is wicked and abominable.

Sin is the positive transgression of God’s Law which brings guilt to the offender, once again, **“Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law”** (I John 3:4). Sin brings about lawlessness, anarchy, a lack of conformity to God’s moral standard, and is a denial of God’s authority. Romans 1:18-32 brings out the condition of man in regards to sin: **“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men,**

**leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.”**

Our sin can be looked at in each of the following four areas: In respect to God, our sin is rebellion and failure to love Him supremely; in respect to God’s Law, our sin is a willful transgression and a violation, perhaps through ignorance, in respect to one another our sin is injustice and failure to love our neighbor as ourselves, and in respect to ourselves, our sin is selfishness and perhaps idolatry. If we are trying to use sin for our profit, we may rest assured that we will, in fact, never profit from it.

As I begin to close, I would be remiss if I failed to bring out that Jesus is the answer to our sin. In Matthew 1:21 the Bible declares: **“And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.”** We are

born with a sinful nature and our sin must be paid for either through the finished work of Christ or sin will be paid for by spending eternity in the Lake of Fire. Jesus declared in John 14:6 **“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”** There is only forgiveness through Christ as found in Acts 4:12 **“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”** I pray that each of you reading this sermon are born again believers.



## Forgiveness

(Continued from page 6) ♦

**is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures”** (Jam. 1:16-18).

It is our commission to present Jesus to the world for He was lifted up that we might be healed. Being unforgiving we attempt to make ourselves bigger than Him and His sacrifice; literally casting our own shadow on the cross and the Gospel itself. Let us be done with such things.



## Idle Words...

(Continued from page 2) ♦

subject of Idle Words. However, it is not the idle words here spoken by wicked Pharisees or the idle words spoken by wicked people in general of which we wish to take note.

It is the idle words which are spoken by God’s own precious blood-bought children of which we wish to take notice. Those

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## Idle Words...

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children are precious in God's sight not because of any intrinsic worth or merit in them but because of the great price that was paid for their everlasting redemption, that price being the atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Greek word used by the Holy Spirit in Matthew 12:36 which was translated as "idle" in the King James Version is "avrgo" (argon). It is a grammatical construction of that Greek root word "avrgo" (argos) for which some definitions from a handful of various Greek lexicons are as follows: ... useless, hollow, unprofitable, unproductive, careless, injurious.

W. E. Vine defines this word as meaning inactive, unfruitful or barren. He says of its use in Matthew 12 that it is: 'there used metaphorically in the sense of ineffective or worthless'.

Joseph H. Thayer defines it in part as meaning: 'things from which no profit is derived, although they can and ought to be productive.'

The Holy Spirit dictated the use of some grammatical form of this word "avrgo" (argos) eight times in the New Testament.

In the King James Version those grammatical variants are translated as "idle" in six instances, one time as "slow" in connection to the Cretians' bellies spoken of in Titus 1:12, and one time as "barren" in II Peter 1:8 in assuring those to whom Peter wrote that if they possessed the Christian attributes spoken of in the preceding verses that they would not be "barren" in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

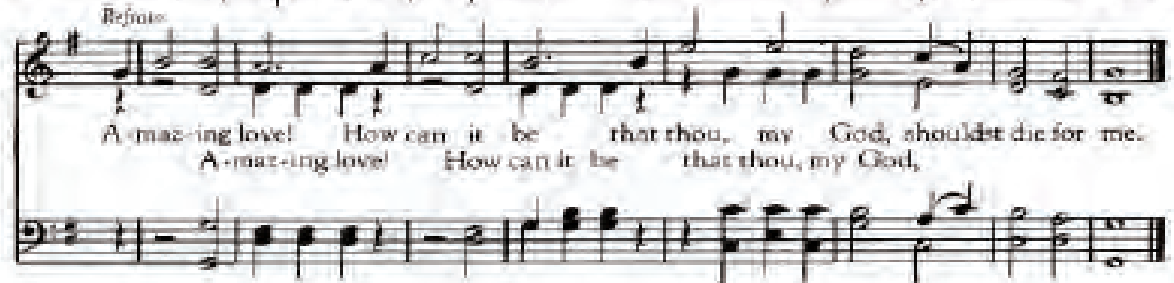
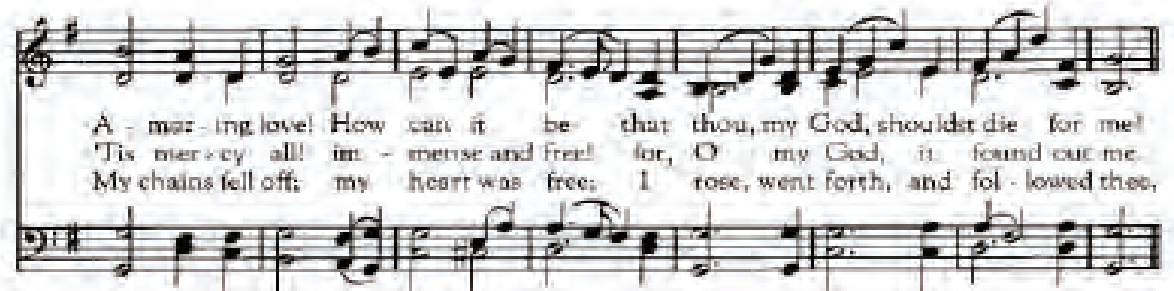
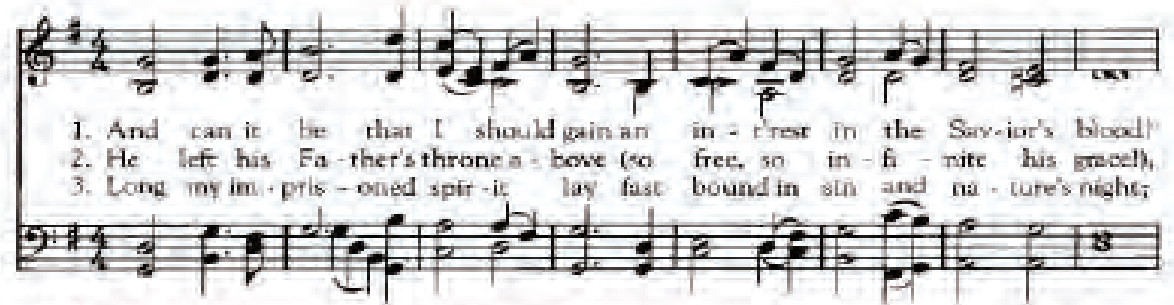
♦ (Continued on page 10)

# Heavenly Hymns

"...Be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 5:18-20). [This hymn was printed with permission from the Olmstead Baptist Church and written by Charles Wesley. You may access their free-domain hymnal by going to [www.olmsteadbaptistchurch.org/hymnal.pdf](http://www.olmsteadbaptistchurch.org/hymnal.pdf)]

## AND CAN IT BE

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## Idle Words...

(Continued from page 9) ♦

It is that definition of Joseph H. Thayer, that “avrgo” (argos) in part means: ‘things from which no profit is derived, although they can and ought to be productive’ which we wish to set our attention on in the remainder of this article as we share some thoughts on idle words.

Briefly stated, I submit unto you that, on occasion, some of God’s dear and eternally beloved children have spoken idle words. That is to say that sadly we have sometimes spoken words from which no profit was derived although our words ought to have been productive. We may further state that, in concert with some other definitions given, our idle words were, on occasion, unprofitable and perhaps even injurious.

Undoubtedly as a people, there are countless occasions when we have done this. Certainly, it has happened in more individual instances than could possibly be named in this short article.

However, it is not those individual instances that perhaps occur only a few times in one’s life that we wish to speak to you of, although those few instances should concern us as well. On the contrary, it is those instances where a phrase is so often repeated by God’s children that its use becomes commonplace, which we turn our attention to.

Those times in which a phrase of words spoken by one or more of God’s children that are idle and from which no profit is derived, words which may even be injurious, are what we wish to focus our attention and concentration upon in the remainder of this article.

Every word that we speak

needs to be well thought out and it needs to be true according to God’s inspired and preserved Word.

So to begin our thoughts on idle words let us ask ourselves, ‘Whose church Is It?’ **“And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it”** (Matt. 16:18).

This verse of Scripture is without a doubt very familiar to our stripe of Baptists. Most, if not all, of us have heard it used many times in sermons and in lessons as a Scriptural proof of the divine

establishment and of the divinely guaranteed age long perpetuity of the Lord’s precious church. The part of the clear proclamation which we wish to draw your attention to is that declaration by the Lord Jesus Christ that the church would be His, **“I will build My church.”**

When we build or when we make something, whatever it may be, such as a house, a piece of furniture, a work of art, or any other item that is considered to be the work of our hands or even of our minds, such as a literary production, we often declare that it is ours.

We may refer to that item with phrases such as my house, my chair, my book, or my whatever. The point which we wish to make is that by our constructing or by our building an item we claim ownership of that item. For now let us forget the fact that we really never make anything tangible in the strictest physical sense but merely reform preexisting materials into a different state. The point that we are attempting to make is that by our labors we claim ownership of the object.

So it is that in Matthew 16:18 the Lord clearly and undeniably claims ownership of the church. He says that it is and will continue to be, **“my church.”**

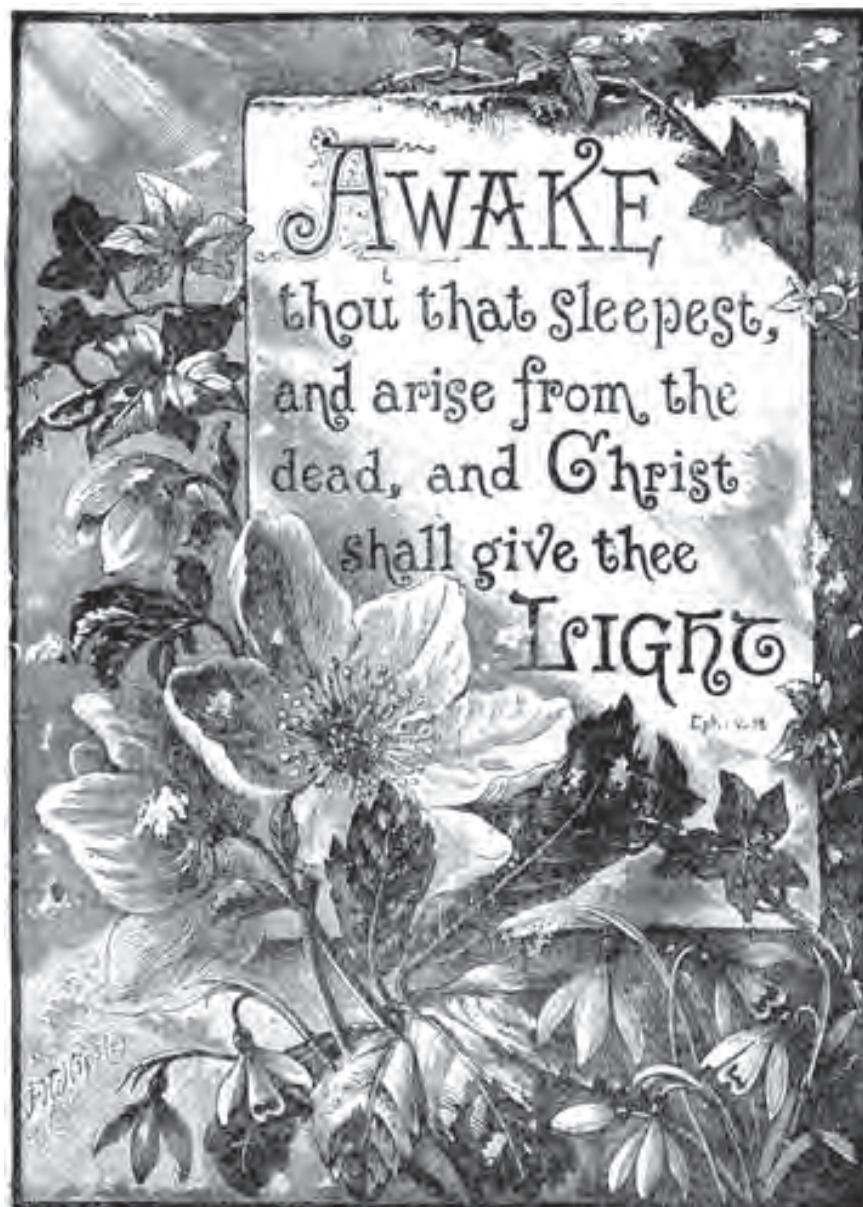
As the owner of the church it only follows suit that Christ is also the Head of His church. That very truth is expressed unto us here in Ephesians 5:23: **“For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.”**

As we just noted ownership of an object may be asserted by building or by making that object. There is also another way that we may justly claim ownership of an object and that is by our purchasing that object.

Perhaps we do not have the time or the skills and abilities to build a house or some other item and by that construction rightly claim that it is our house or our whatever. We may then purchase a house, an automobile, or one of a multitude of other items and correctly assume the role of owner of those items. In this realm in which we now exist for the most part purchasing an item grants us ownership of that item. Software is one exception that comes to my mind.

So it is that not only by

♦ (Continued on page 11)







# 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).

## Perilous to Christians

**"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come"** (II Tim. 3:1).

Christians have been in mortal danger since the first days at Jerusalem. The prophets were slaughtered before them. So what is this peril? It is not mortal danger because there is nothing unique about it. Whatever this peril is, it is dangerous because God's people will be affected by it."

**"For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy"** (II Tim. 3:2).

The peril is now being opened up. What is the peril? They are lovers of self. They are a people of selfies and self promotion. Proudly boasting of themselves. Willing to curse God and speak against Him without fear. Throwing off the authority of parents, ungrateful monsters grow to hate any authority figure, whether it be God or man.

**"Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good"** (II Tim. 3:3).

Without natural affection. Parents without natural care for their children (abortion for example). Children without natural care for parents. Trucebreakers. Breakers of promises and obligations. False accusers. Willing to lie to gain

the upper hand. (Politicians for example.) incontinent. Lack of self restraint. If they are offended, they rage. They scream. They burn down cities. Fierce. A description of how they retaliate and rage. Despisers of those that are good. They think nothing of anything traditionally thought of as good. Particularly they hate Christianity and any biblical definition of good. The home, the marriage, the children, the country, the government. All of these need to be thrown off and redefined.

**"Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God"** (II Tim. 3:4).

Traitors. Traitorous in business, in the home, in relationships. Cannot be trusted. Always seeking to swindle their neighbor. Heady. Predisposed to rush forward in the heat of passion. High minded. Arrogant, proud. Lovers of pleasure. Lovers of entertainments. Lovers of leisure. Lovers of anything that pleases me first and God last. Having God in the place of least importance and priority.

**"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away"** (II Tim. 3:5).

What will define these people? They will have a religion. It will even look Christian from an outsider perspective. It will have a form, a look-alike to the true religion of God. But there is no power. No power to save souls, change lives, transform homes

and communities. It is a facade. And the masses will flock to it. The Osteens and Copelands of the world will fill football stadiums with its poison.

Can you see all the similarities to the time in which we live? What is the peril of this time described as the last times? True Christians will be in the midst of this culture of self love and powerless religion. It will seep in as a poison and will affect them. It would not be perilous unless it was dangerous to the children of God. God would not warn the goats by His Word of the peril. So it must be dangerous to us. The entertainment and self-love culture does harm the true Christian. It is a poison that must be overcome by the Word of God, by prayer and secret devotion to God. What has been the most effective weapon of the enemy to slay Christians? Not famine, nakedness, or being put to the sword. A self-love, self-first culture that encourages entertainment and leisure has been by far the deadliest weapon employed by Satan.

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



## Idle Words...

(Continued from page 10) ◊

construction does the church belong to the Lord Jesus Christ but also by His purchase of the church He is the sole owner of it.

In his farewell address, the apostle Paul speaks to those who were to oversee the flock: and in so doing, he plainly declares that the Lord Jesus is the owner of the church by His purchase of it.

**"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own**

**blood"** (Acts 20:28).

As I am confident that everyone who reads these words acknowledges and rejoices in the Scriptural fact that the Lord Jesus is God we will not look at the many Scriptures which assert that fact. Suffice it to say when the expression **"church of God"** is used in the above Scripture: it does not preclude Christ from being the owner. Moreover, this Scripture is but one of many that clearly declare the Lord Jesus Christ's deity. It declares that the church is owned by God. It also declares that God purchased it with His own blood. Since we are so graciously blessed through His inspired and preserved Word with the knowledge that the member of the Holy Trinity that shed His blood was the Lord Jesus Christ, we can, therefore rightly, conclude that Christ is God and that He is the owner of the church, having purchased it with His own sinless blood.

That Holy Spirit wrought expression **"church of God"** is found eight times in the King James Version of the New Testament while the plural tense phrase **"churches of God"** is found three times.

That the church belongs to Christ is almost universally accepted amongst professing Christianity. One heretical group has even partially based their supposed authority for being in existence upon their claim of acknowledging His ownership of His church and then naming their assemblies as the church of Christ.

**"Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you"** (Rom. 16:16).

We often, and that appropriately so, speak of the church and use the expression, 'the

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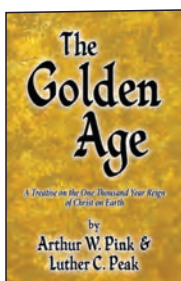


We are pleased to announce that *The Rich Man and Lazarus* by Milburn Cockrell is available. A simple book dealing with the account given by Christ. This book will be sent free to any prisoner that requests.

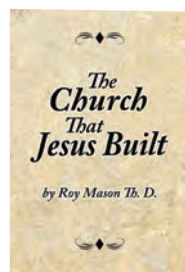


Feminism  
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## Little Hills

By Nathaniel Hille of  
Plant City, Florida



### A LETTER TO THE READER

Dear Reader,

"NOT ANOTHER RELIGIOUS NEWSPAPER!" STOP! I assure you, this one is different. This newspaper is not randomly written by people who have no concern for you. This newspaper is not being distributed to report back to some megachurch, or convention that we have distributed thousands upon thousands of newspapers. Rather, each article has been prayed over, studied out, and specifically written for you. Seriously, it has. Now, it is in your hands. "Now what?" What do you do with this newspaper? Well, you need to read it. But there is a specific way in which you should read it.

#### Read it with your Bible

Acts 17:10-14 says **"And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few. But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they came thither alos, and stirred up the people. And then immediately the brethren sent away Paul to go as it were to**



**the sea: but Silas and Timotheus abode there still."**

Note what the Holy Spirit says concerning these at Berea—These **"received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so"** (Acts 17:11). They searched the scriptures daily concerning the things that they heard. Paul and Silas came and preached the word of God to them and they compared them with what the Bible said. The Bereans looked at the word of the Lord to see whether or not what was declared to them was according to thus saith the Lord. They did not think upon it. They did not see if it coincided with what they already believed. They were not concerned if it made them feel good. Their concern, and what your concern ought to be is that what they heard (or in your case, what you are reading) is in agreement with the Holy Scriptures. So, open your Bibles. Read the articles and compare with what the scriptures say. See that what is contained in this newspaper is in agreement with what the Bible says. Know for sure that the Scriptures are being expounded unto you.

#### Read it prayerfully

Psalms 119:125 says **"I am thy servant; give me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies."** The Bible is a spiritual book. It cannot be understood by the natural man or the natural mind. We are in need of Divine help to comprehend the Scriptures. I Corinthians 2:14, **"But the natural man receiveth**

**not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."** Pray unto the Lord seeking for Him to give you understanding among these articles and the word of God. Spend time before, during, and after before His throne of grace requesting the God of all grace to open up your heart and mind to the word of God. One will never truly grasp the word of God without prayer. These articles are not written with enticing words. The authors have not used theological tricks to make you believe our doctrine. Rather, we have laid bare the message of our Lord and Savior. We have sought to make the message plain. However, this is the best we can do. We can only reason with you out of the scriptures. But our desire is not that your faith would stand upon our plainness of speech or writing. Rather that it would stand in the power of God.

#### Meditate Upon What You Have Read

Psalms 119:15 says **"I will mediate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways."** Psalm 119:48 says **"My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy statutes."**

Think or meditate upon what you have read. Think upon it with what the Scriptures say. Fill your heart and mind, soul and spirit with the word of God. Be consumed with it. Ladies, while you are at home tending to children or the duties of a wife and mother...meditate upon the word of God. Men, while you are at work, laboring, or commuting—dwell upon the words of our Savior contained here in this

◊ (Continued on page 13)



## Little Hills...

(Continued from page 12) ♦

newspaper. Children, while you are at play think of the glorious words of our Savior that have been declared unto you. When you rise from your bed, think upon these words. When you sit down at your tables to eat your supper with your family, instead of turning on the television, have conversation concerning the things of God and what you have been thinking about.

### Do The Word Of God

**“But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves,”** James 1:22. Your work does not end with reading, praying, or thinking upon the word of God. We must be doers of it. We must be conformed to what the word of God says. We must order our lives according to His word. The Bible does not just tell a church or the minister what to do, it tells you what to do. Some will need to Repent and Believe the gospel that they might be saved. They will have to quit trusting in their own good works to save them and they will have to trust the sacrifice of Jesus on Calvary to atone for their sins. Others will need to submit to Scriptural Baptism. Some have been “baptized” but not correctly according to the Scriptures. Others will need to join a true church of Jesus Christ. They will have to forsake the churches they were brought up in for they are churches of men and not the Lord. Others will have to give up false teachings such as “Free will” and “universal church” and believe the truth that salvation is of the Lord and the church is only local and visible. Some will have to break ties and affiliation with so-called missionaries because they do not teach the doctrines of our

Savior. Some churches will need to walk by faith and support their own pastors. Some pastors will have to give up support from false churches that have a hold upon them and become tent-makers (even as our beloved brother Paul was Acts 18:1-3; Acts 20:34; 1 Cor. 4:12). Some churches will have to quit using puppets, games, and entertainment and preach the word of God. Others will have to stop celebrating Pagan holidays such as Christ-mass (Christmas) and Easter (Ishtar). Some will have to learn to dress in clothing that does not promote promiscuity, but rather holiness.

Beloved, the word of God is going to be used to make us more like unto the glorious Savior—Jesus Christ.

Dear reader, I pray that you will go on this journey with me, with us who have written to you, for the glory of our Savior. We will be praying for you. We will be writing to you again. We will do so because our Savior has commanded us.



## Idle Words...

(Continued from page 11) ♦

Lord’s church.’ The Lord is the sole Creator, the sole Builder, the sole Purchaser, and the sole Sustainer of the church. No creature had any part whatsoever in any of those functions and therefore no creature has any claim whatsoever to any ownership of the church.

We trust that we have clearly and plainly demonstrated from God’s inspired, preserved, and faithfully translated Word that Christ is the owner of His church both from the standpoint of His creating it and His building it up and from the standpoint of His purchasing it with His own sinless blood.

So what is the relationship of

that knowledge of the church’s ownership to idle words spoken by His people you may now ask?

I am confident that we have, and that with rejoicing, many times heard and used the expression ‘the Lord’s church’ to the profit of those who heard those words.

Yet, sadly there have been times when we have heard the Lord’s church referred to as Brother So and So’s church, referring to one of the Lord’s churches that was currently being pastored by Brother So and So. Those words are idle words. There can be no profit derived from those words and those careless words could be injurious. Brother So and So did not build the church. Brother So and So did not purchase the church. Brother So and So does not sustain the church. Brother So and So does not own the church.

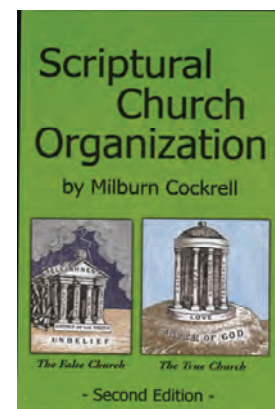
The pastor of one of the Lord’s churches is to be a member of that church. He is, in fact, the most vital human member in reference to the wellbeing of that church. Yet, his membership like any of the other memberships does not equate to his ownership of that church.

We sometimes refer to the church in which the Lord has placed us as our church when, in fact, it is not ours at all. We have been graciously added to the membership of one of the Lord’s churches, and He permits us to serve Him through that church and to financially support that church. However, that membership, that service, and that support which should proceed from it, does not equate to our ownership of the church in any infinitesimal portion.

I am so very thankful and appreciative that I have, through the years, heard Brother Oscar Mink and Brother Doyal

♦ (Continued on page 14)

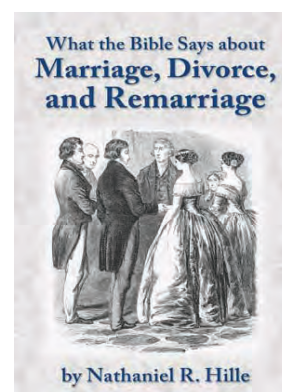
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## Points to Ponder

### "An Astronomer Becomes A Christian"

By Elder Perry Ames

Psalms 104:2 **"Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain."**

Isaiah 44:24 **"Thus saith the LORD, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the LORD that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself."**

The "eth" word endings in the King James Version of the Bible are not just a fancy or old way to end verbs in old English but add meaning to the verb. These verbs have a continuing action, that is, the action is not just done but the action continues on and on. So in Isaiah 44:24 the Word of God tells us that not only did God stretch out the heavens but that He is continuing to stretch forth the heavens. Also note the phrase **"...spreadeth abroad the earth by myself"** Since we now know that the sun is going on an orbit just as Psalm 19:5 tells us and as the earth is orbiting the sun, the earth truly is being spread abroad.

Edwin Hubble (1889-1953), who became an emanate astronomer arrived at Mount Wilson California just as the 100" Hooker telescope (The largest in the world at that time) was being completed. Edwin Hubble using the Hooker telescope was the first

astronomer to see galaxies outside the Milky Way. In 1929 Hubble observed that the universe seemed to be expanding.

Hubble, rather than site God as the First Cause for the expanding universe as Psalm 104:2 and Isaiah 44:24 declare, was instrumental in developing the "Big Bang" theory. It was not until around 1980 that observations confirmed that the universe was expanding. So, it took man 3,000 years to prove the universe is being stretched out just as God said in His Word.

It is interesting to note that Edwin Hubble believed in his own destiny and as such never came to know the truth of God's Word. However, Allan Rex Sandage, who, earned his PH. D. at Cal Tech under Walter Baade and protégé to Edwin Hubble, became a Christian at the age of 50. Why would Sandage, a man who was on the staff of Mount Wilson and Palomar observatories become a Christian? I mean the world believes Christians are stupid, right? So how is it that *"the ethnically Jewish Sandage who had been a virtual atheist even as a child"* (Strobel 2004 p. 69) became a Christian? Was Sandage a fool? No!

Quite the contrary, he was a man that his peers regard as the "greatest observational cosmologist in the world!" Sandage was a very intelligent man who wrote over 500 scientific papers based upon his personal observations.

Sandage's reasons for leaving atheism were based upon scientific research, and the fact that the creation of the universe must have been *"a supernatural even that cannot be explained within the realm of physics as we know it. Science...can't take us...to the First Cause. The sudden emergence of matter, space, time, and*

*energy pointed to the need for some kind of transcendence"* (quoted by Strobel once again 2004 p. 70). He concluded the *"world is too complicated in all its parts of interconnections to be due to chance alone"* (Sandage 1985). Sandage stated that scientific research *"drove me to the conclusion that the world is much more complicated than can be explained by science... It was only through supernatural that I can understand the mystery of existence."*

Psalms 8:3-4 **"When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?"**

Psalms 104:1 **"Bless the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty."**

Points to Ponder: think of how great God is and how He sent His Son to die for our sins. Think of how true science will always agree with Scripture. Are you saved? Are you living for Him? And think of the fact that being in the majority does not make anything or anyone correct.

To see just how "big" you are in comparison to the universe visit this "Scale of the Universe" at <http://htwins.net/scale2/> and note that God made it all!



## Idle Words...

(Continued from page 13) ♦

Thomas, when referencing one of the Lord's churches in some geographical location, use the expression, the Lord's church there in Whatever City pastored by Brother So And So. That expression proclaims Who the true owner of the church is while

yet identifying who that God called under shepherd currently is.

Whenever we speak of the Lord's church let us always speak in a fashion that properly (according to Scriptural teaching) declares Who is the builder, Who is the purchaser, Who is the sustainer, and Who is the owner of the church.

I hope that no reader believes that I am being nit picky or that I am trying to belittle another person or trying to find fault with them, for that is certainly not the case. My desire is that each of God's children, and especially myself, would be constantly aware of the force of our words and of the meaning which they can convey.

It is not what the speaker meant that we take issue with but what the speaker's words meant. We have attempted to show what the words spoken meant, not what someone wanted them to mean. Perhaps one who has used the idle words expression that were mentioned might say, "Well that is not what I meant." Well, dear one, why did you not say what you meant?

Words mean something. Words convey that meaning. Therefore, when we use inappropriate words the wrong meaning can be conveyed.

Of course we are well aware that God's infinite glory cannot be added to nor can it be diminished. Yet, our own finite understanding of that glory can be reduced or it can be increased in proportion to our understanding of that glory. In the previous instance of idle words that I have presented to you, the real meaning of the words spoken diminished the glory which His creatures ascribe to God. That diminishing may very well have

♦ (Continued on page 16)



# THE BIBLE AND THE NEWSPAPER

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

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## The Bible and the Newspaper Biden Administration Creates Its Own Ministry of Truth

By C. Mitchell Shaw

The recent creation of a “Disinformation Governance Board” has raised more than a few eyebrows. And rightly so: The board is eerily similar to the Ministry of Truth from Orwell’s 1984, and it is the creation of the Department of Homeland Security — a department so *deeply* Deep State that it nearly defines the term.

The creation of the board was announced on May 27, when DHS chief Alejandro Mayorkas was answering questions before congressional lawmakers. Invoking the bogeyman of alleged previous “Russian interference” in the 2020 elections, Representative Jim Langevin (D-R.I.) asked the DHS chief what DHS was doing to prevent “misinformation” from skewing the 2022 midterms. Mayorkas answered, “We have just established a disinformation governance board in the Department of Homeland Security to more effectively combat this threat, not only to election security but to our homeland security.”

The timing is highly questionable, not only coming as Democrats prepare for what many expect to be a thorough

trouncing in the midterms — due largely to voter response to Biden’s disastrous policies — but also coinciding with Elon Musk’s takeover of Twitter. Musk’s promise to transform Twitter into a “free speech” platform where conservatives will no longer be censored has been met on the Left with dire predictions of the “end of democracy.” Democrats — it appears — believe “democracy” can only prevail when conservatives are routinely silenced in the public square.

But perhaps even more disturbing than the timing is the choice of who will head the new Ministry of Truth: Nina Jankowicz — a “Russian disinformation” expert who served as a disinformation fellow at the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars in Washington, D.C. — will serve as the Arbiter of All Truth.

Jankowicz is a demonstrable enemy of free speech, tweeting on April 25 that “free speech absolutists” cause her to “shudder” because unhindered free speech is harmful to “marginalized communities.”

And by couching her disdain for free speech in terms of support for women and other “marginalized communities,” Jankowicz muddies the water of logic and reason while ticking off another box beloved by the Left. She is a rabid pro-fill-in-the-blank-of-victimhood, bleeding-heart liberal.

And while one would rightly expect the Arbiter of All Truth to know the difference between truth and lies, Jankowicz is little more than a spewer of the party line. Far from differentiating truth from lies — information from misinformation — she merely regurgitates whatever the Left is saying at any given time. And, as do her fellow liberal partisans, she shifts gears and changes direction with the winds of political expediency. For instance, early on in the Covid drama, she vociferously agreed with the party line that masks were unnecessary, tweeting in March of 2020 that the “adtech industry” should stop “placing ads for masks” on “articles about coronavirus,” calling such ads “straight up disinfo!” So, like a good Democrat, Jankowicz was against masks before she was for them.

And during the final presidential debate between Trump and Biden on October 22, 2020, Jankowicz sided with her fellow partisans in criticizing Trump for the Hunter Biden laptop story, tweeting, “Back on the ‘laptop from hell,’ apparently — Biden notes 50 former NatSec officials and 5 former CIA heads that believe the laptop is a Russian influence op.”

And while she has subsequently claimed that she was “livetweeting” during the debate and that the tweet was “a direct quote” from the debate and not “a key to all my views,” she is simply lying. Because the next morning, she tweeted, “I was thinking of pitching a quick piece about the election security section of the debate, but I realized it can be summed up in a tweet,” continuing, “One candidate cogently discussed actual policies for keeping our democracy safe. The other spouted convoluted [sic] conspiracies.” She also called

the story of Hunter Biden’s laptop a “Trump campaign product.” Also, the day of the debate, she tweeted that she agreed with doubts about “the provenance of the NY Post’s Hunter Biden story.” In subsequent tweets months later, she continued to refer to the laptop story as “misleading or unsubstantiated claims” pushed by “the Kremlin.”

In the final analysis, the creation of a DHS Disinformation Governance Board — headed by a bleeding-heart liberal, man-hating woman who never met a conservative fact she didn’t accuse of being right-wing misinformation and who has herself unapologetically spread misinformation — is a naked attempt on the part of the Biden administration to control the flow of information. And the reason is obvious: It is the only hope Democrats have of avoiding an electoral bloodbath in the midterms.

(Article was originally printed on May 30, 2022 in *The New American* Vol. 38, No. 10)



## Embrace “The Homeschool Awakening” — Your Kids Are Worth It! by Annalisa Pesek

On June 14, actor Kirk Cameron (*Growing Pains*; *Left Behind* series) premiered the inspiring documentary *The Homeschool Awakening*, reminding parents that the world is their classroom, and it’s time to teach it.

While the box-office blockbuster *Jurassic World* played in the theater next door, *Homeschool* offered its own refreshing escape and was surprisingly well attended for

♦ (Continued on page 16)

# Baptist History



Taken from *This Day in Baptist History*  
Written by E. Wayne Thompson and David L Cummins

## SUNDAY SCHOOL: SOURCE OF SPIRITUAL BLESSING

By David L. Cummins

**“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (II Tim. 2:15).**

The first Sunday School in America was founded in September 1799 in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, and for twenty-five years it was conducted as a day school on Sundays with pupils using spelling books as part of their equipment. In time, pastors began to envision the possibilities of spiritually-oriented Sunday schools, and the course of study was turned to the Word of God. The Sunday school has become a great tool of evangelism. One cannot help but wonder where Christianity would be today in America without local Sunday schools! The first Sunday school in Philadelphia was organized in 1815 and the first in Boston in 1816. By 1824 the “Latter Day Luminary,” a Baptist magazine for promoting missions, reported, “The Sunday School properly conducted is the greatest and most successful opponent of the Prince of darkness. . . Let these schools be cherished, let them be increased; soon the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the wilderness shall blossom as the rose.”

As with so much Baptist growth,

there was no “master plan” and the Sunday schools proliferated spontaneously. Literature was needed both to train teachers and provide spiritual material for the students. In time, Sunday school associations appeared, but these did not meet the need of Baptist churches, for literature had to be supplied that taught the Baptist distinctives. One of the first to see this need was Ira M. Allen, agent of the Baptist General Tract Society. In 1832 Allen wrote, “As it is, a part of the truth of God is excluded from all Sunday School books published by the American Union, which furnish the principle reading for hundreds of thousands of youth throughout the land. And we, as a denomination, have not a single book for Sunday Schools, containing our distinguishing sentiments.” One of the first to see this need was Ira M. Allen, agent of the Baptist General Tract Society. In 1832 Allen wrote, “As it is, a part of the truth of God is excluded from all the Sunday School books published by the American Union, which furnish the principal reading for hundreds of thousands of youth throughout the land. And we, as a denomination, have not a single book for Sunday Schools, containing our distinguishing sentiments.”<sup>1</sup>

1 Lemuel Call Barnes, Mary Clark Barnes, and Edward M. Stephenson, *Pioneers of Light*

As pressure mounted upon the members of the Triennial Convention to provide something for Baptist Sunday schools, at the triennial session in Richmond, Virginia, in 1835 that body requested the Baptist General Tract Society to change its constitution so that, in addition to its tract work, it might “publish and distribute books for family use and Sunday Schools.” The Hudson River Association (New York) in 1839 pressed the “urgent need of a Baptist Sunday-school union to furnish a juvenile literature corresponding to Baptist convictions.”<sup>2</sup>

“This was finally accomplished on April 30, 1840, in New York City, when representations from fifteen states, from New Hampshire to Louisiana, voted to change the complexion and name of the tract society to “The American Baptist Publication and Sunday School Society.”<sup>3</sup> For the first time, it was possible for Baptist Sunday schools to secure biographical, doctrinal, and historical material written from a Baptist perspective. Of course, just a few years later, the division came between Baptists of the North and South, and in

(Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1924), p. 115.

2 Daniel Gurden Stevens, *The First Hundred Years of the American Baptist Publication Society* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, n.d.) p. 21.

3 Jesse L. Boyd, *A History of Baptists in America Prior to 1845* (New York: American Press, 1957), p. 113.

(Copied from *This Day in Baptist History* by E. Wayne Thompson and David L. Cummins, 1993 Bob Jones University Press pp. 175-176)

this century, doctrinal disunions have caused the establishment of many Baptist publishing houses that provide literature for Baptist Sunday schools in associations with diverse doctrinal, ethnic, and cultural differences. However, we rejoice in the vision of the dissemination of our doctrines thought the printed page for worldwide use!



## Idle Words...

(Continued from page 14) ♦

been unintentional. However, it is not intent but results which we have been contemplating in this brief article.

Can we ascribe too much glory to God? I think not!

It should be our continual prayer that we would be granted the desire of the Psalmist in his concern for all of the words that issued from his mouth.

**“Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer” (Psa. 19:14).**



## Bible & the Newspaper

(Continued from page 15) ♦

a theater in a suburb of “woke” Seattle.

A few seats from where this writer sat was a busy toddler seemingly mesmerized by the montages on the big screen; her laughter was contagious, as she pointed to and repeated the words and actions of families in the midst of story time, cooking, or playing outdoor games.

To paraphrase one father featured in the film: “Wealth is not about the material things we own; real wealth is found in the family, and parents must take

♦ (Continued on page 17)



# Bible & the Newspaper

(Continued from page 16) ♦

seriously their responsibility as both educator and caretaker.”

And as the Bible teaches in Proverbs 22:6, “Parents, train a child in the way he should go, so that even when he is old, he will not depart from it.

”Homeschool embraces both of these ideas and ultimately challenges parents to assume sole responsibility of their children’s education.

In a film that features 17 families from all backgrounds, races, colors, and creeds — some kids work on farms but live in the city; another is a pilot at age 14 — the message Cameron sends is that homeschooling can offer a “hands-on workshop where you get to learn together from other families through curriculums that are built by education experts.... You can do it in a tailor-made way that doesn’t undermine your faith and values, and it doesn’t replace family time. It actually enhances those things.”

## Parent-led Education

Multiple award-winner Cameron, the teenage heartthrob-turned-American activist — most widely known for his role as Mike Seaver in the popular 1980-90s TV sitcom *Growing Pains* — stars in the film, along with his family, and is also the film’s executive producer. He describes the overarching theme of the film in a few words in an interview with *The Epoch Times’* “American Thought Leaders” host Jan Jekielek:

“God gave your children to you as mom and dad, not to the federal government, and you get to decide what is the best way to support, encourage, and educate your kids.”

Cameron and other presenters

in the film, such as author and journalist Alex Newman (founder of Public School Exit and co-author of *Crimes of the Educators: How Utopians Are Using Government Schools to Destroy America’s Children*) and Dr. Kathy Koch (founder of Celebrate Kids, Inc. and author of the book *8 Great Smarts*), remind viewers that for more than one hundred years early education in America was based in the home and was not in the hands of the federal government.

“In fact,” says Newman, “the word *education* is not in the Constitution. And the Founders also state explicitly in the 10th Amendment that anything that is not mentioned in the Constitution is specifically prohibited by the federal government. So the Founding Fathers actually prohibited getting federal government involvement in education.”

“[Education] was a private thing,” Cameron told Jekielek. “It certainly wasn’t funded by the government until later, and parents took their responsibility as a sacred duty to shape the hearts and minds of their children. And they didn’t do it alone; they were doing it in community with other families, and they saw their whole world as their classroom.”

One family in the film with a daughter named Abby who has Down syndrome explained that a public-school aide told them that Abby could not play in the same way as the other children, owing to her disability. The family grappled with whether to take their daughter out of the school.

“I wanted Abby to be in an environment where she would be allowed to try things and not told that she couldn’t do something because she was different,” said Abby’s mother. Added Abby’s

father, “If we put half as much time into homeschooling our child as we’re putting into trying to [write these articles and find out what was legal], all that energy we were wasting in that direction, I thought she’d be better off. We didn’t have to be a special-needs teacher, we only have to be a teacher to our daughter.”

Being a teacher to four children, another mom in the film noted that “every single school day starts with prayer and a devotional.” Some of her children are more hands-on, she explained, others less so but moving in that direction. “Each kid has his or her own crate ... with whatever we’re working on that week. Nothing more. Only the workbooks we’re working on that week. Our school looks different every day,” she said.

Her eldest daughter, Chloe, a beautiful young girl with wonder in her eyes, said, “I will start college at 12 and at my third year, I will graduate with my degree at 15. At my fourth year I will graduate with my Master’s at 16.”

“She is actually in the middle of finalizing her internship with NASA,” said her mother.

In a touching scene, Chloe thanked her mother for all she has done for her: “I am encouraged by what she does for me because I know she doesn’t have to do this for me.... She made sure I had everything I needed.” Chloe is crying as she looks at her mom and says, “she has no idea, she has no idea.”

## A Day in the Life

“Homeschooling was never on our radar, but it all of a sudden sounded really nice,” said one mom of two who is also a small-business owner. “Our eldest was in private school, and I knew in my heart if he stayed in school it was going to be an uphill battle to preserve who he was. I didn’t feel

like I had the time. I really felt clearly that God said I will create time where there is no time.”

Another mom, who admitted she is *not* a morning person, chuckled as she remarked that “when all of [our] friends were chasing the bus, we would all pile into bed and read a book and giggle at the fact that everybody else was awake and onto the grind and here we are all cuddled up doing a read-aloud and having a cup of coffee in our jammies.”

Yet another mother, whose father was a senator and passed a bill that if a teacher was assigning explicit material, the parents should be notified, described how her family was flooded with emails from teachers telling her to get out of the way: Your child’s education is not your business; we have the degrees and the expertise.

Many of these parents who once had their children in public schools have had to “un-public school themselves” and learn to teach their kids how to learn for themselves. While all admit the process has been challenging, all also said it has been the greatest gift they were given.

“What’s the worst thing that could happen,” said one parent to his wife while discussing the option of home-based learning. Their son, Nathaniel, had been repeatedly bullied at school, but once at home he wasn’t dealing with those same pressures.

“We were no longer chained to the school schedule,” said Nathaniel’s mom. “I was worried about losing freedom but what I discovered was that the freedom we had was so worth this small sacrifice. [That sacrifice] was to teach the kids. Now 12 years later, I realize it wasn’t a sacrifice; it was a total gift.”

In one compelling scene,

♦ (Continued on page 20)



## From the Pen of a Country Preacher

Milburn R. Cockrell  
(1941 - 2002)



### The Unpardonable Sin

**"Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come" (Matt. 12:31-32).**

**"Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation" (Mark 3:28-29).**

**"And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven" (Luke 12:10).**

Much of what is found in the Bible is "plain to him that understandeth" (Prov. 8:9), but the verses I have just read contain "some things hard to be understood" (II Pet. 3:16). The sin against the Holy Spirit has never been fully explained by the greatest of theologians of all time. It is not difficult to show from Scripture what the sin is not, but it is difficult to show what it is. Of one thing we can be absolutely certain. According to the verses

that I have just read, there is a sin which never has forgiveness.

#### A LOOK AT THE CONTEXT

No text should be separated from its context. In Matthew's account I see a man possessed of a demon who had inflicted him with blindness and dumbness (v. 22). Christ healed the man so that he both spoke and saw. The common people were amazed and pronounced Christ as the Messiah (v. 23). When the scribes and Pharisees heard this they accused Christ of being in league with the Devil: **"This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of devils"** (v. 24). Beelzebub (sometimes spelled Baalzebub) was the fly-god of Ekron (II Kings 1:2-6, 16), or Baal of the fly, or lord of the fly. Here it is doubtless a reference to Satan himself.

Our Lord answered their lies by pointing out that a divided kingdom or house would fall: **"Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand"** (v. 25). He then went on to say that Satan is not divided against himself, and he and his demons do not fight each other: **"And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?"** (v. 26). The fault of fighting against each other is reserved for the servants of a better Master.

In verse 27 Christ makes a

reference to Jewish exorcists: **"And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges."** The Lord wanted to know if their children had dealings with the demon-prince. Their very sons would not agree with what they had said.

After this the Lord delivered the death-blow to their lies: **"But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house"** (vv. 28-29). In verse 30 Christ declared that there was no compromise with Satan: **"He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."** Immediately after saying this Christ spoke the alarming words about the unpardonable sin.

#### A NECESSARY DISTINCTION

Before I proceed further I must distinguish between an unpardoned sin and the unpardonable sin. All the sins of the wicked who die in unbelief will be unpardoned. The final impenitent will suffer eternally in the lake of fire for these unpardoned sins (Rev. 21:8). Any sin not repented of is unpardoned, but all sins may be pardoned upon repentance except the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit.

In the text Christ clearly distinguished between the sin that **"shall not be forgiven unto men"** and **"all manner of sin and blasphemy"** which **"shall be forgiven unto men"** (Matt. 12:31). It is so very good to know that every sin can be forgiven to those who repent, save just one. Even blasphemy against Christ can be forgiven: **"And whosoever**

**speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him. . ."** Before conversion Paul blasphemed the Lord Jesus Christ, but he obtained mercy because he **"did it ignorantly in unbelief"** (I Tim. 1:13). God always forgives those who truly repent, and no sin is in itself of too great a guilt to be pardoned.

#### WHAT THE SIN IS NOT

1. It is not every sin against the Holy Spirit. There are numerous sins committed directly and specifically against the Holy Spirit. The Third Person in the Godhead can be insulted (Heb. 10:29), vexed (Isa. 63:9-10), resisted (Acts 7:51), tempted (Acts 5:1-9), quenched (I Thess. 5:19), and grieved (Eph. 4:30). All of these sins against the Holy Spirit are pardonable. One may even attack the deity and personality of the Spirit and still be forgiven, if God is pleased to grant him repentance.

2. It is not a sin against Christ. Some say the Spirit in Matthew 12:32 refers to the Divine nature of Christ, and that the verse has no reference to the Third Person of the trinity. But the term "Holy Ghost" is never employed in Scripture of the Divine nature of Christ. It is universally applied to the Holy Spirit, the Third Person in the adorable trinity. The first part of the verse reveals the reference is not to the Son of God: **"And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him. . ."** (Matt. 12:32). A person may deny the deity and virgin birth of Christ, deny the blood atonement, despise His Divine person, ignore His lordship, yet still be granted repentance and forgiveness.

3. It is not the final rejection of Christ. This is the most commonly held view. In my humble opinion

◊ (Continued on page 19)



## Country Preacher...

(Continued from page 18) ♦

this is a great and grievous error. According to Matthew 12:32, just one act of speaking against the Holy Spirit is the unpardonable sin. “. . . **whosoever speaketh (just one time) against the Holy Ghost. . .**” If just one committing is unpardonable, how can time after time rejecting salvation be it? Would not the final rejection be the same as the first?

4. It is not unbelief in Christ as Savior. If rejecting Christ as Lord and Savior is the unpardonable sin, then every person in the world almost is guilty of it. “**For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all**” (Rom. 11:32). Seeing that all men by nature are unbelievers in Christ, this cannot be the sin, otherwise nearly all of Adam’s race is guilty of it. This is not to say that if men die in unbelief that they shall be pardoned. Unbelief, like any other sin a man may commit, is an unpardoned sin if it is never repented of. “. . . **he that believeth not shall be damned**” (Mark 16:16).

### WHAT THE SIN IS

The unpardonable sin is an act of speech: “. . . **but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come**” (Matt. 12:32). “**But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation**” (Mark 3:29). “. . . **but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven**” (Luke 12:10). Looking at all of these verses, the unpardonable sin is to speak malicious words against the Holy Spirit. According to the context, it

is to ascribe the miracles wrought by the Holy Spirit to the agency of the Devil. This is what the Pharisees did. One can blaspheme the Father and the Son (Acts 13:45; 26:11) and be forgiven upon repentance, but he cannot blaspheme the Holy Spirit and be forgiven.

Why is the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit rather than the Father and the Son? The Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the trinity who imparts spiritual life to the sinner. The blasphemy has never forgiveness, for he who thus blasphemes sets himself in direct hostility to that Holy Spirit who is the only source of spiritual life. By blaspheming the Spirit, the

blasphemer shows God has given him “**over to a reprobate mind**” (Rom. 1:28) and never designed him to receive forgiveness through Christ. In God’s sight the sin against the Spirit is more heinous than the sin against the Father or the Son. If the Spirit is condemned as the agent of evil, what power is left to move the heart toward God?

The sin is said by scholars to be unpardonable because of the consequence connected to one single act of blaspheming the Spirit. Look again at the verses. “. . . **shall not be forgiven unto men. . . shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come**”

(Matt. 12:31-32). “. . . **hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation**” (Mark 3:29). “. . . **it shall not be forgiven**” (Luke 12:10). The blasphemy of the Holy Spirit is a sin of eternal abiding guilt. It is a sin whose guilt is never removed from a soul by a pardon. If some sins are forgiven they are forgiven to eternity, and if unforgiven they will eternally remain so.

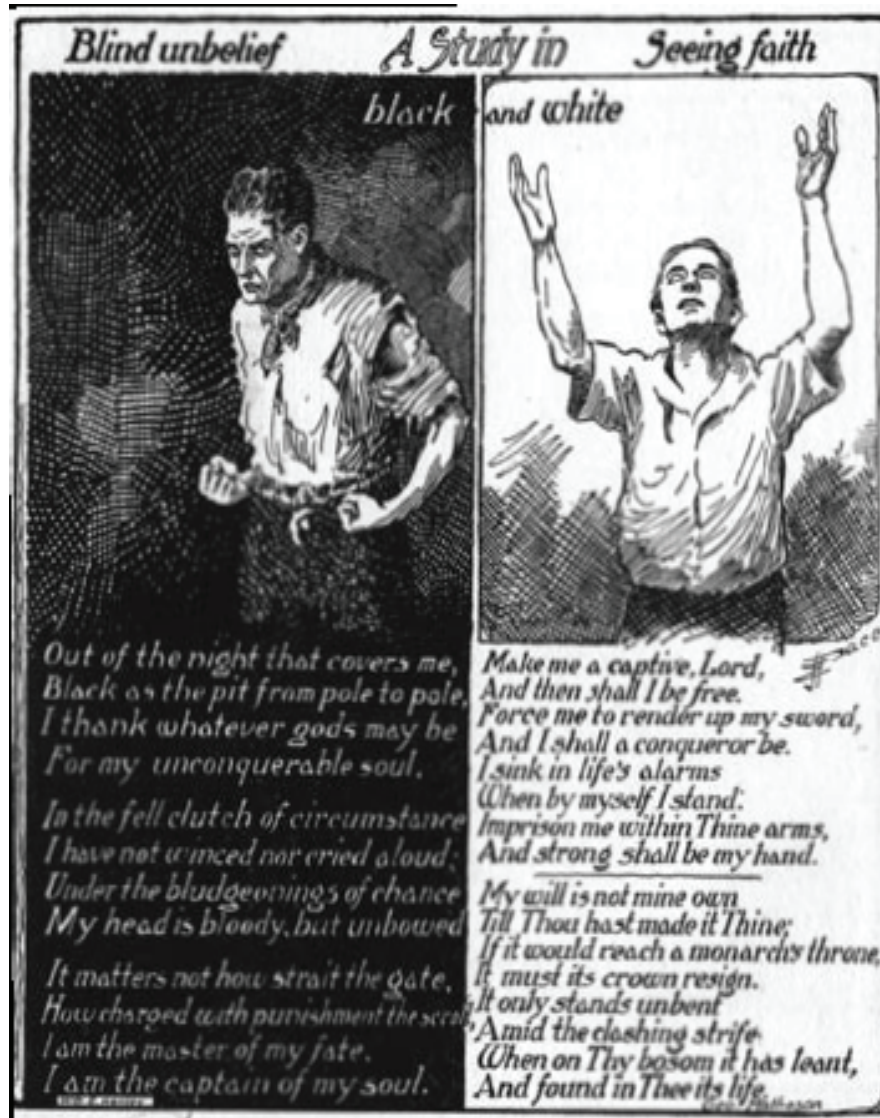
No man can blaspheme unconsciously. Blasphemy of the Spirit is the act of one who, in defiance of light and knowledge, opposes after due deliberation, the work of the Spirit. The unpardonable sin involves an obstinate, persevering, and malicious rejection of the Holy Spirit to the point of ascribing His work to the Devil. Practically this person pronounces Jesus Christ an imposter, His blood an unholy thing, the Spirit worthless, the Bible a fable, death a sleep, the judgment a dream, and eternal realities a mere illusion.

### WHY IS IT UNPARDONABLE?

It is not because the sin is too great for the blood of Christ to atone for. The blood of Jesus is efficient and sufficient to atone for every sin it was designed to make atonement for. The teaching about the unpardonable sin proves the doctrine of a definite atonement. Christ did not die for the sin of the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit, for if He did it would be forgivable. The blood of Christ would have been sufficient to atone even for the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit if God had designed it to be so. We must not limit the sufficiency of the blood of Jesus Christ.

“The unpardonableness of sin must be attributed to the sovereign will of God. And He has sovereignly (I do not say

♦ (Continued on page 20)





## Country Preacher...

(Continued from page 19) ♦

arbitrarily) determined that there is one sin He will not forgive. He could if it pleased Him to do so. We believe with Job that **“what his soul desireth, even that he doeth.”** There is one kind of sin for which there is no provision of pardon. Therefore, there is one kind of sin for which Christ made no atonement. There is one sin of which the Holy Spirit will not convict, and from which He will not convert. There is one sin God will not pardon. The Bible calls it blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, and we dare not call it by any other name” (C. D. Cole in *Definitions of Doctrine*, Vol. II, pp. 25-26).

### MISTAKES CORRECTED

A saved person cannot commit the unpardonable sin. The condemnation is not only upon the word spoken, but it is also upon the heart that prompts the blasphemy. Note Matthew 12:33-34: **“Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit. O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.”** Christ spoke these words immediately after He uttered the words about the unpardonable sin. Since a saved man has a new heart and a new spirit (Ezek. 36:26) he cannot commit this sin. The new nature within him **“cannot sin,”** (I John 3:9) and, therefore, he is incapable of committing the unpardonable sin.

Any person who sincerely desires salvation has not committed the unpardonable sin. The fact that he still desires to be saved and is penitent is evidence

that he has not committed this terrible sin. The person who commits it is indifferent to all good and all spiritual things. He is in a deadly impenitence. His conscience is seared as with a hot iron. A troubled conscience, a concern about one's soul, and a desire to escape the wrath of God, will never be found in the heart of the person who has blasphemed the Holy Spirit.

Some theologians say the unpardonable sin could only be committed in the age when Christ was personally present on earth in the flesh. They say that when the Pharisees saw the evidence of our Lord's miracles, and refused to believe in Him as the Messiah, they committed the unpardonable sin. Their assertion that our Lord worked miracles by Beelzebub, was blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. They point out that the word for “world” in Matthew 12 is the word in the Greek text for “age,” and they confine the sin to the age of our Lord's personal ministry.

I believe this is wrong for at least two reasons. First, the word in the Greek text is the word for “age,” but this word included the whole period of time from the days of Christ to the millennium. I say this because **“this age”** must have this meaning, seeing the millennium is **“the age to come.”** Second, this idea is erroneous because the sin is against the Holy Spirit, not against Christ. The Holy Spirit has always been in the world to regenerate sinners from the days of Adam to the present hour. Therefore, the sin could have been committed in any age since the beginning of the world, and it may be committed even today, or even in the millennium.

It is not our business to go around and judge who has, or who has not, committed this awful sin.

Christ did not even judge the Pharisees here. He warned them of the possibility of this terrible sin. All of us have far less sense than Jesus Christ. Hence we are not qualified to judge who has, or who has not, committed this sin. A merciful God has so ordered things that man can never decide positively if any man has committed the sin which has never forgiveness.

### ADDITIONAL TEACHINGS

Will some sins be forgiven in the age to come? Note again the words of Matthew 12:32 of the true rendering: **“...neither in this age, nor in the age to come.”** As I have already shown, **“this age”** is the present dispensation, and the **“age to come”** is the millennial age. We know from the words of Christ that all sins are pardonable upon repentance, save the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. The verse implies that in the age to come all sins are pardonable, save one. This means that God will forgive sinners in the millennium with one exception; therefore, Matthew 12:32 proves some people will be saved in the 1,000-year reign of Christ.

How can a minister preach to a mixed congregation and invite sinners to receive the gospel, if there may be present some who have committed the unpardonable sin? Let the minister preach the gospel to all, invite all to repent of sins, and believe on Christ, for this is his duty. Preach the truth to all men and leave the results to God. There is no danger of getting one saved who is guilty of the unpardonable sin, for those who commit this terrible sin have a hard and impenitent heart that will never desire to be saved.

Sin is sin, but there are some sins worse than others in God's sight. Christ told Pilate: **“...he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin”** (John 19:11).

According to Scripture, there is a **“greater sin”** which deserves **“the greater damnation”** (Matt. 23:14). Some sins are worse than others. There is a sin unto physical death which a Christian can commit (I John 5:16). There is an unpardonable sin which a lost sinner can commit. All sin is sin, but there are degrees of sins and degrees of punishment for these sins.

Here is a serious warning to lost sinners. Be careful what you say. Be very cautious about any remarks about the Holy Spirit which are of a slanderous nature. You may go too far and sin against the Holy Spirit and put yourself in an unpardonable state before God. The very thought of one being guilty of this sin brings before my eyes screaming, dying, doomed, and damned men and women who shall never have forgiveness. Will you be one of them? Remember the words of Christ: **“All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men”** (Matt. 12:31).



## Bible & the Newspaper

(Continued from page 17) ♦

a college dean of admissions explains that, if test scores are equal, they prefer homeschooled kids because they have such a well-roundedness about them. “Their socialization is exceptional. They're used to being around and working with adults and children! They're initiative-takers, they're out of the box thinkers, they're pioneer families, and we want more like that.”

### Teaching Children, Not Content

♦ (Continued on page 21)



# It's Only A Prayer Meeting

Many of our churches are confessedly not prosperous: in accounting for this too obvious fact, the blame is usually thrown upon the minister. Most frequently he is pronounced wanting in eloquence, learning, or tact; some declare he does not "study," others that he does not "visit enough;" the most opposite and contradictory allegations are made and repeated, each accuser in the mean time believing that he has found, in the real or supposed deficiencies of the pastor, ample reason for the absence of those happy seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, which, in former days, gladdened the hearts of his people. Hence the press teems with elaborate essays on ministerial preparation and training; hence, every destitute church is supremely solicitous to obtain a talented ministry; hence in every religious circle a primary topic of conversation is the ministry we need.

Without at all undervaluing the vast importance of an able and efficient ministry, it were only an act of cruelty both to pastors and people, to permit a continuance of the delusion that the cause of this want of success is mainly, and in all cases, to be looked for here. To another quarter we turn for the solution of the supposed mystery, and find it in the ominous expression so often heard on the lips of professing Christians, ---"It's only a prayer meeting;" we find it in the poor, meager, scattered remnant that constitutes, and the cold heartless formality that characterizes, the assembly for social prayer.

Every Christian acknowledges the importance of public and private prayer. Its efficacy cannot be doubted; for the promises of God are many and sure. We are commanded **"always to pray, and not to faint;"** **"to come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."** We are exhorted to prove

God herewith, and see if He will not give us a blessing. We know that we cannot advance in holy things, or in spiritual knowledge, unless we possess and cultivate a spirit of prayer. God's blessings on His people, on His ministers, on His Word, on the unconverted around us, and on the far off heathen, is essential to real success. But He has told us that He will be **"enquired of by the house of Israel, to do these things for them."** He has assured us that the way whereby we may approach Him is prayer; that if we ask aright, nothing doubting, our supplications will be heard, our requests granted. Every true disciple of Christ will readily confess that if this privilege were taken away, there would be nothing to depend upon but a broken reed. How is it, then, that the prayer meeting is the most thinly attended of all the services of the church? How is it that so few are there found lifting up their hearts to God? How is it that the least trifle is considered a sufficient excuse for absence from the place where prayer is wont to be made? It is painful to listen to the manifold excuses made for non-attendance on this means of grace. Pleas of absence are put in, that would not be allowed in case of a mere visit of ceremony; ---how then must they appear at the judgment-seat of God?

"Brother A., Are you going to the meeting tonight?" --- "No, I believe not," is the reply; "it has the appearance of rain, and I don't feel very well. Besides, you know 'it's only a prayer meeting.'"

"Brother B., Are you going to the prayer meeting tonight? I fear there will not be many present; the church seems in a cold state." --- "I know it," is the answer; "but I have some friends from the country visiting me, and I must pay them that attention which they deserve. I should like to go, but no matter, 'it's only a prayer meeting.'"

"Come, Brother C., it is time we were going; I never like to be late at

meeting, for it disturbs those who are already there, and is a bad example to those who are at all inclined to be dilatory." --- "I don't think of going this evening, brother; I have been hard at work all day, and had thought to stay at home this evening, and rest a little. I hope you will have a good time; I believe, however, 'it's only a prayer meeting!'"

"Brother D. cannot go, for he is behind-hand in writing up his books, and is consequently pressed for time. He spent an idle hour in the morning in the----gallery of paintings. It is impossible for Brother E. to attend, for he has a previous engagement. Brother F. is to make one of a select party at the house of Sister G.; and thus it runs on. This one cannot go, and the other will not go; and what is the result? The prayer meeting is thin; the church languishes; vital religion is not cherished; and the hearts of the members become cold. The pastor finds himself comparatively alone; labours and strives to do his duty, but there are few to hold up his hands! 'It's only a prayer meeting!'"

God is not called upon for His blessings, and no wonder that His Spirit is not shed abroad in the hearts of the people. How, then, should there be success?

Reader, if you have neglected to associate yourself with the assembled brethren and sisters at the hour of prayer, ---do so no more. From the prayer meeting goes forth a power that rests not upon earth, but ascending, calleth down high and holy influences from Heaven. In the abounding of prayer, is prosperity.

(Baptist Record and Biblical Repository, Vol. I, 1844).



## Bible & the Newspaper

(Continued from page 20) ♦

As the parents of six children, four of whom were adopted, Cameron and his wife, Chelsea, speak candidly about their own decision to homeschool, which they did not make until their children had completed six years

of private schooling.

With the meteoric rise of the homeschool movement, a fast-growing trend that shows no signs of slowing, the number of American families opting for a home-based education for their children has increased a stunning 63 percent over the 2020-21 school year, and the percentage continues to soar. There are dozens of homeschool co-ops and networks popping up across the nation, as well as homeschool conventions (which Cameron discusses in the film and which can be found on the *Homeschool Awakening* website).

For example, FreedomProject Academy, an affiliate of The John Birch Society, offers a fully accredited, Common Core-free, classical education for kindergarten through high school, preparing students to become proud leaders of a country they love.

To critics of homeschooling who question whether it is possible for the single mom or dad to homeschool because it is too costly or too time-consuming, Cameron said, "Homeschooling is becoming so popular and so many people are there to help that homeschooling has become very, very affordable. And you're not doing this alone. You have the support of a vast community of millions of families who are doing it successfully."

"Instead of saying I can't afford to do anything but the status quo," urged Cameron, "ask yourself can I afford not to look into something that might be better for my kids and really help them succeed and flourish? As a parent, no one is going to love them and care for them as much as I do, and I need to take the lead in discovering where my priorities are and how

♦ (Continued on page 23)

## BEREA BAPTIST BANNER

## Financial Report

12-1-2022 to 12-31-2022

Beginning Balance ..... \$6,717.98

## RECEIPTS:

Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS ..... 750.00  
 The Willetts, Cottonwood Shores, TX ..... 100.00  
 Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL ..... 25.00  
 Grace B. C., Gladwin, MI ..... 50.00  
 Grace B. C., Germanton, NC ..... 50.00  
 The Lord's B. C., Goose Creek, SC ..... 100.00  
 Michael Sherman, Ashland, KY ..... 45.00  
 Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, 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  
 Beauty Mtn. B. C., Edmond WV ..... 50.00  
 Indore B.C., Indore, WV ..... 300.00  
 Berea B.C., Stonington, IL ..... 60.00  
 Big Creek B.C., Wayne, WV ..... 200.00  
 Victory B. C., Courtland VA ..... 25.00  
 Grace B. C., Corbin KY ..... 100.00  
 Southside B.C., Fulton MS ..... 25.00  
 New Testament B. C., Goshen IN ..... 100.00  
 Faith B. C., Lynn AR ..... 12.50  
 Donald Parker, Millport, AL ..... 100.00  
 Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX ..... 50.00  
 Bruce Allen, Cross Plains, TX ..... 25.00  
 Eve Knowles, Scarborough ME ..... 100.00  
 Bible Believers BC, Naples ID ..... 300.00  
 Charles Hudson, Kansas City KS ..... 300.00  
 S.G.B.C., Texarkana TX ..... 50.00

Subscriptions ..... 106.00  
 Divided Checks ..... 0.00  
 Anonymous ..... 725.00  
 Sub Total ..... \$4,098.50  
 TOTAL ..... \$10,816.48

## EXPENDITURES:

Postage: ..... 906.74  
 Supplies ..... 251.24  
 Wages ..... 2000.00  
 FICA ..... 153.00  
 Div Cks ..... 0.00  
 Total Expenditures ..... \$3,310.98

ENDING BALANCE ..... \$7,505.50



## BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST

## Financial Report

12-1-2022 to 12-31-2022

Beginning Balance ..... \$5,369.89

## RECEIPTS:

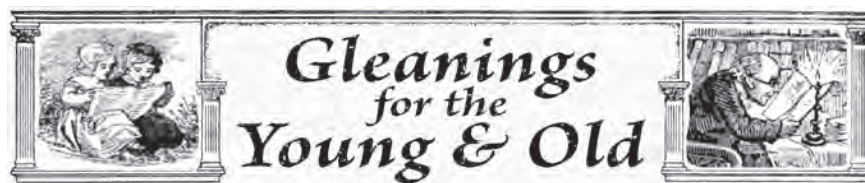
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS ..... 225.00  
 Grace B. C., Corbin, KY ..... 100.00  
 Calvary B. C., Sumas, WA ..... 100.00  
 ..... 425.00  
 TOTAL ..... \$5,794.89

## EXPENDITURES:

Radio time ..... 363.98  
 TOTAL EXPENDITURES ..... 363.98

Interest ..... +0.20

ENDING BALANCE ..... \$5,431.11



## What is the Gospel?

By Raul Enyedi  
Bocsa, Romania

The word "Gospel" comes from the Old English "god-spell" and it means "good tale" or "good news." The content of this good news is found in the Scriptures: **"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"** (Emphasis RE) (I Cor. 15:1-4).

This is the only message that, if believed, opens the gates of Heaven. The Gospel does not speak about the works of the saints, church rituals or the importance of the church in your salvation. The Gospel does not tell you what works you must do in order to be saved. The Gospel tells you about Jesus, because in no one else will you find salvation (Acts 4:12). He is the only way! The Gospel tells about what He did for the salvation of men! Since man is unable to save himself or contribute anything to his own salvation, the message of this good news is called **"the gospel of the grace of God"** (Acts 20:24).



Grace means a gift or a favor given freely to someone that does not deserve it or cannot earn it. Did you believe the Gospel for the salvation of your soul?

END  
**"Way Side Hearers"**

By E. D. Strickland  
(1915 - 2003)

How can the non-elect have the Word of God preached to him and be saved? The Scriptures clearly teach that only the elect of God shall be saved, (Luke 8:12).

Before we seek to give a specific answer to the question above and agree with the positive statement, let us briefly examine the immediate context and one reference a little farther away in the Old Testament.

Jesus is the Master teacher and He excelled in the parabolic method. A parable is the compare together (Gr.). It is the inculcation of spiritual illustrated by object or narrative in the natural realm.

It follows that the unspiritual minds or hearts of hearers would not understand the spiritual application of the parable, (II Cor. 2:14). The mind (heart) spiritually renewed would in understanding, progress from the natural narrative to the spiritual application. The parable of the sower teaches that His true followers come to know new truth, (Luke 8:15). To others who had ears (physical) and heard not (did not understand) the truth Jesus taught, remained hid.

**"If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost"** (II Cor. 4:3).

Jesus connected His parabolic teaching with Isaiah 6:9-10. Compare Isaiah with Jesus in Matt. 13:13-16, **"And he said, Go and tell**

this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed" (Isa. 6:9-10).

**"Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive. For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear"** (Matt. 13:13-16).

In the parable of the sower Jesus had included two main classes of people. There were those who had their hearts prepared, they heard the Word, they perceived its meaning, and it brought forth fruit.

There were others who responded naturally in varied ways, but not having been born spiritually were unable to produce fruit in the realm of the Spirit.

I cannot see that the wayside hearers were ever of the elect, composing God's people, (Luke 8:5). The non-elect may receive the outward call of the gospel by the Word. But he does not receive the inward call of the Spirit.

In I Cor. 2:4, Paul said his preaching was in demonstration of the Spirit and power. This power is given to the elect through the preaching of the gospel made effective by the demonstrative work of the Holy Spirit.

**"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name"** (John 1:12).

Receiving Him and believing  
 ♦ (Continued on page 23)



# What Matters Most

By T. Matthew Stepp of  
Wayne, West Virginia

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



**"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: And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time" (I Cor. 15:3-8).**

The Gospel accounts of the resurrection have caused much study through the ages. Were there several visits to the tomb? Are there any discrepancies in the Gospel accounts? Much study will be required to come to the proper conclusions and still one cannot be dogmatic. But a chronology can be outlined that is consistent with Scripture and logic. (Scripture is "always" logical!)

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

for the necessary viewing of the arriving women.

It is not likely that there were two visits to the tomb. No gospel account mentions two, except for Mary Magdalene seeking and coming back with the apostles. But all four gospels have the ladies arriving in the early pre-dawn hour, while it was yet dark. They arrive wondering how they would remove the stone, but witness upon their arrival the 'rolling away of the tombstone,' most clearly recorded in Matthew, but again, mentioned in all four gospels.

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

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

to tell the unbelieving apostles (this time) of her sighting of the Master.

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

The rest of the events of this first day of the week finds Jesus walking on the road to Emmaus with Cleopas and another disciple (Luke 24:13), then revealing Himself to ten of the eleven apostles (minus Thomas) in the closed upper room (John 20:19), berating them for their hard-hearted unbelief despite all the reports coming in of Christ the risen Saviour! (Mark 16:14)

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

truth. Truly, only God could have written the Bible! Selah! Think about it!



## Bible & the Newspaper

(Continued from page 21) ♦

to find a way to do the things that are important to me."

[This article was originally published by the New American in their August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022 issue. Vol 38, No 15.]

**Note from the editor:**  
**Anyone who knows me and my wife know that we are advocates for homeschooling. If you are looking to get started yourself, or perhaps even know others who might have questions about homeschooling, please feel free to email me directly at [pastorjoegmbc@gmail.com](mailto:pastorjoegmbc@gmail.com); please use set the subject line of your email to be "Homeschooling".**



## "Way Side Hearers"

(Continued from page 22) ♦

on His name are strict evidences that they are the elect of God. They were given that power or right to experience Divine sonship. Relate this to Acts 13:48, **"As many as were ordained to eternal life believed."**

The non-elect may do many religious acts, demonstrate many noble deeds. But God knows not the non-elect savingly (Matt. 7:23).

The elect of God, in the Father's good time, will bring each of His children to spiritual worship without the loss of one.

(Scripture Notes, January 1983)



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Grace Baptist Church of Gladwin, MI 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/>

\*\*\*\*\*

The Maranatha Missionary Baptist Church located at 14460 Ravenna Avenue, Alliance, OH, 44601, is seeking a pastor. The church was organized in 1981 and currently has seven members that are grounded in sound Baptist doctrine. Any interested elder can contact Brother Denny Morgan at [dennymatco@gmail.com](mailto:dennymatco@gmail.com) or call (330) 324-3038.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Grace Landmark Baptist Church of Buckhannon, WV, is seeking a pastor. The church is Sovereign Grace and Landmark in doctrine and practice. Any interested called pastor of like faith may contact Brother Brad Butcher at (304) 669-4738 or (304) 745-6226.

\*\*\*\*\*

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

\*\*\*\*\*

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

\*\*\*\*\*

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

\*\*\*\*\*

Bethel Baptist Church, which is located at 2603 Penfield, Pasadena, TX 77506, is in need of a pastor. Any interested Elders should call Brother Risinger at 832-564-6350 which is his cell phone or you can call him at home at 281-476-5099.

\*\*\*\*\*

Grace Missionary Baptist Church in Tulsa, Oklahoma is in need of a pastor. This calling has a parsonage located right next to the church building. Interested persons are to contact Brothers Charlie Hodges at 918-633-2713 or David Thorne at 918-373-6057.

\*\*\*\*\*

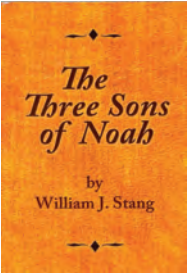
Bethel Bapist Church of Lawton, OK is looking for a pastor. They have been an independent, sovereign grace Baptist Church since the late 1950's and they are seeking to call a man of God to guide, lead, teach, and rebuild their modest congregation. If you are interested please contact Bennie Burnsed at 580-695-4473.

## NOW AVAILABLE



We are pleased to announce that *One Hundred Reasons for the Pre-Trib Rapture* by Milburn Cockrell is now back in print! This book will be sent free to any prisoner that requests it. Retail price \$4.95. Paperback, 56 pages.

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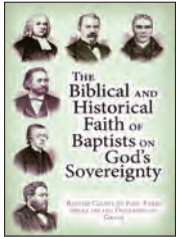
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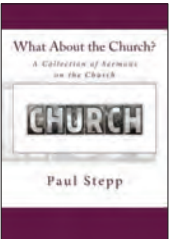


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