

The Berea Baptist Banner

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

The Great Commission or the Great Omission?

By Andy Proctor
of Winston-Salem, North Carolina

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matt.



28:18-20).

We live in days that our Baptist forefathers never knew with the overreaching tentacles of the New World

Order and the coming kingdom of the Antichrist drawing very close.

Evangelism can be an increasingly daunting, humanly

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Your Neighbor's House is on Fire

By Joseph M. Sidders
of Guntown, Mississippi

"These are the things that ye shall do; Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates: And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for all these are things that I hate, saith the LORD" (Zech. 8:16-17).

What should you do if your neighbor's house is on fire? I hope to answer that question with



today's article, but let us start by asking you to consider a few questions first. If your neighbor's house were on fire, would you:

- Go back to sleep or back to the task you were originally performing?
- Would you pull out your cell phone and get this to the web as fast as you could?

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Commandments of Men or God

By Glenn Gilbreath
of Decatur, Alabama

"But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

The context here is about the Pharisees and scribes coming to Jesus and complaining about the disciples' "transgressing the tradition of the elders," by not washing their hands before they ate. Jesus simply turned it around on them by asking why they transgress God's commandment by their traditions. Jesus brought to their attention that they had transgressed the commandment to honour their fathers and



mothers.

They were more worried about their "traditions" than the commandments of God.

This is why Jesus called them "hypocrites." Jesus told them they drew nigh with their mouth and lips, but it was their heart that was corrupt. Their attempts to worship were vain or empty and not real worship – just a form of worship. They were teaching the "commandments of men."

What is the meaning of "commandments"? Strong's gives
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The Great Tribulation Period

T. P. Simmons
(1898 - 1969)

We have seen that the second coming of Christ consists of two phases, and that these two phases are to be separated by a period of time. The writer has stated his belief that this period of time will be the time of the future great tribulation. Our reasons for this belief will appear in the course of this article. We will study this period under the following heads:

The Scriptures that describe this period

The first Scripture we desire to notice is Matt. 24:21, 22, and reads as follows: **"For then shall be great**



tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those

days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." That these words cannot be wholly referred to the sufferings of the Jews at the time of the siege and destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, A. D. 70, is shown by verses 29 to 31. These verses tell us that immediately

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

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

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KARL, Blaine, WA	Saturday 10:30 - 11:00 a.m.	550	5,000 A M

Neighbor's House

(Continued from page 1) ♦

- Would you call your friends and family to tell them how unbelievably lucky you are to be in the right place at the right time?
- Or would you drop everything, call the authorities, and run to the aid of your neighbor?

I would not want to call you my neighbor if you picked one of the first three options. "Am I my neighbor's keeper?" you might ask. The Bible says we are to love our neighbors if we love the Lord. To say you are a person's neighbor and pick one of these first three options is for us to be a liar. We are called to speak the truth to them and to not "imagine evil in [our] hearts against them... for all these are things that I hate, saith the LORD." What a study it would be for us to break down and analyze all that the Bible says the Lord hates.

In regards to your neighbor's house being on fire let us first answer the question, "What did Jesus say?" "And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these" (Mark 12:28-31).

In this chapter, we see the Pharisees, Herodians, Sadducees,

and Scribes all question the Lord Jesus, attempting to "catch Him in His words" (v. 13). Here in this part of the chapter the scribes, the interpreters of the law, tried one more question, one that they had been debating for a long time. "Of the 613 commandments found in the Law (365 negative, 248 positive), which one is the most important?" Jesus replied with the traditional Jewish "statement of faith" (the Shema) quoting specifically v. 4. "Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey. Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates. And it shall be, when the LORD thy God shall have brought thee into the land which he sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities, which thou buildedst not, And houses full of all good things, which thou filledst not, and wells digged, which thou diggedst not, vineyards and olive trees, which thou plantedst

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Brief Truths

By Randy Johnson of
Texarkana, Texas

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



Search the Scriptures, in them you will find the Truth!

"And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not. Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" (John 5:38-39).

God is the author of the Holy Scriptures; men were simply the writers as the Holy Spirit inspired. Paul wrote to Timothy these words, **"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works"** (II Tim. 3:16-17). The only way we can trust the Bible is if it is one hundred percent breathed by the Holy Spirit, men do not know anything about God except what God has shown them.

The problem in the world of "Christian Religion" is that people believe man rather than God, it is only by searching God's Holy Script that you will find the absolute truth. It does no good if you search the Scriptures with a bias heart, the Scriptures must be searched with an open unbiased heart.

There is nothing more important to anyone in this world than the salvation of your soul, nothing! Salvation is the single most important doctrine, because if you do not get it right you will

go to hell when you die. It does not matter how you were raised, what you have been taught all your life, it does not matter what you believe, it does not matter what men teach, all that matters is if you believe the biblical truth about salvation.

Everything scripturally begins with salvation, not just salvation but true salvation. **"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you"** (Matt. 6:33). You will not have God's truth in you if you are not God's child first, it is only after salvation you will understand the truth of the Scriptures. The Scriptures are a revelation and to the unsaved it is a confusion to their understanding. The unsaved understands humanism thus everything is accomplished within a person, humanism recognizes the will and power of the person, seeing everything self-accomplished by their will and power therefore praising themselves. But God said this is a lie, **"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"** (Rom. 1:25).

The same is also to understanding the doctrine of the Bible, it is all divinely inspired, all God's gracious gift by the Holy Spirit. **"And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in**

heaven" (Matt. 16:17). There are billions of souls who think they have eternal life but are lost and destined to eternal hell. The truth of salvation is in the Scriptures; if you never seek the truth about salvation, you will never find it. If your salvation is based on anything but the Holy Scriptures, you are not saved. **"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them"** (Eph. 2:8-10).

If your salvation includes human works, then you are not saved; you believe the lie of Satan, who has men blinded to prevent them from seeing God's truth about salvation. This is not Baptist Doctrine, this is God's Word and because of that, it is what Baptists believe. The doctrine is God's Holy Script called the Bible. **"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine...."** Baptist Doctrine is the Scriptures, not a confession of faith, so if you hate "doctrine" you hate God's Word. Paul wrote, **"For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. 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 20:27-28). It is the Pastor's responsibility to preach the truth in love, not church doctrine. The whole Bible and not selected Scriptures out-of-context or making-up humanistic laced doctrine. It is your personal responsibility to search the scriptures to find the truth as God's Word reveals it. You may

find that you need to be saved, God may show you the truth if you search for it.

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

Neighbor's House

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not; when thou shalt have eaten and be full; Then beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name. Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people which are round about you; (For the LORD thy God is a jealous God among you) lest the anger of the LORD thy God be kindled against thee, and destroy thee from off the face of the earth. Ye shall not tempt the LORD your God, as ye tempted him in Massah. Ye shall diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, and his testimonies, and his statutes, which he hath commanded thee. And thou shalt do that which is right and good in the sight of the LORD: that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest go in and possess the good land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, To cast out all thine enemies from before thee, as the LORD hath spoken. And when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What mean the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD our God hath commanded you? Then thou shalt say unto thy son, We were Pharaoh's bondmen in Egypt; and the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand: And the LORD shewed signs

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Neighbor's House

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and wonders, great and sore, upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his household, before our eyes: And he brought us out from thence, that he might bring us in, to give us the land which he swore unto our fathers. And the LORD commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as it is at this day. And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the LORD our God, as he hath commanded us" (Deut. 6:3-25). This would have been recited morning and evening by the faithful.

Jesus then quotes from Leviticus 19:17-18: "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him. Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD." It is made clear by scripture that to love the Lord: we must show it to others. It is those who show grace the best that understand it the best.

Returning then to our metaphor of our neighbor's house being on fire, let us address the questions of "What does this fire represent, and who is my neighbor?"

Here is what Jesus points out of what and who our neighbor is: "And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and

with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live. But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour? And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise" (Luke 10:25-37).

Was this "certain man" the Samaritan's neighbor because he was himself also Samaritan? Of course not! The lawyer, likely another scribe, summed it up by saying it was "He that shewed mercy on him" that was truly a neighbor. Being a person's biblical neighbor is not based on geography; it is based on

our response to the command "Go, and do thou likewise."

In a previous article we compared the wrath of God to an approaching storm and we discussed the responsibility of the church to warn of this coming storm. What is the wrath of God spent upon? The sinner. It stands to reason then that the "fire" we now speak of is sin; sin most assuredly impacts an entire house!

Now let us return to the opening question, if your neighbor, someone you have been commanded to love and you do so faithfully, had his/her house on fire (depending on the nature and length of time it could be the beginning of a small flame or the entire house could be ablaze) what will you do?

It is a much different thing for us "modern day Christians" to warn our neighbor when their home is "literally" on fire than to bring their attention to the sin in their life, is it not? Why is that? A home can be rebuilt. If it is a small flame and we catch it early enough it can save lives and money and, in the end, bring us closer to our neighbors because of our love and honesty toward them. Dear reader, those are not just the windfalls of a literal burning house, we can see this wonderful benefit from also warning of the spiritual fires. The truth is, we allow ourselves boundaries that the Lord has commanded that we are not to have. We might say, "It is uncomfortable to tell someone they need to repent of sin." How will that discomfort compare to standing before the living God and telling Him why we could not give them the Gospel and tell them of repentance?

As predestinated first responders, "what have we been doing?" Many of us have likely been frozen in place, elect of

God, because we do not want to "offend" our neighbors by telling them to "Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!" Our society still debates the death of George Floyd even after they have combed over the videos and photos of his death time and time again. Why are we able to see this? Why did they not act to stop it? How does looting and destroying local businesses help? How does the removal of local law enforcement stop this supposed problem? I know this took place over a year ago, but would this had been a hyped-up national news story had those in attendance to the event done the right thing? Had the fire of his house been addressed by those around him, would it have burnt to the ground? If indeed the police were out of line, which is not for me to decide, would they have still done this act had the fire of their house been addressed?

What would God have us to do, beloved? Shall we keep waiting to see if our neighbors house will burn down completely, or shall we go to them and truly see them as this Samaritan did in the aforementioned parable? Shall we look them in the eyes, hear their story, and preach to them Jesus Christ (as Philip did in Acts)? Does God not require that we have compassion on them; that we bind up their wounds, give them what they need to stop the fire and to stop the spread? Are we better than this Samaritan, whom the Jews would have hated, in that we cannot take the time to set our neighbor upright again and bring them to the inn (the local and visible church)?

Can we indeed say that we know mercy if we do not show it? Can we call ourselves neighbors if we do not "go and do likewise"?

 **END** 



Narrow Paths

By Doug Newell IV of
Clendenin, West Virginia

"Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matthew 7:14).

Psalms of Who?

I recently finished a book about the Psalms and it was frustrating work. The author has some really good insights and observations but in some passages, I wondered if he and I were reading the same Bible. He spends a lot of time suggesting and offering the best thoughts of the latest scholarship and is very careful not to disagree too strongly against any wind of doctrine, but I was almost finished with the book before he hinted at his opinion. One popular thought among the scholars suggests (because they always suggest) David did not write any of the Psalms.

These academics say the "sweet Psalmist of Israel" could not have written the Psalms attributed to him because he could not have been as sophisticated and theologically advanced as the Psalms attributed to him are, or so they say. Because critics do not really believe in the inerrancy of Scripture, they can spend their days teaching us why it is wrong. Many of the same scholars do not believe the history of the Old Testament can be trusted so they developed the "form-critical" view of the Psalms that categorizes groups of songs of praise, or lament, and views them through that context. Why? Because they believe we cannot trust the history of the Bible to get the context, so this is an alternative lens to read the Psalms. They view the Scripture, not as God's Word, but a historical text to preside over in judgment. These same men give credence to extra-

biblical records and histories, and those histories trump the Bible. The Psalms are an academic puzzle to be solved, rather than God's truth to be believed.

I, for one, believe David wrote a good portion of the Psalms, **"The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended"** (Psa. 72:20). I am standing apart from many of the learned, I know, but I think I stand in good company. Jesus believed David wrote Psalms, **"And David himself saith in the book of Psalms, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand"** (Luke 20:42), and **"For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, The LORD said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool"** (Mark 12:36). Peter believed David wrote Psalms, **"Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus"** (Acts 1:16), and **"For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved"** (Acts 2:25). Paul believed David wrote Psalms, **"Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works"** (Rom. 4:6). The author of Hebrews believed David wrote Psalms, **"Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his**

voice, harden not your hearts" (Heb. 4:7). Not only did the New Testament writers believe this, but the author of Hebrews attributes a Psalm to David that does not have a title "and" tells us it was God speaking through David as he was moved by the Holy Ghost **"Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice..."** (Heb. 3:7). I will believe the Bible.

This is why we must be discerning as we read the thoughts of men, no matter how much schooling they have under their belt. The best of scholars are men, and all men are liars. Writing and publishing thoughts does not elevate thoughts and a seminary education does not sanctify them. A book is merely a one-sided conversation of someone's ideas and some ideas are trash. You may not read these scholars, but you might listen to men preach who have read them, and are under their influence. My advice is to read the Bible with faith and read every book written by men like a textual critic and preside over their works with suspicion.

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



Great Commission

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scary thought in such days, as it was, especially in the Dark Ages. But, the Lord's churches were faithful to carry out the Great Commission.

In this series of messages, I would like to look at a biblical perspective of evangelism we may have not looked at much, but one that our Baptist forefathers knew very well.

Our text is the classic text on the Great Commission, but, what exactly is a commission

anyway? A commission is a charge or a command given by a higher authority to an individual or organization. In so doing, the authority is given to the one receiving the command. Within our context, Christ commands, and thus authorizes, His church to carry out this commission of evangelism, baptism, instruction, and application.

In examining The Great Commission or the Great Omission 1: Start with the Heart, we will examine, first, A Heart for God; second, A Heart for Souls; and third and last, A Heart to Work.

First let us consider having a heart for God. This is where it all starts, in the heart. **"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life..."** (Prov. 4:23). **"But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart"** (I Sam. 16:7).

The heart of man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked (Jer. 17:9) and therefore cannot please God. The first question we must ask ourselves is; do we have a heart for God or against God? Has God given us a new heart for Him? Have we truly repented of our sins and continue to and have we truly believed and trusted in Christ as our Saviour and Lord and continue to do so?

It is called self-examination, or rather Spirit examination. We know that Judas Iscariot was one who the disciples never suspected as being the one who would betray Christ. He deceived them along with Satan, and likely deceived himself for awhile. So, this is why

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Great Commission

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it is said: **"Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall"** (II Pet. 1:10). **"By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain"** (I Cor. 15:2). **"Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting"** (Psa. 139:23-24). **"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God"** (Rom. 8:15-19).

The fruit of the Spirit also bears witness. **"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law"** (Gal. 5:22-23). The love of Christ bears witness in our hearts and lives: **"If ye love me, keep my commandments"** (John 14:15). And yet, even as a saved person, our hearts can grow tragically cold with the cares and troubles of this life being in focus too much: **"Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee,**

because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent" (Rev. 2:4-5). The first work a church is to do in the Great Commission is to evangelize. There are probably more than we know that have lost their candlestick, or are in danger of it as the church in Ephesus, and look what happened to it, with all the admonitions given it in Acts 20; Ephesians; I & II Timothy and Revelation, not to mention the Gospels and other books. **"And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. Love to God, love to obey His Word, and a love for souls"** (Matt. 24:12).

A church in right standing with God is one to do all to the glory of God, according to Ephesians 3:21, **"Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."** And for the individual, **"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God"** (I Cor. 10:31).

Tooting our horns is the wrong motivation, is like the self-righteous Pharisee, for we are as Jesus said in Luke 17:10, **"So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do."** The slave who only does what he is commanded by his master to do has gained no merit or credit, for his master or himself. All we do that is any good is only by the grace of God, not of ourselves.

Secondly, let us consider having a heart for souls. Notice in Revelation 2:5 **"Remember therefore from whence thou**

art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." If we would but remember the nasty pit of sin that the Lord found us and then, we would have compassion upon souls and tell them the Word they need to hear. That is why such sinners as the Samaritan woman could dare say from whence she came, John 4:29 **"Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?"** Or think about the man of the Gadarenes possessed with a legion of devils in Mark 5:19-20, when he wanted to go with Jesus it says, **"Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel."**

We should know ourselves better than others and we realize we are the chiefest of sinners like the Apostle Paul. Oh, may the love of Christ constrain us to tell what great things the Lord has done for us and compel them to come to Christ praying that the grace of God would enable them to do so!

In keeping ourselves in the love of God (Jude verse 21), we shall be moved to keep the two greatest commandments: **"Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself"** (Matt. 22:37-39).

We love our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ by encouraging them by our evangelistic example

to do likewise, or at least, it should encourage them to, **"provoking them to love and good works"** (Heb. 10:24), and to **"see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven"** (Matt. 5:16) likewise. Even to love our enemies (Luke 6:27) as Stephen did to Saul of Tarsus when he told him of Christ in Acts 6-7.

Finally, we should display a heart to work. **"So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind** (Hebrew word "labe" is translated as "heart" over 500 times and mind only 12 times) **to work"** (Neh. 4:6). The love of Christ constraineth us to labor for Him.

Jesus said in Luke 10:2 **"Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest."** And lo and behold, the disciples, upon hearing that, had their hearts warmed towards their Saviour and towards the lost and had a heart to work, and went out to labor in the fields to plant the seed of the gospel and bring in the sheaves! It is work, let us not be slack in doing our duty, this labor of love.

Not only was the Great Commission mentioned in Matthew 28:18-20 and in Mark 16:15, but also just before Christ's ascension again into heaven in Acts 1:8 **"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."**

God blessed the church, but they did not go to Samaria and certainly not unto the uttermost part of the earth! The Lord

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Moderate Steps

By Paul Stepp of
Indore, West Virginia

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



Their Heart Was Not Right

"Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues. For their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant," Ps 78:36-37. This is a passage that is speaking of Ephraim and the sons of Israel.

The Psalmist is lamenting that though the Children of Israel had received many benefits from their God; still, they were unthankful unto God, rebellious towards God, and selfish and wicked in their desires and behaviors.

This sounds a lot like many so-called Christians today. Too often, men and women will be consumed with their own desires and affections and will give only lip service unto the God Whom they claim to serve. What does the Psalmist mean, when he says of Israel that **"their heart was not right with Him"**? Well, the context tells us a couple of reasons that Ephraim was not in good fellowship with God – and I believe these reasons are evident in Christianity today.

First, they were full of flattery towards God, and they lied unto God. It is a shame that folks would flatter God, when there is not enough glory or praise in the sum total of our beings, that we could honor Him as He truly deserves!

It seems that their words were empty and without meaning; and their words were insincere and full of deceit. They said what they didn't really mean! This could be true when they praised Him; this

could be true when they thanked Him; this could be true when they called upon Him for aid – they didn't really mean any of it! I think that insincere Christians behave the same way today: Their hearts are not right with God, because they lie and deceive in their every pretense of worship, praise, or supplication towards God.

Second, the Israelites were not right with God because they were not **"stedfast in His covenant."** This people knew what God could do – they had received God's provision and protection throughout their journeys in the wilderness and throughout their history in the Land of Canaan. This people knew what love God had for them, and also what obedience God expected from them. They knew the Law of God – the Word of God was delivered unto them. And yet, knowing the Power of God, and knowing the Favor of God, and knowing the Justice of God, they still resisted Him, and ignored or disobeyed His Word.

This seems comparable to much of Christianity today: Their hearts are not right with God, because they do not steadfastly obey His Word and contend for the Truths that have been delivered unto us. Despite God's blessings upon so many in Christianity, still, men and women are not faithful unto Him. Many Christians will say with their lips that God is good and holy and the Ruler of men. Then they will proceed to give the lie to their words by disobeying the same God Whom they pretended to follow.

I pray God that more and more of those who call upon the Name of the Lord will be truly saved and will have hearts that are right with God – hearts that are full of sincere love (not flattery); and hearts that are full of steadfastness in the ways and Word of God. To obey God, rather than men. To pursue Him and His Will, rather than our own fleshly desires.



Great Commission

(Continued from page 6) ♦

chastises the churches He loves and there came persecution to move them to go into all the world.

The church at Jerusalem became complacent and were satisfied with me, myself and I, or us four and no more. We can either voluntarily go, or involuntarily go. The church at Jerusalem had to involuntarily go because the persecution became so great. **"And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles"** (Acts 8:1). Whenever a church grows too comfortable in this world it turns inward and grows complacent.

Now there are many ways to carry out the Great Commission or to evangelize, and some of these we will deal with later.

Oftentimes, people are quick to be critical of even biblical methods of evangelism, and when you ask them how they do it, they say they do not, or they live the life of a Christian before others, but that is only part of it. The question is not so much how we do evangelism, but will we do it?

We can admire those or cheer on those who do, we can talk about

it, read good books about it, but, if we do not do it,...what can we say? It all comes down to obedience.

It is really, in part, a theological problem in that we do not believe in Mark 16:15 **"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature..."** and will not strive to do it, remember II Corinthians 5:10 **"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."**

It is not only the job of the pastor to do the work of an evangelist, but it says that one of the purposes of the pastor is found in Ephesians 4:12 **"For the perfecting [equipping] of the saints, for the work of the ministry [to serve, to minister to others], for the edifying of the body of Christ."** Doing the work of the ministry means church is not a spectator sport for others to approve or disapprove. The problem is we know what to do, but we just will not do it.

We may have different Scriptural methods than another, and one person may not be called to do what another is doing, but, let us not neglect to do what Christ commands! We may need to simply ask, Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do? Then the answer is showed us in Acts 9:15-16 **"But the Lord said unto him (Ananias), Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake."**

We want to do it if it is easy, comfortable, fun, etc...but, not if it involves any kind of sacrifice of our time or efforts, or interferes

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Great Commission

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with our hobbies and free time. Dear God, help us to honestly look at ourselves and that our hearts would be upon You first, seeking first your kingdom and your righteousness and your glory!

Besides, remember the joys of seeing those who come to Christ? Psalms 126:6 **“He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.”** And more so, Luke 15:1-7 **“Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him. And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them. And he spake this parable unto them, saying, What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.”**

Let it not be for one moment that the Great Commission becomes the Great Omission as a church or as individual members of this church. Is not God worthy of so much more than even if we would labor 24/7 for Him?

One of the reasons why this has weighed so heavily upon me of late is because now more than ever the time is short,

our opportunities may narrow soon and our only hope for our nation is Jesus Christ...we cannot afford to not redeem the time for the days are evil (Eph. 5:16).

Next time, God willing, we shall deal with some particulars as to how we are to go about carrying out the Great Commission, namely, evangelizing in the home. Until then, let us ask God to increase our love to Him and towards the lost and give us a heart to work the work He has called us to as a church.



Commandments

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the definition as injunction, religious precept, or authoritative prescription. God is the only one Who has the right to declare what commandments shall be taught in His service. Man would rather teach his own commandments, which they consider superior to the written Word of God. **“And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition”** (Mark 7:9). Simply put, if we stop and think about it, the true meaning of the “commandments of men” is anything that is contrary to the commandments of God.

What are some “commandments of men?”

1) Most religious organizations will not publicly tell anyone to deny God and the Lord Jesus Christ, but their instruction and teachings certainly do. Jude 4 says that there were certain men that crept in unawares and they were ungodly men that denied God and Jesus Christ. That is why Jude said in the previous verse, for them to “earnestly contend for the faith?” **“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers**

among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction” (II Peter 2:1). In the very next verse, it says that many will follow their destructive ways, because the truth will be blasphemed.

2) Why do men teach that all you have to do to be saved is to say this prayer, or walk the isle and shake the preacher’s hand, or be baptized? These are the works of men, and God is left completely out of the equation. **“No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day”** (John 6:44). **“It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life”** (John 6:63). **“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast”** (Ephesians 2: 8-9).

The plain and simple truth is that man in his lost condition is dead to anything spiritual. He does not want God in his life. 3) I believe one of the biggest atrocities in “religious organizations” today is the acceptance of homosexuality. Not only are “churches” accepting people of that “lifestyle” to become members, but they go even further and accept them as pastors, deacons, and teachers.

These are “commandments of men” and not of God. This acceptance is an abomination to God. Will those of this “lifestyle” be a part of the “new heaven and new earth”? **Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,**

nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. (I Corinthians 6: 9 – 10). “And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life” (Revelation 21:27). **“If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them”** (Leviticus 20:13). What is an “abomination?” Strong’s has it being something detestable, or morally disgusting. How can mankind believe this will be accepted in heaven?

Now let’s look at the consequences of teaching the “commandments of men.” **“Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven”** (Matthew 5:19a). The “least” here means the smallest of commandments. In verse 18 where it says “one jot,” it means one very small part; and “one tittle” means one of the very least particles. This does not say we will lose our salvation. It means our rewards in heaven will be on a smaller scale. Will Jesus Christ call you the “least” in His Kingdom? Stop teaching the “commandments of men.” Another consequence is that their worship will be vain, empty, and void. **“Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men”** (Mark 7:7). How can anyone grow in the knowledge of Jesus Christ if all that is being taught are the vain

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Small Drops

By Joseph M. Sidders of
Guntown, Mississippi

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



Under the Influence

Philippians 4:8 **"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."**

Beloved friends, here in Mississippi recently we have been inundated with commercials supporting taking the COVID vaccination. These commercials feature famous athletes from the area such as Jerry Rice and Archie Manning, essentially shaming Mississippi residents who have not yet "done their part" to take the vaccination so that we can all "move on" with our lives.

Let me state my intention for writing this piece before I continue. I do not have any issues with individuals who have decided for themselves and their households to not get vaccinated. I always still love and fellowship with those who have decided that taking these shots is what is best for their families. My reason for writing on this subject today comes from a place of concern for America, in particular, in that we continue to find ourselves "under the influence" of movie stars, athletes and even famous politicians who have decided for us what is right and what is wrong.

For those who might be reading this who are born-again I admonish you to recognize that it is YOU dear friend who has been

called to be a light unto the world: **"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven"** (Matt. 5:14-16). Are you to cave to the opinions and shaming of the rich and famous? No! Are you to service their opinions and influences by rolling them on to your families? No!

I want to be very clear here, I am not telling you that it is un-Christian to be, or not be vaccinated. I am, however, telling you that it is un-Christian to be led by anything but God! We have our orders as delivered through God the Son, and sealed within us by God the Holy Spirit. As much as I enjoyed watching Peyton and Eli play football in my lifetime, I have no command to follow their daddy in how I lead my home! I must honour the Lord first and foremost. Jerry Rice may be one of the greatest wide receivers of our day, but I am not commanded to pursue "thus saith Jerry"!

Each man will answer for how he leads his home during this time just as every man from every age before us. Joshua 24:15 says **"... if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of**

the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."



Commandments

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thoughts of men? **"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth NOT in the doctrines of Christ, hath not God"** (II John 9a). Many times Israel turned from serving God. Many times God told them to stop worshipping idols. But we see many times what the outcome would be for them. **"I am the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it. But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me. So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels"** (Psalm 81:10-12). They had their own purpose in mind instead of obeying God's instruction.

What are the "commandments of God"?

God set the standard of His precepts when He gave His people the Ten Commandments found in Exodus chapter 20. These are surely not all the commandments of God, but if all His people would abide by and live by these ten, there would be much less teaching of the "commandments of men." In Matthew chapters 5-7, we find the Sermon on the Mount that Jesus gave to the disciples and the multitudes that had gathered. In verses 3-11, we are given what is commonly referred to as the "beatitudes." The meaning of beatitude is the highest form of heavenly happiness, blessings spoken in regard to particular virtues (Webster's Encyclopedia of Dictionaries). Jesus Christ continues the instruction on a

multitude of subjects – murder, adultery, swearing, love of our enemies, alms, prayers, forgiveness, fasting, worldly cares, etc. Notice what happened after this sermon. **"And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes"** (Matthew 7:28-29). He taught His doctrine, not man's doctrine. God only has the right to declare what is to be taught in His services. We have God's word, the Bible. If man teaches anything contrary to the Bible, then he is putting his authority above God's.

When we keep God's commandments, the blessings will freely come. **"The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit"** (Romans 5:5). The love that Jesus Christ bestows upon His chosen people comes from the Heavenly Father. **"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love"** (John 15:10). We must keep in mind every day of our lives what our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ did on the cross of Calvary when He shed His precious blood, bore every sin that His chosen ones have committed or ever will commit in their lifetime. Think about the agony He endured. Think about the love it took for Him to love an exceedingly sinful people such as we are. All He asks from us is to "keep His commandments." Do we love Him enough to keep His commandments? **"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him"** (John 14:21).

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Tribulation Period

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after the tribulation of those days Christ will come in power and great glory. This clearly refers to the second phase of Christ's coming. Nothing that attended or resulted from the destruction of Jerusalem can fully satisfy these verses. It is true that according to verse 34 the destruction of Jerusalem brought about either a spiritual or a typical fulfillment of all that is predicted in this part of the discourse. The destruction of Jerusalem struck the death-blow to Judaism, and marked the coming of the kingdom of God with power, as Jesus had foretold (Mark 9:1; Matt. 16:28; Luke 9:27). This was a spiritual fulfillment of all Christ said about his coming in this chapter. And the siege of Jerusalem (A. D. 70) brought about a typical fulfillment of all he said about Jerusalem in this chapter. But the literal fulfillment of that which Christ said about his second coming, and the antetype of the siege of Jerusalem are yet to come. No believer in verbal inspiration can find in the destruction of Jerusalem a full and complete satisfaction of the prophecy of this chapter. Its ultimate reference must be to the final siege of Jerusalem in the battle of Armageddon (Rev. 16:13-21; 19:11-21; Zech. 12:2-9; 14:1-7, 12-15); and to the personal and bodily coming of the Lord, as promised in Acts 1:11.

But in Rev. 6-19 we believe we have a far more extended and detailed description of this period. We take these chapters as descriptive of this period for the two following reasons:

(1) As we saw in the last article, we have in chapter 7 the sealing of the servants of God in the forehead; and only Jews are

sealed. This shows that all Gentile believers (and previous Jewish believers) have been taken out of the earth, and therefore, that the rapture of the saints (Which will occur at the first phase of Christ's coming— (I Thess. 4:15-17) has already taken place. Then the second phase of Christ's coming is clearly pictured in Rev. 19:11-21. Therefore, we take the intervening section of the book as describing the interim between the two phases of Christ's coming. And we relate chapter six to this period because we regard the riders of the four horses (6:2-8) the same as the four angels (7:1-3) whose work is restrained until after the sealing of the servants of God.

(2) Then in Rev. 7:14 we have a reference to the great tribulation in the following words: **"These are they who come out of the great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb"** (R. V.). These words were spoken of the numberless multitude in verse 9. The original here is very emphatic. It says literally: **"These are they WHO ARE COMING out of tribulations, THE GREAT ONE."** It is not just tribulation in general that is spoken of here; it is a definite and particular tribulation, vii., the great one. In this verse the present participle, **"are coming out,"** shows the great tribulation to be in progress. Thus we assign this section of the book to the great tribulation period.

The length of this period

It is our conviction that this period will be seven years in length. We hold this conviction because the combined time of the prophesying of the two witnesses (Rev. 11:3) and the career of the Beast (Rev. 13:5) is approximately seven years. Note that the witnesses are to prophesy **"a thousand two hundred and**

three score days" (approximately three years and a half); then the Beast is to arise and kill them (Rev. 11:7) and is to continue **"forty and two months"** (Rev. 13:5). It is our opinion that the witnesses will begin testifying soon after the rapture, and since the Beast is to be destroyed when Christ comes to judge and make war (Rev. 19:11-21; II Thess. 2:8), we conclude that the length of the intervening period is to be found by the above method. It will be noted that we take the thousand, two hundred, and threescore days and the forty-two months literally. We do this in harmony with the rule mentioned in our last article. We find no reason for taking it otherwise either in the passages themselves, or in their context, or in any other Scripture.

The horrors of this period

This period is to be the "day" of God's wrath. During this period the God to whom vengeance belongeth will avenge himself of the treatment this world has accorded his Son and his saints. He will fully avenge his elect (Luke 18:7; Rev. 6:9, 10). He will pour out the vials of his wrath to the last bitter dregs upon this old sin-cursed and devil-darkened earth. The earth will be wrested from the devil and his people and given to the people of God (Matt. 5:5). We regard Rev. 6:12-17 as picture of the turmoil, trouble, fear, and consternation that shall come upon the world at the time of the rapture of the saints; the beginning of this period. Coming to the realization that Christ has come for his saints and that God's day of wrath is upon them, the inhabitants of the earth are represented as saying to the mountains and rocks: **"Fall on us and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb;**

for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand." This gives us some idea of the horrors of this period. Then as we see in rapid succession the depiction of war, famine, death, and plagues and torment of every kind, we surely cannot fail to realize something of the horrors of this period. We are told that **"in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them"** (Rev. 9:6). The inhabitants of earth in this period will get a Veritable foretaste of hell. And here we would speak a word to every lost soul. If today Christ should come for his saints, you would be left here to go through this awful period, whose horrors are indescribable. Christ may come at any moment! Therefore, we urge you "to flee from the wrath to come." Turn from your sins and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ! (Luke 13:3; Acts 16:31).

Will the gospel be preached during this period?

This is a much-controverted question, but we unhesitatingly give an affirmative answer as our opinion. In chapter eleven, as we have seen already, we have the mention of God's two witnesses. We have stated already that we believe these two witnesses will prophesy during the interim between the two phases of Christ's coming. We believe they' will preach the gospel and announce the millennial kingdom, just as Christ and the apostles preached the gospel and announced the spiritual kingdom (the kingdom of God) and the temporal phase of the kingdom of heaven. We can think of no other message God would have for the world during this period. Then we take the numberless multitude depicted in Rev. 7:9-17 to represent

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Tribulation Period

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those who are saved during this period, and who, having been martyred or otherwise died, are immediately caught up to heaven, just as it is said the two witnesses will be (Rev. 11:7-12). Also, we take the sheep in the judgment of the nations (Matt. 24:31-46) to be people who have believed and been saved during the great tribulation period. Someone may inquire how people will be saved during this period. We answer that they will be saved exactly like all others have been saved. God has never had, and never will have, but one way of salvation. That one way is by grace through faith. "But," someone may say, "how can people be saved after the Holy Spirit has been taken out of the world?" The answer that they will be saved just like they were before the day of Pentecost. During the great tribulation period the Holy Spirit will have access to the world just like he did before the day of Pentecost.

Who are the two witnesses who will prophecy during this period?

We do not regard the two witnesses (Rev. 11:1-12) as merely two individuals. Two persons could not bear an adequate testimony to the world in three years and a half. And since there are to be a hundred and forty-four thousand saved Jews in the world during the first part of the tribulation period, we take these two witnesses to represent them. We think the significance of the number two lies in the fact that the hundred and forty-four thousand are of both Israel and Judah. We are confirmed in the opinion that the two witnesses represent the hundred and forty-four thousand because after the witnesses are

killed, they are taken up to heaven (Rev. 11:12), and then in chapter fourteen we have the hundred and forty-four thousand seemingly already taken out of the earth. Moreover, we take this hundred and forty-four thousand Jews to be the brethren of Jesus referred to in the account of the judgment of the nations in Matt. 25:31-46.

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Commandments

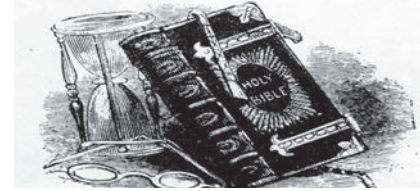
(Continued from page 9) ♦

God's people are blessed when they do His commandments. **"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city"** (Revelation 22:14).

God's people HAVE His commandments. It is called the Bible. How can God's people do His commandments? **"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth"** (II Timothy 2:15). We need to show our love to God by taking the time to study so that we can know His instruction. The greatest instruction given in the word of God is found in John 22:37 – **"Jesus said unto them, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."**

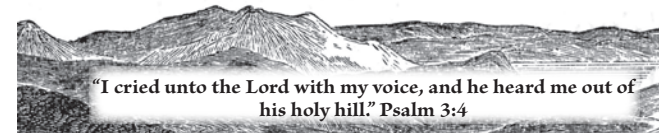
"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (Romans 16:17-18).

"Wherever we are, His eye is upon us. Whoever we are, our life and everything is held at His disposal. To the Christian, He is a tender Father; to the rebellious sinner He will yet be a consuming fire." (A.W. Pink). **"Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen"** (I Timothy 1:17).



Selahs

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Potholes Troublesome?

Mark 9:20-24 **"And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming. And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child. And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us. -- Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief."**

When was the last time you paid attention to the potholes on your roads? And how often do you wish them away? These potholes are there for a reason. As you come to each hole, see it as the test and trial you have to face to make it through.

Sometimes a bump sends you upward and you feel as if you are not going to have an easy landing. But, you eventually come down, and keep right on going. Other times, when you hit a hole, you feel the dip that leaves you uneasy or queasy. You think you're going to be sick. But, a few minutes later, that has passed, and the hole is merely a memory. When you face your testing and trials, tell yourself, "I do not know if it will be an easy landing, or if I'll feel fit to carry on, but that too shall pass."

If you could avoid every bump, you wouldn't need a mechanic, just as if you could avoid every trial or test, you wouldn't need God. But you do. So just fasten your seat belt, and face every bump with the assurance that it will not last forever. Today, expect more bumps and potholes, just trust God to make all things new. Selah!



The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. Please comment on Judges 6:13 and how it applies to us today.

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"And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him (Gideon), and said unto him, The LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valour. And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the LORD be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt? but now the LORD hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites" (Jud. 6:12-13).

The two problems of Gideon's prayer, I have high-lighted for our study today. It is a good prayer in that he acknowledges the God of his fathers was capable of miracles and rescuing them with the exodus, and even the "delivering into the hands" of the enemy is true. God alone is responsible for that act of judgment, because neither Satan nor the Midianites could ever touch the children of God, unless God remove the hedge of protection that is normally around all of God's people! Ask Job about that! Selah! Think about it!

Number one, we do not deserve miracles. It should never be the attitude of any beleaguered saint that we are worthy of being miraculously rescued from our pitiful plights that we find ourselves in. That God will actually give us

a reprieve or wondrously (again) restore us out of the valley of trials to the mountain top is just another witness to His marvelous grace and longsuffering. God is good!

Number two, open your eyes (Gideon) America! If we were not constantly complaining and griping, we would see the handiwork of God in more than just creation (Psa. 19:1), but also in His salvation and preservation! One at a time (at least!) God is performing the most marvelous miracle ever, when our children, neighbors, and sister churches witness the salvation of a lost soul, by the power of the blood of Jesus Christ and the regeneration of life where death once reigned in the body of a new believer! Wow, miracle again! We cannot really go along with Gideon's prayer of complaint when we have just witnessed the miracle of redemption and watched God bring that soul into the obedience of baptism and church membership! Selah! Think about it!

Even more impressive is that every time the Lord providentially causes us to walk in the door of the kitchen, just as the water line breaks, or slows us down with that pokey coal truck, so that we are not at that fatal intersection, where lives would have been destroyed or forever altered, God is constantly performing miracles all around us! Just reflect on the day just past, and honestly tell me you cannot find the miraculous hand of God touching your family and church in the last twenty-four hours? On a larger scale of national deliverance, as is the context of Gideon's prayer, have we stopped

to give God the glory and honor of sending us our own American Gideon in 2016? Judges 6:12 says **"And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and said unto him, The LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valour."** Undeniably, against all odds, the Lord brought Donald J. Trump into a position to deliver this nation out of the nefarious schemes of Barack Obama, et al. I do not know whether our great president was even a saved man, but I do know that God used him as the tool of many miracles during his tenure as president of the United States. Let us look at four major miracles that God performed, even after the original miracle of breaking down the blue wall states that the world had guaranteed to elect the evil Hillary Clinton.

God used the boldness and strength of a carnal Samson to rebuke the domesticated Tribe of Judah. **"Then three thousand men of Judah went to the top of the rock Etam, and said to Samson, Knowest thou not that the Philistines are rulers over us? what is this that thou hast done unto us? And he said unto them, As they did unto me, so have I done unto them. And they said unto him, We are come down to bind thee, that we may deliver thee into the hand of the Philistines. And Samson said unto them, Swear unto me, that ye will not fall upon me yourselves"** (Jud. 15:11-12). The first year of Trump's presidency, God revealed the "Republicans In Name Only" and allowed the beginning of the draining of the swamp that none of us even knew was so terribly entrenched with such vile, fetid creatures of treachery to our great nation. Those of us who our great American president should have been able to count on

beforehand, were virtually shamed into action by his bold actions of deliverance! God sent this man, and yet there are still some that will not recognize this miracle of using a proud, arrogant strongman to God's own glory and honor. Yes, He may yet break that awful pride, but it will take another miracle of grace, eh? Please Lord, save him!

Secondly, God used a furious Jehu to slay the dragons of the aforementioned swamp of Jezreel and Washington, DC! I love the following phrase in Scripture as wicked King Joram watched Donald Trump come energetically flying toward the hapless Democrats (and RINO's) trying to defend their evil programs!

"And the watchman told, saying, He came even unto them, and cometh not again: and the driving is like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi; for he driveth furiously" (II Kings 9:20). Katy-bar-the-door, as our Beloved President held nothing back in exposing the Liberal establishment on every hand, on almost every single day of his short presidency. "Move Israel's embassy back to her Jerusalem capital!" "Stop funding abortions!" "Make America Great Again!" "More American jobs, more American oil!" "Make NATO pay their fair share!" "More religious freedom for those that hate abortion and homosexuality!" "Let our families educate their children, not bureaucrats and school boards!" "No critical race theory, but 1776 project!"

The third Scriptural parallel, where I see God performed a miracle, is in the exposing of the liberal leftist media as a direct tool of Satan. **"And Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the LORD besides, that we might inquire of him? And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat,**

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. What is the significance of the resurrection?

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The significance of the resurrection is that it shows the essential power of a Saviour— that of life over death! Selah! Think about it! One that can conquer the grave? Can restore, resuscitate, and resurrect Life? Wow! Now that is a Saviour, praise God! John 11:21-25 says **“Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee. Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.”** Martha and the others knew the power of God in an almost esoteric way. Yeah, sure, somewhere down the line, God (Elohim?) will raise all of the dead in the final resurrection for judgment. What Jesus shows in this chapter is not so “doctrinal” or obscure! Hey! Pay Attention! I am the Saviour! I can raise the dead anytime I want to! As Brother Joe Collins said once, “Jesus must have hated funerals, because He broke up every one He attended!” Hallelujah! He is the Way of life and resurrection!

So, number one, the Saviour can resurrect physical life from physical death, as He did at Lazarus’ tomb. But number two, a real Saviour can resurrect spiritual life from spiritual death, also! **“And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die”** (Gen. 2:16-17). The death of Adam that day was spiritual, as well as the commencing of “dying” physically. Death is never annihilation, but rather a separation. At physical death, the body is “separated” from the soul. At spiritual death, the spirit of Man/Adam is “separated” from God. There is a continued “existence” either way, but the terrible consequences of death are very real! When Adam was “separated” from God, he was living a “living death” of a life of guilt, shame, nakedness, peril and destruction. The Apostle Paul cries out, **“O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”** (Rom. 7:24).

So how does the Saviour conquer spiritual death? **“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: ...so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace (Unconditional Election) of God, and the gift (Calvary’s Limited Atonement) by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto**

many (Irresistible Regeneration)” (Rom. 5:12, 15). Every instance of the new birth, is a resurrection of life from death! The sinning soul that was bound up in death clothes as much as Lazarus was, has been liberated through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from death and verily Hell! **“I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death”** (Rev. 1:18). **“Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again”** (John 3:7). Ye must be resurrected again! Selah!

The third resurrection picture is the resurrection of eternal life from eternal death. I love the thought of Immortality transposed upon us carnal and mortal creatures, by the power of our Saviour! **“Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory”** (I Cor. 15:51-54).

With God, nothing is impossible! Eternal life died on Calvary, that our eternal death might live eternally! Because of His sovereign grace, love, and power, we are no longer bound up in any sort of death or separation, whatsoever. We will always be with Him! **“...Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen...”** (Luke 24:5-6)! The significance of the resurrection? There is “no more death” for us!

Praise God! Selah! Think about it!

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I will first answer the question. The significance of the resurrection is everything! Without the resurrection there would be no gospel, without the resurrection we would have no hope of being raised from the dead.

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

The Old Testament spoke of the suffering and resurrection of Christ (see Luke 24:25-27; Acts 2:25-31; 26:22-23). Jesus, Peter, and Paul quoted or referred to such Old Testament passages regarding the work of Christ, **“I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore”** (Psa. 16:8-11).

Let the Scriptures speak for themselves. Concerning the resurrection, here is what Paul told the Corinthian church, (read I Cor. 15:12-58).

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Forum Question #1

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There is yet one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may inquire of the LORD: but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so" (I Kings 22:7-8). As the media outlets lined up to malign the truth that Donald Trump spoke, the Micaiahs were few and far between that recognized God's truth in their president's words and actions. The lies and defamation of the Steele Dossier, the Russian Collusion, the twin impeachments and the daily attacks on his person, his regal wife and loyal family, and ultimately down to the working man and the Christian church-goer should be obvious to all. That the Lord protected President Trump and strengthened him throughout those four polarizing years, is a miracle of God. I remember my neighbor asking me one time if there had ever been a person hated and maligned as much as our faithful president? I answered that I only knew of one person—and that was Jesus Christ, my Lord and Saviour! Selah! Think about it! I John 3:13/John 15:18/7:7 says **"Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you...If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you...The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil."** As I heard him say once, "They are really coming after You, I am just in the way..." God put both Gideon and Donald Trump in the way to stand for the purposes of truth, deliverance, and justice!

Fourthly, the spiritual and scriptural Legacy of God using this 45th President is found in how the Lord will yet bring deliverance, if

grace tempers the judgment our America is due for. Gideon was given a detailed plan from God, and President Trump's orders are given in Isaiah 1:21-28 **"How is the faithful city (America) become an harlot (Fatherless/Godless schools)! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it (in 1776); but now murderers (Abortionists). Thy silver is become dross (inflation), thy wine mixed with water (cheap imports): Thy princes (politicians) are rebellious, and companions of thieves (Fake News Media): every one loveth gifts (lobbyists), and followeth after rewards (career swamp critters): they judge not the fatherless (teen pregnancy), neither doth the cause of the widow (welfare dependency) come unto them. Therefore saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts, the mighty One of Israel, Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies (here comes Samson, Jehu, Micaiah and Gideon all rolled into one!): And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross (drain the Swamp), and take away all thy tin (expose flimsy Socialism): And I will restore thy judges (three Supreme Court Justices, plus hundreds of Federal Judges) as at the first (rule of Law), and thy counsellors as at the beginning (no more Judicial Activism): afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city (Our only Miraculous Hope!). Zion shall be redeemed with judgment (expose the Democrat Party), and her converts (newly courageous Conservatives!) with righteousness. And the destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners shall be together (God is "not" dead-Judgment will certainly fall on**

Pelosi, Schumer, etc), **and they that forsake the LORD shall be consumed.**" Yes! That is who God is! May God bless America with more miracles, Gideon! God is moving and aligning all things to His will - miraculously and powerfully, if we will only give credit, honour, and glory where it is due! Thank you, Lord!

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Many today, as in Gideon's day, do not understand the chastisement of God. The very chastisement of God is proof of His care for and presence with Israel, **"And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons"** (Heb. 12:5-8).

Just because it may appear that God no longer dwells with us does not mean that He has fled **"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee"** (Heb. 13:5).

In Judges 6:13 Israel was under the chastening hand of the Almighty and it appeared He had given them over to the Midianites. But that was not the

case. The Lord assured Gideon that if he was to fight for Israel by being "sent" of the Lord, that the Lord would surely be with him. **"And the LORD said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man"** (Jud. 6:16).

There may be a New Testament Church under the chastening hand of the Lord today, but that does not mean He can not or will not use the preacher to get things straightened back out. So, even though we may think God is a mile away He has the situation well under control and will be there to help the man of God whenever he cries out. God Bless!

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"And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the LORD be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt? but now the LORD hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites" (Jud. 6:13).

Gideon's response to the appearance of the angel of the Lord reveals a lack of faith on his part, a misunderstanding of the nature of God's chastisement, and a lack of discernment regarding the laws of sowing and reaping.

When we are not walking by faith, especially during times of great outward trials we often find ourselves questioning God like Gideon did. It is really a common reaction fueled by our fallen and depraved human nature. Why is all this bad stuff

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Forum Question #1

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happening to us? Why will God not do miracles like He did for our forefathers? Human rationale's response is that God must have completely forsaken us. All this reveals a lack of faith and trust in Almighty God. The remedy for leaning to our own understanding rather than just trusting God day by day is found in the familiar Proverb: **"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths"** (3:5-6). Present day application: rather than question God's ways, trust Him, especially when things look really bad.

The very fact that God was chastening the nation of Israel was proof positive of His love according to Hebrews 12:5-12. God only chastises His children. Israel had devolved into idolatry and Baal worship and God was rubbing their noses in the Midianite filth, idolatry, and oppression. God was showing them the severity of their sin and what it leads to. Thank God for His chastening hand! The key is learning how to respond to God's chastening hand. Present-day application: Instead of being bitter and rebellious, we ought to examine ourselves as to why God is dealing with us in chastisement. Through honest and transparent self examination we must repent of our waywardness and submit to God. Instead of pridefully going on in rebellion it is far better to obey the admonition of I Peter 5:6-7: **"Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in**

due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."

Finally, Gideon's attitude revealed a lack of spiritual discernment when it comes to the irrefutable laws of sowing and reaping. If you sow to the flesh, you will reap fleshly results. In spite of all the blessings God had poured out upon Israel, they were rebelling and identifying with the heathen ways of those around them. Present day application: Do not expect God to bless your life when you are doing stupid and sinful things. God will not bless your worldliness and rebellion. You will reap what you sow even if you are saved and forgiven of your sins! Galatians 6:6-7 declares: **"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."**

Thankfully, God got a hold of Gideon and used him in a mighty way in delivering Israel from Midianite oppression. Present day application: God is still working with and in His people. Though things around us may look bleak and dismal, let us learn to trust God and humble ourselves under His mighty providential hand. We still have the promise of God as individuals that He will never leave us nor forsake us. As the Lord's churches, we can rejoice that the Lord is with His people as they carry out the Great Commission and will continue to do so unto the end of the world (Matt. 28:18-20). Let us learn to apply the admonitions found in Psalm 60:11-12: **"Give us help from trouble: for vain is the help of man. Through God we shall do valiantly: for he it is that shall tread down our enemies."**

Forum Question #2

(Continued from page 13) ♦

The trump will sound and those that are in the grave will rise up in victory (vv. 52-55), **"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"** (v.55). Because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the grave cannot hold us, and the sting of death has no power over us! We will rise victoriously! The resurrection is shown beautifully in baptism, also. Baptism shows the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ! So again, I believe that the resurrection is everything or as Paul said, **"And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins"** (I Cor. 15:17). God Bless!

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"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I" (John 14:27-28).

The resurrection proves the efficiency of Christ in His death. That is to say, the death of Christ was not wasted, useless, or inefficient. It accomplished exactly what it was intended to; the salvation of the people of God from their sins. All of them, and from all of their sins. **"And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name JESUS:**

for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21). If the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ was not effective, was lacking, wasted, useless, or inefficient, then when He cried, **"it is finished"** (John 19:30), it would have been a lie, thus forever the Lord would have to bear the blame of His children, and would not have been permitted to raise again as a failure. Rather, the Lord rose again, and He did so **"having spoiled principalities and powers, [making] ...a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it** [His efficacious death as evidenced by His wondrous resurrection]." This is illustrated by Judah, as he spoke with Jacob concerning taking Benjamin into Egypt; **"I will be a surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame forever"** (Gen. 43:9). The resurrection, then, proves that the Lord stands before the Father, and that His death was efficient in the matter, for if Christ lost even one of the people of God, and their sins be not forgiven by His work, and redeemed according to His righteousness, then He would bear the blame forever. Please let the reader be assured, that the Lord bears no blame, and that in His death, and according to His resurrection, the Lord Jesus Christ is efficient in saving His people from their sins!

The resurrection proves the power of Christ as God. **"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received**

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Forum Question #2

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of my Father" (John 10:17-18).

For one to lay down their life is no big thing at all. Military agents have laid down their lives as long as there have been military agents. But, for one to take it again, or raise themselves from the dead is something only God can do. This is evidenced in natural birth and spiritual birth. Without detail, a person must be conceived in the flesh, and one cannot conceive themselves. Likewise, for one to be saved, they must be **"born again,"** or born from above (John 3:5-7). Yet this Man, the Lord Jesus Christ, being God, needed no outside agent to live or die, being God. And being God, though He were dead, yet He acted upon Himself unto life. Only God can do that. Only God can cause a man and woman to conceive. Only God can born someone again. Thank God!

The resurrection proves the acceptance of God the Father of the work of Christ. **"...if ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, 'I go unto the Father...'"**(John 14:28). Praise the Lord, that because the Lord has risen from the dead, and having shown His beautiful and complete work on behalf of His people, He has risen from the dead and gone unto the Father, this proves that God the Father is pleased with this work. This is vividly portrayed of God at the Lord's baptism, picturing His death, burial, and resurrection. The Father proclaims from the loft of splendor, **"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"** (Matt. 3:17). Yes, the work of Christ is acceptable to God, His death was acceptable to God, and His resurrection is acceptable to God, being pleasing unto Him and

delightful in holiness and glory!

The resurrection assures the peace of God in Christ. **"Now unto Him (Christ Jesus) that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen"** (Jude 24-25). That is peace in this life, and peace in eternal life. In this life, we know that whatever happens, that Jesus is still the Christ, still the beloved Son of God, still well-pleasing unto the Father, and still risen from the dead. This peace, as the Lord differentiates in text of John 14 from the peace of this world in that it is unmovable, unshakable, unwavering, constant, reliable, and worthy to be cherished. This peace is not based on feelings, but on the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, and His resurrection confirms, strengthens, and is the very basis for the peace of God in the world to come. Further, this peace in the resurrection gives peace in this life. **"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus"** (Phil. 4:6-7). Yes, the resurrection of Christ provides the peace of God both now and forever for the child of God!

The resurrection assures the personal peace of God in Christ. **"Peace I leave with you..."** (John 14:27). The child of God can and should take this personally. It is good if the people of God at large are promised peace, but I believe it a great and precious thing that I am promised peace in the resurrection of Christ Jesus. He

died for me. He rose again for me. He is acceptable unto the Father for me. He makes intercession unto the Father for me (Heb. 7:25). He is an Anchor for my soul beyond the veil (Heb. 6:19). And, being risen, He is coming back for me. Children of God, we would do well to rehearse the Gospel, particularly the resurrection, in a personal manner, giving thanks to God. No matter what happens in this life, up to and including death, a great and personal hope and assurance toward God from the believer should flood our hearts and minds with joy and peace until the day of eternity! **"...I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this"** (John 11:25-26).

The resurrection brings joy and rejoicing to those that believe it in Christ. **"If ye loved me, ye would rejoice..."**(John 14:28). This refers to being joyful in this present world. When the disciples knew that Christ was risen from the dead, notice their response, **"And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures.... And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen"** (Luke 24:44-45/52-53). Knowing that the Lord is risen today, likewise should the children of God conduct themselves with great joy, blessing and praising God, and continue in worship and service accordingly.

Such conduct is a glimpse of what all eternity will be like. Please notice, **"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.... I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen;.... And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation... And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it [New Jerusalem]; and His servants shall serve Him"** (Rev. 1:5, 18, 5:9, 22:3). It will be the joy of eternity to worship the Lord Jesus Christ, who rose from the dead for us! What a delight to serve Him who loved us in such an open and wondrous way!

The resurrection, not only as an event, but a Person, the Lord Jesus Christ, is hope and life to those that believe and trust in Him. **"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words"** (I Thess. 4:16-18). **"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also"** (John 14:3). It is the Lord who rose again. It is the Lord who is coming

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Light Contemplations

By Luke Austin
of Cadillac, Michigan

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

Charismatic Chaos

I have been watching some reformed videos rebuking the so-called Pentecostal faith healers. Though I may disagree doctrinally in other areas with reformers, these videos are sound in their rebuke of "faith healers." Without fail if you read in the comment section all these people come out of the woodwork and try to defend these charlatans.

Ask yourself one question though if these "faith healers" with their magic prayer cloths are real then why are there nursing homes brimming over with sick and infirm? If they have the ability to heal the sick and dying, then why are they letting so many people die? There's an abundance of these so-called faith healers today.

Well, if they had a mind to they could empty the nursing homes and hospitals inside of a week. It can only be one of two things that explains why they have not emptied the nursing homes. First, they are refusing to heal the dying unless they get paid. Secondly, they are liars that cannot even stop a runny nose.

II Peter 2:3 **"And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."**

If you are curious the answer is number two. We can see why if we but answer the question - What is the gospel? It is that you are a sinner deserving of the wrath of Almighty God yet

this same God sent His Son to die for your sin. That you might be justified in the sight of God. That you through Christ can be eternally saved. What do physical healings and magic hankies have to do with this? Nothing. There were physical healings in biblical times. But they were always for the furtherance of the gospel.

Paul had bad eyes, why did he not just heal them himself? It would not have furthered the purpose of the gospel. Paul had a fellow laborer named Epaphroditus. He was sick, near to death actually. Why didn't Paul just heal him? It didn't further the purpose of the gospel.

Philippians 2:27 **"For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow."** The plan is the gospel. The purpose is the gospel. The point is the gospel. God has never done anything without a purpose. He does not just grant the ability to heal for "funzies."



Forum Question #2

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back for His people. It is the Lord who is that **"blessed hope, and glorious appearing"** (Titus 2:13) of resurrection. It is the Lord that the people of God cleave unto and long for. It is the Lord Jesus Christ, and His resurrection, that is the comfort, joy, hope, assurance, and trust for salvation. In fact, **"if**

Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain" (I Cor. 15:14). God forbid! No, but the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the passion and trust of those that believe, and the hope of all eternity! That **"...this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever [died], sat down on the right hand of God [in His resurrection!]; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified"** (Heb. 10:12-14).

I understand that there are more components of wonder and glory concerning the resurrection. This presentation of the importance of the resurrection is by no means exhaustive. So, then, child of God, elaborate upon these things in your own heart. Study upon these things, trusting the resurrection of Christ for the security of your eternal soul. Grow in these things, and be exceeding glad, rejoicing, and be of peace and comfort in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ! And be that much more glad about the resurrection as we see the day approaching!

Sinner, there is a second resurrection, and it is described in Revelation 20. It is a resurrection of small and great, important and unimportant, all of which would desire to flee from it. It is a resurrection of the unsaved being called before the judgment bar of God, examined according to their works rather than the works of Christ. It is a resurrection that necessitates the penalty of sin and judgment under the law. It is a resurrection known as the second death. It is a resurrection that guarantees the participants will be cast alive into the lake of fire, fit for Satan and his angels. It is a resurrection without peace, as those who participate will wail and

gnash their teeth for eternity. It is a resurrection without efficiency, as the fire will never be quenched, and God's wrath can never be satisfied. It is a resurrection which has a force of power from God, not unto life, but unto eternal death. It is a resurrection that declares eternally the words of Christ, **"depart from me,"** without acceptance or relationship with God. The only assurances from this resurrection come in this fashion; judgment is forever, judgment is fitting, and judgment is final (no second chances). Sinner, I beg of you to consider these things, and, by the power of God, call upon the Lord, repent, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

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"For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept" (I Cor. 15:16-20).

This question could actually be answered in a series of articles or sermons on the subject of the resurrection. When something is deemed significant it means that it is vitally important, weighty, of great consequence, momentous. Certainly all of those definitions rightly describe the significance of the resurrection. I will narrow my focus on the subject of the resurrection

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The Short Pews



Brief Articles
by Curtis Pugh
(1944 - 2018)

JOHN CALVIN AND JAMES ARMINIUS

In all probability this article will be criticized for a number of reasons. Be that as it may, it is a fact that there is a great division among those called Baptists. Sound Baptists of the historic sort are slandered as "Calvinists" as if they were disciples of that Protestant Reformer. In addition we shall present some historical information to show that John Calvin did not originate what is today called "Calvinism." And neither did James Arminius originate what is today called "Arminianism." (Note this: an Arminian – with an "i" – is one who believes in freewill doctrine: an Armenian – with an "e" – is one whose ethnicity sprang from Armenia. It is easy to remember: the word spelled with an "i" has to do with "doctr-I-ne" while the word with "e" has to do with -E-tnicity. Because of those two letter differences, these words are properly pronounced slightly different one from the other.) We ask the question: where did "Calvinism" originate? Since the Bible consistently presents God as almighty and shows Him to always act without the interference of either angels or men, we conclude that God is sovereign in everything that He does. This is the foundation for what we prefer to call the doctrine of grace rather than "Calvinism." Nothing outside of Himself compels God to do anything. He is not obligated or bound by anything outside of Himself. The Bible contains the

words elect, election, predestinate, foreknow, determinate counsel, etc. The healthy method of Bible interpretation requires us to let these words say what they say: let them mean what they mean without twisting or manipulating them into meaning less than they do. We conclude from our study of the Bible that God chose whom He would save before the foundation of the world and that He is accomplishing His perfect will.

We came to these conclusions apart from ever reading the writings of Calvin or any other man. The Bible says, for example: **"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved"** (Eph. 1:4-6). And again, **"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began"** (II Tim. 1:9). It ought to be a matter of historical interest to sound Baptists today that one group of our anabaptist forefathers was given the name "Paulician." Our enemies today try to say that the Paulicians were so named after an early Armenian (note the "e") bishop. However, Gibbon in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, (liv), says it means "Disciples of St. Paul." We think it is obvious that not only Paul, but all the apostles believed in the sovereignty of God in election, predestination, etc.

Another proof that John Calvin did not originate that which is

called "Calvinism" today is this: Augustine of Hippo (sometimes called Saint Augustine) wrote and preached these things before John Calvin was even born. Perhaps you have read Spurgeon's comment concerning Augustine preaching sovereign grace doctrine. Note that Augustine was born November 13, 354 and died August 28, 430 – long before John Calvin: Calvin was born July 10, 1509 and died May 27, 1564. His birth was, therefore, 1,155 years after the birth of Augustine. So it is ignorance to claim that John Calvin originated the doctrine of grace. It should also be noted that while Calvin did teach sovereign grace doctrine, he also taught baptismal regeneration and also that the sword should exercise its power over those who disagreed with his doctrine. He was, of course, a Protestant Reformer. What that really means is that he was once a part of the Roman Harlot and had a great part in giving birth to her daughters, for Rome is "The Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth" (Rev. 17:5). This preacher is not aware of anything good that came out of the Protestant Reformation. It is, first of all, a fact that a reformation is not possible. Proof: **"Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one"** (Job 14:4). The second fact is this: no "reformation" was needed. There were anabaptist congregations in existence in most of the countries of Europe. Had the "Reformers" really desired to leave the Harlot, they could have made a clean break with her and sought membership with one of the Lord's congregations. But they kept Harlot baptism, Harlot church government, Harlot church state compromises, and actively persecuted anabaptists and other dissenting groups.

Now let us consider James Arminius and Arminianism (note the "i"). It may be a surprise to some to hear that John Calvin never heard of James Arminius nor of Arminianism. These two never had an argument nor did they ever meet. Calvin lived a short time in France, but spent most of his life in Switzerland, dying there on May 27, 1564. James Arminius was a Dutchman who lived in Holland. He was born there on October 10, 1560. A little math shows that Arminius was only four years old when Calvin died. Thus there was no interchange, correspondence, or communication between the two.

What is Arminianism and how did this system of doctrine come about? First of all, it should be understood that just as there were men who preached sovereign grace before Calvin, so there were people who preached freewill doctrine before Arminius. In fact, a Dominican friar named Thomas Aquinas, a Catholic theologian, was the father of Roman Catholic freewill teaching. He lived from A. D. 1225 until March 7, 1274. So Aquinas lived and died before either Calvin or Arminius. He opposed the sovereignty of God teachings of Augustine and his doctrine became the basic doctrine of the Catholics. It is called "Thomism." Again, it is obvious that Thomas Aquinas, Calvin and Arminius were not contemporaries, and never had any personal meetings or confrontations.

James Arminius began his professorship at the Dutch University of Leiden in 1603. Remember, Calvin had died in 1564. In the years following Calvin's death, a Dutch pastor, theologian, and former student of his (Calvin's) named Guido de Bres

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Short Pews

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crafted what is called the Belgic Confession. (The term Belgic then referred to not only Belgium, but all the low countries including Holland.) This Belgic Confession was the official doctrine of the Dutch Reformed Church and other "reformed churches." The Dutch Reformed Church was the officially sanctioned state church of Holland. James Arminius died in October A. D. 1609.

After James Arminius died, his followers presented their objections regarding the Belgic Confession (Calvinism) to the Dutch government the following year. They opposed the established Calvinism and wanted to change the state church's doctrinal position. They wanted the teachings of James Arminius to be the official doctrine of their church. They opposed the sovereignty of God in salvation including total depravity, unconditional election, particular redemption, irresistible grace, and perseverance of the saints. It was these followers of Arminius who first came up with their "five points." Their objections were presented to the Dutch government in an official document called "The Remonstrance of 1610." These men were known as "Remonstrants." In response to this Remonstrance of 1610, the Dutch government ordered a synod – an official gathering of church leaders of the Dutch Reformed Church and eight other reformed bodies. (No Baptists or anabaptists were present.) It was not until November 13, 1618 – about 8 years later – that the first meeting of the Synod of Dort was held. (Dort is another name for Dordrecht, the city

where the synod was held.) These Reformed church leaders held 154 meetings, the last on May 9, 1619. In these meetings the Synod of Dort crafted "the five points of Calvinism" in response to Arminius's teachings. John Calvin did not formulate the famous "five points" that today bear his name. Additionally you cannot find anything like the familiar "TULIP" in any of Calvin's writings. The "five points of Calvinism" were a response to the "five points" of the Dutch Remonstrants who were disciples of James Arminius.

Considering these facts, and the fact that sound Baptists today reject Calvin's doctrine of baptismal regeneration and other aberrations, why are they slandered by the name "Calvinist?" A multitude of freewill Baptists in various manmade organizations have never heard of James Arminius. But they have heard their preachers make ignorant and untrue statements about "Calvinism." They have heard sovereign grace Baptists slandered and maligned. They have been taught that "Calvinism" is a horrible system of doctrine. They have not been told that what today is called "Calvinism" is the doctrine of the old Baptists because it is the doctrine of the Bible.

We think we can conclude this little article with no better words than those of Charles Haddon Spurgeon who said: "I have my own private opinion that there is no such thing as preaching Christ and Him crucified, unless we preach what nowadays is called Calvinism. It is a nickname to call it Calvinism; Calvinism is the gospel, and nothing else. I do not believe we can preach the gospel, if we do not preach justification by faith, without works; nor unless we preach the sovereignty

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From the Pen of a Country Preacher

Milburn R. Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)



The Way of Cain Even in the Church

"Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core" (Jude 11). In the first portion of this verse Jude calls the persecuting Gnostics the followers of Cain. But just who was Cain? What was his way? Does he have followers in the world today? I want us to consider these vital questions.

WHO IS CAIN?

From Genesis 4, I see that Cain was the first born of Adam and Eve, and the older brother of Abel. The Divine narrative reads: **"And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD. And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect..."** (Gen. 4:1-5).

Both Cain and Abel engaged in religious worship. They equally brought an offering unto the Lord, yet God accepted Abel's and rejected Cain's. Why? First Cain's offering was rejected because it was bloodless and "...

without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. 9:22). Second, his offering consisted of the fruit of his own toils; it was the work of his own hands. Third, he brought **"...the fruit of the ground..."** which God had cursed (Gen. 3:17). Abel **"...brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof..."** (Gen. 4:4). To secure this sacrifice that had to be made, blood had to be shed and life taken as was necessary when God clothed Adam and Eve with coats of animal skins. The Divine commentary on this passage is found in Hebrews 11:4: **"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain...."** Abel was not more excellent, but his offering was more pleasing to God.

WHAT WAS HIS WAY?

Cain and Abel represented two kinds of people in the world, the lost and the saved. Cain is the natural man and Abel the spiritual man. Abel acknowledged his fallen condition, put his faith in a sacrificial substitute **"...by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts..."** (Heb. 11:4). Cain, by bringing the offering he did, denied he was a sinful creature and ignored God's demand for expiration by the shedding of blood. He approached God on the grounds of personal worthiness. He worshipped God after his own fashion. He rejected God's revealed will and set up his own defiance.

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The Kentucky Baptist and the Burning Coals of Truth



C. D. Cole
(1885 - 1968)

The Minister and His Message



"Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God" (I Cor. 4:1).

"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine..." (I Tim. 4:16).

The ministry is a glorious undertaking — nothing comparable to it among the professions of men. The highest and noblest of human aspirations is to be a good minister of Jesus Christ. When Felix Carey turned from missionary work to accept the post of ambassadorship from the king of England, his father said, "Felix has dwindled into an ambassador." Under God, the ministers of Christ have made the greatest contribution to the welfare and happiness of mankind.

The ministry is also a serious and solemn undertaking. Of all the tasks committed into the hands of men, that of the ministry most requires divine enablement. No man, of himself, is at all equal to such a task. It involves a tremendous responsibility. It is a work before which the noblest saints of earth have hesitated. Jeremiah, when called, demurred, saying, **"...Ah, Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child"** (Jer. 1:6). And it was only after God had said, **"I am with thee,"** that he dared to speak. Isaiah was so filled with the sense of his unworthiness, that it was not until one of the Seraphims took a live coal from off the altar

and put it upon his mouth, saying, **"Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged,"** that he said, **"Here am I; send me."** The apostle Paul, in the face of such an undertaking, cried out, **"...who is sufficient for these things?"** And his spirit was not quieted until he could say, **"...our sufficiency is of God."** James says, **"My brethren, be not many masters (teachers), knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation"** (James 3:1). The ministerial office carries with it tremendous possibilities in either of two directions. There is the possibility of hearing Christ say, **"Well done, thou good and faithful servant,"** or the possibility of a greater condemnation. With some such feeling Paul said, **"...I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway (disapproved)"** (I Cor. 9 :27).

The Difficulties of the Gospel Ministry

The seriousness of our task is seen when we consider to whom we are to preach. We are not commissioned to preach to the elect angels, who have been confirmed in holiness and who delight to do God's will. Our ministry is not limited to the sheep, who hear the Shepherd's voice and follow Him. But, we are to preach to men, who, by nature, are at enmity with God; men who

are void of understanding, and to whom the things of the Spirit of God are foolishness. We are to preach to men who are blinded by the god of this world, and taken captive by him at his will.

And, again the bigness of our task is seen when we consider who we are to whom the gospel has been entrusted. God's ways are not our ways. We would have sought agents for such a task who excelled in strength and wisdom. We would have committed such a task into the hands of the mighty angels. But God has deposited the gospel treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of men (II Cor. 4 :7). As our Lord took not on Him the nature of angels for man's redemption, so neither does He employ angels for man's conversion. Our success, therefore: is not due to any natural love men have for God and the gospel, nor to any power or excellency in the preacher, but to God alone Who raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them. **"Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollo & watered; but God gave the increase"** (I Cor 3:5-6). Somebody has said that it proved the divinity of our holy religion that it survived the preachers. We are, indeed, poor tools for such a task, and unless He had said, **"...lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world,"** we might well despair. Every saved person is a miracle of grace. Conversion is a miracle in that it is not natural, but supernatural; it is of grace in that it is not an obligation from God to the sinner.

Some Qualifications for a Successful Ministry

I. The minister must be a good

man. We are told that Barnabas was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith, and that much people was added unto the Lord (Acts 11:24). **"Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil"** (I Tim. 3:7). Nothing will take the place of practical godliness and piety in a preacher. God uses weak instruments, but they must be clean.

2. The preacher must have courage. I do not mean he should be a worldly bravado, but he must be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. His must be a supernatural strength—a moral and spiritual stamina that will overcome all temptations to compromise. Pastor Oncken was the Baptist pioneer in Germany. He suffered much, in his younger days, for the truth's sake. He was fined and imprisoned. One day the Burgomaster of Hamburg held up his finger and said: "Do you see that finger? So long as that can move, I will put you down." "Sir," said Pastor Oncken. "I see your finger, but I also see an arm that you cannot see, and so long as that arm is stretched out you cannot put me down." He endured as seeing Him who is invisible. God pity His preachers when they lose sight of His mighty arm and see nothing but a human finger. Hugh Lattimer was ordered by Henry VIII to apologize for a too plain sermon he had preached. But, with the consciousness that he was sent by a higher King, he repeated the sermon.

3. The minister of Christ must always be a student. (II Tim. 2:15). Whenever a preacher quits studying, he immediately takes the dry-rot. He begins to decay. Here are the words of B. H. Carroll to a certain young preacher: "My

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Country Preacher

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The real difference between Cain and Abel was their offerings. It was a difference of the blood. Abel believed in salvation by faith in a sacrificial substitute. Cain held to salvation by human merit. Here was the beginning of two streams which empty themselves in Heaven and Hell. The whole religious world is either going the way of Cain or the way of Abel.

The followers of Cain believe salvation is by moral character and charitable deeds. Those in the way of Abel contend for salvation by faith in the shed blood of Jesus Christ. To one group salvation is by man, to the other **"Salvation is of the LORD"** (Jonah 2:9).

Cain, the founder of the first human religion, was the Devil's patriarch in whom religious persecution began. The origin of all human religions is the opposition of the unrenewed heart to the law of God. The unrenewed heart of a false religionist is not only opposed to God but to the people of God. Genesis 4:8 says: **"And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him."** I John 3:12 also says: **"Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother...."**

The spirit of persecution, the spirit of Cain, has been manifest by the children of the Devil toward God's children since the day of religious Abel. Whenever the followers of Cain have had power, they have murdered the followers of Abel. False religionists have shed the blood of the saints in all ages. God's children are not murderers! They do not persecute or shed blood! It is the followers of Cain

who persecute and shed blood!

Men like Noah and Abraham preserved true religion in the patriarchal age. They taught their children of salvation by faith in the shed blood of the coming Redeemer (Rom. 4). The rest of the world in the way of Cain. The nation of Israel had **"...the oracles of God..."** (Rom. 3:2) committed to her during the old dispensation. She carried the ceremonies which revealed salvation to be from Jehovah through the death of the coming Redeemer. The rest of the world continued to hold that salvation was by good works. But at the time of Christ even Judaism had corrupted itself and gone the way of Cain. Christ came to establish true religion, and once again to reveal that salvation was by the will of God, not the will of man.

WHO ARE CAIN'S FOLLOWERS?

In the sixth century before Christ, in India Buddha founded Buddhism. The essence of his religion is that one must cleanse his mind and maintain pure conduct to attain to immortality. He did no more than point his followers to the way of Cain. Presently Buddhism has 350,000,000 adherents in nine countries.

In the same century in China, Confucius originated a system of religious teaching. His main teachings were: The nature of man is good. Man possesses free will to make choices. Virtue brings its own reward. He sought the moral cultivation of "the princely man" as the cornerstone of "the good society." The 300,000,000 Confucianists in the world today are going the way of Cain. This religion would be better called confusionism.

There are about 300,000,000 Hindus in the world. the principal idea of this religion is salvation

by works or good deeds. These people are going the way of Cain.

Islam has 350,000,000 adherents in the world. Mohammed originated this religion over 500 years before Christ in Arabia. This religion is also a religion which teaches salvation by good works. Muslims must pray five times a day, give alms, fast and make a pilgrimage to Mecca to obtain salvation. The attitude of Cain is seen in this religion which encourages its followers to "slay the infidel."

Over six hundred years before the birth of Christ, Zoroaster invented Zoroastrianism in Iran. Today this religion has 1,000,000 followers who are really followers of Cain. The principal belief of these people is that in the after life the individual will be in Heaven or Hell according to his actions on earth. This is nothing but Cainism, or what we call today Arminianism. Actually Arminianism is nothing but paganism under the cloak of Christianity.

CAINISM AND THE CHURCH

In the first century, Jesus Christ came to revive and perfect true religion. He did this and afterward committed the preservation of "the faith" to His newly organized church. Christ taught salvation by faith in Himself. He taught total depravity of the natural man. He declared: **"None is good, save one, that is God"** (Luke 18:19). He taught the total inability of the alien sinner to come to Himself for eternal life. He declared in John 6:44: **"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."** He contended that eternal life was the gift of God to fallen man. He said of His sheep, or elect: **"I give them eternal life"** (John

10:28). Unlike all the religions of the heathen which teach that the actual cause of salvation depends upon man, Jesus Christ taught that salvation was wholly from God, separate and apart from all human merit. In John chapter 1, He ascribed the whole of the new birth or regeneration to the power of God, not the power of man. Of the regenerate He said in verse 13: **"Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."**

The early church contended for this same line of teaching. The very heart of New Testament Christianity is expressed in Ephesians 2:8-9: **"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any many should boast."** There is not any religious group in all the world who preaches this verse as it is but the Baptists. The Christian religion is to be distinguished from the false religions of the world by contending that salvation is of the Lord. Salvation is not by man's will, words, works, or worthiness.

In the second century after Christ, the way of Cain began to have acceptance in some of the early churches who were influenced by heathen religions. These apostate churches began to teach a system of conditional salvation which represented the sinner as his own saviour and entitled him to the chief glory for his salvation. They taught that a man could only be saved if he worked hard for God.

One of the signs of the paganish influence upon these false churches was the belief in baptismal regeneration. They began to look upon baptism, not as a symbol of Christ's burial and resurrection as the New Testament teaches, but as a sacrament which cleansed

♦ (Continued on page 22)

BEREA BAPTIST BANNER	
Financial Report	
11-1-2021 to 11-30-2021	
Beginning Balance	\$4597.11
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	500.00
S.G. B. C. Silsbee Tx	30.00
Berea B. C., Stonington. IL	60.00
Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX	50.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV	200.00
Carol Willett, Cottonwood Shores, TX	100.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL	25.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
Grace B. C., Gladwin, MI	50.00
Grace B. C., Germanton, NC	50.00
Grace Missionary B. C., Tulsa, OK	50.00
Indore B. C., Indore, WV	300.00
The Lord's B. C., Goose Creek, SC	50.00
Michael Sherman, Ashland, KY	35.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Cheapeake, OH	400.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL	100.00
Portland B. C., Plumerville, AR	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Wellington, KS	100.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA	25.00
Beauty Mtn. B. C., Edmond WV	50.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	150.00
Southside BC, Fulton, MS	25.00
N. T. B. C. Goshen, IN	50.00
Faith B. C., Lynn, AR	12.50
Parkway L. B. C., Springfield, OR	100.00

Divided Checks.....	250.00
Subscriptions	34.00
Anonymous	200.00
Sub Total	\$3146.50
TOTAL	\$7743.61

EXPENDITURES:	
Postage	619.22
Printing.....	459.10
Wages	1550.00
FICA	118.58
Supplies	292.56
Div Cks	250.00
Total Expenditures	\$3,289.46
ENDING BALANCE	\$4454.15



BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST	
Financial Report	
11-1-2021 to 11-30-2021	
Beginning Balance	\$3,603.10
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	225.00
Calvary Ind. B. C., Sumas, WA	100.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	100.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
.....	525.00
TOTAL	4128.10
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio time	403.98
Adobe	32.09
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	436.07
.....
Interest	+0.03
ENDING BALANCE	\$3,692.06

Minister's Message

(Continued from page 20) ◊

son, you are in great danger. You have been complimented so much for the fire of your off-hand, maiden sermons that you have quit studying. You have no library, and do not read. You have already contracted the habit of preaching over your first dozen revival sermons. The first time such a sermon is a juicy roast, the next time it is only warmed over, next time it is hash, and next time it is only soup out of the bones." Booker T. Washington often told of his experience in the rebuke of a negro church for violation of their contract in not paying their pastor. He was completely silenced by a remark of one of the sturdy members: "We done paid for them sermons last year." Though Timothy had known the Holy Scriptures from a child. Paul told him to study, and to give himself to reading.

4. Faithfulness is another essential to a God-honoring ministry. Ministers are stewards of the mysteries of God, and it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful (I Cor. 4:1, 2). Faithfulness to the Word of God is the best way to be loyal to Jesus Christ. Of what account is a brilliant ministry if it is unfaithful to the once delivered faith? Culture and refinement are poor substitutes for loyalty to the Truth. Sad the day when the ministers are educated "to think above that which is written." What was it that characterized the true Prophets of God in Old Testament times? Was it courage? No, for Elijah, one of the greatest, fled from a woman. Was it cheerfulness? No, for they were often despondent, and cast down. But they were faithful to God's Word. Everyone of them was possessed with

the spirit of Micaiah, who said, "...As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak" (I Kings 22:14). They delivered God's message. Sometimes they would proclaim God's Word and then run, as did Elijah. They might deliver it and then cry and complain, as in the case of Jeremiah. But, the point is, they spoke God's Word. God commands us to "Preach the word..." (II Tim. 4:2). Too much of the truth is held as mere private opinion.

Preaching vs. Priestcraft

The minister of Christ is, primarily, a preacher. The ministers in New Testament days were neither priests, nor popes, but missionaries of the cross. In Romanism worship is complete without a sermon. The preacher is belittled, and the priest is enhanced. If you push back the pulpit, by the same act you push forward the altar. The whole of Christian history is a conflict between the preacher and the priest. It is the difference between evangelism and sacerdotalism. It is the difference between preaching and performing. It is the difference between the "Bread of Life" and the magic of the Mass. The preacher proclaims a God on His throne; the priest creates his God in a wafer. The writer recognizes, and rejoices in, the New Testament priesthood of believers. But it is individual and not official. Christ is our High Priest, and every believer belongs to the "holy priesthood" (I Peter 2 :5).

Preaching vs. Oratory

The Christian preacher is not the successor to the Greek orator, but of the Hebrew prophet. The orator comes with an inspiration; the prophet comes with a revelation. The orator's object is to secure his audience; the preacher's

object is to secure the gospel. The orator would persuade men to do something; the preacher would urge them to trust Somebody and renounce themselves for Him. The orator inspires self-confidence; the preacher convicts men of their sin and need of God. (This article was taken from *The Baptist Examiner* Vol 1, No 8 & 9 from August 1, 1931)



Short Pews

(Continued from page 19) ◊

of God in His dispensation of grace; nor unless we exalt the electing, unchangeable, eternal, immutable, conquering love of Jehovah; nor do I think we can preach the gospel, unless we base it upon the special and particular redemption of His elect and chosen people which Christ wrought out upon the cross; nor can I comprehend a gospel which lets saints fall away after they are called, and suffers the children of God to be burned in the fires of damnation after having once believed in Jesus." We can only add: Amen! (Spurgeon's quote from: *A Defense of Calvinism*.)

(This article is available as a tract in the Berea Baptist Bookstore.)



Country Preacher

(Continued from page 21) ◊

from sin. They even began to baptize infants like the heathen had been doing for already two thousand years who also believed in baptismal regeneration. These false churches began to call the true churches heretics and dissenters and to persecute them unto death. Apostate Christianity murdered fifty million Anabaptists in the Dark Ages alone. By this these false churches

◊ (Continued on page 23)

Country Preacher

(Continued from page 22) ♦

manifested the spirit of Cain the murderer. The real Christians were called during these times Montanists, Novationists, Donatists, Paulicians, Albigenses, Waldenses, Petrobrusians, Henricians, Lollards, Whycliffites, Anabaptists, and Baptists. These despised and persecuted people continue to maintain true religion in spite of dungeon fire or sword.

When Protestantism came along it never cast off the fatal error of Romanism in predicating the salvation of the sinner upon himself instead of God. This Cainism or Arminianism is the very life and soul of popery. It is regrettable that nearly all professed Christians in our day have gone the way of Cain. They teach salvation by a meritorious faith, or by baptism, or by the Lord's Supper, or by some other action on the part of man. Such religion is in substance the same teaching of Confucius and Buddha. It is pure paganism under the cloak of Christianity.

Many churches and people hold that baptism saves or helps save, but the Word of God knows nothing of it. The doctrine of baptismal regeneration originated among the devil worshippers of ancient Chaldea. Alexander Hislop in his world famous book "*The Two Babylons*," says on page 137 that the Chaldean priests "led their votaries to believe that if they only passed through the baptismal waters...that of itself would make them...regenerate." Thus we see that baptismal regeneration is an old belief which goes back thousands of years before Christ to the worshippers of Bacchus, the Babylonian Messiah. Those who hold to this system of teaching are not

followers of Christ, but of Cain.

Did you know that the Babylonians held the doctrine of justification of works? Those who hold to this teaching today are holding to the way of Cain, yet this is the primary teaching of professed Christendom.

MODERN CAINISM

The greatest emergence of Cainism in the history of the world is upon the nations. Cainism is a better name for the humanism of our day. Humanism regards man as an evolutionary product with his own unique facilities. It accepts the world as science finds it and rules out all forms of the supernatural. It holds that man has the power and potentiality of solving his own problems, relying on reason and scientific method. He is not determined by God, but free to control his own destiny and the destiny of the world. This is the worst form of Cainism the world has ever known. It will culminate in the worship of man in the person of Antichrist. This is where the world is headed at an alarming rate of speed.

Dear friend, I have something better to offer than paganism under the banner of Christianity. I present you true religion. The way of Abel, Abraham, the nation of Israel, Jesus Christ, the Apostles of Christ and the redeemed of all ages. I tell you by the authority of God's Word that your salvation must be of the Lord. It cannot be of your enfeebled will or corrupt, sinful nature. If you could by your own free will produce works which would redeem your souls then you would not need the grace of God or the regeneration of the Holy Spirit. But the Bible says: "**Ye must be born again.**" If you are ever saved, you must be saved by the free and sovereign grace of God. You are depending on God for salvation. His Divine

grace is absolutely unmerited, indispensable and victorious in the salvation of a sinner. Grace, the free grace of God, does all the work of salvation. It works in the sinner all his good will and all his good works so that he shall go at last into the Divine presence as a poor, helpless beggar, a poor, lost sinner, saved by grace alone from first to last, and be prepared to give God all the glory of his salvation.

May God the Holy Spirit help me to shout from land to sea; from Heaven to Hell, to the living saints and the spiritually dead sinner, salvation is not of yourself; it is of the Lord!



Forum Question #2

(Continued from page 17) ♦

to Christ and His salvation.

First, the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ is the third component of the Gospel message according to I Corinthians 15:1-4: "**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.**" Paul makes it crystal clear that the Gospel is the means of the salvation of God's elect. He also points out that the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ are all taught in the prophecies, promises, and types of the Old Testament Scriptures. The saving Gospel of Christ runs from Genesis to Revelation. Without

the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ there would be no Gospel, no salvation, no eternal life, and the veracity and authority of the Holy Scriptures would be called into question.

Secondly, Christ Himself prophesied that He would rise from the dead in John 10:17-18: "**Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.**" In the solitude of eternity, in the Covenant of Grace, the Father had decreed and commanded that the Lord Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity would die in the stead of all the Father gave Him in the decree of election. Included in this covenant was the commandment that Christ would be buried and raise from the dead to secure the salvation of all the elect. The resurrection of Christ from the dead not only signified the success of His mission to redeem His people, but it also established the veracity of the everlasting covenant. Thus, without the literal resurrection of Jesus Christ, it would call into question not only Christ's veracity as The Truth but also the validity of the Covenant of Grace.

Third, the resurrection signifies that the justification of all the elect is complete and successful in Christ. Just as Abraham believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness (Rom. 4:5-26), we believe that Christ died for our sins and was raised from the dead for our justification. Romans 4:24-25 declares: "**But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the**

♦ (Continued on page 24)

Forum Question #2

(Continued from page 23) ♦

dead; Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification.” On account of Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection, the moment God gives us the grace to believe the Gospel His righteousness is imputed to us! The resurrection of Christ proves that the sins He bore in His body were judged and were forever put away. He rose again without sin because He had put away our sins by the sacrifice of Himself.

Fourth, the resurrection of Christ confirms that He is Lord over all. Acts 2:32-33, 36 state: “This Jesus hath God raised up, wherefore we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear... Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.” Romans 14:9 declares: “For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.” By virtue of Christ’s blood reconciling us to God, and His glorious resurrection securing eternal life for believers, we are to recognize Him as Lord. II Corinthians 5:14-15 states: “For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.”

Fifth, the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ gives all believers hope beyond the grave. Since

Christ rose from the dead, all that are in Him will follow in His glorious train. His resurrection from the dead is the first fruit, insuring that all who die in Christ will also be raised from the dead in the resurrection of the just, whose bodies will be changed and fashioned like unto His glorious body. Victory in a resurrected Jesus should motivate every believer to serve Him with every fiber of their body! Its why Paul ended the resurrection chapter under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in the following way: “**For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain**

in the Lord” (I Cor. 15:53-58).



ANNOUNCEMENTS

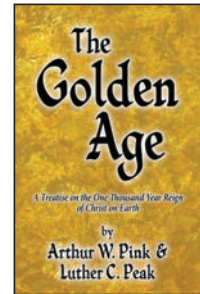
The Maranatha Missionary Baptist Church located at 14460 Ravenna Avenue, Alliance, OH, 44601, is seeking a pastor. The church was organized in 1981 and currently has seven members that are grounded in sound Baptist doctrine. Any interested elder can contact Brother Denny Morgan at dennymatco@gmail.com 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 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.

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 Golden Age by Arthur Pink and Luther Peak. This book will be sent free to any prisoner that requests it. Retail price \$8.00. Paperback, 87 pages. 50% discount given on orders of five or more.



We here at the Banner are looking for audio copies of Elder Milburn Cockrell’s series on Revelation. We are specifically looking for his teachings on Revelation 13:1-8. If you happen to have this audio, please contact us through our email:

request@bereabaptistchurch.org



WORKING IN MYRTLE BEACH, SOUTH CAROLINA

Grace Baptist Church of Gladwin, Michigan is seeking to start a mission work in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. We are also seeking a sound preacher to go there. If you are interested and feel led of the Lord, please contact:

Pastor Sam Wilson at 989-701-5564.

Grace Baptist Church has Bro. Tom Coffee working in the area whom you may also contact on:

<https://thefaithfulofgod.com/blog/>
or

843-254-3018

May it please the Lord to bless these efforts.
Please remember this work in prayer.

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