

# The Berea Baptist Banner

"THOU HAST GIVEN A BANNER TO THEM THAT BEAR THEE,  
THAT IT MAY BE DISPLAYED BECAUSE OF THE TRUTH" Ps. 60:4

## The Sluggard in Harvest

By Alexander MacLaren  
(1826 - 1910)

**"The sluggard will not plough by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest and have nothing"** (Prov. 20:4).

Like all the sayings of this book, this is simply a piece of plain, practical common sense. It is intended to inculcate the lesson that men should diligently seize the opportunity whilst it is theirs. The sluggard is one of the pet aversions of the Book of Proverbs, which, unlike most other manuals of Eastern wisdom, has a profound reverence for honest work.

He is a great drone, for he prefers the chimney-corner to the field, even although it cannot have been very cold,



if the weather was open enough to admit of ploughing. And he is a great fool, too, for he buys his comfort at a very dear price, as do all men who live for today, and let tomorrow look out for itself.

But, like most of the other sayings of this book, my text contains principles which are true in the highest regions of human life, for the laws which rule up there are not different from those which regulate the motions of its lower phases. Religion recognizes the same practical common-sense principles that daily business does. I venture to take this as my text now, in addressing young people, because they have special need of, and special facilities for, the wisdom

◊ (Continued on page 362)

## The Ills of America

By Tom Ross  
of South Point, Ohio

**"Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters; they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward"** (Isa. 1:4).

This verse was penned by the prophet Isaiah many years ago under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit as an indictment against the children of Israel who had forsaken the true God and His ways to follow Baal. What was true in Israel over 2500 years ago is true of the once great nation of America. We are a nation that is plagued by moral, spiritual, educational, political, and economic ills. All of these problems can be directly traced to America's rebellion against a Holy God. I believe that our nation is presently experiencing the consequences of the disease of sin and rebellion like never before in our history.

◊ (Continued on page 366)

## The Value of A Friend

By Milburn Cockrell  
(1941 - 2002)

**"A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother"** (Prov. 18:24).

Just what is a friend? A friend is a person attached to another by affection or esteem, an individual who is not hostile toward another person. Friendship is the sweet attraction of the heart toward the merit we esteem or the qualities of character we admire. It produces a mutual inclination between two or more persons to promote each others' interest, knowledge, virtue, and happiness.

What would this earth life be without this cheering, enriching blessing? Kings have preferred friendship to their thrones (Ps. 55:14). Friendship is a jewel as rare as it is precious. It is the sweetest and most satisfactory connection in our mortal existence. It relieves our cares, raises our hopes, and abates our fears. It



doubles our joys and divides our grief.

The language of friendship is as varied as the wants and weaknesses of the human race. To the timid and cautious it speaks

words of encouragement. To the weak it is ready to extend a helping hand. To the bold it whispers a word of caution. It is ready to sympathize with the sorrowing one and to rejoice with him of good cheer.

Friendship is not confined to any  
◊ (Continued on page 363)

## The Power of Little Things

By J. H. Myers  
(18?? - 19??)

**"For who hath despised the day of small things"** (Zech. 4:10).

**"Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering of every man that giveth willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering. And this is the offering which ye shall take of them; gold, and silver, and brass, And blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair, And rams' skins, dyed red, and badgers' skins, and shittim wood, Oil for the light, spices for anointing oil, and for sweet incense, Onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod and in the breastplate"** (Ex. 25:2-7).

I am glad that these words are recorded for our instruction and meditation. The laws of God, as well as the laws of nature, teach us not to despise the day of small things. The wise of this world learn important lessons from the little things in life. He who looks after the little things

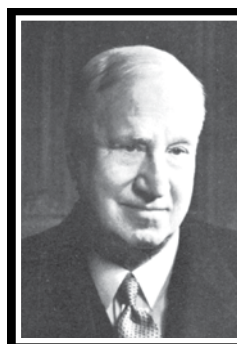
◊ (Continued on page 371)

## The Second Mile

**"And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain"** (Matt. 5:41).

By T. T. Shields  
(1873 - 1955)

As the roman soldiers were escorting Jesus to Calvary, **"they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear His cross."** It is to this Roman custom of compelling whomsoever Caesar's officers chanced to meet to do menial military service, the Saviour alludes in our text. When speaking from the mount He anticipated the hour when He would leave Pilate's hall in His journey to Golgotha. All the circumstances of that great tragedy were ever present to His view. The whole scene to Him would be prophetic of the attitude of different classes of men, and of the world generally, toward Himself. Every person gathered about that cross was representative of other persons who, in succeeding generations, would,



of necessity, give some answer to the proclamation of Pilate's decision to crucify Him; and would elect what attitude he would assume towards the Crucified.

There is Simon ---compelled to go a mile, bearing His cross; and our Lord sees him from the mount, even as He saw us. In this text, if I may be allowed to paraphrase it, Jesus Christ is saying to us today: "When my cross is laid upon you, and you are compelled to bear it; when its influence has so permeated society that many of the principles of My teaching have become crystallized into custom,

◊ (Continued on page 364)

"I see a great many Churches that are graying off the scene. What do I mean by graying off the scene? All the members and attenders of the congregation are social security age. Thank God for the aged saints, but we have let a generation get away because we have emphasized Little league, homework and everything else but the Gospel and consecrated service to God." Troy McGahan

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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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## Sluggard in Harvest

(Continued from page 361) ♦

which it enjoins; and because the words only want to be turned with their faces heavenwards in order to enforce the great appeal, the only one which it is worth my while to make, and worth your while to come here to listen to; the appeal to each of you: "I beseech you, by the mercies of God, that ye yield yourselves to God" now.

My object, then, will be perhaps best accomplished if I simply ask you to look, first, at the principles involved in this quaint proverb; and, secondly, to apply them in one or two directions.

I. ---First, then, let us try to bring out the principles which are crystallized in this picturesque saying.

The first thought evidently is: present conduct determines future conditions. Life is a series of epochs, each of which has its destined work, and that being done, all is well; and that being left undone, all is ill.

Now, of course, in regard of many of the accidents of a man's condition, his conduct is only one, and by no means the most powerful, of the factors which settle them. The position which a man fills, the tasks which he has to perform, and the whole host of things which make up the externals of his life, depend upon far other conditions than any that he brings to them. But yet, on the whole, it is true that what a man does, and is, settles how he fares. And this is the mystical importance and awful solemnity of the most undistinguished moments and most trivial acts of this awful life of ours, that each of them has an influence on all that comes after, and may deflect our whole course into altogether different paths. It is not only the moments that we vulgarly and blindly call great which settle our condition. But it is the accumulation of the tiny ones; the small deeds, the unnoticed acts, which make up so large a portion of every man's life---it is these, after all, that are the most powerful in settling what we shall be. There come to each of us supreme moments in our lives. Yes, and if in all the subordinate and insignificant moments we have not been getting ready for them, but have been nurturing dispositions and acquiring habits, and cultivating ways of acting and thinking which condemn us to fail beneath the requirements of the supreme moment, then it passes us by, and we gain nothing from it. Tiny mica flakes have built up the Matterhorn, and the minute acts of life after all, by their multiplicity, make life to be what it is. "Sand is heavy," says this wise Book of Proverbs. The aggregation of the minutest grains, singly so light that they would not affect the most delicate balance, weighs upon us with a weight "heavy as frost, and deep almost as life." The mystic significance of

the trivialities of life is that in them we largely make destiny, and that in them we wholly make character.

And now, whilst this is true about all life, it is especially true about youth. You have facilities for moulding your being which some of us older men would give a great deal to have again for a moment with our present knowledge and bitter experience. The lava that has solidified into hard rock with us is yet molten and plastic with you. You can, I was going to say, be anything you make up your minds to; and, within reasonable limits, the bold saying is true. "Ask what thou wilt and it shall be given to thee" is what Nature and Providence, almost as really as grace and Christ, say to every young man and woman, because you are the arbiters, not wholly, indeed, of your destiny, and are the architects, altogether, of your character, which is more.

And so I desire to lay upon your hearts this threadbare old truth, because you are living in the ploughing time, and the harvest is months ahead. Whilst it is true that every day is the child of all the yesterdays, and the parent of all the tomorrows, it is also true that life has its predominant coloring, varying at different epochs, and that for you, though you are largely inheriting, even now, the results of your past, brief as it is, still more largely is the future, the plastic future, in your hands, to be shaped into such forms as you will. "The child is father of the man," and the youth has the blessed prerogative of standing before the mouldable tomorrow, and possessing a nature still capable of being cast into an almost infinite variety of form.

But then, not only do you stand with special advantages for making yourselves what you will, but you specially need to be reminded of the terrible importance and significance of each moment. For this is the very irony of human life, that we seldom awake to the sense of its importance till it is nearly ended, and that the period when reflection would avail the most is precisely the period when it is the least strong and habitual. What is the use of an old man like me thinking about what he could make of life if he had it to do over again, as compared with the advantage of your thinking what you will make of it. Yet I daresay that for once that you think thus, many old men do it fifty times. So, not to abate one jot of your buoyancy, not to cast any shadow over joys and hopes, but to lift you to a sense of the blessed possibilities of your position, I want to lay this principle of my text upon your consciences, and to beseech you to try to keep it operatively in mind---you are making yourselves, and settling your destiny, by every day of your plastic youth.

There is another principle as clear in my text---viz., the easy road is generally the wrong one. The sluggard was warmer at the fireside than he would be in

the field with his plough, in the north wind, and so he stopped there. There are always obstacles in the way of noble life. It is always easier, as flesh judges, to live ignobly, than to live as Jesus Christ would have us live. "Endure hardness" is the commandment to all who would be soldiers of any great cause, and would not fling away their lives in low self-indulgence. If a man is going to be anything worth being, or to do anything worth doing, he must start with, and adhere to, the resolve "to scorn delights and live laborious days." And only then has he a chance of rising above the fat dull weed that rots in Lethe's stream, and of living anything like the life that it becomes him to live.

Be sure of this, dear young friends, that self-denial and rigid self-control, in its two forms, of stopping your ears to the attractions of lower pleasures, and of cheerily encountering difficulties, is an indispensable condition of any life which shall at the last yield a harvest worth the gathering, and not destined to be "cast as rubbish to the void, when God hath made the pile complete." Never allow yourselves to be turned away from the plain path of duty by any difficulties. Never allow yourselves to be guided in your choices of a road by the consideration that the turf is smooth, and the flowers by the side of it sweet. Remember, the sluggard would have been warmer, with a wholesome warmth, at the plough-tail than cowering in the chimney-corner. And the things that seem to be difficulties and hardships only need to be fronted to yield, like the east wind in its season, good results in bracing and hardening. Fix it in your minds that nothing worth doing is done but at the cost of difficulty and toil.

That is a lesson that this generation wants, even more than some that have preceded it. I suppose it is one of the temptations of older men to look askance upon the amusements of younger ones, but I cannot help lifting up here one word of earnest appeal to the young men and women of this congregation, and beseeching them, as they value the nobleness of their own lives, and their power of doing any real good, to beware of what seems to me the altogether extravagant and excessive love of, and following after, mere amusement which characterizes this day to so large an extent. Better toil than such devotion to mere relaxation!

The last principle here is that the season let slip is gone for ever. Whether my text, in its second picture, intends us to think of the sluggard, when the harvest came, as "begging" from his neighbors; or whether, as is possibly the construction of the Hebrew, it simply means to describe him as going out into his field, and looking at it, and asking for the harvest and seeing nothing there but weeds, the lesson it conveys is the same.

♦ (Continued on page 363)

## Sluggard in Harvest

(Continued from page 362) ♦

The old, old lesson, so threadbare that I should be almost ashamed of taking up your time with it, unless I believed that you did not lay it to heart as you should. Opportunity is bald behind, and must be grasped by the forelock. Life is full of tragic "might-have-beens." No regret, no remorse, no self-accusation, no clear recognition that I was a fool will avail one jot. The time for ploughing is past; you cannot stick the share into the ground when you should be wielding the sickle. "Too late" is the saddest of human words. And, my brother, as the stages of our lives roll on, unless each is filled, as it passes, with the discharge of the duties, and the appropriation of the benefits which it brings, then, to all eternity, that moment will never return, and the sluggard may beg in harvest that he may have the chance to plough once more, and have none. The student who has spent the term in indolence, perhaps dissipation, has no time to get up his subject when he is in the examination room, with the paper before him. And life, and nature, and God's law, which is the Christian expression for the godless word "nature," are stern taskmasters, and demand that the duty shall be done in its season or left undone for ever.

II. ---In the second place, let me just, in a few words, carry the lamp of these principles of my text and flash its rays upon one or two subjects.

Let me say a word, first, about the lowest sphere to which my text applies. I referred at the beginning of this discourse to this proverb as simply an inculcation of the duty of honest work, and of the necessity of being wide awake to opportunities in our daily work. Now, the most of you young men, and many of you young women, are destined for ordinary trades, professions, walks in commerce; and I do not suppose it to be beneath the dignity of the pulpit to say this: Do not trust to any way of getting on by dodges or speculation, or favour, or by anything but downright hard work. Don't shirk difficulties, don't try to put the weight of the work upon some colleague or other, that you may have an easier life of it. Set your backs to your tasks, and remember that "in all labour there is profit"; and whether the profit comes to you in the shape of advancement, position, promotion in your office partnerships perhaps, wealth, and the like, or no, the profit lies in the work. Honest toil is the key to pleasure.

Then, let me apply the text in a somewhat higher direction. Carry these principles with you in the cultivation of that important part of yourself--your intellects. What would some of us old students give if we had the flexibility,

the power of assimilating new truth, the retentive memories, that you young people have! Some of you, perhaps, are students by profession; I should like all of you to make a conscience of making the best of your brains, as God has given them to you in trust. **"The sluggard will not plough by reason of the cold."** The dawdler will read no books that tax his intellect, therefore shall he beg in harvest and have nothing. Amidst all the flood of feeble, foolish, flaccid literature with which we are afflicted at this day, I wonder how many of you young men and women ever set yourselves to some great book or subject that you cannot understand without effort. Unless you do you are not faithful stewards of God's supreme gift of that great faculty which apprehends and lives upon truth. So remember the sluggard by his fireside; and do you get out with your plough.

Again, I may apply these principles to a higher work still---that of the formation of character. Nothing will come to you noble, great, or elevating in that direction unless it is sought, and sought with toil. *"In woods, in waves, in wars, she's wont to dwell, And will be found with peril and with pain; Before her gate high Heaven did sweat ordain, And wakeful watches ever to abide."*

Wisdom and truth, and all their elevating effects upon human character, absolutely require for their requirement effort and toil. You have the opportunity still. As I said a moment ago---you may mould yourselves into noble forms. But in the making of character we have to work as a painter in fresco does, with a swift brush on the plaster while it is wet. It sets and hardens in an hour. And men drift into habits which become tyrannies and dominant, before they know where they are. Do not let yourselves be shaped by accident, by accident, by circumstance. Remember that you can build yourselves up into forms of beauty by the help of the grace of God, and that, for such building, there must be the diligent labour and that wise clutching at opportunity and understanding of the times, which my text suggests.

And lastly, let these principles be applied to religion and teach us the wisdom and necessity of beginning the Christian life at the earliest moment. I am by no means prepared to say that the extreme tragedy of my text can ever be wrought out, in regard to the religious experience of any man, here on earth; for I believe that, at any moment in his career, however faultful and stained his past has been, and however long and obstinate has been his continuance in evil, a man may turn himself to Jesus Christ, and beg and not in vain, nor ever find "nothing" there.

But whilst all that is quite true, I want you, dear young friends, to lay this to heart, that if you do not yield yourselves to Jesus Christ now, in your early days, and take Him for your Saviour, and rest

your souls upon Him, and then take Him for your Captain and Commander, for your Pattern and Example, for your Companion and your aim, you will lose what you can never make up by any future course. You lose years of blessedness, of peaceful society with Him, of illumination and inspiration. You lose all the sweetness of the days which you spend away from Him. And if at the end you did come to Him, you would have one regret, deep and permanent, that you had not gone to Him before. If you put off, as some of you are putting off, what you know you ought to do, think of what you are laying up for yourselves thereby. You get much that it would be gain to lose---bitter memories, defiled imaginations, stings of conscience, habits that it will be very hard to break, and the sense of having wasted the best part of your lives, and having but the fag end to bring to Him. And if you put off, as some of you are disposed to do---think of the risk you run. It is very unlikely that susceptibilities will remain if they are trifled with. You remember that Felix trembled once, and sent for Paul often; but we never hear that he trembled any more.

But there is a more solemn thought still. This life as a whole is to the future life as the ploughing time is to the harvest, and there are awful words in Scripture, which seem to point in the same direction in reference to the irrevocable and irreversible issue of neglected opportunities on earth, as this proverb does in regard to the ploughing and harvests of this life.

I dare not conceal what seems to me the New Testament confirmation and deepening of the solemn words of our text, "He shall beg in harvest and have nothing," by the Master's words, "Many shall say to Me in that day, Lord! Lord! and I will say I never knew you." The five virgins, who rubbed their sleepy eyes and asked for oil when the master was at hand, got none; and when they besought, **"Lord! Lord! open to us,"** all the answer was, "Too late! Too late! ye cannot enter now." Now, while it is called day, harden not your hearts.



## Value of A Friend

(Continued from page 361) ♦

particular class, or color of skin, or society, or any particular geographical locality. No surveyed chart, no national boundary line, no rugged mountain, no deep ocean puts a limit to its growth. Wherever it is watered with the dew of kindness and affection, there you will be sure to find it. True friendship blooms only in the soil of love and a self-sacrificing heart. There it enjoys perpetual summer, diffusing a sweet atmosphere of peace and love.

**WE MUST HAVE FRIENDS**

The Bible teaches a man is to have friends in our text. It says: **"A man that hath friends. . ."** II Samuel 13:3 says: **"But Amnon had a friend."** Job 2:11 speaks of **"Job's three friends."** In II Samuel 15:37 there is mention of **"Hushai David's friend."** Christ referred to the brother of Mary and Martha as **"Our friend Lazarus"** (John 11:11). John the Baptist was the **"friend of the bridegroom"** (John 3:29). Abraham was called **"the friend of God"** (Jas. 2:23).

The bond of friendship is often closer than the natural ties. Deuteronomy 13:6 mentions **"thy friend which is as thine own soul."** A true friend will stick with us in thickness and in thin. He will be more loyal than a brother in the flesh. David did not always get along with his brothers in the flesh (I Sam. 17:28), but he always pored well with his friend Jonathan. The Scriptures say that **"Jonathan Saul's son delighted much in David"** (I Sam. 19:2) and loved David **"as his own soul"** (I Sam. 18:3). David's love for Jonathan was reciprocal. At Jonathan's death David exclaimed: **"I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women"** (II Sam. 1:27).

**FRIENDSHIP TO BE CULTIVATED**

To have friends we must cultivate friendship. Our text says: **"A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly."** To keep friends we must love them and do good to them. In order to gain their affection you must bestow your affection upon them. The way to be loved is to be lovely.

The friendship of Ruth and Naomi endured because both cultivated it daily (Ruth 1:16; 2:11, 18; 3:1-14; 4:16). David sought always to acknowledge the kindness of his friends (I Sam. 30:26-31). Paul wrote a letter to Philemon to prevent his friend's wounded sensibility (Phil. 1:8-20). The Apostle to the Gentiles was always considerate of the comfort of his friends (Tit. 3:13). To show ourselves friendly by kindness and loving deeds cements friendship to last as long as the everlasting hills.

Proverbs 17:17 declares: **"A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity."** Adversity is the only true scale to weigh friends in. True friendship will stand the shocks of adversity, as iron is more strongly united the fiercer the flames. A friend may not be known in prosperity, but he cannot be hidden in adversity.

A friend loves us through evil as well as good reports. He does not change where circumstances change. He is the same in wealth or need. He is not ashamed of poverty and prison. Joseph loved his brethren in their adversity, although they had been very unkind to him in times past. Epaphroditus was a friend to Paul who was in prison at Rome (Phil. 2:25-

♦ (Continued on page 364)



## Value of A Friend

(Continued from page 363) ♦

26). The disciple whom Jesus loved, the Apostle John, stood with Christ when all others forsook Him and fled (John 19:25-27).

Thank God for an old and trusted friend. He will stand up for you when others seek to ruin your reputation. He will wish you well in distress. He will excuse your faults, draw a cover over your sins, bury your weakness in silence and proclaim your virtue upon the housetops. When sickness calls you to retire from the busy world, He will be with you in your gloomy retreat. He will sit by your bed or wheelchair to listen at your tales of suffering and administer balm to your fainting spirit. When death shall burst asunder every earthly tie, He will stand at your grave weeping and say: **"Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness"** (Ps. 88:18).

### FRIENDSHIP CAN BE LOST

If a man is cruel and unkind to his friends he will lose them. Such acts cool friendship from day to day, cause confidence to gradually give way to cold civility, and this swiftly becomes icy husks of neglect and repugnance. The death of friendship is a very sorrowful affair indeed. It is a loss which time cannot compensate nor eternity repay. Friendship is like a vase, which when once broken, can never be trusted after.

To throw friendship away by neglect, caprice, unreasonable disgust, or needless offense, is to show that we are unworthy of the blessing of friendship. Friends are sometimes lost because of false reports and slanderous statements. Too often the words of others are exaggerated or taken out of context. Even well-meant words may be misinterpreted. Such things make friends angry and past speaking.

Proverbs 17:9 informs us: **"He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends."** The same book in chapter 16, verse 28, reads: **"A froward man soweth strife; and a whisperer separateth chief friends."**

Whenever misunderstanding arises among friends they need to get together and discuss their differences. They must not just sit around and pout about these matters. They must not let their misunderstandings ripen into resentment and hatred. Jesus said: **"Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother"** (Matt. 18:15). According to our Saviour, the falling out of friends is to be followed by the renewing of friendship.

### FALSE FRIENDS

Few persons are so fortunate as to secure in this life the happiness and

advantage of a few devoted friends. One true friend is worth more than a caravan of lukewarm souls who profess friendship, but whose affection is so uncertain we fear to put it to the test lest it be gone forever. Friendship must be tested by time and experience.

A thousand transitory friends meet us along the crowded thoroughfares of life, but when we try their durability in the sieve we experience how many fall by the way! Some we would stake our reputation on as friends prove to be like Judas who claimed to be the friend of Jesus Christ (Matt. 26:50). We would all be better off without such false friends.

The prodigal had many friends while his inheritance lasted, but when it was spent he had no friends or food. Well did the wise man write: **"Every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts"** (Prov. 19:6). Some people have men's **"persons in admiration because of advantage"** (Jude 16), valuing their friendship in order to further their selfish purposes. The rich men of the world are surrounded with a host of such pretended friends, hoping to get some of their wealth. **"Wealth maketh many friends; but the poor is separated from his neighbour"** (Prov. 19:4).

Those who play the part of a friend because of our position or power are false friends. If we were to lose our position and power, they would curse us to our face. They are our friends, not because they love us, but because we may be of help to them in their purposes and plans. Such characters are like flies which leave the kitchen when the dishes are empty. The prophet warned of fickle friends by saying: **"Trust ye not in a friend"** (Mic. 7:5).

Pharaoh's butler was a false friend to Joseph, for he forgot him when he was delivered from prison (Gen. 40:23). Delilah pretended to be Samson's friend, but she delivered him to the Philistines to be made a blind slave (Jud. 16:1-20). David suffered at the hands of false friends (Ps. 35:11-16; 41:9; 55:12-14, 20-21; 88:8, 18). When Christ needed His friends the most, they all forsook Him and fled (Matt. 26:56). The Apostle Paul experienced **"perils among false brethren"** (II Cor. 11:26). With friends like these a man should pray to God that he has no enemies.

### SLOW TO GIVE UP A FRIEND

Friends are too valuable to give up over trivial matters. We should hold our friends to our hearts with hooks of steel. Cling to your friends with the greatest of caution. If they reprove you, thank them; if they grieve you, forgive them; if circumstances have torn them from you, circumstances may change and make them yours again. Be very slow to give up an old and trusted friend. A true friend is such a rare thing to have, you are blessed beyond the majority of men if you possess but one such in a lifetime.

In Proverbs 27:10 it is written: **"Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not; neither go into thy brother's house in the day of thy calamity: for better is a neighbour that is near than a brother far off."** Solomon exemplified his own rule by cultivating friendship with Hiram, his father's friend (I Kings 5:1-10). The failure to obey this rule cost his foolish son his kingdom (I Kings 12:6-19).

Never forget the rare worth of an old friend. Never be tempted by the lure of advantage to incur the risk of losing him. His house may be your shelter in the day of calamity (Prov. 18:24). Never forget his memory when he is laid in the grave. Whenever his name is mentioned after his decease, let fond memories crowd your brain and carry you to past scenes and places when you enjoyed his companionship.

### OUR VERY BEST FRIEND

Where do you really find a friend like the one mentioned in our text, who sticks closer than a brother in the flesh? In the absolute sense he can be found only in the One Who became our Brother that He might cleave to us closer than a brother (Heb. 2:11, 14-18). Jesus Christ is the greatest, best, most loving, most interested and faithful of all friends. He loves us at all times. He is a friend to them who have no other friends. He is a friend who will never let us down; a friend who abides when all others pass away.

*What a friend we have in Jesus,*

*All our sins and grief to bear!*

*Can we find a friend so faithful*

*Who will all our sorrows share?*

Christ is a present friend known and tried to be true and faithful in all seasons. In temptation He is our succorer; in hardship our Comforter; in sickness our

Physician, in death our Eternal Life; in eternity our Everlasting Refuge. What an honorable Friend! Let us lean upon Him and put no confidence in the flesh.

Jesus Christ proved His friendship by giving the ultimate sacrifice. **"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends"** (John 15:13). No higher expression of love could be given. Life is the most valuable object we possess. When a man is willing to lay his life down for his friends, it shows the utmost extent of love. Such love among friends is rarely witnessed.

### ARE WE A FRIEND TO CHRIST?

Jesus Christ said: **"Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants. . .but I have called you friends"** (John 15:14-15). When we do what Christ commanded we show our friendship to Him. True friends can trust each other. Can Jesus Christ trust us to be obedient to Him? True friends are loyal to each other. They will not let each other down. Are we always loyal to our blessed Lord?

### THE FRIEND OF SINNERS

When Jesus Christ lived upon earth He was known as **"a friend of publicans and sinners"** (Matt. 11:19). The lost sinner has no better friend than Jesus Christ, for He **"came into the world to save sinners"** (I Tim. 1:15). In Mark 2:17 our Lord said: **"I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."** **"While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us"** (Rom. 5:8). The Lord Jesus is the Saviour of every sinner who repents of his sins and believes in Him with all his heart. Of Christ the Scripture says: **"This man receiveth sinners"** (Luke 15:2).

The sinner who believes in the Friend of sinners can say:

*I have found a friend in Jesus,*

*He's everything to me,*

*He's the fairest of ten thousand to my soul;*

*The Lily of the Valley, in Him alone I see*

*All I need to cleanse and make me fully whole.*



## The Second Mile

(Continued from page 361) ♦

and others into statutory requirements, so that the carrying of My cross, in its practical bearing, become a social or legal obligation, from which you cannot escape; then, when you have trodden the mile you are compelled to go, and the law releases its grip, and gives you permission to lay down the cross on the top of the hill---show that you are My disciple by volunteering for the second mile. Identify yourself with the cross, and with Him Who died thereon, and walk with Him the second mile, which stretches away from Golgotha to beyond the gates of pearl."

I shall try, therefore, to show you that

♦ (Continued on page 365)

## Tune in to the Berea Baptist Broadcast

STATION	TIME	DIAL	WATTS
WFTA, Tupelo, MS.....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.....	101.9.....	3,000 FM
WCNA, Myrtle, MS.....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.....	95.9.....	3,000 FM
WCTT, Corbin, KY.....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.....	680.....	5,000 AM
KARI, Blaine, WA.....	Saturday 10:30 - 11:00 a.m.....	550.....	5,000 AM
DXUM, Davao City, Philippines.....	Sunday 4:00 - 4:30 p.m.....	819 Khz.....	10,000 AM
DXDS, Digos City, Philippines....	Sunday 12:00 - 12:30 p.m.....	1161 Khz.....	1,000 AM

## The Second Mile

(Continued from page 364) ♦

the atmosphere of Heaven, the "heavenly places," the companionship of angels, the fellowship of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, all lie beyond the limit of the first mile; that Heaven is a fraction over a mile away from the place where a man begins to walk the mile of duty imposed by law.

### I.

THE FIRST MILE IS A COMMON TRACK, for it is not uncommon for men to do such things as they are compelled to do.

Many yield to the compulsion of the first mile "in family life." There are husbands who are faultlessly attentive, but not considerate; who are scrupulously polite, but never manifestly affectionate. There may be wives who publicly are apparently proud and fond of their husbands, who privately are only civil; who are too polite to be petulant, but too selfish to be kind. There are parents who are respectably provident of everything but sympathy, and strictly just in dispensing to their children everything but gentleness. There are children who are respectfully obedient to their parents' express commands, but are not thoughtfully serviceable; who are civil to each other, but seldom unselfishly helpful and kind. But someone will ask: "What keeps such families together?" Merely the law of respectability. By that law they are compelled to go a mile.

Some people yield to the compulsion of the first mile "in social life, outside the family circle." How many walk the paper-flowered mile, and wear the smile by law established, while they leave their hearts at home! Many of the accepted customs and habits of life in refined circles, so-called, do not at all express the tastes or characters of those who observe them. They are only the particular dress required by the king of fashion's court; and men and women conform to them because they are compelled. The same principle holds in our wider social relations. There are many who are no better than self-interest and public opinion make them. Many enjoy a reputation for beneficence who are about as much entitled to it as a man would be who gives up his money when he feels a revolver at his head.

This same compulsion operates "in commercial life." The measure of some men's honesty is the measure of this first mile. It is amazing that men should boast of their honesty because they pay one hundred cents on the dollar, and give sixteen ounces to the pound; that they should strut around as a species of unfledged angels, because, forsooth, they owe no man anything! As though the rest of us were unaware that there are prisons and other uncomfortable things for those who give only ninety-nine cents and fifteen ounces. There are many in

business today who never overstep by so much as an inch the honest mile they are compelled to go.

The principle of the first mile determines too often "the relation of employer and employee." There are employers with whom it is a fixed rule to make no concessions to their work-people unless they are compelled. In wages, time, and conditions of labour, they show no consideration for anyone but themselves. There are workers also who are not one whit better. Apparently they have no conscience. They would accept a full day's pay for two hours' work if they could compel their employer to give it; and failing that it is their rule to give the minimum of service for the maximum wage. In quantity and quality of labour they keep strictly to the first mile; and when the whistle blows at the mile limit they are on the street before it has finished its blast. It is impossible that differences between Capital and Labour should be amicably settled within the first mile.

The compulsion of this first mile, moreover, determines for many the length of their Sabbath day's journey; or, in other words, "its limits are the exact measure of their religious life." In all their religious exercises they do no more, they go no farther, than they are compelled. They have never outgrown the question, "What must I do to be saved?" That is a good and important question for a convicted sinner; but it is a lamentably low standard for a Christian bought with blood. Yet there are many who never weary asking, "What must I do to be saved?" They will do no more than they judge is necessary to save their own selfish, shriveled, little souls. These are they who pick and choose between Christ's commandments. They label some as "non-essentials," and with these they will have nothing to do, because they may, as they think, be saved without them. They read as much of the Bible as may be necessary for them to know, "What must I do to be saved?" Beyond that it is convenient for them to be ignorant of its teaching. They would cross the continent on their knees if that were made a condition of salvation; they would pray night and day; they would give not one-tenth, but nine-tenths of their income, or even ten-tenths, if that were necessary to save the wretched, selfish, contracted, infinitesimal fragment of what God meant to be a soul. They are resolved to save that.

Ah, Simon! Thou dost not volunteer to lift so much as an ounce from the shoulders of the "Man of Sorrows"; thou seest no cross until the strong hand of the law impresses thee, and lays the cross upon thee. Yes, that is Christ's cross thou bearest; but thou art carrying it to save thyself, not to save Him; it will crucify Him, but not thee. Ah, Simon! There is no blood on the cross which needs

compulsion to bear it. Thou wilt lay it down on the top of the hill; and when thou hast seen it crimsoned with thy Saviour's blood, then, perhaps, thou wilt volunteer to carry it another mile.

Is Simon a Christian? Hush! "**Judge not, that ye be not judged.**" It is something to have come to Calvary, even though driven there by Sinai. The first mile is not far from the second. Perhaps Simon will see the blood and understand. Only let no one presume. There is no Heaven within the limits of the first mile. "**By the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified.**" A man may carry His cross but never touch the Crucified. One may profess the name without possessing the nature of the Son of God. God's true children are not under the law of the first mile, but under the free grace of the second.

### II.

Let us now look at THE TRANSCENDENT COURSE OF THE SECOND MILE. Naturally "it lies just beyond the first." Shall I show it to you in the home, in society, in business, in religion? It is not the affection you feel for your wife, but that which makes itself felt in a hundred unrequested little ministries. Your wife's second mile is not her well-ordered home; it is the atmosphere which is inseparable from her presence as fragrance from a flower; it is that mysterious something which makes home "sweet home." And you children, listen; Your second mile is the thing you do for mother which she did not ask you to do, but which you know she would be pleased to have done. For that is the very heart of the text: not the service commanded, but that which is volunteered; not civility, but kindness; not the conventional "thank you," but the warm appreciative smile which accompanies it. The second mile is your attitude toward the amusement in which you could indulge without harm to yourself, but with which you will have nothing to do because your example might work injury to another.

"In business," behind the counter, it is the extra half-ounce to the pound, the extra inch of the yard--by God's measurement, that inch is one full mile. It is the merchant's frank description of an inferior article; his refusal to take advantage of his customer's ignorance. You say that is not business--I did not say it was. Nearly all business-houses are built within the limits of the first mile. But there are vacant lots for sale on the second. There is valuable real estate to be had there. There are good sites for factories, warehouses, stores, and offices; and a garden where flowers bloom and birds sing, goes with every lot. There are none too many stores on the second mile, and competition is not particularly keen. But many a disappointed soul, ready to be convinced of the existence of human honesty and unselfishness, waits to

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## THE FINAL & LAST ISSUE

profit the man who will open a store on that unfrequented street. You may walk the second mile outside the counter of a little corner store. It is the customer's consideration--her remembrance that the merchant's time is money. This unpopular mile is that lady's refusal to let the shopman send a man and horse and wagon or car, a mile, with a parcel weighing less than half a pound. It is the path she walks while carrying it herself.

You may walk the second mile "from pole to pole--on a telephone wire." What a nerve-wracking business telephone-operating must be! The first mile will demand nerves of steel and the promptness and accuracy of a machine on the part of the operator, and will scold in pitiless tones if these are not forthcoming. I read of a telephone operator, after a day of trying to satisfy first-mile scolds, who instead of going home committed suicide. Ah! The first mile leads always to crucifixion, and has driven many a weary soul to death. I heard of another telephone girl who turned to a fellow-operator and said, "He's a patient man. I was flustered and gave him the wrong number four times, and he said so kindly, 'You gave me the wrong number four times, operator. Try once again.' I'd like to meet that man." The other enquired, "What is his number?" When she was told, she said, "I know him; he is my minister." "Then," said the other, "I'm going to hear him preach next Sunday." Oh yes! The second mile, if practiced generally, would fill all our churches with happy, grateful worshippers; and would speedily make up the total of the multitude which no man can number before the throne where God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

"The employer's second mile" is the voluntary increase in wages, the spontaneous recognition of the worker's worth. The employee's second mile is the conscience he puts into his work, his readiness to consult his employer's interests as well as his own. If Capital would erect its factories, and Labour establish its unions, on Second Mile Road, strikes would be unknown; and both would go picnicking together.

But what is the second mile religiously? Ah, that is the charm of

♦ (Continued on page 366)



## The Second Mile

(Continued from page 365) ◊

it! It is all religious. It is sacred, there is not a secular inch in the entire mile. It is essentially a Christian mile; it runs through all a Christian's domestic, social, and business relations. He walks it on Monday, as well as on Sunday. It is the substitution of the Christian's, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" for the sinner's, "What must I do to be saved?" The first mile is Martha's wearisome kitchen, where service cumpers because it is compelled; the second is Mary's alabaster box of ointment of spikenard, whose odour carries the silent message of Christ's presence through all the rooms of the house, and is wafted away by the wind of the Spirit to the uttermost parts of the earth.

The second mile is where we demonstrate that we are Christians: **"If ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same. And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners to receive as much again. And if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?"** That is the measure of our witnessing for Christ, "what we do more than others." Publicans and sinners, the world, the flesh, and the devil, in Sunday clothes, will bear us company when one compels us to go a mile; but they will all stop at the mile limit, and we shall begin to show that we are Christians when we **"go with him twain."**

But we shall go to better company. We shall join hands with all the holy prophets. There we shall be in the goodly fellowship of the apostles, we shall walk in step with the noble army of martyrs, and with the holy church throughout all ages. This second mile lies beyond the wilderness, across the Jordan. It is the promised land, and flows with milk and honey. Here are the restful pastures of tender grass, and the waters of quietness. This is the path of righteousness, wherein we are led for Christ's name's sake, that He may be glorified in us. Here angels spread dainties for weary Elijah, and come to minister to such as have been tempted of the devil. The wilderness and the solitary place are made goad for all who walk in it, and for their sakes the desert rejoices and blossoms as the rose.

But whose hands removed the stones, and plucked the thorns? Whose feet were they that first explored this holy, happy, second mile? From the place where God made man in His own image, and put him in the garden to dress it and to keep it, to where "He drove out the man, and placed at the east of the garden of Eden

cherubim and a flaming sword, which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life" ---that was God's first mile, the thing which, in simple justice, He was compelled to do. But raise thine eyes! Look! Look! Yonder that mysterious track from gates of pearl to Bethlehem, stretching away through Egypt, Nazareth, and Capernaum, to Jerusalem, and anon to Calvary, through the grave, and up yonder to the everlasting doors---the blood-marked track, which, in the giving of His all, our blest Redeemer trod---that is God's second mile! I charge you to pray for the cleansing of His blood, to receive His Spirit, to take up His cross, and go with Him twain---to glory.



## The Ills of America

(Continued from page 361) ◊

We, like Israel of old, are a nation with a rich spiritual heritage that has been largely forgotten and cast aside. We are a sinful nation that has willingly turned its back upon God and His infallible Word. We are a nation that is laden or heavily weighted down with moral iniquity. A seed of evil doers, whose intent is to banish the true God from our society, have effectively permeated our government and public education system with the philosophies of moral relativism and secular humanism. Both of these philosophies deny the authority of God and His Word, which in turn denies an absolute of right and wrong. As a consequence, justice has fallen in the streets and confusion reigns.

The seed of evildoers have produced children who are corrupters. Many young people in America have little or no concept of right and wrong, little moral discipline, a poor work ethic, and very little respect for authority of any kind. Many young people know little about the Bible and even less about genuine Christianity which is characterized by conviction of sin, fruitful repentance, and saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

What happens to a nation that forsakes God and rejects His ways? The answer is found in Psalms 9:17 which declares: **"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."** The sentiments of the Psalmist are echoed by the prophet Isaiah: **"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink: Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him! Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their**

**root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: because they have cast away the law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel. Therefore is the anger of the LORD kindled against his people, and he hath stretched forth his hand against them, and hath smitten them: and the hills did tremble, and their carcasses were torn in the midst of the streets. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still"** (Isa. 5:20-25).

America's sins have reached into the heavens and are an abominable stench in the nostrils of a just and holy God. As a nation we have provoked the Holy One to anger by our senseless murder of innocent babes in abortion mills, our worship of the god of materialism, our unbridled lusts and approval of immorality and sexual perversion. Our nation is morally debased because righteousness is no longer considered a virtue, but rather a bondage of a bygone era. Proverbs 14:34 declares: **"Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people."** I would now like to address some of the ill of America that have collectively combined to make us a morally bankrupt nation.

### THE POLITICAL ILLS OF AMERICA

Americans have elected men that are adulterers, draft-dodgers, abortion on demand advocates, Sodomites and their sympathizers, and a host of lying liberals. This reveals something about the moral and political condition of America. Americans by and large no longer believe that it is important that her leaders be men of moral integrity and righteousness. We no longer have statesmen in branches of government who are honest and concerned about the people that they represent. We now have professional politicians who are bent on furthering their own political careers and lining their own pockets at the voters' expense. Few politicians talk about a need to return to Bible-based moral values because it would mean political suicide.

George Washington, our first President, said long ago: "Let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that National morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle. . .Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, Religion and morality are indispensable supports." Where is the politician who will agree with our first President by recognizing that a country's prosperity is directly linked to Biblical morality?

After years of corrupt administrations

I believe America looks back with shame. Our political ills have only begun and they will undoubtedly grow worse as long as Americans choose to believe the lies of the liberal media and the meaningless promises of lying politicians. However, our hopes should not center around a political messiah who can speak well and say all the things we want to hear, but rather we ought to obey the admonition of Titus 2:13 which declares: **"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."**

### THE ECONOMIC ILLS OF AMERICA

Our country is on the brink of economic disaster. Our budget deficit continues to grow year by year with little or no attempt by Washington to cut deficit spending or balance the yearly budget. With our present national debt, 52% of every tax dollar is used only to pay the interest on the debt. We cannot go on as a nation unless we demand that our government tighten its own belt and require our citizens to rely less on government handouts. America used to be a country that was characterized by hard work, diligence, and self sufficiency on the part of its citizens. Yet, today we see Americans becoming more dependent upon the government's entitlement programs (Big Brother), which only serve to increase deficit spending at alarming rates. If the average American would manage his checking account like the Federal Government manages its own, he would be thrown into jail for bouncing checks.

Our economic ills can also be traced to the sin of covetousness and the love of money. Many people will do anything for money even if it is immoral and contributes to the downfall of our society. For example, the movie, "Indecent Proposal" now showing in theaters all across America is leading in box-office sales. It is about a young couple who agree to allow the wife to have a one night stand with a wealthy man for the price of a million dollars. It is a godless and sick society that glorifies and promotes prostitution in such a way. Immorality abounds when the love of money takes root in an individual's heart.

The media made a big issue of the economy during the presidential campaign. Many Americans voted for Clinton because they felt he would solve our economic woes. Because our country is no longer populated by people who fear God and depend upon His providential care, Americans foolishly thought that a man could solve these problems. However, our economic woes can be directly traced to the immorality and rebellion of the citizens of our country. God will not prosper a nation that is in direct opposition to His ways. God will not prosper a nation whose

◊ (Continued on page 367)

## The Ills of America

(Continued from page 366) ♦

leaders glorify the perverted lifestyle of homosexuals and promote the murder of babies!

When a nation forgets God and rejects His ways they will experience economic disaster as God warned the nation of Israel long ago: **“But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day. And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the LORD thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish. As the nations which the LORD destroyeth before your face, so shall ye perish; because ye would not be obedient unto the voice of the LORD your God”** (Deut. 8:18-20).

Businesses have opted to stay open on Sunday so they can make more money. Years ago operating a business on Sunday would have been considered profaning the Lord's day. Most Americans rarely set aside any money to give to the Lord's work. Even many church members who profess to be Christians rarely give a tithe and offering. Malachi 3:8-9 states: **“Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.”** Our economic problems in America will never be solved unless people turn back to God and give Him the glory that is worthy of His name. Unless men and women return to the principles of God's Word our economic situation will grow worse and worse.

### THE EDUCATIONAL ILLS OF AMERICA

Our public education system is proving to be a total failure in most cities. Our government is pouring billions of dollars into an education system that is failing. Young people are coming out of high school unable to read, write, or do simple arithmetic. Ever since the Bible, prayer, and the Ten Commandments were taken out of the schools America has gone downhill in the area of learning. In a majority of public schools the religion of secular humanism is being crammed down the throats of unsuspecting students. The lie of evolution is being taught as science. As a result, students see no need for moral absolutes. After all, they are taught that they came from a random mass of slime and are not accountable to the God of the Bible for their behavior! Sexual immorality is promoted in many schools through sex education courses that fail to teach abstinence until marriage. Some schools hand out condoms which do nothing

more than promote the immorality of students. What have been the results of such so called education? The teenage pregnancy rate is astronomical because boys and girls can't and won't control themselves. AIDS and venereal diseases are sweeping our country like a plague. Young men have very little respect for women and often look at them merely as sex objects. Drug abuse, drunkenness, rape, and vandalism are common occurrences in most of our major cities. The lack of moral values and character is very evident in our young people today.

Regardless what the intellectual left may say, there can be no true education apart from God and His Word. Proverbs 1:7 declares: **“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.”** Our public education system for the most part is producing a generation of fools who know little or nothing about God and the Bible. In early America, schools were established so that young people could learn to read the Bible at an early age. Now the Bible has been banished from our schools! The Ivy league schools like Harvard and Yale were originally established for the express purpose of training ministers of the Gospel. Now they are hotbeds of heresy, liberalism, and atheism. It is never wise for a nation to discard the Bible as a guide for morality and virtue. Proverbs 13:13 declares: **“Whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed: but he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded.”** Jeremiah 8:9 states: **“The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the LORD; and what wisdom is in them?”**

The former Soviet Union is a case in point. They were formerly an atheistic nation that banished God from their government and schools. As a result, morality, virtue, and a solid work ethic were largely unknown among the masses. The Soviets had to learn the hard way, their government had to be toppled and their economy crumbled. Now they are a second rate power. But the Soviets are now calling for the Bible and Christianity to be taught in their public schools. Their leaders have come to realize that there can be no true morality among their citizens apart from the Bible.

All of the blame for our educational woes cannot be blamed upon the system. Americans have allowed the federal government and the teachers' union to exercise too much control over local schools. Also, Americans no longer see the necessity of educating their children in the home. They feel as though the responsibility to educate is in the hands of the State. Yet the responsibility to educate, instill moral values, and develop a love for learning rests upon the parents according to Deuteronomy 6:6-7 which states: **“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.”**

However, most children in America never see their parents ever crack open a Bible. Many parents are too busy fulfilling their own desires and interests to spend any time in the training and education of their children. Until Americans see the danger of rejecting God and His Word, our education system will continue to be a mess. Until Americans stand up to the likes of the godless ACLU, secular humanism, and Madeline Murray O'Hare there will be no hope for a moral society. It is my personal belief that the home school and Christian school movements are going to be a vital force in shaping our educational future in the nation. Christian parents and educators are much more capable of teaching and imparting values and knowledge than the secular humanists.

### THE MORAL ILLS OF AMERICA

Approximately two generations of Americans have had the philosophy of moral relativism crammed down their throats by way of the liberal media, and the public education system. Moral relativism teaches situation ethics, as well as the idea that each man develops his own standard of truth. In essence, the philosophy of moral relativism is a system of no absolute right or wrong. It is built upon the pursuit of advancing one's own self interest even at the expense of others if need be. I like what Charles Colson wrote concerning those who are advocates of the philosophy of moral relativism: **“While such new barbarians who know no higher law than self-interest, who see nothing to champion beyond their individualism, are celebrating their own nihilism, they are, in effect, torching the very props of virtue on which our societal experiment-and our very existence depend.”**

Whenever man becomes a law unto himself and develops his own standard of right and wrong immorality will reign. Man is a fallen, sinful creature. He follows and fulfills the lusts of his base nature. Jeremiah 17:9 declares: **“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”** Wicked hearts produce immoral lifestyles. Americans have been duped into thinking that they are to tolerate everything except for the teachings of the religious right. As a result, we have a myriad of moral ills because of loose living and unrighteousness. Homosexuality, pornography, prostitution, gambling, drunkenness, drug abuse, murder, and gang violence plague the streets of America.

The liberal left has been trying to force the American public to accept the Sodomite (homosexual) lifestyle as

normal and healthy. If it is so normal and healthy, why do those who engage in such perverted behavior contract the deadly disease of AIDS? I couldn't care less if the secular humanists want to say that I am an intolerant homophobic. The homosexual lifestyle is a perverted and abominable way of life. God destroyed Sodom and Gommorah by raining down fire and brimstone because they were filled with homosexuals. God considers homosexuality to be unnatural and unacceptable behavior according to Leviticus 18:22-25 which states: **“Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination. Neither shalt thou lie with any beast to defile thyself therewith: neither shall any woman stand before a beast to lie down thereto: it is confusion. Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you: And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants.”**

I read an editorial in a daily newspaper by a high school student who was in essence saying that we must accept homosexuals because God made them that way when they were born. In essence he was saying that we must tolerate such behavior because they aren't responsible for it. What nonsense! Are we to say that the rapist and the pedophiliac are to be tolerated because they were just made that way and they can't control their behavior? No one in his right mind would answer in the affirmative. As long as America promotes and tolerates the wickedness of homosexuality, the judgment of God will rest upon our nation.

Abortion is another moral evil that is being tolerated and promoted by many Americans. Since 1973, millions of babes have been killed in their mother's womb. Abortion mills have produced more casualties than all the wars put together in which Americans have fought. The hypocritical “Femi-Nazis” say that it is a woman's right to do whatever she pleases with her body. They argue that every woman should have a right to murder their own baby in the womb if they so choose. Often these same abortion rights advocates are the ones who are trying to protect the whales and snail darters. What hypocrites! To use the logic of an abortion rights activists, rape would not be wrong in our society. After all, the rapist is merely choosing to use his body and fulfill his desires much the same way that a woman who is getting an abortion is. But people will cry out against rapists because they are invading the rights of another person and doing them bodily harm. But in essence that is exactly what a woman who gets an abortion is doing; she is violating the rights of the babe in the womb, and murdering it at the same

♦ (Continued on page 368)

## The Ills of America

(Continued from page 367) ♦

time. Abortion teaches that human life is not valuable. Any nation that murders babes in the womb has perverted justice and incensed the anger of the God of Heaven.

There are many more moral ills in our society that I do not have space or time to catalog. However, all moral ills can be traced to sinful, irresponsible behavior. The spread of AIDS could be stopped today if homosexuals, whoremongers, and drug abusers would control their sinful and perverted lusts. Gang violence would stop if kids had parents who would take the time to teach them character and virtue. Until the hearts of Americans are changed to fear God, repent of sin, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, moral ills will be abundant in our land. God warned the nation of Israel long ago: **"And thou shalt not go aside from any of the words which I command thee this day, to the right hand, or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them. But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee"** (Deut. 28:14-15). The same principles can be applied to America today, so we had better take heed!

### THE SPIRITUAL ILLS OF AMERICA

For the most part the spiritual condition of America is diseased and corrupt. People are serving themselves rather than the true God. Churches are weak and spiritually powerless. There is little separation from the world and godly living in the average church. The true worship of God has been replaced with entertainment, songests, and dramatic productions. Easy believism, free-willism, and religious ritualism are the norm in most American churches. There is little or no strong doctrinal preaching coming from the average pulpit. Church members know more about the television schedule than they do the Word of God. Ball games are better attended than mid-week prayer meetings. Lost people look at the lives of the average professing Christian and see little or no difference from their own, so they remain indifferent. Professing Christians rarely tell others about the power of Christ's Gospel to save. Religious America is a quagmire of contradictions and hypocrisy!

I see little hope for the religious condition of America unless preachers get back to preaching the whole counsel of God and the true Gospel. Church members also must study the Bible, obey its commands, and practice its precepts if there is to be a change in America's

spiritual condition. America needs a return to the strong Calvinistic preaching that emphasizes the sovereignty of God in salvation, the depravity of man, and the power of Christ to change the lives of men and women forever. Most of today's preaching is man-centered rather than God-centered. Preachers are glorifying and exalting man's fallen and fickle free will as a saviour rather than proclaiming the power of God and the Gospel. As a result, people do not fear or respect a God that they can resist at will. Churches are resorting to all sorts of gimmicks, gadgets, and frills in an attempt to attract people's interest rather than simply preaching the truth and allowing God to do the work of changing hearts and minds.

Oh, that God would pour out His Spirit upon our land! We sorely need a widespread revival of holiness and worship. God's people must repent of their wanderings and return to the God of the Bible if we are to have any influence in our nation. II Chronicles 7:14 declares: **"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."**

### THE ONLY CURE FOR AMERICA'S ILLS

I have briefly catalogued some of the major ills in our society. I admit that the picture I have painted is indeed bleak and hopeless. I believe that a return to God and His Word is the only hope for America. Americans need a change of heart and mind by the power of God's Spirit. The only hope for America is if God would be pleased to pour out His Spirit and make the Gospel effectual in the hearts of men and women.

Dear reader, have you ever acknowledged that you are a sinner bound for Hell according to God's Holy Word? Have you ever repented of your sins, abandoned all your self righteous hopes, and trusted in the finished work of Christ in complete dependence upon Him? This is your only hope for forgiveness and cleansing. The only hope for America is for sinners to be translated out of darkness into light, out of the dominion of Satan into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Eyes and ears need to be opened so that sinners can see their need of Jesus Christ and hear the clarion call of the Gospel. Hebrews 2:1-3 declares: **"Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward: How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him."**

END



## From the Pen of a Country Preacher

Milburn R. Cockrell  
(1941 - 2002)



## The Importance of Virginity

My text is found in Deuteronomy 22:13-21. Some overly pious persons tell us that this passage is not suitable for family reading and that it should not be preached in a mixed congregation. But this is untrue, for there is nothing dirty or obscene in the Bible. II Timothy 3:16 says: **"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."** "All scripture" is broad enough to cover Deuteronomy 22:13-21.

### AN EXPOSITION OF THE TEXT

In verse 13 we see how a man in Israel would marry a virgin and cohabit with her: **"If a man take a wife, and go in unto her, and hate her."** As time passed this husband developed a strong dislike of her, and he decided to get rid of her. Therefore he embarks on a wicked scheme to put her away. He will say that he married a woman who was not a virgin. He could have merely divorced her under the Mosaic Law (Deut. 24:1-2), but his hatred for her causes him to do something worse.

Instead of divorcing her, he falsely accuses her of not being a virgin. **"And give occasions of speech against her, and bring up an evil name upon her, and say, I took this woman, and when I came to her, I found her not a maid"** (Deut. 22:14). This was told to the neighbors and the Jewish Court.

The father and mother appeared in court in defense of their daughter and to protect their good name in Israel: **"Then shall the father of the damsel, and her mother, take and bring forth the tokens of the damsel's virginity unto the elders of the city in the gate"** (Deut. 22:15). Her parents were to bring the sheet with the blood where she first bedded with her husband. This her parents kept to prove her purity.

The young girl's father would then address the court: **"And the damsel's father shall say unto the elders, I gave my daughter unto this man to wife, and he hateth her; And, lo, he hath given occasions of speech against her, saying, I found not thy daughter a maid; and yet these are the tokens of my daughter's virginity. And they shall spread the cloth before the elders of the city"** (Deut. 22:16-17).

The accused girl could not speak in

court, but she was present. The father did the speaking since he gave away the bride. If the girl had no parents, then the next of kin or her guardian served in the role of her father. Both the father and the mother would spread the bloody sheet stained with the blood of their daughter's virginity when she first lay with her husband. The friends of the bride and bridegroom guarded the bride chamber the first night (John 3:29). When the couple came out, they rushed in and took the linen sheet to the bride's mother.

The false accuser was beaten with 39 stripes for lying on his wife: **"And the elders of that city shall take that man and chastise him"** (Deut. 22:18; cf. 25:1-4).

This lying husband was then fined and never permitted to divorce his wife for any reason from this time forth: **"And they shall amerce him in an hundred shekels of silver, and give them unto the father of the damsel, because he hath brought up an evil name upon a virgin of Israel: and she shall be his wife; he may not put her away all his days"** (Deut. 22:19).

But if the charge was true the woman was executed: **"But if this thing be true, and the tokens of virginity be not found for the damsel: Then they shall bring out the damsel to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her with stones that she die: because she hath wrought folly in Israel, to play the whore in her father's house: so shalt thou put evil away from among you"** (Deut. 22:20-21).

Stoning was the common means of execution for one guilty of sexual impurity (John 8:1-11), save in the case of a priest's daughter (Lev. 21:9). The fornication was executed because she **"wrought folly in Israel."** All sin is folly. It is especially so when it is committed by one of God's own who is to be a holy person. The girl was stoned at the door of her father's house. This was because her parents neglected her moral education and did not bring her up properly. This extreme measure was taken to deter others from such conduct.

### THE WORTH OF VIRGINITY

One very clear lesson from this passage is the importance of virginity. A son or a daughter given in marriage should be a

♦ (Continued on page 369)



## Importance of Virginit

(Continued from page 368) ♦

virgin. A virgin is a young man or woman who has not had sexual intercourse. The law of marriage for a priest read: **“And he shall take a wife in her virginity”** (Lev. 21:13). In the New Testament Joseph was espoused to **“a virgin. . .and the virgin’s name was Mary”** (Luke 1:27). Boys should be virgins as well as girls. It is said of the 144,000 Jewish evangelists of the tribulation period: **“These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins”** (Rev. 14:4).

In this liberal age young people hear social experts, doctors and nurses, educators and even religious leaders declare that premarital sex is normal, healthy, and sensational. Rock music, X-rated movies, and dirty TV arouse in youth a craving to express their sexuality. Our promiscuous society puts considerable pressure upon our young people to commit fornication. The young person who abstains from “sleeping around” is looked upon by certain peers as odd or a religious fanatic. No one, it seems, pays any attention to what the Bible says about what is right and wrong.

Some 12 million American teenagers are sexually active, some beginning at the age of 13 or younger. More than one million unwed teenagers get pregnant every year in America. Some 400,000 end the pregnancy through abortion or miscarriage. Simply stated this means that thousands of girls each year start out in life as fornicators and murderers!

Over 600,000 illegitimate babies are born each year to teenagers. In the United States an estimated one-half million teenagers contacted gonorrhea last year. Syphilis and herpes were at epidemic levels in the 1980s. Stillbirth, miscarriages, and deformed children have been caused by sexually transmissible diseases acquired through premarital sex.

Our moral sense of value has been so confused that today we have some parents who think that premarital sex is okay, if the girl does not get pregnant! The philosophy seems to be that it is right to have sex, but wrong to have a baby! Some parents give their daughters birth control pills and their sons condoms. Such provisions have already forced the children to say yes to premarital sex! Such foolishness has resulted in an almost total eclipse of virginity in the world. Parents have forsaken the teaching of the Bible that boys and girls should be virgins when they marry. We might well expect the unsaved to do this, but it is alarming to see so-called Christian parents telling their children that premarital sex is okay. Such persons have cast the Bible to the wind and very well may be unregenerate church members.

There is sex education in the public schools, but it is void of any stress on the importance of virginity. The program of sex education in public schools has increased sexual impurity and led many to experiment in all kinds of sexual activities. Things are so bad in the State of New York that they are teaching fourth-graders about the use of condoms. The public schools have no business being involved in sex education. This teaching should be left to the home and the church.

Parents a generation ago began to practice sexual freedom when the teaching of evolution was so widely accepted. People were told that they came from animals, so they began to live like animals that had no moral restraints. Many who were brainwashed in the 1950s and 1960s were themselves involved in sexual impurity, and therefore they are too embarrassed to talk to their children about sex. They are afraid that their children will ask them if they were virgins when they got married. So they won’t tell their children about the importance of virginity.

Worse than any of this is the presence of moral cowards in the pulpits of our land. I refer to preachers who are afraid to preach a sermon like this. The older preachers preached against fornication and adultery often. People were excluded from Baptist churches for fornication and adultery. Perhaps so many modern preachers are silent on this subject because there is a skeleton in their closet. I fear the silence is due to golden-gate scandals and Harper Valley PTAs!

We must forsake the new morality for the old morality set forth in the Bible. Early in the 1900s the influence of Christianity was such over society that a girl who surrendered her virginity before marriage had disgraced herself, her family, her church, and her God. The same was true of a boy, too! Girls wore a white dress to symbolize that they were virgins. Today most of the girls getting married still wear white dresses, but in most cases they are not virgins, but whores!

### PARENTS AND MORAL TRAINING

Deuteronomy 22:13-21 makes it plain that parents should be greatly concerned about the moral training of their children. In ancient Israel, if parents failed in their moral training they lived to see their own daughter stoned in their front yard. In this generation parents need to fully discuss all aspects of sex thoughtfully and openly according to each child’s level of understanding. Tell them that God created sex to be a private, loving, binding relationship between a husband and a wife, not casual sex partners. Teach them that premarital sex is a violation of the Seventh Commandment (Ex. 20:14). Train them so that they will know that social experts, educators, and religious

leaders who condone premarital sex are liars who are in violation of the law of God and who are to be ignored.

Parents should set a good example before their children. The Bible commands us to **“shew piety at home”** (I Tim. 5:4). Do your best to be a living example of moral purity before them. Bring your children **“up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord”** (Eph. 6:4). There is a wonderful promise that faithful parents may claim in Proverbs 22:6: **“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”** This verse does not say train up a child in the way that he wants to go, but **“in the way that he should go.”** Neither does it say that he will necessarily like such training when he is young. Rather, it says that **“when he is old, he will not depart from it.”** It also stands to reason from this verse that if parents bring children up in the way they should not go, when they are old they will not depart from their evil ways.

Much of the moral training in the home is placed upon the mother in the Bible as the father was expected to be out working to earn a living for his family. Timothy was brought up by his mother to know the Scriptures from childhood (II Tim. 1:5; 3:15). Satan scored a direct hit against American society when he drove the mother from the home where she taught her children moral values, into the public work force for the sake of material gain. While families have experienced some material gain, their moral and spiritual losses have been greater. In the Bible, young mothers are urged to be **“chaste, keepers at home”** (Tit. 2:5).

Most children grow up today to be Bible ignoramuses. They know all about sports, world affairs, and sex, but, in most cases, almost nothing about God and the Bible. This is because parents have failed to teach their children the Bible in the home. In Deuteronomy 6:4-7 it is written: **“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 walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.”**

### YOU CAN SAY, NO

My text gives a powerful caution to flee fornication. In my text a young fornicator was stoned to death. I Corinthians 6:18 says: **“Flee fornication.”** In more modern terms it means to say, “No!” Don’t share your body with any one except the one you really love and marry. It is the responsibility of each boy and girl to maintain a certain amount of self-respect.

Don’t entertain the foolish notion that God doesn’t want you to have any fun. This is simply not true. God wants you to be attractive, healthy, wholesome, and a virtuous person. He wants you to be looked up to and to be respected. He wants you to have a happy and lasting marriage and healthy children. The moral guidelines set forth in the Bible are to protect you from what would certainly ruin those beautiful years ahead.

### THINGS TO AVOID

He who would be kept from harm must stay out of harm’s way. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Saying no to sex before marriage will not be easy in every case. Sex is a powerful force in our lives. Don’t underestimate its power in your life. It will take a great deal of courage and determination on your part to avoid premarital sex. God is looking for some who are not moral cowards.

1. Don’t go steady until you find the person you want to marry. Too much dating of only one person multiplies the pressure to have sex.

2. Lovemaking precedes actual sexual intercourse, and it is a part of the sex act. Holding hands, prolonged kissing, and fondling is an integral part of sexual intercourse in marriage. Avoid immodest clothing which is designed to arouse the sexual urge. Always remember that God does not want people to indulge in these acts before marriage. So avoid these at all costs.

3. Keep away from pornographic literature, dirty movies and TV. These things distort your perception of sex and may give you an unrighteous obsession with sexual enjoyment.

4. Steer clear of alcohol and drugs which destroy good judgment. In the Bible the abuse of such things are associated with the Devil. Don’t ruin your life for an evening of chemical euphoria.

5. Shun evil companions of either sex. I Corinthians 5:11 tells us not to keep company with fornicators. Exodus 23:2 says: **“Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil.”** Christian girls, make it clear to your boyfriend that you want a boyfriend, not a sex partner. Christian boys, make it clear to your girlfriend that you want a girlfriend, not a whore.

6. Don’t be pressured into promiscuousness by what some smart aleck may say. Don’t be afraid of being called “old-fashioned.” If a boy wants you to go to bed with him, you have no right to be out with such a whore-hopper. If a girl wants you to go to bed with her, you have no business being out with such a whore. Never go on a date with such a person ever again. It is not who’s in the “in” crowd that really matters. It is your virtue and happiness in the future that really matters. Buck the crowd and avoid venereal disease, unwanted pregnancies, unhappy marriages and broken homes.

♦ (Continued on page 370)

## The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. Should we as Christians be patriotic citizens (flag wavers) of a country that was founded on Godly principles even though it has left most of those principles behind?

- Editor

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Matthew 22:21: "...Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's."

Romans 13:1-2: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation."

1 Peter 2:13-15: "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake; whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men."

Contrary to what a lot of contemporary Christian preachers are saying, the government and society in which Jesus walked was fully as corrupt and immoral as that of the United States today, if not more so. In addition, that government and society was more polytheistic and anti-Christian than ours.

Well before what we call the "Apostolic Period" ended, the true church was suffering more persecution and martyrdom from Rome than from the Pharisaical persecution which Paul had been leading before Acts chapter 9.

Yet, our Lord never advocated the overthrow of Rome, never led any "anti-abortion" marches in the streets (We understand that abortion and homosexuality was as rampant then as it is now, if not more so.), or otherwise criticized the government. He advocated obedience to the laws of Rome and doing the proper duty of a "subject" of Rome.

Paul suffered much at the hands of the Pagans but thanked God for the protection and justice of the Roman government. Even while a prisoner under Nero, Paul never spoke against the government of Rome.

It is doubtful that any of the "flag waving" patriotism we think of today

even existed in that day other than possible victory marches of returning armies, but even the conquered subjects of Rome respected the government. I have never read of there being any need of the Roman army to put down anti-government protests or riots although they did need to squelch riots stirred up by various religious zealots.

I think it important that no such riots were instigated by Christians until well after the apostate Church of Rome had become a political force.

Yes, Scripture teaches that Christians should be good, loyal, law-abiding, patriotic citizens even though there is much in our government which we abhor. The only justification for civil disobedience is whenever the government requires us to do that which is contrary to Scripture. "But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye" (Acts 4:19).

Daniel Webster wrote, "Whatever makes men good Christians makes them good citizens" (A speech to Plymouth, 1820).

There is a right way to try to make changes in our government and I suggest that starts in the voting booth, then extends to writing to our representatives, but does not call for demonstrations in the streets.

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I sometimes wonder if the reason why this country has left most of those Godly principles is because Christians (gospel wavers) have left Godly principles behind.

It is not only right, it is our right, of not only freedom of speech, but our duty as Christians and citizens of the greatest country on God's green earth, to make others aware of how our country came about, and who gave us liberty and peace.

True liberty comes from God, "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to

the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound" (Isa. 61:1) liberty of conscience, from God.

Liberty is freedom. This world and the United States of America owe God first, acknowledgement of the fact the only reason we have any freedom is because of Him. Secondly this world owes some gratitude to our Baptist forefathers for their lives given for our very freedom.

Patriotic, nowadays, seems to be old fashioned and bigoted. Patriots still roam the land of America and I would like to think I am one of them. I may not be too happy with the direction my countrymen have taken this country, but I am proud to be an American. I would gladly give my life for God and country, and when it is time I am sure God will give me grace to stand, as our forefathers have, whether they were Baptist or not.

MIKE DEWITT



## Importance of Virginity

(Continued from page 369) ♦

Then one day you can have the wonderful marriage that God intended!

7. Talk to your parents about providing opportunities for a balanced social life where you can be with other good boys and girls. They will respond if you will point out the needs to them.

### THE EVILS OF SEX BEFORE MARRIAGE

First, sooner or later premarital sex will be known. Boys and girls talk. A boy may love you tonight and call you a whore in the morning. Then the wolves will come who are interested in the same. A girl may sleep with you tonight and cry rape in the morning. Then the sheriff comes and you go to jail.

Second, if the privileges of marriage can be enjoyed before marriage, then why get married? Premarital sex is one of the reasons so many are content to just "shack up" instead of going to the marriage altar. No boy wants to marry a whore. No girl wants to marry a boy who has slept with all the girls in town. You can't make a successful marriage between a whore and a whore-hopper! In most cases they simply cannot remain faithful to each other in marriage. Such marriages often end in divorce or desertion.

Third, it breaks down trust. If a girl sins with a boy before marriage, then after they are married the boy will always wonder how many other boys she sinned with before him. If a boy commits fornication with a girl before marriage, then after marriage the girl will always wonder how many other girls he sinned with before her. Each will always doubt the faithfulness of the other. Premarital sex often leads to extra-marital sex and divorce.

Fourth, there is the loss of a good name. People know that it takes nine months to

get a baby. People are not fooled by some shotgun wedding. The Bible speaks of the superior worth of a good name (Prov. 22:1; Eccl. 7:1). Once a good name is lost it is almost impossible to regain it.

Fifth, there are some who are determined at all costs to engage in premarital sex. They don't care what God and the Bible say. If this is your attitude, then go ahead and indulge in the pleasure of sin. In your case it probably doesn't matter, for you are soon to burn for ever in Hell-fire. God made Hell just for such characters as you are. The Bible says that fornication and adulterers will have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone (1 Cor. 6:9-10; Eph. 5:5; Gal. 5:19-21; Rev. 21:8).

"But, preacher, this can't be true of me. I am a church member," I heard someone say. The Bible says nothing about whoremongers escaping Hell because they belong to some church. Instead, it teaches that such lost church members will burn in the very lowest Hell for all eternity.

### CONCLUSION

1. If you are a virgin, remain such until the day of your marriage. God will bless you and your marriage if you remain such. There will be a curse upon you if you give up your virginity before marriage.

2. A fornicator can be saved. Jesus Christ saved one such person in John 8:1-11. The Lord freely forgave the woman taken in adultery, but He warned her: "Go, and sin no more" (John 8:11). All manner of sin may be forgiven (Matt. 12:31), including fornication and all forms of sexual impurity. But those who truly repent of such sins and receive forgiveness do not repeat them.



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## The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. Do you feel that America can ever return to the once godly nation she used to be or is she ripe for the judgment hand of God? – Editor

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Anything is possible to our finite minds because we have no understanding of the future.

The theory that things are going to get better, or are better, is false. All things degrade over time and compounded with the element of sinful man produces a lack of righteousness. We can plainly see by the world scene at this time we need to be waiting for the rapture of the Saints even more than ever.

Other than that I pray for all of God's children to live a Holy and separate life in expectation of Christ's return. What will you be doing? What have you done for the advancement of the Kingdom of God? **"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing"** (II Tim. 4:8).

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This is more of a "personal opinion" question than one that can be answered with some kind of definite Scriptural statement. Before I give you my thoughts let me give you some Biblical basis for my thoughts.

II Corinthians 1:20: **"For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us."** Even though this verse specifically refers to the church, by context, the "us" may well be taken to include all believers of all dispensations.

Notice, for instance, God's promises to Abraham and Israel which include the assuring words "for ever." God is not a liar! His promises to Israel will be fulfilled even though He has temporarily set them aside (Rom. 11:1-6). But God's promises to Israel are specifically for Israel, spiritual Israel, the believing seed of Abraham. There is a "faith" connection

between the true church believers and the "seed of Abraham" which it far too complicated to deal with here, but The United States is not included, as a nation. One has to do a lot of scriptural gymnastics to get the U.S. or England included in the Abrahamic covenant.

Hosea 4:17: **"Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone"** and Jeremiah 7:16: **"Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me: for I will not hear thee"** all reveal that God was not going to restore that currently existing national entity although I don't believe those statements nullify the multitude of promises to someday restore Israel. As is pointed out above with the Abrahamic covenant, God is not a liar. His promises are all "yea and amen."

Matthew 16:18: **"I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."** This promise is to the church, not to a national entity.

In understanding and applying this promise it is necessary the difference between the "Church which Christ founded" during His earthly ministry and the masses of professing Christians (some not really Christians at all and other true believers but either ignorant of or disobedient to New Testament church truth). God will always have His remnant although it often becomes necessary to remove His candlestick from a lot of once good churches because of disobedience and apostasy.

II Chronicles 7:14: **"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."** Contextually, this promise is to a national entity but there is some validity in applying it to the U.S., England or any of the other countries where Christianity once was strong but there may only be a remnant now. I suggest that there may also be a personal application and an ecclesiastical application. The person, or church, who will do as this verse says, will certainly experience the promised blessing of God even though it may not directly effect the community or nation.

So my answer to your question is, "yes."

God's promises are never just empty teasers! Right up to the end, God pleaded with Judah, first to turn from their wicked ways, then to trust Him and obediently accept the chastisement coming upon them.

Yes, this nation is ripe for judgment! It is very possible that we have gone past the irrevocable judgment on Manasseh even though there had been a token – and great – revival under Josiah. **"Notwithstanding the LORD turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations that Manasseh had provoked him withal"** (II Kings 23:26). But within the sovereignty, mercy and grace of God there may still be hope. Even when national Israel went down in judgment, God spared his remnant and used them for His glory. Nevertheless, I see no Scriptural promise of a so-called "last day's revival."

Had Israel turned, truly repented as a nation, and obeyed the commandments of God, I'm sure God would have **"... repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not"** (Jonah 3:10; Ex. 32:14). Perhaps we can have that same hope, but it will take a national revival, not just spot revivals here and there.

There is an unorganized group of believers, unknown to each other except for this commitment, who set aside whatever else they are doing to pray for this nation, the elections and national revival, at 9 PM Eastern time every night. You are urged to join us. Adjust that time to whatever it will be in your time zone.

RAY BENNETT



## Power of Little Things

(Continued from page 361) ♦

in life will have an aggregation after awhile. Trifles are not to be despised in any man's life. Little acts are the elements of true greatness. They raise the life's value like the little figures over the larger in arithmetic, to its highest power. In I Corinthians 1:25-30, the language of the Apostle Paul is, **"Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are: That no flesh should glory in His presence."** You will notice that here are five things, **"Foolish things," "base things," "despised things,"** and **"things which are not."** God seeth not as we see. **"Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart."** God's ways are not our ways, **"For as the heaven is high**

**above the earth, so are my ways above your ways."** If we were in need of more preachers, and wished to ordain one, we would doubtless call the wealthiest young man in the town to the work, but the Lord possibly would not ratify our choice. God never makes mistakes; He chooses the weak things of this world to **"confound the things which are mighty."** When He wanted His everlasting Gospel carried to the ends of the world and His churches strengthened and built up, He called some poor fishermen to leave their nets and follow Him. He said, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me." "He that forsaketh wife and children, houses and lands, for My name's sake, shall have a hundredfold more in this world, and in the world to come, everlasting life." He did not call around Him the mighty men, nor the noble after the world's way of speaking, nor did He call the great men of the earth, but some poor fishermen to preach His Gospel. Some tell us that these early disciples were ignorant and unlearned. If we are to believe profane history, the proof is abundant that they were not ignorant men, for in the days of Christ there were plenty of schools. Every synagogue was a school. I quote from the Jewish Talmud, a book in which all the wise sayings were kept. "The world is preserved by the breath of children in schools." "A town in which there are no schools must perish." Josephus says, "Our principal care is to educate our children." The Talmud states that there were 400 schools, having each 400 teachers with 400 children each, and that there were 4,000 pupils in the house of Rabban-Semon-Ben-Gamiel. This would lead us to believe that schools were abundant in the days of our Saviour, and doubtless the apostles were well educated. If we are not to believe the above record, there is one thing that is certain: they had been in the school of Christ for more than three years, which was worth more, to them than to have been in any of our great colleges or universities. They sat at the feet of Christ and learned the great lessons that He would have them teach. How sublime to be in the great school of Christ!

We have never stopped to consider the power of little things, in our lives. Many of the great inventions have been the result of giving attention to little things. The stupendous results of the steam engine may be all attributed to the fact that more than a century ago a little boy sat by a fire while his mother was preparing the meal, watching the steam as it came from the tea-kettle. This was improved upon until James Watt could perfect the mighty steam engine which is doing the work of hundreds and even millions of men, in every part of the world today. Thus we are commercially connected with all the world.

♦ (Continued on page 372)

## Power of Little Things

(Continued from page 371) ♦

Galvanism owes its origin to Madame Galvani's noticing the contracting muscles of a skinned frog, which was accidentally touched by a person at the moment her husband was taking an electric spark from the machine. He followed up the suggestion, and the world knows the result. Phutarch said, "It is not in the most distinguished exploits that men's virtues or vices may be discovered, but frequently an action of small note, a short saying, or a jest, that distinguishes a person's true character more than the greatest battles or the most important actions."

Pendulum clocks were invented by Gallileo observing a lamp swinging to and fro in a church, and the world is full of clocks. The telescope was also invented by Gallileo, the idea originating by a spectacle maker placing two or more pairs before each other and looking through them. Gallileo took up the suggestion and improved upon it, and gave to the world the telescope, whereby the astronomer may view the distant worlds. A learned writer has said, "There is nothing on earth so small that it may not produce great things."

"Planets govern not the soul, nor the destinies of man, but trifles lighter than straw are the levers in the building up of character."

The inventor of the barometer observed that under certain atmospheric conditions water would rise higher in a pump than under other conditions; thus was invented the barometer.

The art of printing owes its origin to the rude impressions made by children while playing, from characters carved on a beech tree, and the world is full of books and papers. Solomon said: "The making of many books there is no end, and much study is wearisome to the flesh." Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter, "**Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.**"

Gunpowder was discovered from the falling of sparks on some material mixed in mortar. When Franklin made his discovery of the lightning rod, and electricity, the people laughed at him. Now almost every house has a lightning rod, and the world can be girdled in a few minutes by electricity.

The writing of a book is a small thing; but who can tell the influence for weal or woe? Two centuries ago, within the walls of a prison, was written the immortal "Pilgrim's Progress," a book that has moved the hearts of the people of the world as no other book has ever done outside of the Bible. It goes forth by the millions to every quarter of the globe, leading hundreds to the cross of Christ. Its influence for good will never die. In

February, 1832, S. F. Smith, who died two or three years ago, wrote that hymn:

*"My country 'tis of thee,  
Sweet land of liberty,  
Of thee I sing;  
Land where my fathers died,  
Land of the pilgrim's pride!  
From every mountain side,  
Let freedom ring!"*

He penned the words on a scrap-book, and had no idea of their being of any note, and now it is sung in every land. Smith is dead; but he will live in that song for ages. "Little words, not great, eloquent speeches and sermons; little deeds, not miracles, not great battles, not great acts or mighty martyrdom, make up the true Christian's life."

When the Lord wanted the Israelites delivered from bondage, He did not send forth an army with flying banners and drawn weapons, but He sent the meekest man the world has ever produced--- Moses, with a rod---to perform the wonderful deed, and he did the work as none but he could have done it. When the Lord wanted the great champion, Goliath, met, He did not send forth a mighty army of men, but He sent forth little David, a shepherd boy, the sweet singer of Israel, with five little stones, from the brook of Kidron. And David gave his carcass to the fowls of the air. He could have sent forth a giant, the men of Gath, but He did not do so. God's ways are not our ways.

The children of Israel were under bondage to the Philistines for the space of about forty years, and God raised up Samson to deliver them. So Samson took the jawbone of an ass, one day when they came upon him, and slew a thousand men therewith. "**Heaps upon heaps, with the jaw of an ass have I slain a thousand men.**" Shamgar was coming down the hill one day, and looked back and saw six hundred Philistines coming after him, and he took an ox goad and slew them.

When Mary anointed the feet of Christ, and wiped them with the hair of her head, she had no idea that she was performing a deed that would outlive the kings and monarchs of the earth. Love never thinks of itself. They made the complaint about the waste of ointment, but Christ said, "**Let her alone. . . she hath done what she could.**" "She has come beforehand to anoint my body for the burial." It was a very little thing, but Christ said, "Wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, there shall this be told what she hath done, for a memorial of her." What a blessing it would be to the cause of Christ and to the world, if every one in this broad, broad land of ours would do what they could for the cause of Christ. The second coming of Christ would be hastened. Mary did what she could for Him. Oh, that the world had more consecrated Marys, with their hearts in the work of the Lord, instead of being

given over to the world as a great many of our women are! I see a poor woman yonder, as Jesus sits over near the treasury, as they were casting their gifts into the treasury of the Lord. This poor woman comes forward; maybe her bonnet is old, and her wearing apparel out of date, but she comes forward, and casts in two mites, which make a farthing. While the rich had, no doubt, cast in their abundance, Jesus said, "She hath cast in more than they all." "She of her want has cast in her all." Noble woman! She loved the Lord. She kept nothing back. The Lord wants whole-hearted service and whole-hearted giving. "**Two mites**" were about seventeen cents in our money, but it was her all. That was the beauty about it. How different from the example of Ananias and Sapphira, who contributed to the common fund, and Peter, with that keen discretion that God had given him, said, "Did you cast it all in?" And they said, "**All.**" Their sad end should be a warning to all covetous people in every age of the world.

We need men and women whose souls are on fire for the cause of Christ, and who are willing to do any kind of work for the Lord. Paul's motto was, "This one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind me, I press forward toward the mark of the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus our Lord." A sin may be small, but it will mar the life here, and in the world to come, unless repented of, forgiveness obtained. There is no escape from the consequences of sin. Paul says, "**Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.**" "**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.**" We may possibly deceive our friends for awhile, but we can not deceive God. The leading of one soul to Christ may be a small thing, yet it is putting in operation the influences that will never end. Paul says: "No man liveth to himself, nor no man dieth to himself; whether we live, we live unto the Lord, or whether we die, we are the Lord's."

The church of Christ began more than nineteen hundred years ago, in the land of Palestine, with twelve apostles---and one of them was a traitor---with no money, nor influence, but today it has spread to every land and nation in the world, and will continue until it covers the earth as the waters cover the sea. The religion of Christ has cheered millions in this world, and they have in their last moments pillowed their heads upon the promises of Christ, and have sweetly breathed out their lives there. The influence of John the Baptist, Peter, Paul the great apostle, Chrysostom, Lattimer and Riddle, John Bunyan, Wesley, and the thousands of others who have left their impress on the world for good, will never die. Living we act, but dead we speak. The noble

Christian life of President McKinley will exert its influence on the lives of statesmen yet to be born. Washington's influence is still being felt today in every part of the world.

When Mr. Wesley wrote that grand old hymn:

*"Jesus, lover of my soul,  
Let me to thy bosom fly;  
While the nearer waters roll,  
While the tempest still is high.*

*"Hide me, oh, my Saviour hide,  
Till the storm of life is past.  
Safe into the haven guide,  
Oh, receive my soul at last."*

He had no idea of it ever being a great soul-stirring hymn that would be immortal. It has cheered millions in their last moments, and helped the children of God to a better life. Let no one despise the day of small things. (*Gospel Revival Sermons*, 1903 edition, pp. 206-214).



### Mini-Edition by Joseph Harris

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### Surprised?

An old saying tells us that life is full of surprises, but some things should not catch us by surprise. And especially those events that give a forerunner of their happening. When the ungodly seem to win a victory over morality and purity, some Christians seem surprised. Their surprise almost surprises me.

Who is surprised over the news from California about "gay" marriage, as the same sex marriage ban was overturned by that wide majority vote, 4-3? A homosexual "couple" (Ain't no such thing) can now apply for a marriage license. We have already seen the hand writing on the wall in Massachusetts, which is a hotbed of homosexuality, with homosexual sympathizers. Remember, this is the home of Barney Frank, the queer representative of the fourth congressional district of Massachusetts. And don't forget their illustrious senator, Chappaquiddick Ted, that moralizing Kennedy who left Mary Jo Kopechne to die trapped in the car submerged in water, while he swam to safety, then waited nine hours to report the accident. With elected officials like the aforementioned men, who could possibly be surprised at anything that might come out of Massachusetts. And now California, a state known for its liberalism, has a handful of judicial activists telling the dissenting majority of the population that the will of the majority is worthless. 61 % of the people of California approved

♦ (Continued on page 373)



## Mini-Edition

(Continued from page 372) ♦

the ban on homosexual marriage. The phrase "homosexual marriage" is a paradox that voids itself. It's kind of like talking about cold fire, dry water or Christian adultery. It is a self canceling paradox. Is that redundant?

Was anyone surprised with the removal of Judge Roy Moore as Chief Justice of Alabama, a few years back? Why be surprised when God and His commandments have already been removed? The natural step of progression is to remove God's man. And remove him they did. The nine member Court of the Judiciary, presided over by Judge William Thompson, voted to remove Judge Moore. The only surprising thing about this event was that Thompson led the court in prayer at the beginning, asking God to bless the proceedings of the court. This was laughable....asking God to bless the removal of the very man who has tried to keep God's blessing on the people by honoring God's laws. Insanity rules.

Then there is the display of ungodliness, vulgarity and filth on the airwaves. No one is surprised or shocked anymore, and I'm speaking of regular TV. X rated programming has been on the television for 30 years, since the advent of pay TV as found on HBO, SINmax and other purveyors of pornography. When the filth switched over to "mainstream" TV, no one was surprised....or cared. This is nothing more than the natural course of events. We have been de-sensitized to that which was previously shocking. We may not be surprised, but we should be ashamed.

## Lessons from Comics

I hope the kid in me never grows up. For instance, I like to read the Sunday comics. It's amazing what can be found in what we used to call, when I was a kid, the funny papers. Sometimes they are profound and true to life.

A few years back, I came across a series that was new to me. "Zits" was the name of the comic series. The beginning panels showed a woman pulling out a pair of rubber gloves and attaching a face mask, kind of like a filter. She then took a pair of tongs and pulled a tape from a VCR and dropped it in a garbage bag with a look of disgust on her face as if she smelled a bad odor. The last panel contained the only dialogue in the strip. Two guys were sitting in front of the TV, watching her actions, and the first one made a remark about how the woman (the other guy's Mom) did not like coarse language. The second guy responded with an exasperated look on his face saying the movie was only

rated PG-13.

How true to life. I expect this attitude from the world, since society has become so de-sensitized. Things are accepted today that would not have been tolerated 40 years ago. I do, however, expect something different from professing Christians, who seldom use much discrimination in their choices of TV and film entertainment. I have been told, "Well, it's only rated PG or PG-13" as if the rating alone makes it acceptable. Usually, films with these "mild" ratings contain obscene, vulgar, and profane language. When you point out the adultery and homosexuality that might be in the film, the excuse is, "Well, this is real life. These things exist in the real world." True, and these things are usually not rebuked in the real world either. A film containing these themes at least has some redeeming value when it shows the consequences, tragedy, and destruction of these and other sins, instead of presenting them in an amoral, nonjudgmental way. Plus the world view presented and promoted by the film should be considered. And remember, the Motion Picture Association rates films, and this group is not comprised of conservative Bible believers.

A steady diet of filth, perversity, blasphemy, nudity, hedonism, etc, etc, does have an affect on the consumer. We as Christians believe constant exposure to the Word affects people. How can we not believe constant exposure to the world will do the same? In the name of entertainment, professing Christians will subject themselves to vile, lewd, anti-God behavior and language, while they as Christians abstain from the use of the same language and lifestyles portrayed on the screen. This is inconsistency with a capital I. If you do not use profanity, then don't pay to hear others use it. If you don't take God's name in vain, then don't promote it by endorsing it and financially supporting the ones who profane God. If you do not believe in adultery, homosexuality, etc., then don't laugh at the crude humor and applaud when it is practiced by others. And any woman who bares her body for millions to see is on the level of a harlot and should be prayed for, not exalted and adored as a sex symbol.

I'm not saying bury your head in the sand, but I am saying we should use plain common sense guided by Scripture. **"Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." Beware** what you allow into your heart, **"For from the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks."** Sadly, this simple comic strip of few words, speak volumes.



**THE BIBLE AND THE NEWSPAPER**

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

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

### JUDICIAL CANDIDATES SEEK RIGHT TO FREE SPEECH

(EP News)--Judicial candidates in several states are challenging state ethics rules that forbid their participation in voter guides. They simply want the right to tell voters what organizations stand behind them or which Supreme Court justices they admire. The James Madison Center for Free Speech of Indiana has organized the Judicial Accountability Project to assist the candidates. James Bopp, general counsel for the center, said the states are muzzling the judiciary and limiting the information people can bring to the voting booth. "It's unconstitutional under the First Amendment to have any such prohibition," he said. "The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that the First Amendment protects the right of judicial candidates to announce their views on disputed, legal and political issues." Texas, which allows its judges to be included in voter guides, has an informed electorate, said Kelly Shackelford, president of the Free Market Foundation.

"Voter guides are essential, if people are going to have some way to intelligently vote and get the kind of judges they want," he said. The Judicial Accountability Project is active in eight states, including Indiana, Florida and Pennsylvania. Two judicial candidates in Indiana recently filed suit in a federal court.

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### LOUISIANA SCHOOL SUED AFTER CHRISTIAN CLUB IS DENIED ACCESS TO BUSES

(EP News)--The Alliance Defense Fund (ADF) filed a lawsuit May 1 against a Louisiana school after the Fellowship of Christian Athletes club was denied access to school buses. The school grants non-religious clubs access to the buses. ADF Senior Counsel David Cortman said Calcasieu Parish Public Schools can't deny transportation to an event simply because the club and event have a religious affiliation. "Christian student groups shouldn't be discriminated against because of their beliefs," Cortman said. "All student groups have the same First Amendment rights, and schools cannot deny benefits to one club while granting the same benefits to another."

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### COURT RULES AGAINST ANTI-CHRISTIAN COLLEGE PROGRAM

(EP News)--A federal court has ruled that Georgia Tech's Safe Space training program discriminates against those who hold a biblical view of sexuality. The Alliance Defense Fund (ADF) represented the two

Christian plaintiffs, who were the targets of scorn and ridicule. "A state university cannot elevate one religious belief over another, and that's precisely what they were doing with this program," he said. "They denigrated the religious beliefs of evangelical Christians and others." The court ruled the religious component has to be taken out of the program, including statements that biblical passages have been misinterpreted and that clergy and theologians are softening on homosexuality.

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### HARVARD PROFESSOR: CHILDREN SPOIL HAPPINESS

(EP News)--The more kids you have, the sadder you are likely to be. At least that's what Harvard University psychology professor Daniel Gilbert claims. At today's Happiness and its Causes conference in Sydney, Australia, Gilbert concluded having children will send your marital happiness into a downward spiral. Jenny Tyree, associate marriage analyst at Focus on the Family Action, said it's not about short-term happiness. "In a Pew poll taken last July, 85 percent of people said that their relationship with their children was their greatest source of fulfillment," she said. "I think that says more about the value of children to their parents" than Gilbert's conclusions.

**"Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate"** (Ps. 127:3-5).

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### FBI SAYS GOVERNMENT LOSING FIGHT AGAINST PORN

(EP News)--The popularity of the Internet and the advent of digital photos have boosted child pornography into a \$20 billion-a-year black-market business. Now the FBI and the Department of Justice have come under congressional scrutiny over the handling of child pornography and exploitation. In April, FBI Director Robert Mueller told a House committee that the government is losing the fight against child porn. FBI spokesman Paul Bresson added, "I'm not sure that anywhere around the globe have we conquered this problem. We see a fair amount of activity on the Internet involving exploitation of children. We have police representatives from 21 countries that work with us to help solve this problem." Mueller told the House

♦ (Continued on page 374)

## Bible & Newspaper

(Continued from page 373) ♦

Committee the FBI has nearly 300 agents working on the Innocent Images Program.

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### CALIFORNIA BILL WOULD RESTRICT NONPROFITS

(EP News)--Legislation that would force some nonprofits to record the sexual orientation of board members, as well as the number of grants awarded to homosexual groups, is awaiting a vote in the California Senate. The Assembly passed the Foundation Diversity and Transparency Act – AB 624 -- in January. Under AB 624, foundations with assets over \$250 million would be forced to report the race, gender and sexual preference of its staff, board of directors and grant recipients. Foundations also would be forced to report the number of grants awarded to organizations serving ethnic minority communities and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities. Foundations that don't comply with the law could face legal action, fines and loss of their nonprofit status.

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### MARYLAND HIGH COURT UPHOLDS PARENTAL RIGHTS

(EP News)--The highest court in Maryland decided in favor of parental rights recently, ruling that a lesbian does not have visitation rights to the adopted child of her former lesbian partner. The state does not recognize "de facto parenthood," the court ruled.

Jenny Tyree, associate marriage analyst for Focus on the Family Action, called it a victory for families. "Courts have lately found too many ways to weaken marriage and family law," she said, "but this decision upholds both the law and the fact that children need and deserve the protection of their legal parent."

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### DEMOCRATS GIVE DISCOUNT TO PLANNED PARENTHOOD

(EP News)--Thanks to a Democrat maneuver, Planned Parenthood will receive a discount from drug manufacturers in a bill designed to fund our troops. On May 21, the U.S. Senate voted on an amendment to the War Supplemental Appropriations Bill. Democrats, led by Sen. Barack Obama, had inserted language to help Planned Parenthood into the domestic-spending portion of this troop-funding bill. The Senate passed the amendment 75-22. The provision allows for groups like Planned Parenthood and university health centers to receive discounted prices from drug manufacturers for drugs like the morning-after pill, which may cause an early abortion. Planned Parenthood, the nation's largest abortion provider, received \$330 million in taxpayer money last year.

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### OHIO GROUPS ASK HIGH COURT TO ALLOW PLANNED PARENTHOOD INVESTIGATION

(EP News)--The Alliance Defense

Fund (ADF), on behalf of 27 pro-family organizations, filed a friend-of-the-court brief with the Ohio Supreme Court on May 19 in a case involving Planned Parenthood staffers who failed to report the statutory rape of a 14-year-old girl abused by her school's soccer coach. The 21-year-old coach brought the girl to the Planned Parenthood clinic in Cincinnati to have an abortion after discovering she was pregnant with his child. Neither Planned Parenthood nor the soccer coach notified the parents of the abortion or the sexual relationship. The high court is being asked to reverse an appellate court decision keeping the teenager and her parents from accessing Planned Parenthood records that may show a systematic coverup of statutory rape and other sexual abuse. "The health and safety of young girls trumps Planned Parenthood's desire for secrecy," said Jeff Shafer, senior legal counsel for ADF. "Ohio law mandates that Planned Parenthood report the sexual abuse of minors, and evidence that may reveal the organization's violation of that legal obligation may not be hidden."

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### ARIZONA MARRIAGE AMENDMENT MOVES FORWARD

(EP News)--The Arizona House voted 33-25 May 12 in favor of a constitutional amendment to protect marriage as the union of one man and one woman. If the Senate approves the amendment, it will appear on the November ballot. Cathi Herrod, president of The Center for Arizona Policy, said she anticipates a close vote in the Senate. "Opponents to the marriage amendment in Arizona have done every desperate political maneuver they can think of to block this, to block the Arizona voters from being able to have a say on a definition of marriage," she said. "This isn't about politics. It's about doing what's right, and it's about keeping the family unit being headed by husband and wife." Public opinion polls show 65 percent of Arizonans support traditional marriage.

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### MICHIGAN LEGISLATURE BANS PARTIAL-BIRTH ABORTIONS

(EP News)--The Michigan House on May 27 passed a partial-birth abortion ban. The state Senate, which approved similar legislation in January, now will vote on the House version. A federal law upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court last year already prohibits the abortion procedure, but life advocates say a state law is necessary to ensure enforcement. The proposed legislation would punish doctors who perform the gruesome procedure with up to two years in prison and/or a \$50,000 fine. "This isn't about pro-life or pro-choice, it's about common decency and preventing brutal murder," Rep. Brian Palmer, R-Romeo, told The Detroit News. Democratic Gov. Jennifer Granholm has indicated she may veto the bill.

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### MOST AMERICANS SAY DIVORCE IS MORALLY ACCEPTABLE

(EP News)--A record 70 percent of Americans believe divorce is morally

acceptable, according to Gallup's 2008 Values and Beliefs survey. That's an 11-point increase from seven years ago. Mike McManus, co-founder of Marriage Savers, said two generations of high divorce rates have made divorce the norm in America. "Since 1970, that's 42 million divorces, shattering the lives of 40 million children," he said. "We have the highest divorce rate in the world, and for 70 percent of Americans to say it's morally acceptable is really quite stunning." Of the poll's 16 ethical issues rated for moral acceptability, divorce topped the list, followed by gambling, embryonic stem-cell research, homosexuality and abortion. Extramarital affairs — often a cause of divorce — are at the bottom of the list, with just 7 percent of Americans finding them morally acceptable.

**"And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away. And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder"** (Mark 10:4-9).

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### FEDERAL MARRIAGE AMENDMENT REINTRODUCED

(EP News)--U.S. Rep. Paul Broun, R-Ga., has introduced a constitutional amendment today to protect marriage from redefinition by state and federal judges. The Marriage Protection Amendment is being offered in response to the recent 4-3 decision by the California Supreme Court to redefine marriage to include unions between homosexuals. The amendment, which has failed twice in the House and twice in the Senate, states: "Marriage in the United States shall consist only of the union of a man and a woman." The amendment has received widespread support from Republicans. Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., the likely GOP presidential nominee, was one of just five Republican senators to oppose the amendment in 2004.

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### COLORADO LEGISLATION "TRAMPLES RELIGIOUS FREEDOMS"

(EP News)--The next time you visit Colorado, you may run into members of the opposite sex when you use a public restroom. Under a bill sitting on Gov. Bill Ritter's desk, all "public accommodations" must be open to men, women, bisexuals, transsexuals and "transgendered" individuals. Senate Bill 200 also adds religion and sexual orientation to state nondiscrimination statutes. Supporters claim the bill will prevent discrimination. Critics of the bill say it endangers religious freedom by opening the door for the state to punish any person or organization — including small and home-based businesses — that refuses, for religious or other moral reasons, to offer or sell goods or services to homosexuals, bisexuals,

"transgendered" and transsexual individuals.

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### N.Y. ASSEMBLY ADDS SPECIAL PROTECTIONS FOR "GENDER IDENTITY"

(EP News)--The New York Assembly recently voted in favor of special rights based on "gender identity and expression," according to news reports. The state already grants special protections based on sexual orientation. The Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act (GENDA), which passed 102-33, now goes to the state Senate. The federal Employment Non-Discrimination Act, which would give homosexuals and "transgendered" individuals special rights, is sitting in the U.S. Senate. The House passed it, 235-184.

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### CALIFORNIA MARRIAGE AMENDMENT QUALIFIES FOR NOVEMBER BALLOT

(EP News)--California Secretary of State Debra Bowen today certified the state marriage-protection amendment for the November ballot. The measure would amend the state constitution to define marriage as the union between a man and a woman. "The response from the people of this state has been unprecedented in support of marriage's legacy, by responding with an all-out volunteer signature campaign," said Ron Prentice, CEO of the California Family Council and chairman of the ProtectMarriage.com coalition sponsoring the amendment. "We're so grateful to the over 1.1 million voters who signed the marriage petition." On May 15, the California Supreme Court overturned Proposition 22, declaring a right to same-sex "marriage." Family advocates have asked the court to delay its ruling until the people vote in November. "Passing this amendment is the only way for the people to override the four supreme court judges who want to redefine marriage for our entire society," Prentice said.

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### PEDIATRICIAN SAYS TRY DISCIPLINE BEFORE RITALIN

(EP News)--"Could it be that America would rather give unruly kids a pill than a swat?" That's what Dr. Lawrence Diller asks in a recent article. The behavioral pediatrician in Walnut Creek, Calif., said he thinks Ritalin is prescribed too often. "There's good solid evidence that when you give parents permission to give one or two smacks on the child's bottom if the child defies the rules of the timeout procedure, the family is more often successful with the approach," he told U.S. News & World Report. "Nobody wants to be pro-spanking. I'm not pro-spanking. I just think a well-thought-out spank ain't so bad and shouldn't be banned."

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### NEW YORK LETS TROUBLED KIDS CHOOSE THEIR GENDER

(EP News)--New York's Office of Children and Family Services, which runs the state's juvenile-detention centers, has quietly adopted new rules that cater to

♦ (Continued on page 375)



## Bible & Newspaper

(Continued from page 374) ♦

lesbian, gay, bisexual and "transgender" youth in its custody, The Village Voice reported. "Transgendered" youth can request private sleeping quarters and be called by their chosen name. The new guidelines even allow boys to wear girls' panties and bras, use makeup and shave their legs. The policy shift and new rules, which were approved without fanfare or even a press release, follow a 2006 lawsuit by a "transgendered" kid.

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### VIRGINIA COURT RULES IN FAVOR OF PARENTAL RIGHTS

(EP News)--In a victory for parents' rights, the Virginia Court of Appeals issued a 3-0 decision June 3 rejecting the so-called "de facto" or "psychological" parent doctrine. The court refused to grant visitation to a former same-sex partner, thus affirming the rights of the child's biological mother. Jennifer Siperko and Christine Stadter were in a lesbian relationship when Siperko had a child through artificial insemination. Stadter did not adopt the child, and more than a year after the birth, the couple broke up. Stadter argued she should be considered a "de facto" parent. The "de facto" parent doctrine has been used by same-sex "marriage" activists to undermine marriage and weaken the rights of parents.

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### NATIONAL BRIEFS EUROPEAN COURT TO DECIDE IF CHIMP IS A "PERSON"

(EP News)--Austrian animal-rights activists are fighting to have a 26-year-old chimpanzee legally declared a person so he can be adopted. The European Court of Human Rights has agreed to hear the case. Paula Stibbe wants Matthew to be recognized as a human being so she can become his legal guardian. Austrian law limits guardianship to humans. The case could set legal precedent for apes, and possibly other animals, to receive the rights, protections, and even medical, financial and social benefits of humans, DailyTech.com reported. Wesley Smith, a senior fellow at the Discovery Institute, said giving constitutional rights to animals and plants will open Pandora's Box. "Chimp personhood is a primary goal that animal-right activists seek to attain and then use as a wrecking ball to disintegrate human exceptionalism," Smith wrote on his blog. "Once a court declares a chimpanzee to be a full person, that ruling would make chimps, in at least some regards, our legal equals. ... And when it happens ... it will be a moral earthquake that will harm humankind profoundly."

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### SWITZERLAND CENTER HELPS NEARLY 900 PEOPLE KILL THEMSELVES

(EP News)--Switzerland's suicide center Dignitas reported that it has helped 868 people kill themselves since it opened 10 years ago. In the last two years, 335 people killed

themselves -- 85 percent of them foreigners. Swiss law allows agencies to assist with suicides for "honorable reasons," but they cannot profit from the deaths. However, Dignitas admits to charging clients nearly \$10,000, in addition to a membership fee. "It is imperative that countries support suicide prevention strategies for their most vulnerable citizens," Alex Schadenberg, executive director of the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition-Canada, wrote on his blog. "We must recognize that a caring society protects its vulnerable citizens at their greatest time of need."



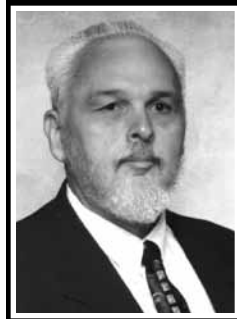
## Gabriel's Seventy Weeks

Curtis Pugh  
of Bocsa, Romania

Before considering the seventy weeks, let us note three things by way of introduction. First of all, I have elected to title this piece "Gabriel's Seventy Weeks" because of three things. It was to Gabriel that this revelation was first given. It was Gabriel who was sent with this prophecy, and it was Gabriel who first spoke the words of our text to Daniel.

Second, both as an auditor and a reader I have received help on this passage from various men over the years. I cannot give them all proper credit. However, I call attention to Alva J. McClain's little book, *Daniel's Prophecy of the 70 Weeks* from which I shall draw considerably. This book of 73 pages was first published in 1940. I first read it about 1963. As far as I know, in all these years, no one has successfully contradicted its main points. McClain was a protestant and writes as one regarding what he calls "the church," but otherwise this work is very helpful.

The third thing I would call to your attention is the importance of this passage. I am convinced that no one lacking a proper understanding of these seventy weeks can have a proper understanding of biblical prophecy. One tremendously important thing that a correct understanding of this passage will do is save us from the terrible error of date setting! These seventy weeks are the God-given framework over which the whole fabric of Bible prophecy is draped. If I may speak in this fashion, I have found that the tent of Bible prophecy thus formed has no leaks. And I have found that Gabriel's framework and the whole fabric of Scripture taken together make up a pre-millennial and pre-tribulational tent. I am well aware



that there are godly Baptist brethren who hold a different eschatological position than I do. I respect both them and their positions. On occasion I have examined their positions in as honest a way as I know how, but I have not yet been shaken from this eschatological tent -- in large measure because of the framework made known to Daniel by the angel Gabriel -- our text.

Let us look at Gabriel's prophecy. He said: **"...O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to shew thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision. Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate"** (Dan. 9:22-27). Consider with me very briefly the following nine major things that are taught in this prophecy.

1. THE SUBJECT OF THIS PROPHECY: Gabriel said plainly to Daniel that the entire prophecy has to do with **"thy people,"** and **"thy holy city"** (v. 24). These weeks, then, are exclusively Jewish! These weeks are not determined upon Gentile world powers, nor are the Lord's Churches mentioned by Gabriel! This prophecy has nothing to do with them. In our present day Israel has been **"broken off"** and specific elect Gentiles have been grafted in (Rom. 11:17). During this era in which we live, except for a small remnant of elect Jews, God is not dealing with Israel as far as salvation is concerned (Rom. 11:5; Acts 28:28). Neither is He dealing favorably with them as a nation except in His kind providence. I say again, this prophecy of the seventy weeks has nothing to say about the Lord's Churches! They are just not there! In fact, the only Gentiles mentioned in

this prophecy are the **"prince that shall come"** and his **"people"** and perhaps the **"many"** with whom the covenant shall be confirmed may include some Gentiles. So we may with certainty say that this prophecy pertains exclusively to the Jews! Don't look for the Churches or details or events pertaining to them in these seventy weeks. We will grievously err if we try to fit the Lord's program for His Churches in either the first sixty-nine weeks or in the seventieth week of this prophecy for God's message is: **"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city..."** (9:24).

2. TWO DIFFERENT PRINCES ARE SPOKEN ABOUT IN THIS PROPHECY. Do not confuse these two princes. To confuse them is to confuse the message of this prophecy. The first prince mentioned is **"Messiah the Prince"** (v. 25). Obviously this is a reference to the Lord Jesus Christ in His princely or kingly office. The second prince mentioned is **"the prince of the people that shall come."** This man is a prince of those people that Gabriel said would come in the future and destroy both Jerusalem and the temple located there. This makes it clear that this second **"prince"** cannot be the Lord Jesus Christ. While the event was yet future in the days of Daniel, we can look back and identify these people of whom it was prophesied that they **"...shall come (and) shall destroy the city and the sanctuary..."** (v. 26). This event is past! History is clear! It was the Roman army under Titus that destroyed both the city of Jerusalem and the temple in A.D. 70. So this coming prince shall be from the Roman Empire. Some have suggested that he will be a Jew. That presents no difficulty at all. Paul was both a **"Hebrew of the Hebrews"** and a Roman citizen as well (Phil. 3:5; Acts 22:25, 26). It is possible for a man to be ethnically a Jew (or of certain other ethnic groups) and be a citizen of the Roman Empire, revived or otherwise, at the same time. It seems abundantly clear that these two "princes" are distinct individuals: we must not confuse them.

3. CONSIDER THE ENTIRETY OF THE TIME PERIOD WITH WHICH THIS PROPHECY DEALS. This time period is exactly **"seventy weeks"** (v. 24). This time period is divided into three smaller periods (vs. 25-27). First there is a period of seven weeks. Then there is a period of **"threescore and two weeks"** or sixty-two weeks. This is followed by a period of one week. Thus we have a total of seventy weeks. Some have tried to make the **"weeks"** mean weeks of days, making each day stand for a year. This has resulted in only confusion. If we remember two things we can understand the meaning of the word **"week."** First, the word used here for **"weeks"** is literally **"sevens."** The Hebrew language uses the word **"sevens"** to mean two things relative to time. The

♦ (Continued on page 376)

## Gabriel's Seventy

(Continued from page 375) ♦

word can mean a week of days such as we commonly speak of today. Second, it is also used of a week of years: i.e. a period of seven years. When Jacob's uncle Laban had given him his older daughter to marriage instead of her younger sister whom Jacob wanted, Laban said about Rachel, the desired daughter, "**Fulfil her week, and we will give thee this also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years**" (Gen. 29:27). Here Laban makes it perfectly clear that "**her week**" was "**yet seven other years.**" Afterwards we read, "**And Jacob did so, and fulfilled her week: and he gave him Rachel his daughter to wife also**" (Gen. 29:28). Remember also that Israel had by Divine law not only a week of days but also a week of years (Ex. 16:26; 31:15; 23:11). Every seventh year was a Sabbath Year just as every seventh day was a Sabbath Day! So Daniel and the Jews would have understood that Gabriel was not necessarily talking about a week of days, but rather may have meant a week of years. Since the events of this prophecy obviously cannot be made to fit into seventy weeks of days and actually do fit into seventy weeks of years, we conclude that each "week" was actually a week of seven years.

4. WE KNOW WITH ABSOLUTE CERTAINTY WHEN THE WHOLE PERIOD OF SEVENTY WEEKS BEGAN. We are clearly told in verse 25 that, "**from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks...**" or sixty-nine weeks. This sixty-nine week period is obviously to be followed by the seventieth week, but not necessarily immediately. By locating the precise date in history when a decree was given to rebuild the city of Jerusalem we can know when the seventy weeks began. There were several royal decrees issued, but the earlier ones related to reconstruction of the temple. According to the words of Gabriel, we are to look for the decree that authorized the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem. Nehemiah records such a decree and says that this decree was given "**...in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king...**" (Neh. 2:1). This date is one of the best-known dates in history. Alva J. McClain writes: "Even the Encyclopaedia Britannica, certainly not biased in favor of prophecy, sets the date of Artaxerxes' accession as 465 B.C.; and therefore his twentieth year would be 445 B.C." (Alva J. McClain, op cit) p. 24. So we know when the seventy weeks began – right down to the very day, the first day of Nisan, for according to the custom of the time if no specific day was mentioned, the first day of the month was meant.

5. WE KNOW ALSO WITH ABSOLUTE CERTAINTY THE EVENT THAT MARKS THE END OF THE SIXTY-NINE WEEKS. Gabriel said, "**...from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks...**" (v. 26). If we add the seven weeks and the sixty-two weeks we have sixty-nine weeks. This total of sixty-nine weeks shall be "**unto the Messiah the Prince.**" The event that marks the end of the sixty-nine weeks is the appearance of "**Messiah the Prince.**" We have not the space to prove it here, but it can be demonstrated, and has been so demonstrated, that this sixty-nine week period ended with the Lord Jesus being received as "*prince*" or *King*" on the day of His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. On that momentous day the Jewish people recognized the "*Messiah*" as their "*King*." John writes that the people "**...cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord**" (John 12:13). They called Him "**the King of Israel.**" Matthew 21:9, 15 in dealing with this event calls Him "**the Son of David**" and as the son of a king is a prince, so Christ, the Messiah of Israel, was recognized as the royal "*prince*." This part of the prophecy has been fulfilled. The sixty-nine weeks are past!

6. TWO THINGS WERE PROPHESED TO TAKE PLACE AFTER THE SIXTY-NINE WEEKS. Gabriel said, "**And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined**" (v. 25). The two events that are to take place "*after*" the sixty-nine weeks (7 weeks plus 62 weeks) are not said to be included in the last or seventieth week. Nowhere does Gabriel even hint that the two events mentioned here occur in the seventieth week! They follow the sixty-ninth week, but it is clear that they do not take place in the seventieth. Thus we have clearly introduced to us the idea that there is a time gap between the sixty-ninth and the seventieth week. The duration of this time gap is not stated. Any serious study of prophecy will show that Old Testament prophets were not concerned with events foreign to their subject, nor to the time that might intervene between prophesied events. They often prophesied future mountain-peak events without any mention or regard for events that would occur in the valleys between the mountain-peaks. Thus Gabriel, speaking regarding Israel, does not speak fully about the time gap between the sixty-ninth week and the seventieth one. Most of the events in this time gap do not concern Israel, but rather the Gentiles and so are rightly ignored in this prophecy. Paul speaks of this time – a

time when Israel has been set aside. That period of time began between the sixty-ninth and seventieth week with Israel's rejection of their Messiah (Romans 11:20). This time period will last, "**until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in**" (Romans 11:25). Gabriel does speak of two notable events that take place during the time gap that has been introduced to us here. He speaks of them because they are events directly related to Daniel's people, Israel. First he says, Messiah shall be cut off or killed, but not for Himself, i.e. He shall die on behalf of others. Second the people ("*of the prince that shall come*") shall destroy both Jerusalem and the temple (v. 25). There are other events during this time-gap that we call the Church age or the "**acceptable year of the Lord**" (Luke 4:19), but they are not pertinent to our present discussion. Gabriel said the death of the Lord Jesus Christ and the destruction of Jerusalem take place after the sixty-ninth week. Because we know that the death of Christ and the destruction of Jerusalem are past, we know that the sixty-ninth week is past.

7. WE KNOW WHEN THE LAST OR SEVENTIETH WEEK WILL BEGIN. We are told that sometime "*after*" this time period "*he*" shall confirm a treaty having to do with Israel (and perhaps other nations) for "*one week*" (v. 27). Thus we have introduced another "*week*." Since only seventy weeks are prophesied regarding Israel and we have seen that the first sixty-nine are finished and past, this "*week*" must be the final or seventieth week. Thus the making of this seven-year treaty with Israel marks the beginning of the seventieth and final week of this prophecy. Since no "*prince*" has yet made a seven-year treaty with Israel, the last or seventieth of these weeks has not yet begun. However, this question remains, just whom shall we identify as the "*he*" in verse 27? Some have tried to say that this pronoun refers to "*Messiah*" in the preceding verse with the result that this week is understood to be past already. Here is the question: does the "*he*" refer to Christ or another "*prince*?" Regarding this "**he**" in the phrase "**he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week,**" Alva J. McClain writes, "Grammatically, it might refer to either; although presumption favors the latter because he is mentioned last before the pronoun." He continues: "However, there are certain other considerations which are decisive. First we are told that "*he*" will make a firm covenant with the Jewish nation for a period of one week, or seven years. Now, there is absolutely nothing recorded in the earthly ministry of our Lord which even remotely resembles such a covenant. Those who hold that Messiah is the maker of this seven-year covenant have never been able to produce the evidence to show the existence of such a covenant between our

Lord and the Jews. They cannot point to the place in history where it began nor where it has ended. Second, the theory that this covenant was made by our Lord when He began His earthly ministry and that by His death He caused the Jewish sacrifice to cease, breaks down because there is no reference to such a covenant in the Gospel records and also because the death of Christ did not cause the Jewish sacrifices to cease. They continued, in fact, until the destruction of Jerusalem nearly forty years later. And, since according to this theory Christ died "in the midst of the week," the sacrifices should have ceased immediately. But they did not. In the third place, to insist that Messiah was the maker of this seven-year covenant necessarily puts the entire Seventieth Week in the *past*, immediately following the Sixty-ninth Week. But this is impossible... The Seventieth Week is still in the future, not in the past, according to the Word of our Lord Himself in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew." (Alva J. McClain, op cit) pp. 51, 52. For the record, Christ did indeed indicate that the seventieth week of this prophecy was future when He said, "**When ye therefore shall see...**" (Matt. 24:15). Surely no one will suggest that Christ told His Jewish hearers to be looking for an event ("**the abomination of desolation**") that is already past! Such an idea is foolish and so it is erroneous to think that either part or all of the final week is past. This seventieth week, which is yet future, gives us the chronological framework for all those prophetic events recorded in Revelation chapters 6 to 19. Upon this Divinely-given framework the whole fabric of biblical prophecy can be fitted with precision and completeness. Thus this prophecy is indeed one of two keys to understanding the Book of Revelation – the other key being the God-given outline of that Book found in Revelation 1:19. So we see that the last or seventieth week will begin with a definite event: a Roman prince making a seven-year treaty with Israel.

8. WE KNOW WHAT WILL HAPPEN HALFWAY THROUGH THE SEVENTIETH WEEK. Verse 27 says: "**...in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate...**" This is the very thing the Lord warned His Jewish hearers about in Matthew 24:15, i.e. "**the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet**" which shall occur in the reconstructed Jewish temple in Jerusalem. Such horrific pollution of the temple shall take place halfway through this final seven-year period that the sacrifices shall cease. Note that because the Lord Jesus said that this event is future, the middle of the seventieth week must be future.

9. WE KNOW WHAT WILL HAPPEN  
♦ (Continued on page 377)



## Gabriel's Seventy

(Continued from page 376) ♦

WHEN THIS FINAL OR SEVENTIETH WEEK IS COMPLETED. There will be a time of unparalleled prosperity and blessing for Israel. We may not understand all that is included in this prophecy, but we surely can see that sin will be done away with and all will be well with Israel. A part of verse 24 says these seventy weeks will accomplish six specific things: i.e. "...to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy." These things have not happened – clear proof that the seventieth week is not past. What glory it will be when Christ has brought in "everlasting righteousness!" When prophecy has been sealed up because of its fulfillment and when the "most Holy" shall be anointed will be nothing short of the restoration of Israel to God's favor. It will be the time when the prophecy made to Mary shall come to pass: "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:32, 33).

The first sixty-nine weeks are past. In these weeks God dealt graciously only with His elect nation, Israel, except for a few individual Gentiles. In the future seventieth and final week of God's prophetic framework He shall again be dealing with Israel and because of this, there is no cause to think that the Lord's Churches will be present during this time. Jesus said, "The law and the prophets were until John..." (Luke 16:16). What had previously been God-ordained worship became merely "the Jews religion" (Gal. 1:13, 14). The Jews were judicially blinded and shall remain so "until the fulness of the gentiles be come in" (Rom. 11:25). When that "fulness" has come about, God will again turn to the Jews. While God has a present day Church-age program, He has not permanently cast Israel away. Romans 11:23 is clear on this point. Speaking of Israel, Paul wrote, "And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again." And again Paul writes, "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take

away their sins" (Romans 11:25-27). There is yet a "seventieth week" ahead for Israel! God has a covenant with them! When God is finished dealing with the Gentiles in this Church age, He shall, after they experience great tribulation (Jer. 30:7), graft Israel back in and do for her all those things prophesied. When "the fulness of the Gentiles be come in," then and only then, "all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." What a glorious time is ahead when God "shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob."



## Is Hell A Myth?

By Roy Mason  
(1894 - 1978)

"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God" (Ps. 9:17).

Is there such a place as hell? And is there a personal devil? Or are both hell and the devil only the creation of superstitious and ignorant minds? Can we of the twentieth century still hold to belief in these things, or have we reached the place where we can no longer hold to them? I am quite frank to any that I, for one, believe fully in the doctrine of hell and eternal punishment. If I did not believe in these absolutely without any reservation whatsoever, I would most certainly quit the ministry, and quit at once, for back behind all of my preaching and all of my Christian efforts, as a background, is the belief that men are hastening toward hell and an eternity of suffering just as rapidly as time can carry them. And my belief in hell and future punishment is not merely founded upon superstition, either. I have what I consider to be good and sufficient reasons for my beliefs. Some of these I expect to give you presently. Some there are who would have us believe that hell is a myth and that the devil is just merely a mythical character, like Santa Claus, for instance. Some time ago I heard a story of a boy who had become quite skeptical. As his Sunday school teacher went on to tell the class about hell and the devil, this boy sat with a smile of half-derision on his face. When the teacher had finished he said, "Aw---they ain't no devil. It's just like Santa Claus, it's paw."

Of course, belief in the devil and in hell stands or falls together, because certainly if there is no personal devil there is likewise no hell. Any place inhabited by

such a character as the devil is described as being could hardly be less than a hell, don't you think? If there were no hell, then a devil and such characters as his followers must be, would not have much trouble in creating a hell all their own.

Now, before I give you my reasons for believing in the existence of a hell, I want to consider the objections that are commonly raised by people who profess not to believe in the existence of such a place. There may be other objections than those I shall mention, but they are the ones that I have commonly heard made. I desire to face these objections frankly and fairly.

The first objection, and one that I have seen and heard repeatedly raised, is this: *God is too merciful to let anyone go to hell.* Let me ask you, what do you know about God, or about His character? Isn't it true that you get all of your information from the Bible? This same Bible tells us that there is a hell. By what rule of interpretation do you accept the Bible's teaching on one point and reject its teachings on another? God is merciful, that is true, but let us remember that God is also just. Let us also remember that God never sends anyone to hell. If any man ever goes to hell it will be because he, of his own will and volition, voluntarily chose hell as his portion, instead of heaven and eternal life. When God made man, there was one of two things possible for him to do; either to make him with no power of will of his own---just a machine---or else to make him a free being with the power to choose between good and evil. God made man with the power to make choices for himself, and, that being the case; man becomes responsible for his own actions and his own choices and must abide the consequences in case he chooses the wrong. Let us suppose that I am standing on the bank of a river, I and my son, who has grown to be a man. I see a man drowning in the river, and I cannot swim, but my son can. I send him out into the water in an attempt to rescue the man, but instead of permitting himself to be saved, the man fights off my son---strikes him a blow that stuns him such that he sinks beneath the water and drowns. Should I be expected to do any more toward rescuing the man than that? I have given the life of my own son in an attempt to save the man from death. If he drowns in spite of all my efforts and in spite of the efforts of my son to save his life, whose fault is it? Listen: that man, who talks about God being too merciful to permit anyone to be lost, forgets that the man who goes to hell has sinned against the mercy and love of God, and has refused to make use of God's supreme effort to save him from his danger. A man can die and go to hell in spite of God's mercy if he wants to, and that is exactly what everyone that goes to hell does.

Again, another objection that is often

raised to the Bible doctrine of hell is this: *A good and merciful God would not suffer His children to spend eternity in torment.* I agree with those who raise this objection. We cannot conceive of a God of love sending, or permitting, his children to go to torment. But the point at which I disagree with the objector is in regard to who are the children of God. Many people assume that God is the Father of all men. There is, in fact, no doctrine that is more popular in our day than that of the "Universal Fatherhood of God and the Universal Brotherhood of Man." But is it true? It absolutely is not. If God is the Father of all men, then hell is an absolute impossibility and an insult to God and to man. "But how can you deny that God is the Father of all?" I have had people to ask me, "Didn't He create everybody?" Yes, He did, but there is a vast difference between creatorhood and fatherhood. God made the devil, didn't He? Is He, then, the Father of the devil? If God is the father of everything that He created, then He is the father of every old mule, every cat, every dog, every skunk, every tree, every cabbage, and so on. It is not right to confound creatorhood with fatherhood. A certain preacher tells the story of how once upon one occasion, after he had preached on hell, a certain woman approached him and said, "You are a father, and I am sure that you love your children." "Yes," said the man, "I do." "Then I suppose that if you could ease the pain and sorrow of your child you would do so?" "Yes," said the preacher, "I would." "Well, what would you think of a father who could ease the pain and sorrow of a suffering child, and who would not?" "Why," said the man, "I think he would be a tyrant and a monster." "I am glad to hear you say so," said the woman, "for you see that is what you are making God out to be. God could never see His children in hell and in torment. He would be a monster if He did." The preacher said, "Lady, there is just one point on which you are mistaken. God hasn't a child in hell, never had one and will never have one. Moreover, there are none on the road there. All of God's children are either in heaven or on the road there---one or the other. The people who go to hell are the devil's children. God as a father has a home for His children, and the devil has a home for his. God is only the Father of those who believe on and trust Jesus Christ as their Savior" (John 1:11-12; Gal. 3:26).

Again, let me note another objection to hell that many people raise. It is this: They say that it is *unreasonable for us to believe that people are to be punished for all eternity for the things they did during the short space of time that they lived here.* That is a very plausible objection. But let us just think for a moment and we will come to see the truth about the matter. The person who dies a lost sinner and

♦ (Continued on page 378)

## Is Hell A Myth?

(Continued from page 377) ◊

goes into hell, goes into that place still a sinner with all the tendencies to sin that they ever had active. Now, if they lived in sin in this world, where there are many good influences, is there any reason to think that they would no longer sin after reaching hell, where every good person and every good influence had been removed? Certainly not. In hell they would go on sinning forever. Thus sinning in eternity, they would be guilty of eternal sin and deserving of eternal punishment.

Then again, someone else objects to hell *because of the Bible's teaching about fire*. They say that they can't understand how a person in the world to come can be tormented in "literal fire." That objection grows out of the failure to think. Let me ask you this question: In describing hell, didn't the writer of Scripture have to express himself in language and in terms capable of being understood by human beings? The only way either heaven or hell could possibly be described to the human mind, so as to mean anything at all, was for the description to be couched in terms understandable to the human intellect. Consequently, heaven is described to us as containing those things that are most beautiful to us here in this world, and the most precious. Hell is described to us by means of terms that convey the idea of supreme suffering, horror, agony and woe. If you should ask me the question, "Do you believe in hell as a place of fire?" I should answer, "Yes." It seems to me but reasonable to believe that hell will contain fire, or else something that corresponds to it so closely that to the human mind it could not have been properly described in any other way or by any other term. And I say to you, we do an exceedingly dangerous as well as a foolish thing when we, with our puny little minds, rise up against what God has revealed in His Word, and attempt to say that it is impossible for this or that to be, just because we don't happen to know the how of it all.

And now I want to take a little time to tell you some of the reasons as to *why I believe in the existence of hell. I believe in it, first of all, because I believe the Bible, and the Bible teaches the existence of hell too plainly for any honest man to deny.* The Bible is absolutely the only book in this world that has any creditable claim to divine inspiration. No other book on earth even begins to bear the stamp of having come from God. I have read the Koran, the writings of Confucius, the sacred books of India, the Book of Mormon, Mrs. Eddy's book on Christian Science. I have even struggled through such a collection of bunk as Darwin's Origin of the Species, but in none of these do I find anything to intimate that

they are divinely inspired. The Bible is the only book that reveals God and that furnishes the human race with any adequate conception of a Supreme Being. The same Bible that reveals God tells us in plain, unmistakable terms about hell. Either there is a hell, or else the Bible is a lie, one or the other. There is no escape from this position.

Again, I believe in the existence of hell because *Jesus Christ said there is a hell.* I believe that Christ was truthful, and that He knew exactly what He was talking about. All over the world today we have men who claim to hold Jesus in great admiration. All admit that He was a great character. They say that He was the world's supreme teacher, and they quote many of His teachings, but when it comes to what He taught about hell and future punishment, they ignore that--they omit that. Why? Simply because they don't want to believe it. Such men know that if there is a hell they will go there, so they deny it. But listen: a fact cannot be altered, no matter how many times it is denied. If Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and He is, then there is a hell. You may deny it, but that won't change matters one bit. Fire burns whether I believe it or not. Poison kills whether I believe it or not. Frost freezes whether I believe it or not. Two and two make four whether I believe it or not. Hell is a reality whether I believe it or not. I land right into hell if I reject Christ, whether I believe it or not.

Once more, I believe in the existence of hell *because I do not believe that Jesus Christ was a fool.* To deny hell is to make Jesus the most foolish person that ever walked the earth. He claimed that He left heaven with all of its glory in order to come to this earth to save men. "Save men from what?" If there is no hell, then there was no danger, and there was nothing to be saved from. Wasn't it ridiculous for Jesus to permit Himself to be foully murdered unless there was some reason for it? He said that He didn't have to give up His life. "**No man taketh it from me,**" He said, "**I lay it down of myself.**" He told Pilate that He could speak the word and God the Father would come to His rescue with ten legions of angels. Why did He lay down His life? He claimed that He gave His life in order that all who believe in Him may not perish but may have eternal life. And unless men were in real danger of perishing--perishing in hell, at that--then the death of Christ was a useless, bloody tragedy. Either there is a hell, and men are in imminent danger of going there, and His death offers the only way to escape, or else Jesus didn't know what He was talking about and was laboring under self-delusion, one or the other.

Then again, I believe in the existence of hell because, apart from the Bible and divine revelation, *the human reason demands the existence of such a place.* This world is a place where there are all sorts

of inequalities. Injustice of all kinds is constantly being perpetrated. Will any person dare to assert that everyone gets exactly what they deserve in this life? No, for everybody knows that they don't. Then isn't it but reasonable to believe that sometimes, somewhere, all such matters will be adjusted and men will get exactly what is coming to them? Some months ago the whole nation was horrified when the sons of two Chicago millionaires took a boy, the son of another millionaire, and deliberately killed him with no reason than that they wanted to experience how it feels to be a murderer. There was money enough behind them to save them from the electric chair, and it will not be long until they will both be turned loose. Can you believe that those two cold-blooded murderers will never be brought to justice? Will God turn those two red-handed wretches into the same place with His people to live with them forever? Just a few months ago, the whole State of Kentucky was filled with horror and revulsion over one of the most brutal crimes that has ever stained the record of our state. A Negro in Fayette County, apparently with no good reason, killed a man, brutally murdered the man's two children, in front of the very eyes of their mother, assaulted the mother, and then shot her in an attempt to kill her. You just let that crime soak into your mind for a moment, will you? Can you think of or conceive of anything more brutal, more horrible, more awful than that? Then will someone stand and watch a fiend like that murder innocent, helpless children--spill their blood before the horrified gaze of the screaming mother, and tell me that there is no hell? If the Bible had nothing to say about the existence of hell, I would be forced to say that there "ought" to be one for such characters. I don't believe that a just God is going to turn a wretch like that unregenerate into the place where His children have to live throughout eternity.

Did you ever read Josephus' History of the Jews? There is given there the story of the persecution carried on by that wicked and notorious ruler, Antiochus Epiphanes. Never have I read of such brutalities as was carried on by that inhuman fiend. He had people put to death with every conceivable torture that his demoniacal brain could devise. Josephus tells of a mother that had seven sons. The mother was tied and each of the sons was in turn put to death in some different way before her eyes. One was boiled to death, one was cut up and fried, another was baked, another was roasted, and so on. He goes on to tell of how mothers were crucified and of how their babies were run through with a sword and their dead bodies hung around the neck of the mother as she suffered the tortures of crucifixion. You tell me that there is no hell for such a monster as a man who would torture human beings like that!

Do you think that a just God would turn a fiend like that into heaven to live with His children throughout eternity? Why, it is preposterous for anyone to think so!

A lot of people talk as though they think they are better than God. Yet in these civilized lands we have jails and penitentiaries. Isn't it a shame to put men like the Fayette County murderer I described, in a place like that? Isn't it awful to rob men and women of their freedom and shut them up in jail? Isn't it a shame that civilization should permit such a thing? Many times a man is jailed or electrocuted for only one crime. "But," you say, "Don't you know that these people are lawbreakers? It is for their own good and the safety of the country and the people that we put them in jails and prisons." Yes, I understand that, and I also understand that hell is simply God's prison house where the incorrigibly lawless, the criminal and the vile are shut out from the society of those who are the pure and good. What sort of place would this world be, anyhow, if there were no prisons, no asylums, no jails, and if all criminals were just turned free to murder, pillage, burn, mangle and destroy? Why, this world would be almost a hell. Nothing would be safe, and we would be living in a constant reign of terror.

Then we have all over the land great asylums, where many nice, respectable people are taken. Isn't it a shame that they are taken there and shut up? "Why," you say, "they are crazy, they are not responsible, they are taken there for their own good and for the good of society at large." Yes, I understand. But let me ask you, "Has God such a place for mad people in eternity?" Certainly He has. Surely a man is mad--is crazy--who will damn his own soul by willfully rejecting Jesus Christ as his Savior in spite of the love of God and the work of the Holy Spirit. Listen: maybe you have never thought of it in this way before. What sort of a world would eternity be if all the people who will not have God to be their God, will not have His law as their guide, will not have His Son, Christ Jesus, to reign over them, should be turned loose to go where they pleased and do as they pleased? Why, such an outfit would turn God's heaven into a hell! Oh, no, men and women! Hell is God's penitentiary, hell is God's madhouse. And those that continue to rebel against God, to break His laws, to refuse His Son, will go there just as certainly as God lives. God has an asylum for you, lost man or woman, if you will and choose to go there! God never sends any person there. They send themselves there. Suppose I go out here and kill someone, and for that am sentenced to prison. Who is to blame? I am. Is it the law that sends me there? Not in the truest sense it isn't--I have sent myself there. If I had acted right

◊ (Continued on page 379)



## Is Hell A Myth?

(Continued from page 378) ♦

the law would never have disturbed me in any way. If the Bible is true, then God never prepared hell for mankind. The Bible says that hell was prepared for the devil and his angels. If a man or woman prefers the company of the devil, prefers to live for and to serve the devil, then they have no kick coming if they are forced to spend eternity in the presence of the devil. Every person who ever goes into hell will have to trample upon the Bible's warnings, spatter through the blood of Christ, and pass right by the Cross of Calvary. God has literally blockaded the road that leads to hell, and the person that goes is without excuse.

But someone comes to me with another question: "Where is hell?" I am not going to try to give you the locality. Just where in all this boundless universe hell is located doesn't concern me. Some people say that the only hell that there is, is right here on earth. When they say that they pit their own puny minds against what God's Word says. This present earth is not the hell the Bible speaks about by a thousand miles. Where, then, is hell? I will put the answer in this way: "Hell is at the end of every Christ-rejecting, Christless life. You may be a church member, you may be very devout in the performance of what you think to be your Christian duties; you may give your body to be burned; you may preach with the eloquence of an angel, but if you have not Christ in your life--if your whole dependence for eternity is not on Him, then you are just as certain of hell as anything in this universe can be certain.

And listen: Some folks are all confused on this whole question. That Negro that I described a while ago, that killed that man, wife and children in cold blood--will he go to hell? "Certainly," you say, "if there is a hell, it looks like he is deserving of a place there." Well, here is a man who lives a good, clean, moral life, pays his debts, is nice and kind to his neighbors and friends, is a good citizen, good neighbor, good friend. But with all that he is not a Christian and has never received Christ as a personal Savior. He dies. What about him? Does he to go hell just like the vile murderer I mentioned a moment ago? Many people are extremely hesitant about saying that he does, but if there is any truth in the Bible's teaching he does. He goes to the same hell as the murderer, the thief, the libertine, the harlot, and all other criminals and lost sinners. Here is the thing that many people fail to realize. We are all sinners. We are all guilty--even the best among us, of breaking the laws of God. We are all in our natural state, sinners, deserving of hell. God has provided a way for the pardon and the salvation of hell-deserving sinners, through faith in His Son, whom He sent to be our Savior. Don't you see,

the person who will not have Christ as a Savior has repudiated the plan--the only plan that God has devised for the salvation of lost people? So the man who refuses Christ is bound to go to hell. There is simply no way around it. He may not receive the punishment that the hardened criminal will receive--I don't know about that, but he will go to the same hell.

And what kind of a place is hell? I haven't the time or space to give you a description of the place. If I had the time, I should not want to draw upon my imagination, and simply try to depict something to scare you with. I wouldn't have to do that. The description of hell given in the Word of God is horrible enough to make anyone want to shun it. A lot of people decry what they term "hell-scared" religion, but let me tell you, men and women--you who are not Christians--you ought to be scared--you ought to be scared about your condition enough to cause you to do something about it. Jesus said, "**Fear him that hath power to cast both body and soul into hell.**" There are thousands of people who live through a hard struggle here in this world. They work hard every day, never have very much, and, to sum it all up, there are more sorrows and hardships in life than there is joy and pleasure. About all folks that have to look forward to is the better life out yonder. And if they haven't that, then it would be better if they had never been born. To live in privation and toil here, then to die and go on out into hell, is like jumping out of the frying pan into the fire. It is bad enough here in this world, where there are many good people and many good things, but if we are to believe the Bible, hell is ten thousand times worse than anything we know here. There, in hell, will be all of the criminals, all of the vile, the depraved, the moral lepers, the scum of the earth that have lived through all ages. Here there is always some hope, some joy. There in hell will be no hope, no joy--nothing that is good, pure wholesome, happy or glad. Cut off, cut off forever from all contact with God and with good people, doomed, doomed forever to live in that life that is worse than death--that is the state and condition that awaits every Christ-rejecting person that leaves this world and this life.

And now may I, in the closing moment of this sermon, dwell upon the *one way of escape*? I have already indicated it. May I repeat the truth that there is no need that any should perish, no need that any person should go to hell? Jesus Christ the just has died for you, the unjust; He was wounded for your transgressions; He was bruised for your iniquities. Surely I am not speaking to anyone today who will go on to hell with his eyes open and his feet stained in the blood of Christ. For your own sake, and your soul's sake, let me urge you, if you are not right with God, if you are not ready for eternity, get right by receiving Christ and by placing your case

in His hands.

"In the north of Scotland, where the main line of a certain railroad crosses a great ravine or gully, is a fearful looking abyss. The viaduct that bridged it was one of the wonders of the North. One night a fearful storm raged over that district. The little stream or burn that meandered under the viaduct was turned into a raging mad torrent. A young Highland shepherd lad sheltered his sheep as best he could for the night. In the morning, long before dawn, he set out to see how they had fared. As he made his way up the hillside, he noticed, to his horror, that the central column had gone and that the bridge was broken. He knew that the mail train was due, and that if not warned she would be dashed to pieces and many lives lost. He looked at the raging torrent. He wondered if he could get across. The thought of the danger of so many urged him on. He plunged in and made his way to the other side. He was battered and baffled and breathless and bleeding when he got to the other side. He made his way up as best he could, wondering if he would be in time. As soon as he reached the rails he heard the 'pound, pound' of the mighty engine. He stood and beckoned wildly, but all he saw was the hand of the engineer beckoning him out of the way. He was making up lost time. The train came on nearer and nearer, and still he stood beckoning to stop. At last it came to where he was. He flung himself in front of the engine. The driver put on the brakes suddenly and managed to stop the train almost in its own length. The stop was so sudden that the passengers were awakened and came out to see what was the matter. When they could see nothing they were very angry, but the driver said, "It has been a close shave this time. We might all have been lost." And when they saw how near they were to the ragged edge of the broken bridge, their faces blanched. The driver said, "Come with me and I will show you the one who saved us tonight." They went with him back along the track a little way, and there they saw the mangled remains of the young Highland shepherd laddie. 'If he had not died for us,' said the engine-driver, 'we would all have perished tonight'.

"That is what the Lord Jesus did for us on the cross. He flung Himself between us and wrath and hell. He died for us or we would have died. What base ingratitude it would have been if they had not felt grateful for what that lad did for them! But what baser ingratitude on your part to spurn His love and make light of His death on the cross. Tell me, you will not rush over His body to hell, will you? Why should you perish? There is no need. Receive Him. Trust Him. Believe Him, and you shall never perish. But if you spurn His love and mercy you will surely perish. May God incline your hearts to come to Him now."



### BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 5-1-2008 to 5-31-2008

Beginning Balance .....	\$11,398.86
<b>RECEIPTS:</b>	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS .....	225.00
Berea M. B. C., West Point, TN .....	50.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY .....	100.00
Calvary Ind. B. C., Everson, WA .....	500.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY .....	100.00
.....	975.00
TOTAL .....	12,373.86
<b>EXPENDITURES:</b>	
Radio Time .....	400.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES .....	400.00
.....	\$11,973.86
Interest .....	+ 1.58
.....	11,975.44
Less Corbin, KY des. ....	-850.92
ENDING BALANCE .....	\$11,124.52

### CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT

Beginning Balance .....	\$1,050.92
<b>RECEIPTS:</b>	
.....	1,050.92
<b>EXPENDITURES:</b>	
WCTT .....	200.00

### BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 5-1-2008 to 5-31-2008

Beginning Balance .....	\$8,702.02
<b>RECEIPTS:</b>	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS .....	200.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL .....	60.00
Berea M. B. C., West Point, TN .....	150.00
Bethel M. B. C., Pasadena, TX .....	100.00
Bible Believers B. C., Naples, ID .....	100.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV .....	300.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY .....	150.00
Buffalo Valley B. C., Clay, WV .....	50.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL .....	25.00
Eve Knowles, Scarborough, ME .....	200.00
Faith M. B. C., Lynn, AR .....	25.00
Gail Knowles, Scarborough, ME .....	20.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY .....	100.00
Grace B. C., Winston-Salem, NC .....	50.00
Grace M. B. C., Marion, IL .....	50.00
Grace M. B. C., Tulsa, OK .....	35.00
Immanuel B. C., Jackson, MI .....	20.00
Indore B. C., Indore, WV .....	100.00
Inez Tweet, Seattle, WA .....	10.00
J. L. Saddler, Panama City, FL .....	60.00
L. H. Farrell, Des Allemands, LA .....	150.00
Leroy Bullard, Albuquerque, NM .....	100.00
Morris St. B. C., Hobbs, NM .....	500.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH .....	100.00
New Testament B. C., Bristol, TN .....	20.00
New Testament B. C., Leivasy, WV .....	100.00
Ocoonita M. B. C., Keokee, VA .....	40.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL .....	100.00
Rebecca Williamson, Huntington, IN .....	19.00
Southside B. C., Fulton, MS .....	25.00
South Park M.B.C., Seattle, WA .....	25.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Columbus, MS .....	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL .....	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Wake Forest, NC .....	100.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA .....	25.00
Walnut Creek B. C., Grove City, OH .....	50.00
Subscriptions .....	230.00
Anon .....	230.00
Dividing Checks .....	150.00
Sub Total .....	\$3,919.00
TOTAL .....	\$12,621.02
<b>EXPENDITURES:</b>	
Printing .....	581.71
Postage .....	763.47
Supplies .....	282.27
Wages .....	2,000.00
FICA .....	153.01
Dividing Checks .....	150.00
Total Expenditures .....	3,930.46
ENDING BALANCE .....	\$8,690.56



# WORLD SCENE

By  
Capt. G. Russell Evans USCG (Ret.)



## Protect Barack Obama and Political Liberals?

The way the liberal media have covered the Barack Obama and Jeremiah Wright scandal, as well as the prostitute scandal involving Eliot Spitzer, now the former democratic governor of New York, reveals their gross political biases and how far they will go to spin the facts to keep Americans in the dark.

That blatant mis-reporting, which is on-going in those stories and in many others, shows why the Media Research Center (MRC) is vital to the conservative movement and how it carries on its mission despite the liberal armies with their hundreds of millions of dollars arrayed against it.

### NEW PASTOR EMERITUS

Jeremiah Wright Jr., now pastor emeritus at Trinity United Church of Christ, has been Sen. Barack Obama's (D-IL) pastor and close friend for at least 20 years. Obama has attended his church for two decades; he was married by Wright, and his children were baptized by Wright.

Wright is a flaming black nationalist whose writings, sermons, and rhetoric frequently fall into anti-white and anti-American rants. Typical was a sermon he gave after 9/11 in which he blamed America for the terrorist attacks and, in another talk, railed about the "U.S. of K-K-K-A." There are countless examples of this lunatic speech. He's claimed that the U.S. Government invented AIDS as a "genocide" against blacks. Five times in one speech he roared "God D--- America."

### CAN YOU IMAGINE

Can you imagine the news stories and endless drip, drip, drip of reports if Sen. John McCain (R-AZ) had attended an anti-American "white liberation" church headed by a wacky racist pastor?

It would be the top story everyday in every major paper and news show until McCain explained himself, left the church and totally rejected his pastor--and then, the liberal media would still hound him.

### THE FIRST STORY

With Obama and Wright, the first story came on ABC's World News on March 14<sup>th</sup>, a Friday night (if you want to try to bury a story, roll it out on a Friday night). To its credit, ABC mentioned some of Wright's incendiary remarks but gave it a protective spin with comments that such "Fiery Language" is not uncommon in black churches. Three days later, however, neither CBS

nor NBC's evening news shows had touched the issue---no story, no mention, nothing.

CBS's morning program, The Early Show, gave 13 minutes of coverage to the scandal but aired only 16 seconds of the videotape of Wright, and left out the more outrageous remarks. Like ABC, CBS spun the scandal as, "well, that type of talk goes on all the time in black churches," ---which is not true, and is an insult to black churches.

### THE TOPIC

The topic did race through the news media, especially on the internet. Also, conservative talk radio ran hard with the facts and the liberal media giants were forced to try to spin the unpleasantness away---and so was Obama.

He gave a speech on March 18<sup>th</sup> on race relations to try to explain his loony pastor and why they were friends for two decades. Almost immediately, liberals like MSNBC's Chris Matthews were chattering that the speech was "worthy of Abraham Lincoln" and "the best speech ever given on race in this country".

### LEWD CONDUCT

Back when Republican Senator Larry Craig (Idaho) was arrested, in August 2007, for lewd conduct in a men's bathroom, it was top news for nearly two weeks and he was labeled "Republican" from the get-go in endless news reports. When Rep. Mark Foley (R-FL) was caught up in a text-message "dirty talk" scandal in 2006, the liberal networks went ballistic. They ran 152 stories on him over the course of two weeks and in nearly every story identified him as a Republican.

That is how the liberal media operate. They have one set of journalistic standards for their political friends and another set of standards for political conservatives. They distort, they mis-report, and sometimes flat out lie---or just not report basic facts---to further their agenda.

"How can we not believe in the greatness of America?" (Ronald Reagan)  
(Excerpts and letter by L. Brent Bozell III, Founder and President of The Watchdog).



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

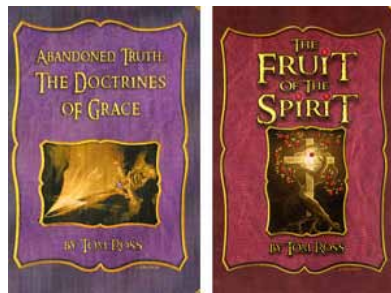
The Northside Baptist Church, Elkton, KY and Pastor Irving Cummins would like to announce the dates for their Bible conference this year will be July 31st, August 1st, and August 2nd.

Services on Thursday night will be at 7:00 P.M., Friday morning at 9:30 A.M., Friday afternoon 2:00 P.M., Friday night 7:00 P.M. and Saturday morning at 10:00 A.M.

Scheduled speakers are: Elders Jerry Asberry, Rick Catt, Dan Gordon, Lee Hammel, Clyde Hancock, Chris Page, Wayne Reynolds, Garner Smith, Bill Titus, and Randy Titus.

Anyone needing more information can contact Pastor Cummins at 270-265-9665 or 270-791-8474 or by e-mail at cumminsi@bellsouth.net.

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## ARTICLE INDEX

Bible and the Newspaper .....	p. 373
Forum .....	pp. 370 - 371
<b>Gabriel's Sevety Weeks</b> by Curtis Pugh .....	p. 375
<b>The Ills of America</b> by Tom Ross .....	p. 361
<b>The Importance of Virginity</b> by Milburn Cockrell.....	p. 368
<b>Is Hell A Myth?</b> by Roy Mason .....	p. 377
Mini-Edition.....	p. 372
<b>The Power of Little Things</b> by J. H. Myers .....	p. 361
<b>The Second Mile</b> by T. T. Shields.....	p. 361
<b>The Sluggard in Harvest</b> by Alexander MacLaren.....	p. 361
<b>The Value of A Friend</b> by Milburn Cockrell.....	p. 361
World Scene .....	p. 380



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