

The Berea Baptist Banner

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

Sin Compels Separation

By Arthur T. Pierson

(1837 - 1911)

"Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord" (Luke 5:8).

Here is a very remarkable confession, and a very remarkable prayer. The confession is, **"I am a sinful man, O Lord."** The prayer is,

"Depart from me." The confession would not be so very remarkable in itself, if it were not evidently the expression of a deep sense of sin. That is very rare in these days. It is told of Nelson, at Trafalgar, that, when he received his death wound, he sent for the chaplain, and he said, "Chaplain, they tell me that I have got to die; but really, I do not know that I have been a very great sinner." And while there are many people in this world who are ready to confess that they are sinners, the confession is sometimes nothing more than a kind of veil to hide their self-righteousness. They do no mean it. They have no sense of sin. One morning in the year 1878, while I was sitting in my study in Detroit, Michigan, just after my breakfast, I heard a knock at the door, and I said, "Come in," and a man about thirty years of age opened the door. I saw that



Arthur T. Pierson

he had been violently weeping, and he said, "May I come in, sir?" I said, "Yes, indeed you may. Can I do anything for you?" "Well, sir," said he, "I do not know, but I am a great sinner, and I want a Saviour." Said I, "Come right in, my friend. You are just the man that I have been looking for, for about ten years," —a man,

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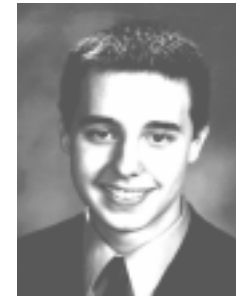
A Brief Devotion on Church Discipline

By Stephen DuBarry

Lexington, Kentucky

Read: 1 Cor. 5:1-13 and Gal. 6:1-10. These verses form a foundation for the local church practice of church discipline.

Church discipline is vitally important to the local church, because it is our primary means of protecting the purity of the church. We know that the church is the bride of Christ. And, as we would an earthly bride, we seek to protect her



Stephen DuBarry

purity and her reputation. In 1 Corinthians 5, Paul reminds us that **"a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."** Thus, it is the local church's duty to purge any leaven that is

uncovered in the church if that body of believers is to be pure in the eyes of God. It is the church's responsibility to properly exercise church discipline for unto it are given the keys to the kingdom of heaven and **"whatsoever thou [it] shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou [it] shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."**

What is this leaven to be purged out from the church? It is clear from both its discussions in the New Testament and its symbolism in the Old Testament that this leaven is sin.

But wait. We all sin—even we who are members of one of the Lord's churches. Yes, we are sinners saved by grace, but we sin daily. Should we then therefore be excluded from our churches? If this were the case, churches faithfully practicing

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The Way of Cain, Even in The Church

By Milburn Cockrell

(1941 - 2002)

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

WHO IS CAIN?

From Genesis 4, I see that Cain was the first born of Adam and Eve, and the older brother of Abel. The Divine narrative reads: **"And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare**

Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD. And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in the process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect" (Gen. 4:1-5).

Both Cain and Abel engaged in religious worship. They equally brought

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The Spirit and The Letter

By Jeff Short

Mantachie, Mississippi

"Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart. And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. But if the ministration



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hold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condem-

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of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly be-

Money and Missions

By Milburn Cockrell

(1941 - 2002)

"Freely ye have received, freely give" (Matt. 10:8).

In uttering these words, Jesus Christ announced to His disciples a Divine method of blessing running throughout the Scriptures. If this truth were fully recognized by Christ's disciples, it would result in a worldwide spread of blessing and brightness to a sinful and suffering host never known before. God gives to us that we may give to others. We are not to be like sponges forever absorbing and never giving out until squeezed. We are to receive so that we may give. God blesses us, so that we may



Milburn Cockrell

take the gospel to every tribe and nation on earth. To do this, tens of thousands of pastors, evangelists, and missionaries are needed. Those who preach the gospel should devote themselves entirely to

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Sin Compels

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deeply afflicted with a sense of his sin, and deeply desirous of finding a Saviour from his sin. That is the man I wanted to see then, and that is the man I want to see now; tomorrow morning, who would not gladly stay here and talk with such, and point them to Jesus? How many pastors there are all through Great Britain, as in America, who are thus yearning to find some souls oppressed with a sense of guilt, and desirous to find a salvation from sin.

Simon Peter, on this occasion if never before, had a deep sense of his own sin, and so that confession was wrung out of him— "I am a sinful man, O Lord"; and it was accompanied by an involuntary prayer, "Depart from me," for he felt that, as a sinner, he was unfit to associate with such a Saviour.

Why is it that there are so few people in these days that seem to have any deep sense of sin? I am speaking, now, of the unsaved, those that are not disciples of Jesus Christ.

Because, in the first place, there is very little *right thinking about sin* itself. If you ask a man whether he is a sinner, he understands you to mean by that a great, a flagrant, an outbreaking transgressor. If you tell him that he is a great sinner in the sight of God, he thinks perhaps that you mean to accuse him of being a blasphemer, a perjurer, a thief, an adulterer, a murderer. Without any of these outbreaking forms of sin there may be a deep and damning hatred of God in the human soul. There are many diseases that have no corresponding outward symptom. A man fell through a hatchway and was taken up dead, and there was not an outward sign on his body, that one could perceive, of the fatal injury. It was the shock that killed him, and yet there was no appearance of his having come to his death by any such violence. It is said that in the great plague that devastated London a long time ago, if there appeared in the cheek just one little round red spot it was the sign of death, and death came very rapidly. That single symptom was the sign of approaching dissolution. Sin may not break out in violent trampling on the Ten Commandments; but Almighty God, looking with omniscient eye beneath the veil of outward propriety, and even morality, sees lurking in souls the desperate and deadly hatred of himself.

Then again, there is a large bulk of sins, which some of us never even think of, and which may be called *sins of omission*, that is, things that are left undone; for sin includes not merely what is done contrary to the will of God, but what we fail to do which is in accordance with his blessed will—laws unkept, commands disregarded, paths of duty never walked in. What about all that class of sins included under those sins of omission?

Did you ever notice this fact—that three of the greatest arraignments in the whole Word of God on the subject of sin have to do with what is *not done*? For instance, when Jesus Christ, in the sixteenth chapter of John, speaks of the coming of the Holy Spirit and of His work in the sinner's soul, He says, He shall convince "**of sin because they believe not on me.**" *Not believing.* In the great vision of judgment in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew, when the King sits on the throne of His glory, those that go away into everlasting punishment are addressed by Him in these words, "I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat; a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick and in prison, and ye visited me not. Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it not to me." *Not doing:* not something done, but something not done. And when Paul writes to the Corinthians, as he comes to the end of his epistle, he crowds aside the amanuensis, and he takes up the pen in his own hands, and in large characters he writes, "**The**

salutation of me Paul, with mine own hand. If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema." Not "If any man hate"; not "If any man persecute"; not "If any man blaspheme the Lord Jesus Christ"; but "**If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ.**" Believing not, doing not, loving not—these are the three arraignments of God upon which is based the punishment of the sinner, even his everlasting exclusion from the presence, glory, and power of the Lord.

Again, we have not a *right perception* of sin. We are like people born blind that have not the proper sense of sight, or like people born deaf that have not the proper sense of hearing, or like people born without proper feeling or sensibility, so that they do not perceive as men perceive that have proper eyes, and proper ears, and proper organs. And what is more than that, we become more and more callous about sin *by familiarity* with it. Workmen know that if they continue to use an instrument or an implement or a tool of trade in one hand habitually, that hand becomes calloused, hardened by its use, so that the tenderness of the palm is injured. And so you may injure the sensitive surface of your conscience.

*"Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,**As to be hated needs but to be seen;**Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,**We first endure, then pity, then embrace."*

Our conscience is like an alarm clock, which rings out its alarm early in the morning, and if you go to sleep again and disregard it, the next morning when it rings you hear it less plainly; and the next morning it still less effectively disturbs your sleep, until, by-and-by, you can sleep through the noise and never hear it. Disregard the voice of conscience, and tomorrow it will speak more feebly, less clearly. Disregard it still, and the next time it will be a little more faint, a little less clear, until, by-and-by, you can go on in the sleep of sin and scarcely ever hear its remonstrance. And so you learn not to perceive the sin that you are committing, by becoming accustomed to it. It ceases to affect your sensibilities.

Then again, there is a *power in sin to deceive* a man. Remember what the Word of God itself says, "**If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.**" Yes, the heart makes the theology. Why do men like to believe that they are not sinners? Because it makes them uncomfortable to think that they are. A man, perhaps, has about him some fatal disease, and he wants, if possible, to persuade himself that the difficulty is not so serious, and all the urgency and importunity of a friendly physician, advising him to take care of the disease while it is possible, perhaps, to alleviate its symptoms or lengthen his life, does not affect him. He tries to make himself believe that, after all, his case is not a dangerous one. That is the way in which men deal with the subject of sin.

They have not a right conception of sin, they have not a clear perception of sin, and sin is itself a cherished deception. Just as an insane man persuades himself that he is sane, and thinks that he is sound in mind, and that everybody round about him is crazy; so a sinner disputes his own sin, and it is part of the madness that is in the hearts of the sons of men while they live, that they persuade themselves that they are not sinners, even against the verdict of God.

How can we get free from this wrong conception, lack of perception, and snare of deception with regard to sin and its nature? How can we come to know that we are sinners, and to see ourselves somewhat as God sees us?

In the first place, we must *receive God's verdict* concerning us. Here is a blind man: he is approaching the edge of a precipice, but he does not see the precipice, and so far perhaps he is not responsible if he falls off, inasmuch as he does not perceive his danger. But suppose that I, who do see his danger, come up, and put my hand on his shoulder, and say, "My friend, ten feet in front of you there is a precipice, and if you keep on walking in the direction in which you are now going, you will go over, and be dashed into pieces." If after that warning he does so, he does it at his own responsibility. It is a case of suicide, for, though he did not see the danger, I did, and I warned him. Now, perhaps you do not see your sin, but God tells you what He thinks of it, and all that you have to do is to take God's verdict concerning yourself. Let the eyes of God become eyes to you to see yourself, and let the ears of God become ears to you to hear your danger, and let the sensibilities of God become sensibilities to you to perceive the guilt and peril in which you are, and then you will come to know yourself somewhat as God knows you.

If you will take the Bible testimony you will see what God thinks of men. It is a fearfully solemn thing to get God's verdict. In the days of Noah the Lord said, "Every imagination of the thought of man's heart is only evil continually, and the whole earth is corrupt before me and filled with violence." In the days of Solomon God looked down from Heaven upon the children of men to see if there were any that did understand and seek after God, and he said, "They are altogether become filthy; they are all gone out of the way. There is not one that doeth good, no not one." And in the days of the apostle Paul, when Paul wrote the third chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, what does he say? "There is none righteous, no, not one. There is none that feareth and seeketh after God. The poison of asps is under their lips; their mouth is full of bitterness; their feet make haste to shed innocent blood. Destruction and misery are in their ways, and the way of peace they have not known, and there

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is no fear of God before their eyes." And when Paul frames this terrible arraignment of the natural and unsaved man, he draws threads for the woof and the warp from the most terrible statements of the entire Old Testament. He selects out of the whole Word of God, as then possessed, these awful expressions of the natural man and the unsaved man, and he weaves them together and says, "That is God's opinion of men."

Once more, in order to come to the sense of my sin it is necessary that I should set up alongside of myself God's perfect standard of truth and life, and duty and conduct. One of the common things that men do—and it is a piece of folly and of wickedness—is to compare themselves among themselves, and measure themselves by themselves. Suppose that a carpenter should desire to plane the edge of a board straight. Would he put alongside of that board another crooked board to guide his plane by? If so, he would simply perpetuate imperfection. No, he puts a straight-edge alongside of his board, and marks it accordingly, and so he planes it straight. If a mason, building a wall, "sights" the wall that he is building by another wall that, perhaps, leans from the perpendicular or inclines from the horizontal, he will construct his own wall inclining and leaning. In all the arts—the mechanical arts and the fine arts—we have to employ, as near as possible, a perfect standard. We use the plane, the square, the level, the plumb-line, and by these approximations to perfection we are enabled to bring our work itself into an approximation to perfection. If a man takes a standard that is far below perfection he will only make more imperfect work, like the standard that he follows.

God has given us, in his precious Word, a perfect standard of doctrine and of deportment, in the Lord Jesus Christ; and, if ever you are tempted to think that you are not a sinner, set up your character and your conduct beside that of Jesus, and see how far you come short of the standard of perfection; and then you may be able to see why it is that God counts you to be even a great sinner. If you drop a clean white piece of linen on the freshly fallen snow, the linen looks unclean, because there is nothing so white in the universe as the fresh snow from Heaven. If you put an oil lamp in front of an electric light, that which was before casting light now casts only a shadow, for the flame of the oil light becomes only an obstacle to the shining of the brighter electric flame. And if the fairest human life be put in the burning focus of the light of the life of Jesus Christ, that fair life will appear but as a shadow in comparison with the intense luster of the radiant God-Man.

Berea Baptist Broadcast

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WCTT, Corbin, KY	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.	680	5,000 AM
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DXRA, Davao City, Philippines	Sunday 8:15 - 8:45 a.m.	783 Khz...	10,000 AM
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This train of thought is the natural introduction to the true understanding of the text. Why was it that Peter came to be so oppressed with a sense of sin, when Christ had performed this miracle? He had toiled all night in the Lake of Galilee, and had taken no fish. Jesus said, "Let down your nets for a draught"; and so great was now the draught of fishes that the nets began to break, and Simon Peter and his companions had to beckon to their partners in the other ship, James and John, to come and help them to draw the fish to the land.

There was nothing in this miracle that was calculated to call Peter's attention to the moral attributes of Jesus. There was nothing in it to suggest holiness. It might suggest omniscience, that Jesus Christ saw the fish gathered in that place. It might suggest omnipotence, that he gathered the fish into that place. But it did not suggest moral attributes. But, when Peter thought of omnipotence or omniscience, he thought of God, and so, he thought of holiness; for, in connection with the Divine Being, the Jew thought of holiness first of all, and the whole ritual of the old economy and all the prohibitions about the tabernacle were intended to impress the idea of God's purity—that he was of purer eyes than to behold evil, and could not look upon sin. And so when Peter was reminded of the power or knowledge of this Being who was beside him—for it was evidently the power or knowledge of God—he thought of the moral character of God, and especially the divine holiness, and so he thought of his own sin in comparison; and this drew from him the confession, "I am a sinful man, O Lord," and it wrung from him the prayer, "Depart from me."

And now, naturally, the thought is suggested that conscious sin brings conscious sense of separation. If, by any means, the conviction of sin be produced in a human soul, the immediate effect is that there is the consciousness of ill-desert: "I deserve to be separated from all holy beings." It is impossible to have the sense of sin awakened in you without there coming at once into your mind the thought, "I am unfit to be associated with those who are holy, and especially with a holy God"; and so, just as surely as you come to the conclusion that you are a sinner just so surely will you come to the conclusion that you ought to depart from God or that God ought to depart from

you. This is a very solemn thought, and it is a key to many great mysteries.

An illustration may be drawn from old Greek fables, which may be very helpful in understanding this subject. There was a strange being called the Lamia. It was said that by nature it was a serpent, but had power to assume the beautiful form of a seductive woman, and then walked through the groves and avenues to seduce unwary youths to follow her, that she might eat them or suck their blood. The Greeks held a philosopher to be the representative of all that was most beautiful and pure in character; and the old story says that one of these Lamiae that had taken a beautiful female form suddenly confronted the eyes of one of Greece's purest philosophers. He stood with folded arms, and looked at her with intent and fixed gaze—looked at her as though he read through her deceptive form the secrets of her being; and beneath his pure glance she began to tremble and cringe and shrink away, until she turned into the loathsome reptile that she was, and drew her length along the ground in slime. And so is iniquity stripped of all its disguises before the eye of infinite purity. When God looks upon man, man forgets his self-righteous plea; he forgets the morality in which he has been confident; he forgets the outward propriety in which he has taken refuge; and, giving up all these disguises, he sees himself in God's sight to be a child of the devil and shrinks away before the face of God.

Through the Old Testament and the New you will find one continuous and unchanging testimony on this subject. When, in Eden, Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, and God came down to walk and talk with them in the garden in the cool of the day, as was his custom, to hold fellowship with his human children, they hid behind the trees of the garden, afraid to look upon God. The very presence of God flashed remonstrance in their faces, and made it impossible for them to hold communion with the Holy One. When Moses stood before the burning bush that burned and was not consumed, he turned aside, for we are told that he was afraid to look upon God. When the bright and Holy One appeared to Daniel, as we read in the tenth chapter of his prophecy, and Daniel looked on those eyes that flashed fire, and on those feet that were as burnished brass, and

heard that voice as the sound of many waters, he tells us, "Then my comeliness was turned into corruption, and there remained no strength in me." Daniel stood as high above the men of Babylon as the image on the plain of Dura rose above the plain, and yet, when he looked on the holiness of God, even the things on which he had prided himself,—his beauty of person or beauty of conduct, the very propriety of demeanour or excellence of character,—his very comeliness was turned into corruption, and he retained no more strength.

And when even the beloved disciple who leaned on the breast of Jesus at supper beheld, as we read in the Book of Revelation, the same vision of the Holy One, he fell at His feet as dead. Ah! You and I can never stand the vision of the holy God till we become partners of the divine nature in Jesus. Then, like the eagle, we can soar up into the heaven, and, with undimmed eye, look at the Sun of Righteousness in the splendour of His noontide glory.

Let me add a few words of practical application.

We have here a key that unlocks many of the mysteries of the future state. The world is full of people who dispute the great Bible doctrine which, I praise God, has never been denied or disputed in this place—the punishment of the finally ungodly and the impenitent with "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power." There is every method taken to get rid of this unpleasant doctrine. Some boldly deny it. Others try to inculcate a doctrine of restoration—some method of universal salvation, some atonement for sin in a kind of purgatory, with deliverance from purgatorial pains and hell fires after the period of purgation has passed by. But I pray you consider, just for a moment, whether there be not in the human soul a revelation that goes side by side with the revelation in the Word of God. Are there not materials in the human soul, which, out of themselves, could build a hell if there were no hell revealed? The brothers of Joseph stood before him in the palace of the Pharaohs, and as yet Joseph had not revealed himself to them, and they did not know that it was Joseph. No voice spoke to them from above. God did not accuse them. No man arraigned them for guilt in selling their brother into Egypt. But observe this: "They said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us."

What were the elements of this self-accusation? First, *memory*—"We saw the anguish of his soul," twenty years ago, when he was put in that pit, and "he besought us, and we would not hear." He asked to be taken back to his father and

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his father's home, and not to have that awful fraud, of the coat dipped in the blood of a kid, imposed on his father in his old age. **"We saw the anguish of his soul when he besought us, and we would not hear."** Then, in the second place, there was *conscience*: **"We are verily guilty concerning our brother."** And then, *reason*: **"Therefore is this distress come upon us."** If you should go into the next world with your memory and your conscience and your reason uncleansed by the power of the blood of Christ, those three elements that you possess in your own constitution would build a hell for you in any part of the universe of God. I want you to feel the greatness and the awfulness of this truth. It can give a preacher no pleasure to declare such awful truths. But Jesus Christ came into this world to save sinners, and not to save anybody else but sinners; and if you do not feel that you are a sinner He has no mission to save you. And I am especially desirous, at the outset of this temporary ministry, that I shall have help of God to produce a conviction of sin in souls that have never been convinced of sin; for if you find truly convicted sinners, you will shortly find also conscious saints. There are the elements of self-condemnation in any man who has got a memory and a conscience and a reason. There is a law of affinity, in accordance with which every man, when he goes out of this world, goes to his own place, just as Judas did.

Yes, Judas went to his own place. Notice, that first, every man has his own place in this world and in the next.

Second, every man makes his own place in this world and in the next.

Third, every man finds his own place in this world and in the next.

Fourth, every man feels that it is his own place when he gets there.

Suppose that I take filings of various metals and sprinkle them in front of me, and I pass through them a magnet. The magnet takes up all the filings of iron and steel, and rejects the brass, and even the silver and the gold. Why? Because there is a magnetic affinity between the magnet and the steel and iron. Suppose I take various substances, and put them in a phial together, and shake them up violently, and then set the phial down. If there are substances in that phial that are alike and have affinity for each other, they will combine, but otherwise they will refuse to combine, just as oil and water do. That is chemical affinity. And just as there is magnetic and chemical affinity, so there is moral and spiritual affinity among souls. Every man goes to his own place—the place to which, by his own sin or his own regenerate character he belongs. And there is only one place that you can go to, and that is where you by

affinity belong. When you are let go by death you will go to your own company. There was a holy man in New England in America, who being asked, when he was dying, "Are you going to heaven?" looked up and said, "Where else could I go?" It was not pride, it was not vain-glory, it was not self-confidence, but it was the knowledge that Jesus was his Saviour; and his whole soul longed after Jesus, and he knew that, when the bars of his cage were broken, he would mount like a freed bird, to see the face of his Lord and make his rest in His presence.

*"Rivers to the ocean run,
Nor stay in all their course,
Fire ascending seeks the sun,
Both speed them to their source,*

*So a soul that's born of God
Pants to view his glorious face,
Upward tends to his abode,
To rest in his embrace."*

If you love God, if you believe in Christ, if you are a partaker of the divine nature, all the demons in hell could not stand between you and the throne of God when you are released from this mortal body. And if you have not sympathy with God, and do not love Him, and hate His rule, and have yet an unpardoned sinful nature, all the angels of God could not escort you to His throne. You would go the other way by the force of your own inherent gravitation, towards Satan and towards sin.

Now, once more. As I have tried to show you that self-condemnation makes it impossible that you should dwell with God if you are not like Him, and that your affinities make it impossible that you should seek the society of God if you do not sympathize with His nature, so let me add that the glory of God would turn Heaven into hell if you had not the nature of a child of God. Did you ever read that tale in old Roman history about Regulus, the Roman senator, being taken captive by the Carthaginians in one of the Punic wars? Carthage sent him to Rome with humiliating terms of peace, and he agreed that if he did not effect the peace with the Romans, he would go back and put himself under the control of the Carthaginians, and submit to their punishment. Well, when that noble senator rose before the senators of Rome and presented the terms of peace, he advised them to reject the same. He said, "I would not have my country humiliated even for the sake of her peace or of my own safety. I will go back and submit myself to Carthage, but let not Rome submit to peace on these conditions." He went back, and what did the Carthaginians do with him? They inflicted on him the most awful torture that was known in ancient times. They cut off his eyelids; they bound him with his back to the earth and his face to the heavens; and from the time that the sun rose in the morning till the time that the

god of day sank behind the hills in the evening, those eyes had to bear the unclouded blaze of sunshine, until the very powers of vision were paralyzed and the eyes were hopelessly blinded. You sometimes talk of going to Heaven when as yet you are unsaved, having never been washed in the blood of Jesus Christ, and baptized into His spirit. In the case of Regulus the elements of this awful torture were just these—*an open eye and a pure glory?* What if the torture of the lost should consist in simply being compelled to face the glory of the infinitely holy God, without any likeness to Him or sympathy with His nature!

I beseech you, do not deceive yourselves. There are just two places where you can find out that you are a sinner. One is at the throne of grace on earth: the other is at the throne of glory in the hereafter. If you go into your secret place and shut the door; if you bow down on your knees before the face of Almighty God, and say, like the little Highland maid, "O Lord, show me myself;" He will open the eyes of your understanding, and He will show what a sinner you are. In the first revelation of your own unfitness to dwell with Him you may, like Peter, be tempted to cry out, **"O Lord, I am a sinful man. Depart from me."** But the Lord, like Joseph when he drew toward his conscience-smitten brethren, and said, **"Come near to me, I pray you,"** will throw His arms of mercy and love about you, and will say to you, "I will not depart from thee; neither shalt thou depart from me," for it was to save just such penitent sinners as thou art that Jesus died and rose again.

But if you hide from yourself the fact of your sin and guilt, and try to persuade yourself that you are safe while you are unsaved; if you first learn, at the great white throne of glory above, what a sinner you are, you will then and there be speechless, and the King on the throne shall say, **"Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity!"**



Church Discipline

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church discipline would be completely empty.

The fact is, we who are saved by grace, are justified by faith, and have the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ. In God's eyes, we have no sin that hasn't already been done away with by the blood of Christ. **"As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us."** It is only through this justification that we have the privilege of approaching the Lord's throne in prayer, or have been given any other access to the heavenly kingdom.

So then what sins remain in the church to corrupt its purity? If baptism is the "door" to the church, and we baptize only those who believe, and those who believe are justified by faith, how can there be sin in the church? It's because sometimes, usually unintentionally, people make false professions of faith, and we end up with unsaved church members.

When a church disciplines one of its members, it's not a judgment of that member's inward state—no one but God has the knowledge or the authority to make such a judgment. It is instead a judgment of that member's outward walk. It is the decision of the church that the disciplined member's conduct does not typify the conduct that follows the regenerate. James says, **"But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?"** If the disciplined member is indeed a saved person, albeit acting as if he were unsaved, the discipline performed by the church will hopefully bring the offender back into fellowship with God and then back into the church. If the disciplined member is yet unsaved, the church purifies itself from sinful leaven, and perhaps even awakens the disciplined man to his own lost condition. In 1 Corinthians 5:13, Paul mentions another effect of disciplining a lost church member: **"But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person."** This means that church membership affords even lost people some measure of protection from divine judgment. When an unregenerate church member is disciplined, he loses that protection.

The behavior that qualifies a church member for discipline is any behavior that is typical of unregenerate man. I believe this behavior falls into one or more of four categories that are dealt with independently in the Bible: 1. Neglected personal offenses; 2. An unregenerate lifestyle; 3. Heresy; 4. Forsaking the assembly.

The first category, neglected personal offenses, is dealt with in Matt. 18:15-22: **"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. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For**

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where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven."

If a saved church member realizes that he has offended one of his fellow church members, he will ask for forgiveness. He will do so because he loves his brethren in Christ. In fact, Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." So an unrelenting stubbornness to forgive a fellow brother is evidence that the love that should be in a saved person may not be there. And it's on these grounds that the church is to discipline that member.

The second category, an unregenerate lifestyle, is given Scriptural treatment in 1 Corinthians. We read 1 Corinthians 5, where Paul says "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat." These are characteristics of the unregenerate. He mentions more characteristics in chapter 6, verses 9 and 10: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."

These are the fruits of the flesh. If one of our church members can live persistently and without repentance in one or more of these sins, he is to be disciplined, for it is evidence that he may be yet lost in his sins.

The third category is heresy. Titus 3:10-11 is very clear: "A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself." 2 John 1:9-11 says: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."

So we see heresy is a sinful leaven to be purged from the church, an evidence that a church member's sins may be yet unremitted.

The fourth category of offenses that compel church discipline is forsaking the

assembly. Hebrews 10:25-27 states: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." 1 John 2:19 says of those who have left the faith: "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."

From these verses we can clearly see that it is uncharacteristic of the regenerate to forsake the assembly of the church. We are furthermore warned that forsaking the assembling of ourselves together is a willful sin, after which "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins" — only judgment. Thus, we practice discipline for non-attendance. The forsaking of the assembly is an evidence that a church member may be yet lost in sin.

The church's purity is something that should be zealously guarded and in a timely manner. The reason Paul wrote what he did in 1 Corinthians 5 was that the church was puffed up and tolerant of the sin in their midst. When action is required, we must take action, however painful it might be.

But sometimes it happens that certain church members become overzealous in their pursuit of church discipline. Church discipline can be applied improperly, with malice, spite, or anger. These are certainly not the proper motivations for church discipline. Sometimes church members get anxious and begin to think, "We've got to hurry up and get this person out of here!" But remember that before discipline occurs, there should always be a time of reaching out to the offender in the hopes that he will repent. The offender Jesus spoke of in Matthew 18 was given three chances to repent: a one-on-one meeting with the offended brother, a meeting with the offended brother with one or two more church members there to establish every word, and finally a confrontation with the entire church. The heretic mentioned in Titus was given a first and a second admonition before he was to be rejected. The church should always make sure before disciplining one of its members that the member in question is being stubborn and unrepentant, and that discipline is a last resort.

Not every sin warrants church discipline. As we read in Galatians 6, many times a sin committed by a church member requires not discipline, but careful restoration in an attitude of meekness and self-consideration.

Sometimes sin is thrust upon us. It lies in wait until just the right moment. Because of the weakness of our flesh, we are overtaken by it. It happens. A saved church member still remains in this sinful flesh, and is therefore totally capable of committing any sinful act in the heat of the moment. So not every sin is evidence that would suggest a person is unsaved. As we read in Galatians 6, sometimes a brother is "overtaken in a fault," or in other words, has a momentary lapse in what is otherwise a good Christian testimony.

In these cases, if the offender is in the proper repentant attitude, I believe Galatians 6 bears out that church discipline may not even be necessary. If a brother confesses his sin to the church and turns from it, those in the church who are "spiritual" are to restore them in the "spirit of meekness." To get into the proper mindset to restore a brother who has gotten tripped up by sin, just realize that it could have just as easily been you that stumbled. Paul says there that we are to apply the Golden Rule, and treat our brother with the tender care that we would have him show to us, had we been overtaken.

In conclusion, church discipline is an essential function of the local church. It is not an option. For by it, we maintain the purity of the church and the validity of its testimony. We must be careful in its application—careful to determine the proper course of action, and careful to carry it out with the proper motivation and attitude. But if we succeed in practicing local church discipline, Hebrews 12:11 tells us our reward: "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."



MARK OF THE BEAST

Look at your name on the front page of this month's paper. If you see the mark 6-04, so detestable to a Baptist, wash it out by renewal of greenbacks. If not your paper will stop next month. We are not able to credit. It is not a good plan.



Money and Missions

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prayer and the ministry of the Word. The churches must support these God-called men in their efforts to get out the gospel. Thus, missions are a great and costly work. Members of true churches must not treat it as though it were a mere penny affair or a dime business.

There is a great need for much teaching along these lines. Today, many churchgoers live in luxury and never give anything for the cause of Christ. The attitude of many American parishioners seems to be millions for material things and pennies for pagans. Missions should have a definite place in the budget of every New Testament church. Very few churches have scratched the surface in giving to missions when compared to their ability and God's expectations. Missionary work costs! So did Calvary, and so does every worthwhile thing in the world.

God's Ownership

God lays claim to everything under the whole canopy of Heaven. The Lord said in Job 41:11: "Whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine." Again the Bible says: "Behold, the heaven of heavens is the LORD's thy God" (Deut. 10:14).

"All the earth is mine" claims God (Ex. 19:5). "The earth is the LORD's, and the fullness thereof" (Ps. 24:1). The Lord says in Psalms 50:12: "If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof." Abraham called the most high God "the possessor of heaven and earth" (Gen. 14:22). David declared: "Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honour come of thee...for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee" (1 Chron. 29:11-14).

God owns all earthly creatures. We read in Psalms 50:10: "For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills." Can we add anything to His store? For all the wild fowls and wild beasts are His, also the world itself and its fullness. In Ezekiel 18:4, God says: "All souls are mine." Our money belongs to God: "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the LORD of hosts" (Hag. 2:8). Your wages, your salary, your profit, your income all belong to God, and not to you. God has the right to take or dispose of what you regard as your income as He wills.

God requires one tenth of our material increase for the work of the church: "All the tithe...is the LORD's; it is holy unto the LORD" (Lev. 27:30). God legally directs that after we honestly pay Him the tithe for His work, then the other nine-tenths He gives us. Then, and only

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then, can we rightfully claim ownership over the nine-tenths. The tithe belongs to God, and an offering is never an offering until after the tithe is given. Failure to tithe constitutes scriptural highway robbery (Mal. 3:8).

When Christ comes to reckon with His servants with whom He has entrusted His goods, He will demand an accounting of our stewardship. This is seen in the demand made of the unfaithful servant in Luke 19:23: **"Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury?"** Failure to use the money, which God gives us to further His cause, is to ignore the sovereignty of God, and the lordship of Jesus Christ. Let no man call Jesus Lord who refuses to contribute to the ministry of missions.

Our Trusteeship

The Scripture not only teaches God's ownership of all our possessions, but it also declares our trusteeship. Believers are stewards of God: **"Moreover, it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful"** (I Cor. 4:2). A steward is a person entrusted with the management of estates or affairs not his own. It is his duty to manage the affairs, but to do so in the interest of his master.

We are stewards of the manifold grace of God. I Peter 4:10 reads: **"As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."** What we call our possessions are truly His. We are just the administrators of them. To forget this, and to appropriate and use what God has entrusted to us for ourselves is no less a crime than for the cashier of a bank to use its funds for his own pleasure.

What we need today is a revival of Christian stewardship; the consecration of the money power of the church of God. The world will never be converted by money alone, but God does use the money that we give to missions for the conversions of sinners, who are in the world.

Missionaries Worthy of Support

The Lord has never ordained anything but tithes and offerings for the support of His ministers of the Word. This was His moral law to Israel. **"And, behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation"** (Num. 18:21).

The Lord has not authorized the churches today to raise money for missions by cakewalks, rummage sales, church suppers, and puppet shows. God's work is to be carried on by the tithes and offerings of God's people in this Grace Age. To the Corinthians, in I Cor. 9:13,

Paul wrote: **"Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?"** He refers here to the Jewish priesthood who was supported by tithes of increase and by sharing a part of the animal sacrifices. Then he says: **"Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel"** (I Cor. 9:14). The New Testament ministers of God are to be supported like the Levites were in the Old Testament, and that was by tithes of increase.

Jesus Christ said: **"The labourer is worthy of his hire"** (Luke 10:7). When a missionary does his work well, he performs **"a good work"** (I Tim. 3:1). The minister of God labors for Christ. **"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward"** (I Tim. 5:17-18).

The support of the ministry is not an act of charity but of justice. If God would have men to regard the needs of oxen while preparing grain for the earthly garner, much more would He have the church to supply the material needs of the ministry, who, toiling in God's spiritual harvest, are preparing souls as grain of priceless value for the garner of glory.

Those who enjoy the spiritual teachings of the minister of the Word, must share with the teacher their carnal things. To the Corinthians, Paul said: **"If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?"** (I Cor. 9:11). To the Galatians he said: **"Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things"** (Gal. 6:6). The one who gives his time and strength to the religious instructions of others should receive from them worldly things necessary to health, and appropriate to one in his condition.

In Romans 10:15, Paul asked: **"How shall they preach, except they be sent?"** From Acts 13 we learn that missionaries were sent by the Lord and the church. The church is not only to send them with authority to do their work, but they are also to send with them and later to them sufficient money to sustain them as they labor.

Storehouse Tithing

All offerings to missions should be given to the local church of which one is a member. The church is God's storehouse or collective agency in this age. Malachi 3:10 commands us: **"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts."** In I Timothy 3:15, the church is called **"the house of God."** Church members are to unite in their giving to

missions as one body in Christ. This money must go through the church since the church is the only institution which has the authority to send out missionaries to make disciples, to baptize, and to teach the things of Christ.

There is no Scripture for sending your money directly to a mission board or general treasurer of missions in an association or convention. New Testament missionaries received their financial aid from the churches. Paul declared: **"I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service"** (II Cor. 11:8). He did not say he robbed the mission board or missionary committee.

It was the churches, not the mission board, which paid the traveling expenses of the missionaries in apostolic times. Paul and Barnabas, missionaries of the church at Antioch, are said to have been **"brought on their way by the church"** (Acts 15:3). To the Roman Church, the Apostle Paul wrote: **"Whosoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your company"** (Rom. 15:24). To the Corinthian congregation he said: **"And it may be that I will abide, yea, and winter with you, that ye may bring me on my journey whithersoever I go"** (I Cor. 16:6).

Many churches are handicapped in their support to missionaries because many church members send part of their tithe to some radio preacher, another portion to a Christian paper, another part to a religious school, and still another amount to a mission board. For a member to ignore the church of which he is a member in his tithe-paying is to dishonor the bride, and to anger the Bridegroom; yea, it is to declare that he is unfit to be a member of the congregation.

The Rule of the Early Church

The principle of giving is seen in Paul's instructions to the Corinthian church concerning the poor saints in Jerusalem. Though the offering was for material relief, the doctrine of financial stewardship is also relevant to the missionary enterprise, which is for spiritual relief, which is more important. Paul said to them: **"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come"** (I Cor. 16:2).

Giving in the church was periodic—**"the first day of the week."** Sunday or the Lord's Day was already regarded by all Christians as a sacred day. It was the day of public worship and Christian giving. On this day we are to pay tribute to God for His blessings of the past week, and to ask His blessings on the work of our hands for the next. Giving is to be regular and systematic, not haphazard and spasmodic.

Second, giving was to be personal—**"every one of you."** No one can tithe for you. It is a personal obligation. There are no exceptions to this rule of giving. The rich and poor are to come with their offerings, side by side, in the house of God. There is no healthier spiritual exercise than to tithe one's income to the local church. Each believer needs to give for his own good.

Third, it is to be provident—**"lay by him in store."** I do not believe the reference here is to a person laying his offering aside at home as some believe. I think Paul meant for the offering to be brought to the church assembled for worship. If their offerings were stored at home until Paul's arrival in Corinth, this would have necessitated an offering when Paul came, and this was what he sought to avoid. Each church member is to set apart a definite proportion of his weekly income for the Lord's cause.

Fourth, it is to be proportionate—**"as God hath prospered him."** Giving is based upon an individual's financial ability. It is governed by God's blessing upon our labors. It is His bounty and blessing to which we owe all we have, and whatever we have is to be used, and employed, and improved, for Him. The more He enables us to give, the more He expects us to give to His cause.

Money a Must

Without faithfulness in financial stewardship, there can be no worthwhile program of propagating the gospel. Money is a must in the missionary cause; without it missions would not exist. Failure to give to missions manifests ingratitude and involves disobedience to God. Missions must have more than a beggarly place in our church budgets.

Christianity takes money, the very embodiment of the power of this world, and changes it into an instrument for God's service and glory. By scriptural giving, the church carries on missions at home and abroad. A coin of this world, by being cast into God's treasury in the local church, in the right spirit, receives the stamp of the mint of Heaven and is exchanged for heavenly blessings. With money, and with God's blessings we can go to the ends of the earth as God's messengers.

Some Give Nothing

A development of a sense of stewardship in missions by the churches is greatly needed, because so few realize this responsibility. Multitudes of church people have never come to see they have an obligation resting upon them to give the gospel to the world. Many whole churches last year gave nothing to missions. Some churches grew in number and wealth but never increased their offerings to world missions. All giving anywhere to missions is far below the ability of those who give, and far short of the magnitude of the work to be done, and

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Outlines for Country Preachers by a Country Preacher

Sermon Outlines by Milburn Cockrell

The Triumph of Faith

Job 13:15

Here is a precious jewel of grace, fully set in the purest gold of choice words. Behold in this verse unstaggering faith, unwavering confidence in God, even in death. Here is the highest expression of piety. The boldness of Job's faith rises to its highest pitch in this text.

I. THE MEANING OF "SLAY."

1. The word "slay" means "to kill." It has reference to physical death.
2. There is no reference to punishment in the future world, or to the death of the soul.
3. God could cause Job's pain and sorrow to increase until he could not survive them. His life would be forfeited.
4. The Lord is seen here as the slayer of a trusting servant. An idea hard to understand to the carnal mind.
 - (1) This is an extreme possibility (I Cor. 11:30; I John 5:16).
 - (2) The martyrs are slain for Him, but not by Him.
 - (3) The stones that killed Stephen and the sword that killed James were in the hands of cruel men, not the hands of God.

II. THE MEANING OF THE WORD "TRUST"

1. The Hebrew word means to "expect" or "hope (wait)." It signifies waiting on one with the expectation of aid and help.
2. Hence it means to hope. Job's hope and expectation was in God in life and death (Job 19:25-26).
3. If God destroys my body, I know He will save my soul (Job 13:16). One day He shall raise up my body and in my flesh I shall see God.
4. Death will not rob me of hope. God may slay my body, but not my faith. God would not slay faith and evil men and angels cannot.
5. The unsaved do not have this hope (I Thess. 4:13; Eph. 2:12; Jer. 17:5; Ps. 52:7; Prov. 28:26).

III. HIS TRIUMPHANT FAITH.

1. Though God takes away my possessions and family, I will not lose my faith in Him.
2. If I have nothing left but a dunghill and a broken potsherd with which to scrape my sores, I will trust in the Lord.
3. Though all my friends are physicians of no value, I will keep my confidence in God.
4. Job does not say: "I will trust God if he prospers me and gives me good health." In prosperity there is little room for faith. Prosperity and faith go together.
5. True faith trusts God in foul weather as well as in fair weather (Ps. 46:1-3).
 - (1) Pure trust in God is the highest expression of faith.
 - (2) To trust in God is a high honor done to God.
 - (3) Faith is the remedy before a remedy in all kinds of evils (Isa. 50:10; 54:10).
6. We can never trust God too much, nor creatures too little. We can trust in a God that does as He pleases and who will do whatever He has promised.
7. Trust God for every thing—temporal and spiritual.
8. We must never doubt God or question His dealings with us.
 - (1) We can set no terms or limits on God's actions. Let Him do what seems to Him good.
 - (2) His providence may seem evil. But God cannot err. His dealings are wise and holy. He is never unkind. He does all things right.
 - (3) God's wisdom overrules all for our good and His glory (Rom. 8:28).

IV. THE GLORY OF THIS TRUTH.

1. It would be better for God to slay me than to leave me alone in my sins.
2. The slaying of the creature is the very condition in which faith is born. We pass from death unto life. The old man dies with Christ at Calvary.
3. Faith in suffering proves we are not hypocrites.
 - (1) What hypocrite would trust in a slaying God?
 - (2) It proves we are sincere disinterested servants of God like Job. It shuts the Devil's mouth and makes him a liar.
 - (3) Faith honors God and puts the Devil to shame.

4. Faith may be severely tested, but it will never be overthrown (I John 5:4).

CONCLUSION:

1. Though possessions and health be gone and friends prove untrue, though we go into the valley of death, yet we must never lose faith in God (Ps. 23:4).
2. Though the waves of trouble roll over our heads, we must believe God does right. He must ever be the object of affection and eternal praise.
3. In our dying hour we must trust in the Lord who will slay us. "He trusted in God" (Hab. 3:17-18).
4. Christ trusted in God even though the Father poured out His soul unto death. When all was finished He committed His spirit to the Father. He never lost His faith.
5. Sinner, say: "Though I go to Hell I will trust in Christ. I will cling to Him with such might that if I go to Hell He will go with me. If I hold Him fast, hell will be no Hell, if He is there with me." (Job 13:15).

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of the unparalleled opportunities to do the work.

Americans are poor stewards of their money. We are possessed by a craze of buying useless nothings which makes us spendthrifts and wasters. The immense waste of the money which God has committed to His people as a sacred trust is a lamentable fact. The misused wealth of Christians largely supports the kingdom of darkness, and increases the difficulties which confront Christianity. Many church members spend more on jewelry, amusement, tobacco, soft drinks, and pleasure than they do for the cause of world missions.

What I do with my money is what I do with myself. Money is the stored energy of the person who earns it. No person does any better with himself than he does with his money. Our prayer should be: "Lord, may I not make any more money today than I can use for thy glory?"

One Sunday when the collection was to be used for Foreign Missions, the collection bag was taken to Mr. Dives, who shook his head and whispered, "I never give to Missions." "Then take something out of the bag," the elder whispered in reply, "The money is for the heathen."

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nation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory" (II Cor. 3:3-9).

The prominent theme of this whole chapter is the superiority of the spirit over the letter. The letter here is the ministration of the law, in particular, as given to Moses. It referred to the old covenant or covenant of works. The spirit then is the ministration of the gospel. It referred to the new covenant or covenant of grace.

Many Jews had exalted the law above the lawgiver and were blinded to the excellency of Christ, even as set forth in

the letter of the law. Paul wrote of them, "**Their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament**" (II Cor. 3:14). He declared that the ministration of the gospel far excelled the ministration of the law. He did not deny the glory of the law; rather he showed that the spirit is more glorious.

This comparison between the letter and the spirit is from the perspective of justification. With this in view, Paul concluded that the spirit excels the letter. By the letter is bondage, but by the spirit is liberty. By the first is death, and by the second is life. Concerning our justification, the letter has no power to make just, only the power to curse and condemn with death. Conversely, the spirit has no power to condemn, only the power to pardon and give life. "**For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ**" (John 1:17). "**For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved**" (John 3:17).

Let us now consider the spirit and the letter. In the first place, we shall notice that the letter kills. Secondly, we shall observe that the spirit gives life. Thirdly, our focus will be upon the fact that the letter is glorious, and in the last place, we shall find that the spirit is more glorious.

I. Firstly, our text declares that the letter kills.

The apostle stated, "**Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life**" (II Cor. 3:6). It was not the purpose of the law to give life. *The letter was given that the offence might abound.* Paul wrote to the Roman Christians, "**Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord**" (Rom. 5:20-21). The law did not enter to make the offence but to make the offence abound. The law entered because of sin, for "**sin is**

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Spirit and the Letter

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not imputed when there is no law" (Rom. 5:13). Therefore, the law was made for sinners as Paul wrote, **"The law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane"** (I Tim. 1:9).

The law also gives knowledge of sin. The apostle wrote, **"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin"** (Rom. 3:20). The law did not enter to make men perfect but to show men how imperfect they were. It came to show men their exceeding sinfulness, not to cleanse or make anyone righteous. John Bunyan wrote in his book, *The Law and Grace*, that the law was a looking glass, or a mirror. It was not given to make men righteous but to show them what they really were.

In the mirror of the law, men see their true reflection and come face to face with the sobering truth, **"Sin is the transgression of the law"** (I John 3:4). Their hideous image is measured against God's plumb line and they hear the chilling pronouncement, **"Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them"** (Gal. 3:10). All man's hope is dashed in the law.

Paul wrote, **"The letter killeth."** The letter kills and, not only that, but *the law has no life-giving power.* Men who are **"dead in trespasses and sins"** have no hope in the law for finding life. The law pronounces a just condemnation of death upon men in their sins. **"For the wages of sin is death"** (Rom. 6:23) and **"The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law"** (I Cor. 15:56).

The law has power over men because of their sins, but has no power to take away their sins. **"For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that they worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins"** (Heb. 10:1-4). Because of sin, men are condemned to eternal death; moreover, the blood of bulls and goats has no power to take away sins. The law is **"weak through the flesh"** and cannot save us from our sins.

Paul acknowledged that God had **"made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter."** Did this mean that Paul was a preacher of the gospel and as such did not preach the law? No, it did not mean that. Paul preached

the law. He preached **"all the counsel of God"** (Acts 20:27). He was no despiser of the law; he declared, **"The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good"** (Rom. 7:12).

The holy law of God must be preached in all its utter severity. **"By the law is the knowledge of sin,"** and, except it be preached, how shall men know their sinful condition before God? Paul wrote of his own experience, **"I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet"** (Rom. 7:7). By the law, we know, **"All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"** (Rom. 3:23). Therefore, the ministry of this letter kills. It tears down and destroys. It shows men their sins and rightly places them as worms upon the dunghill.

Many have misinterpreted this law and thought if the law would pronounce them righteous, they would gain entrance into Heaven. The young ruler that came to Christ was an example of this. He asked, **"what shall I do to inherit eternal life"** (Luke 18:18). He told the Lord he had kept the commandments from his youth up. He was blameless as touching the law. Christ said, **"Yet lackest thou one thing"** (Luke 18:22). He showed him he was not perfect in keeping the commandments. The law did not pronounce him righteous, **"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all"** (James 2:10). To leave even one thing undone will not suffice, **"Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them"** (Gal 3:10).

I do not wish to seem to despise the law, for **"the law is good, if a man use it lawfully"** (I Tim. 1:8). The law must be used lawfully. The law is good, but many try to use the law to gain eternal life, but the law has no life to give.

II. Secondly, it is written that the spirit gives life.

The apostle wrote, **"The Spirit giveth life."** *It is the Spirit only and the Spirit always that gives life.* This has not changed. One of the main points in this chapter is that the law never did and never will impart life. The Old Testament saints were not saved by keeping the law and neither shall we be saved by it today. The Scriptures declare that the gospel was preached unto Abraham (Gal. 3:8) and that he believed God and righteousness was accounted to him (Gal. 3:6). Abraham was justified before God through faith and not by the deeds of the law.

Let us now take note of the spirit in this chapter. *The spirit removes the veil.* The children of Israel were frightened by Moses' appearance and could not look at his face because the glory that was radiating from him. Moses had to cover his face with a veil in order to address them. However, in the preaching of the

spirit, there is no veil. The preaching of the spirit is setting forth plainly the things of the gospel and not hiding behind a veil.

So the veil is upon the hearts of the hearers. **"But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart"** (II Cor. 3:14-15). There are Jews today that still have the veil over their heart when they read the Old Testament. They do not see the spirit of the law, which testifies of Christ. All they see is the letter. The Pharisees were blinded in Christ's day in this same way.

Note, Paul said, **"which veil is done away in Christ."** Except the veil be removed, nothing will be seen but the letter. Many sinners today hear the preaching of the Word and feel it is antagonizing to them. They have the veil on their hearts and all they hear is, "do this, and do not do that." They do not see or understand the spirit; all they see is the letter. The letter has no ability to remove this veil but the spirit removes the veil.

The spirit also gives liberty. **"Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty"** (II Cor. 3:16-17). It gives life and sets men free. **"But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life"** (Rom. 6:22). Paul said, if you have been saved, you have been freed from sin. We have been saved from the pleasure of sin. We have been saved from the power of sin. We have been saved from the penalty of sin. We have been set free from the bondage of sin.

We are born under bondage to sin – not just to sin but also to the pleasure of sin. The Bible confesses that there is pleasure in sin for a season (Heb. 11:25). The fleshly nature has a love of sin and delights in sin. **"Men loved darkness rather than light"** (John 3:19). Men love their sins. It would not be such a hard thing to be freed from sin if we did not love it. We are under terrible bondage, but the spirit frees us from the power, penalty, and pleasure of sin. The letter has no way of freeing us from that awful burden of sin.

The spirit also redeems us from the curse. Those that are under the letter are under the curse of that letter. **"And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over**

them in it" (Col. 2:13). We have been redeemed from the curse of the law. That law said that we were cursed, but Christ took that writing out of the way **"nailing it to his cross."** He suffered that penalty Himself.

We see, therefore, we have been redeemed from the curse of the law. The letter has the ability to bring the curse but the letter cannot bring the redemption from that curse. The spirit teaches us, **"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us"** (Gal. 3:13).

The spirit places us into the family of God. The letter has no power to make us the sons of God. We are by nature the children of the bondwoman and not in the family of God. The law is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, but it has no power to place us into His family but the spirit does. **"To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ"** (Gal. 4:5-7).

The letter gives us no access to the inheritance of Jesus Christ. The letter makes us a servant and not a son. We are under that schoolmaster but the Spirit of adoption makes us sons, whereby we can cry to God **"Abba, Father."** Then, if we are sons, we are heirs of **"God through Christ."** We have an inheritance, a birthright, and all the precious promises in Jesus Christ.

If we are just the children of the bondwoman, who we are by nature, and we die in that condition, then we are cast out. Abraham said, **"Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac"** (Gen. 21:10). If we remain in that condition, we are cast out from God. However, through the spirit we are just as Isaac, the son of promise. The letter cannot do that. **"The Spirit giveth life."**

III. Thirdly, we note that the letter is glorious, or does have a glory.

Paul did not deny, and I do not want to deny, that there is glory in the letter. The opinion of some would be to take all the letter of the law and take it out. They think it is a dead letter and it is not for us today. Paul did not say that. Rather, he said there was glory in the letter. He concluded there was more glory in the Spirit, but there was also glory in the letter. We do not want to miss the glory that is in the letter by thinking that the law has been abolished. Christ said, **"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil"** (Matt. 5:17). Christ did not abolish the law. He came to fulfill it. He kept it perfectly. The

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Mini-Edition

By Joseph Harris
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The Fallacy of Same Sex Marriage

Some things just can't be changed. In the realm of nature and science, fire is always hot and ice is always cold. Wind always blows and the sun always shines. The aforementioned facts are not up for discussion or debate. Facts are facts. There is no movement underway to "redefine" or "better understand" these facts. They are accepted because they have been proven to be true.

With the advent of the destruction of an absolute authority in society (the Bible), has also come a redefining of many things. For instance, gender is up for debate. A "Christian" college recently offered three types of housing to its students: male, female and transgendered housing. The transgendered was for those students who were not sure of their gender. Huhhhh! Without being crass or too improper, there is a real easy way to find out. The answer is so common sense; it does not even need mentioning. This sad event is due to the destruction of absolutes.

The definition of murder was changed years ago when it began to be called by new names such as "choice," "abortion," "birth control" and "freedom," to name a few. The question of life beginning at conception used to not even be a question but an accepted truth.

There are many absolutes in life. Here are some more: (1) Death is the absence of life, (2) A fertile sperm and egg are required to begin a new life and (3) Politicians, both Democrat and Republican, will always raise taxes if given one tenth of a percent of an opportunity.

The statement, "Fire is not hot" will not change the fact that you will get fried if you jump into it. The union of two males or two females may in fact be a union, but brother, it ain't a marriage and no amount of name changing, redefining, "compassion" or tolerance will change the truth.

And speaking of civil unions, they should not even be allowed. A civil union for "domestic partners" is a mockery of marriage and an endorsement of fornication by "legally" allowing two individuals of the same sex to live together and potentially receive some of the benefits reserved for marriage.

If every federal, state and local court in the land declares homosexual union to be marriage, it still will not be marriage. There are certain legal qualifying factors required for a couple to

be married, but the foundational requirement of marriage, apart from government, is a requirement that is moral and common sense: that the candidates be of the opposite sex.

This recent push for perversion is not just an attack on marriage. It is an attack on God, the creator of marriage. Nevertheless, you better get ready. Buckle your safety belts. This abomination is coming soon to a town near you via Massachusetts.

Spirit and the Letter

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prophecy that went before on Him was, **"The LORD is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law, and make it honourable"** (Isa. 42:21).

Paul declared the letter to be glorious, for he wrote, **"But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance"** (II Cor. 3:7). He acknowledged that the glory of the letter was lesser. One reason why it is lesser is because the revelation of God is more open in the spirit, but in the letter, the revelation of God is more concealed. The letter was said to have a **"shadow of things to come."** How can the shadow be compared to the real substance? It cannot be equally compared. The shadow is just a figure or form. It is a little glimpse of the overall shape. The substance shows us what is really contained there.

The letter, the **"ministration of death,"** as it is here denominated, is **"written and engraven in stone"** and it **"was glorious."** So, the letter does have some glory. Let us now consider some of the glory of the letter.

The letter was glorious because it was given by God. We must make no mistake about that. It was given by God and it is God's Word. It seems that sometimes a secondary importance is placed upon the law. It may be derogatorily called "The Law of Moses," or "The words of Moses." Some have even preached that Moses was wrong in some of the laws he had given and that it is not really the Word of God, only the opinion of Moses. This completely contradicts God's own testimony concerning His Word: **"All scripture is given by inspiration of God"** (II Tim. 3:16) and **"the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost"** (II Peter

1:21).

The Bible speaks expressly concerning the two tables of the law, saying God **"gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God"** (Exo. 31:18). It was written by God and He gave it to Moses. It is assuredly God's Word. Therefore, there is glory in it because it was given by God. It is not to be done away and looked down upon as the words of men.

That letter, though it was a ministration of death, was written and engraven in stone and it was glorious. It was so glorious that **"the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance."** Moses had communed with God for forty days on the mount. He was so overwhelmed with God's glory that his face shown and the children of Israel were afraid.

The glory of Moses' face did fade. Eventually, Moses took the veil off from his face and talked with the children of Israel. This shows us how the letter of the law was given for a time and was going to fade away and be outdone by the coming of Christ, Christ Himself being more glorious. The Pharisees worshipped the letter of the law. Christ said, **"I am he that is among you,"** and they did not know the day of their visitation. They were more taken by the letter of the law than the person of Jesus Christ. He is the substance that is outlined by the shadow of the law and is obviously more glorious.

There was glory in the ministration of death because *it revealed the holiness of God.* We have already noted how **"The law was given that the offence might abound."** We have seen that through the law comes the knowledge of sin. The Bible states concerning men's sins, **"All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"** (Rom. 3:23). Sin is anything contrary to God that does not measure up to God's standard. Sin falls short of His glory. The law revealed that standard. It is an intimate expression of the holy character of God. Men are schooled by the law in how holy God is and how sinful man is.

The letter also reveals to us the perfect justice of God. In the law, **"every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward"** (Heb. 2:2). God is so perfectly just that through His law He demanded, **"Thou shalt give life for life, Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, Burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe"** (Exo. 21:23-25). God is so perfectly just that He will not permit the least infraction to go unpunished. He **"will not at all acquit the wicked"** (Nah. 1:3). The law pronounced, **"the soul that sinneth it shall die."** God will mete out perfect justice upon every transgression of His

law.

Furthermore, God's perfect justice is revealed in the law when it comes to Jesus Christ. Christ came under the curse of the law, which curse is death. The Scriptures testify of God, **"He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all"** (Rom. 8:32). Christ bore the sins of His people in His own body and the full measure of the exacting justice of God was poured out upon Him. Justice was not relaxed for Jesus Christ. He bore the curse of the law.

IV. Fourthly, the spirit excels the letter in glory.

Paul asked, **"How shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious?"** It was more glorious. The spirit exceeds and excels in glory! The law had only the shadow and the spirit contained the substance, the Messiah. Christ was there in the letter but the view was dim. However, Christ is in the spirit open and plain to view. Let us now briefly consider the glory in the spirit.

The spirit also reveals the justice of God. The prophet of old wrote, **"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand"** (Isa. 53:6,10). The justice of God is seen through the letter in that Christ was cursed by the law when He was bearing sins in His own body. However, the spirit reveals to us a greater glory by declaring that He laid down His **"life for the sheep"** (John 10:15). By the spirit, we understand that His was not just a bloody death to satisfy justice, but that He **"made peace through the blood of his cross"** (Col. 1:20). He satisfied the holy demands of God and **"we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son"** (Rom. 5:10).

The spirit also reveals the love of God. The spirit declares, **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life"** (John 3:16). The spirit reveals the love of God in a way that the letter never could do. The spirit teaches us **"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends"** (John 15:13). Through the spirit, we understand something of the great love of God that gave His only begotten son to die as a perfect substitutionary sacrifice. What glory that God saved His beloved people through the death of His Son!

I conclude, therefore, with Paul, that the spirit excels the letter in glory. **"For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration**

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit questions on any Bible topic

The Berea Baptist Banner, PO Box 39, Mantachie, Mississippi 38855

1. In light of II Corinthians 2:12, was there a church at Troas? --- Kentucky



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“Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ’s gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord” (II Cor. 2:12).

In this passage of Scripture, Paul is rehearsing to the church at Corinth how he came to arrive there by way of Troas and then Macedonia. He went on to say in verse 13, **“I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia.”** Eventually Paul ended up at Corinth and spent eighteen months with the Corinthians before returning to Jerusalem and then Antioch.

This text is referring back to Paul’s second missionary journey as recorded in Acts 16:7-10, **“After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not. And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.”**

From these Scriptures we know that Paul went to Troas to preach the gospel because he had an open door there; however, he did not stay long. The Lord told Paul to instead leave and go to Macedonia. Therefore he immediately left. We can conclude that Paul did go to Troas for the gospel’s sake, but we cannot conclude that there was a church established there.

Since Troas was a port city it appears to have been a common place where the disciples would meet up with each other when traveling back and forth from Asia to Macedonia. Luke met up with Paul in Troas on Paul’s second missionary journey and traveled with him to Philippi. Paul was expecting to meet Titus in Troas as well but he did not show up. On his third missionary journey, Paul again met up with his traveling companions in Troas

and they all stayed for seven days before continuing on toward Jerusalem. This is recorded in Acts 20:4-12, but even here there is no reference to a church at Troas. Troas may have been a common place for the disciples to travel through, but there is no biblical record of a church there.

Now if we go back to the text of II Corinthians 2:12 and then read through verse 16, we see where Paul first speaks about going to Troas (verse 12). Then in verse 13 he mentions that he had no rest of spirit there and left for Macedonia. In verse 14-16 he said, **“Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place. For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life.”** Paul speaks these words in the context of Troas. Perhaps the people there did not receive the gospel like the people did in other cities. Either way, God’s purpose was accomplished when the gospel was preached there. And God was pleased with those who faithfully preached it.

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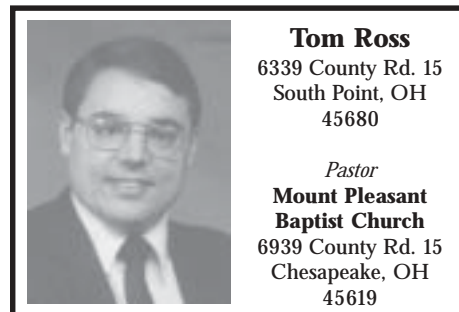
“Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ’s gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia” (II Cor. 2:12-13).

Paul first visits Troas in Acts 16:8. However, he immediately received a vision, which led him to Macedonia. We find him again in Troas in Acts 20:5-12. This is where Eutychus fell from the loft to his death and Paul raised him from the dead. This same night, Paul preached late and talked with the saints until the **“break of day.”** In II Tim. 4:13, Paul instructs Timothy to stop by Troas on his way to Rome and pick up a **“cloak”** and some writings. Paul had apparently left these there for the saints to study.

Now, as to the question, it is the opinion of this writer that there was a church at Troas. With all of the happenings that we have read about, it seems only logical that there was a church there. By **“...a door was opened unto me of the Lord...”** it seems that God, through Paul, planted a work there. God’s design in missionary work is that the gospel is preached, believers are baptized, and churches are organized. I’m quite sure Paul knew this was God’s design because we see in other places that Paul worked this way. We can only conclude that everything at Troas went the “normal” way for nothing is said of it going otherwise.

Let me conclude by saying that I can’t be dogmatic on this. The Bible doesn’t specifically say that there was a church there. However, I am confident that there was because of the verse in question and the other verses which mention this city.

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II Corinthians 2:12-13 states: **“Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ’s gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia.”**

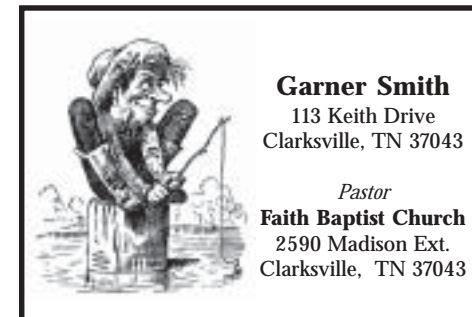
After the Spirit of God would not allow Paul and Silas to go to Bithynia, they proceeded to Troas. It was while Paul was in Troas that the vision of the Macedonia man crying out for help came to him. Paul and Silas left Troas and immediately proceeded to Macedonia by way of Samothracia, Neapolis, and Philippi where they met Lydia (read Acts 16:7-15). It is obvious from the reference in II Corinthians that Paul preached the Gospel in Troas. However, the door that was opened was that of preaching the Gospel in Macedonia as evidenced by him leaving Troas.

According to Acts 20:1-12, Paul and his travelling companions sailed again to Troas from Philippi where they stayed for seven days. It was during this time that

Paul preached to the disciples at Troas on the first day of the week in the evening. He preached until midnight. A man by the name of Eutychus fell asleep during the preaching. He then fell from the third loft and crashed to the floor. It appears that the fall was violent enough to have killed the young man, however Paul embraced him and said: **“..Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him” (v. 10).** Verse 12 implies that the young man was brought back to life which comforted the disciples.

After running all the references regarding Troas (Acts 16:7-15; 20:1-12; II Cor. 2:12-13; II Tim 4:13), I think it is safe to say that a church was organized by Paul and Silas in the city of Troas, though the Scriptures never specifically refer to it as the church at Troas. The fact that there were disciples who met together on the first day of the week to hear the preaching of the Word of God would indicate that a church had been organized there.

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Gone Fishin'

Brother Garner Smith recently suffered a heart-attack and had to undergo open-heart surgery. He is taking some time off from the Forum to rest and catch up on some fishing. Brother Smith has been answering questions on the Forum since May of 1991.

Beginning next month, we will have some guest Forum writers that will be answering questions until Brother Smith returns.



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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

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The Berea Baptist Banner, PO Box 39, Mantachie, Mississippi 38855

2. Is lusting after a person in your heart actually the same as committing adultery? --- Ohio



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Spiritually yes, physically no. Let me clarify. Jesus declared: **“Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell”** (Matt. 5:27-29). According to the spiritual application made by Jesus, when a man lusts after a woman in his heart he has committed heart adultery even though he has not physically had sexual relations with her. In the sight of God, the lusting after a woman in the heart is a breach of the moral law even though no physical contact occurs. Jesus was illustrating the spiritual breadth of the moral law as it applies to man. Heart adultery is a wicked sin that will cause the impenitent to be punished in the Lake of Fire and bring the chastening hand of God upon believers who engage in it.

Physical adultery occurs when one or more married people engage in sexual relations outside of the confines of the marriage bed. In the Old Testament the physical act of adultery was punishable by death (Deut. 22:21-27). Physical adultery is considered a sin that wounds the conscience, brings dishonor and shame, ruins the testimony of those involved, and causes the fire of jealousy to burn. The terrible consequences of physical adultery are clearly stated in Proverbs 6:25-29, 32-34: **“Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids. For by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread: and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life. Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes be not burned? Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned? So he that goeth in to his neighbour’s wife; whosoever toucheth her shall not be innocent...But whoso committeth adultery with a**

woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul. A wound and dishonour shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away. For jealousy is the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance.” According to these verses it is the spiritual heart adultery (lusting) that leads to the physical act of adultery with another person’s spouse. We must conclude that both the spiritual and physical forms of adultery are extremely harmful to the soul. Both must be avoided with all diligence. May God help us to guard our eyes, hearts, minds, and souls from engaging in spiritual adultery so that our bodies will not be caught up in this damnable sin.

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“But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart” (Matt. 5:28).

“But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death” (Jam. 1:14-15).

To lust after a person is to commit adultery with that person in your heart (Mat. 5:28). This surely is sin and should be avoided. Sinful thoughts produce sinful actions. Therefore, we must strive to rid our mind of these types of thoughts as soon as they enter into it.

The question doesn’t exactly measure up with Mat. 5:28. Notice, the lust doesn’t take place in the heart—the adultery does. Lusting takes place in our eyes and minds. These sinful thoughts are adultery in the heart and will produce actual physical adultery if we aren’t careful. Again, we must rid our mind of these thoughts as soon as they enter in.

The question before us asks if lust is the “same as committing adultery.” The answer to this is no. To lust is to commit adultery in the heart. However, it is not the same thing as the actual physical act. The act of adultery carried a penalty of

death in the law God gave to the nation of Israel. Other sins didn’t carry the same penalty. This would lead us to believe that some sins are worse than others. Jesus told Pilate that the one who delivered Him to Pilate had **“the greater sin”** (John. 19:11). Many today tell would tell us that **“a sin is a sin.”** However, Jesus spoke of one who had committed a **“greater sin.”** God told Israel that some sins carried a greater penalty than other sins, which, again, leads us to believe some sins are greater than others. Some sins are referred to as abominations while others are simply referred to as sin. I said all of that to say this—it is worse to commit the act of adultery than it is to lust just as it is worse to actually kill someone than just to think about it.

Lust is a sin. If it is not controlled, it will lead to bigger sins and ultimately will cause one to commit adultery. However, it is not the “same” as the actual act of adultery. To lust is to commit adultery in the heart.

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“Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” (Matt. 5:27-28).

These are the words of Christ from His sermon on the mount, and He is teaching here that if we lust after someone in our heart, it is just as much of a sin in God’s eyes as committing adultery.

Sometimes people think that small sins are not as bad as big ones, or sometimes people think that as long as they don’t commit major sins in their life they will be all right when they stand before God. This is simply not true.

One thing about God is that he does not approve of any sin, no matter how big or small it may seem (Romans 1:18). God abhors all sin and rejects all sinners. He even knows about the sins that we commit in our heart. There is nothing hidden from His view.

The reason that Christ preached these things is to show us that all men are in a desperate need of a Savior, and unless we are made perfect and righteous in Him, we will perish eternally.

Now as to the question asked, the answer is no. Committing adultery in the heart and committing adultery in the flesh are two different sins. They are different in nature and in the way they are committed. One is a sin of the heart and the other is a sin of the flesh. One is imagined and the other is tangible.

Even though all sin is abhorred by God, He has ordained that men deal with different sins in different ways according to His own law. For example, there is a different punishment for theft than there is for murder, according to His law. No judge should punish the thief with the same penalty that the murderer receives. If a judge did, then he would break God’s law.

The same thing is true of these two kinds of adultery. If a church member commits physical adultery, they should immediately be disciplined or excluded until they prove that they have repented (I Cor. 5:1-13). But if another church member commits adultery in the heart, we have no way of knowing it or judging the content of it. God alone must be the judge of it. Both sins are evil in God’s eyes, but we deal with them as humans according to God’s commandments for humans. We can only deal with tangible sin and the way God tells us to deal with it according to His word.

Sometimes when people say that these two sins are the same, they are trying to make an excuse for physical adultery. They want us to believe that we should not discipline adulterous members. They want us to recognize men as preachers who have disqualified themselves from the ministry through adultery. They say that everybody has committed adultery in their heart, and by that, they are trying to belittle the sin of physical adultery. God commanded that all physical adulterers be put to death (Lev. 20:10), but He never gave a command that we kill ourselves because we have committed adultery in our hearts. There is a difference between the two sins. It is not our place to judge the hearts of men, but we are to judge men’s actions in a righteous manner according to the Scriptures. God will judge the hearts of men, as well as their actions.

As far as our standing before God is concerned, we are all great sinners and we all need a Savior no matter what we have or haven’t done. But as far as the practical application of God’s commandments, all men are judged according to their actions by the authorities and institutions that God has set in place for the benefit of mankind everywhere.

MATT JAMES

Spirit and the Letter

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of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious" (II Cor. 3:9-11). The offerings, sacrifices, rites, and ceremonies were done away in Jesus Christ. There is no more sacrifice year after year. "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Heb. 10:14). He made one sacrifice for sin.

The law demanded sacrifices year after year, but those sacrifices had no power to take away sin. What glory is in Christ, who "appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Heb. 9:26)! He did what the law could not do.

Of a truth, there is more glory in the spirit, "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord" (II Cor. 3:18).



The Way of Cain

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

WHAT WAS HIS WAY?

Cain and Abel represented two kinds of people in the world, the lost and the saved. Cain is the natural man and Abel the spiritual man. Abel acknowledged his fallen condition, put his faith in a

sacrificial substitute "by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts" (Heb. 11:4). Cain, by bringing the offering he did, denied he was a sinful creature and ignored God's demand for expiation by the shedding of blood. He approached God on the grounds of personal worthiness. He worshipped God after his own fashion. He rejected God's revealed will and set up his own defiance.

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

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

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

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

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

will of man.

WHO ARE CAIN'S FOLLOWERS?

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

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

There are about 300,000,000 Hindus in the world. The principal idea of this religion is salvation by works or good deeds. These people are going the way of Cain.

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

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

CAINISM AND THE CHURCH

In the first century, Jesus Christ came to revive and perfect true religion. He did this and afterward committed the preservation of "the faith" to His newly organized church. Christ taught salvation by faith in Himself. He taught total depravity of the natural man. He declared: "None is good, save one, that is, God" (Luke 18:19). He taught the total inability of the alien sinner to come to Himself for eternal life. He declared in John 6:44: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." He contended that eternal life was the gift of God to fallen man. He said of His sheep, or elect: "I give unto them eternal life" (John 10:28). Unlike all the religions of the heathen, which teach that the actual cause of salvation depends upon man. Jesus Christ taught that salvation was wholly from God, separate and apart from all human merit. In John,

chapter 1, He ascribed the whole of the new birth or regeneration to the power of God, not the power of man. Of the regenerate, He said in verse 13: "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

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

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

One of the signs of the paganish influence upon these false churches was the belief in baptismal regeneration. They began to look upon baptism, not as a symbol of Christ's burial and resurrection as the New Testament teaches, but as a sacrament which cleansed from sin. They even began to baptize infants like the heathen had been doing already for two thousand years who also believed in baptismal regeneration. These false churches began to call the true churches heretics and dissenters and to persecute them unto death. Apostate Christianity murdered fifty million Anabaptists in the Dark Ages alone. By this these false churches manifested the spirit of Cain the murderer. The real Christians were called during these times Montanists, Novationists, Donatists, Paulicians, Albigenes, Waldenses, Petrobrusians, Henricians, Lollards, Wycliffites, Anabaptists, and Baptists. These despised and persecuted people continue to maintain true religion in spite of dungeon, fire or sword.

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

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Christianity.

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

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

MODERN CAINISM

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

Dear friend, I have something better to offer than paganism under the banner of Christianity. I present you true religion, the way of Abel, Abraham, the nation of Israel, Jesus Christ, the Apostles of Christ and the redeemed of all ages. I tell you by the authority of God's Word that your salvation must be of the Lord. It cannot be of your enfeebled will or corrupt, sinful nature. If you could by your own free will produce works, which would redeem your soul, then you would not need the grace of God or the regeneration of the Holy Spirit. But the Bible says: "**Ye must be born again.**" If you are ever saved, you must be saved by the free and sovereign grace of God. You are depending on God for salvation. His Divine grace is absolutely unmerited, indispensable and victorious in the salvation of a sinner. Grace, the free grace of God, does all the work of salvation. It works in the sinner all his good will and all his good works, so that he shall go at last into the Divine presence as a poor

helpless beggar, a poor lost sinner, saved by grace alone from first to last, and be prepared to give God all the glory for his salvation.

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



Descriptions of Our Security

By Bill James

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one" (John 10:27-30).

From the earliest days of our Christian experience we have all craved tokens of our secure state. We have been intensely interested in knowing that we are safe and secure in this new relation. Verses like the one above have been a great comfort to us from the very outset of our conversion. I venture to say that this text has been a favorite with most of us. How blessed to have such a Shepherd and to be embraced in such strong Hands. These offer the soul enormous comfort and are calculated to produce strong consolation. They are an anchor of soul both sure and steadfast.

Our security, as believers is clothed in several instructive emblems in Scripture. They are borrowed from different realms. Our God is wonderfully accommodating. Being pure Spirit, God has no hands yet He employs such language as to facilitate our human understanding. He crafts this coveted blessing in familiar and striking ways so as to meet our needs. As we will show, God uses geography, anatomy, and familiar imagery to assure our fainting hearts of His secure and abiding love.

First, let us look at His use of geography in illustrating our security. "**They that trust in the LORD shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the LORD is round about his people from henceforth even for ever"** (Ps. 125:1-2). To the untrained eye Jerusalem may not have appeared all that secure. However, its geographic situation rendered it a subtly and strategically sound stronghold. History provides us with an abundance of evidence for this. Jerusalem, formerly called Jebus and held by the Jebusites, was not as easy place for David to capture when he came up from Hebron (Read I Chron. 11:4-7). Enemies

thereafter, when God permitted, took it by siege and starvation rather than by bold advance. Even Titus, the Roman general, had his work cut out for him in A.D. 70 according to the account of Jewish historian Josephus. Remember that Christ foretold this destruction and it was because they had put forth their hands to iniquity (Ps. 125:3). Mountains and rocks were natural fortresses in those days and frequently God is represented by these emblems in the Bible. Like the mountains around about Jerusalem we are circumscribed by God's almighty and secure love.

Secondly, not God's use of anatomy to illustrate our security. "**Keep me as the apple of the eye, hid me under the shadow of thy wings"** (Ps. 17:8). The Psalmist here uses an emblem (the apple of the eye) that is found in four other writers of the Scripture. Moses (Deut. 32:10), Solomon (Prov. 7:2), Jeremiah (Lam. 2:18), and Zechariah (Zech. 2:8) all imply this instructive metaphor in their teaching. Just consider then how wonderfully protected the human eye is. It is formed by an infinitely wise Creator. It is seated in an orbit of hard bone. It is lubricated by mucus and tear ducts. Eyebrows, and eyelashes serve to keep out foreign matter and so does the ability to quickly blink. The eye also has three protective layers and internal methods to reduce the entrance of bright light that could prove damaging. If God went to such lengths to protect the eye will He not protect our souls. Will He not keep us as the apple of the eye?

Remember also the reference to God's Hands earlier. Hands are a faculty of the human anatomy. The Hands that hold us, on which our names are inscribed, are the same that made the world (Is. 49:16; 40:12; 48:13). Shall not He that measured the vast oceans in the hollow of His hand be able to keep us? Is His hand shortened that He cannot save? Are we not under the very shadow of His wings? Christ used this thought when referring to a mother hen gathering her chicks under her wings. God has no wings, but we get the point readily. Finally, God uses familiar imagery to underscore our security. "**For I, saith the LORD, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her"** (Zech. 2:5). Walls and fire were common everyday things to them. What a picture a "wall of fire" paints for us all. The enemy would not be able to penetrate this threatening spectacle. Remember, the pillar of fire stood between fearful Israel and the approaching Egyptians. What is this wall of fire? There is good reason to believe it is angels. They encamp about us and are as a flaming fire (Ps. 34:7 with Ps. 104:4).

Elisha's servant was horrified when they were surrounded by a host of Syrians but God opened his eyes to see "**the mountain was full of horses and**

chariots of fire round about Elisha" (II Kings 6:17). There were more with them than with the Syrians and the Bible says, "**The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place"** (Ps. 68:17).

It is certain that God frequently used angels to protect His beloved people. They like Job's hedge keep the enemy at bay. Christ in speaking of the security of God's little children said, "**Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven"** (Matt. 18:10).

God has then in numerous ways described how He secures us and in doing so provides us with great comfort and encouragement. His sheep shall never perish nor ever be plucked out of His hand!

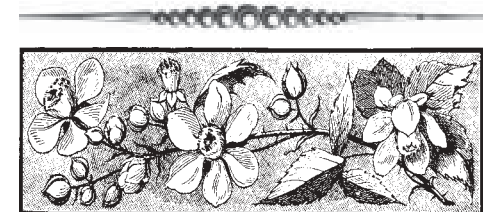
The Mission of the Church

By Clarence Larkin

As we have seen, the church is not an "organization," but an "organism." Therefore, it is not a "social club" organized and supported for the benefit of its members. Neither is it a "place of amusement" to pander to the carnal nature of man. Nor is it a "house of merchandise" for the sale of "indulgences," or other commodities, whereby the money of the ungodly can be secured to save the penurious church member a little self-sacrifice.

Neither is it a "reform bureau" to save the "bodies" of men. The reformation of men is very commendable, as are all forms of "social service," but that is not the work of the church. All the great philanthropic and civilizing agencies of the world are "by-products" of Christianity, but the "mission" of the church is her "commission" to "evangelize" the world (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 1:7-8).

The "kingdom idea" has robbed the church of the "pilgrim" and "martyr spirit," and caused it to go down into Egypt for help. When the church enters into an "alliance with the world," and seeks the help of parliaments, congresses, legislatures, federations, and reform societies, largely made up of ungodly men and women, she loses her "spiritual power" and becomes helpless as a redeeming force. The end of such an "alliance" will be a "religious political regime" that will pave the way for the revelation of Satan's great "religious political leader" and "superman" - the ANTICHRIST.



Studies in Esther 4:1-8

By Jeff Short

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In the previous chapter, Haman was enraged that Mordecai did not follow the king's command in honoring him. It is interesting that Haman the Agagite, of the Amalekites, and Mordecai, of the lineage of King Saul, were bitter enemies. Haman certainly had an intense hatred for Mordecai. It was a cold and calculating hatred. He did not strike out at once; rather, he maliciously planned his revenge.

He came to King Ahasuerus with a plan. He wanted a certain people to be destroyed. Haman said it would not be profitable to the king to permit them to live. Haman suggested their destruction and promised to pay ten thousand talents of silver into the king's treasury upon the execution of the decree. The king handed him his ring and gave him the necessary authority to execute the decree.

This proceeding pleased Haman. He immediately had the scribes to write up the decree and to hasten it into all of the provinces. Haman had to ensure that all the people of the kingdom knew of his power. Now, we turn to the reaction of Mordecai and the Jews to the murderous decree.

Verses 1-3 – “When Mordecai perceived all that was done, Mordecai rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth with ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and cried with a loud and a bitter cry” (Est. 4:1). Beginning chapter 4, we learn that Mordecai had knowledge of Haman's plan. Mordecai likely had connections inside the palace, because he knew more than what was posted. Evidently, from verse 7 of chapter 4, he knew about Haman's arrangement with the king. He knew about the money Haman promised to pay into the king's treasury. Mordecai was very knowledgeable about the details of the arrangement.

It seemed Mordecai had some inside information. This could have been revealed to him by the Spirit, or it could have been through human means. It would be more in line with the rest of the book if Mordecai were informed through human means. In this whole account, God worked without any outward show of Himself. Only the eyes of faith could spy His handiwork here. However, either way, Mordecai definitely knew much about the situation.

The news put Mordecai in great distress, for **“Mordecai rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and cried with a loud and a bitter cry.”** This was a common sight in the Old Testament: a sight of grief and mourning.

People would sit in sackcloth and ashes when they were mourning over sin or hardships. Mordecai was distressed. He was partly distressed because he was the chief cause of the decree of destruction that was written against his people. Not only would this affect him and his house, it would also affect all of his countrymen. The Jews were not guilty of the things Haman accused them of, yet because of Mordecai and his actions, the entire nation was moved against by their enemy.

We note here the integrity of Mordecai. Despite the issued decree, he continued to act on principle. We usually observe men acting very differently from this, for oftentimes when a man's situation changes, his principles also change. Perhaps a preacher will preach something for many years; then his personal circumstances change and, all of a sudden, he has some “new light” and starts preaching differently. Many men, besides just preachers, are **“tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind.”** Their beliefs change to conform to their personal situation and they even become staunch defenders of their newfound position. Solomon said of such men, **“Every way of a man is right in his own eyes”** (Pro. 21:2), and, **“Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness”** (Pro. 20:6).

Mordecai was cut from a different cloth. He came under trial because of acting on principle. He believed it wrong to bow down and reverence Haman. He stuck to his convictions, despite the consequences.

This turn of events came right after Mordecai had been honored. He had come into favor with the king, since he was the one that spoiled the assassination attempt of Bigthan and Teresh. For Mordecai, the day of prosperity gave way to the day of adversity. In providence, the two usually come together. Solomon wrote of this, **“In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other”** (Ecc. 7:14). Despite Mordecai's joy, mourning came to him. This is another testimony that trials will surely come.

Mordecai was mourning, **“And came even before the king's gate: for none might enter into the king's gate clothed with sackcloth”** (Est. 4:2). The king had previously issued a decree that none were to enter into the gate or the palace clothed in sackcloth. Being clothed in sackcloth was indicative of mourning and Ahasuerus sought to banish such grief from his kingdom, or at least from his presence.

This law demonstrates the king's carnality. It is a refusal to deal with the real problems of life. We cannot decree that grief will not come to us. The wise preacher observed, **“I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all”** (Ecc. 9:11). Grief will come, eventually, to everyone. The truth is that none of us can escape that part of the human experience. Some may have a greater share than others have, but everyone will have some.

This law is almost as if the king said he was never going to come to an end or any grief. He enjoyed the feasting in life but did not want the sorrow. In reality, we are made better by enduring some grief. Solomon wrote on this subject, **“It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart. Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth”** (Ecc. 7:2-4). How foolish was this king in trying to make his own house a perpetual house of mirth by banishing any semblance of sorrow? Grief, sickness, death, and sorrow take orders from no one but God. The king could try to hide his head in the sand but he was not exempt from sorrow.

“And in every province, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, there was great mourning among the Jews, and fasting, and weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes” (Est. 4:3). It seems that most of the Jews responded to the news similarly to Mordecai. They could have responded in many different ways. For one, they could have become angry with Mordecai. They could also have become bitter over their misfortune to be unfairly persecuted. However, they responded wisely by mourning, fasting, weeping, and laying in sackcloth and ashes.

The widespread mourning among the Jews indicates they were mourning over their own sins. They were confessing that, in their prosperity, they had forgotten God, His Word, and His ways. They had become a little too accustomed to the Persian culture and way of life. They had settled in and drifted away from God. This is a peculiar temptation in prosperity. It is easy to get comfortable and satisfied and then forget about God and His Word. We just do not seem to need God as much at those times. The Jews mourned over their condition and felt it was because of their own wickedness that they had come into it.

Notice how the Jews responded to the

command of an earthly king. The judgment of an earthly king sent them into widespread mourning and weeping. It was not the word of God that caused them to grieve, yet the Jews bewailed their condition before God when this earthly king pronounced judgment upon them. It is far better to take notice of God's Word, but many today are more exercised over the words of the politicians or government officials than the Word of God. I pray that we might start mourning over our condition in response to the eternal Word of God.

Verses 4-5 – “So Esther's maids and her chamberlains came and told it her. Then was the queen exceedingly grieved; and she sent raiment to clothe Mordecai, and to take away his sackcloth from him: but he received it not” (Est. 4:4). The communication between Esther and Mordecai was very limited at best and likely even cut off entirely since he was outside the gate mourning. Perhaps Mordecai limited their communication to protect her from any trouble because of an association with him.

Esther learned of Mordecai's mourning in sackcloth and ashes through her maids and chamberlains. In response, she sent him a change of clothes. Apparently, she could not bear to hear of his grief. She was afflicted by Mordecai's suffering. Esther was a concerned and compassionate woman. She grieved when others grieved.

We desperately need this sort of compassion and concern today, especially in the Lord's church. **“We are members one of another”** (Eph. 4:25), and if **“one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it”** (I Cor. 12:26). We should be able to weep with them that weep and rejoice with them that rejoice. In some cases, we need the compassion, like Christ, to weep for others when they will not weep for themselves.

“Then called Esther for Hatach, one of the king's chamberlains, whom he had appointed to attend upon her, and gave him a commandment to Mordecai, to know what it was, and why it was” (Est. 4:5). Esther was in sympathy with Mordecai though she really did not know what was wrong with him. She tried to relieve him, but when he refused to be comforted, she sent Hatach to him to find out why he was so distressed.

Verses 6-8 – “So Hatach went forth to Mordecai unto the street of the city, which was before the king's gate” (Est. 4:6). Hatach went to Mordecai as Esther had bidden him. Mordecai was a man of integrity and he was not grieving to gain attention or sympathy. Esther knew there must have been a serious problem or reason why Mordecai was mourning.

The fact that Esther sent Hatach to

Studies in Esther

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inquire of Mordecai is evidence that she must have had no knowledge of Haman's plan. The queen must have been somewhat isolated within the palace. She was not involved in grave matters of the state. Obviously, she did not commune regularly with the king for in verse 11 she confesses that she had not been with him for 30 days. In wise providence, Mordecai would be the one to tell her of the awful thing that had been done.

"And Mordecai told him of all that had happened unto him, and of the sum of the money that Haman had promised to pay to the king's treasuries for the Jews, to destroy them. Also he gave him the copy of the writing of the decree that was given at Shushan to destroy them, to shew it unto Esther, and to declare it unto her" (Est. 4:7-8). Mordecai informed Hatach of what had happened so he could go back and tell Esther about it. Notice that Mordecai told Esther all about Haman's plan, even the secret details not contained in the post. He told her of the sum of the money that Haman had promised to pay to destroy the Jews. He also gave Hatach a copy of the writing of the decree to show her in case that she might not believe it. Not that Esther might think they were lying, but she might think that Hatach had misunderstood. This was a great atrocity and unimaginable. So Mordecai makes sure she has evidence and confirmation that what he said was the truth.

Notice that Mordecai did not mislead her, but rather dealt directly and plainly with her. Mordecai might have been tempted to spare Esther from this grief as much as possible. He could have thought to soften up the message. He could have tried to hide it entirely, but he told her the truth. He did not seek to deceive her but spoke to her plainly. With wisdom, he warns her of the imminent danger.

Parents must deal this way with their children if the child is in present danger. The parents should warn them urgently and clearly, so that the child will understand the situation that danger is around them. Preachers are also ones that must deal this way with people even though it is perceived as harsh. We must do it out of love, which is why the parent will urgently shout to the child that has wandered into the street with oncoming traffic. That parent would not just wave at their child and say softly, "Hi, honey. You need to be careful. There are speeding cars coming around the curve. I know you like the pretty yellow lines, but maybe you should think about coming on back in the yard to play." This is preposterous! The parent will shout, "Come back away from the road! There are cars coming!" Sin is more dangerous than a speeding car. I am not saying that

preachers have to shout at the top of their voice, but we do not need spineless compromisers in the pulpit that will not tell people the truth because they are concerned about attendance, or their salary, or their health and medical benefits. Preachers are to **"Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression . . . and their sins"** (Isa. 58:1). Mordecai told Esther the truth and made her aware of the dangerous situation she was in as well as the rest of the Jewish people.

Mordecai not only warned Esther, he charged her with her responsibility. He sent Hatach back **"to charge her that she should go in unto the king, to make supplication unto him, and to make request before him for her people"** (Est. 4:8). Mordecai realized this was the only hope they had that Esther would go in before the king, he would receive her, and she would be able to make a request for people. Mordecai charged her that she had this responsibility to undertake for her people.

Esther had a great position in the kingdom; she was the queen. God had given her many gifts physically that had caused to her to come into this position. Mordecai believed that she was responsible to use those same gifts for the glory of God and for the good of His people. She had not been blessed only for her own personal benefit. She had received and now was required to give.

Like Esther, we all are responsible in our own station. Certain circumstances are peculiar to us, just as we have unique talents and abilities. In our place, we can do things because of who we are, where we are, what we know, and what we have. In other words, each of us has a unique opportunity to minister in ways that others cannot. For example, some possess wealth and can do things that others with less cannot do. This does not mean that only those who are "well off" are responsible to minister. We are each responsible to recognize our gifts, the things we have of the Spirit, the place where we stand, and what we can do from where we are. We should be willing to give to others and feel the responsibility to minister from our own station. Esther was reminded of this by Mordecai.

Conclusion – We note the providence of God in the fact that there was so much time between the writing of the decree and the actual execution of it. There were about eleven months between them. Haman was in great haste to make the decree known. He was in a big hurry for all of the provinces to know about it.

Why was he in such a hurry if he had so much time before the day of execution? It was the providence of God working, because, had he done the thing suddenly, there would have been no time for Mordecai to communicate with Esther. There would have been no time for the

Jews to mourn, fast, weep, and wail. Esther would have had no time to go in before the king and plead with him for her people. Time would not have permitted all of these events, yet these were necessary for the deliverance of the people. God in His providence allowed this time and allowed it for response, or space for repentance. Mordecai was given room to see if he would stand true to the principles he believed to be right. Esther was given room to see if she would rise up to the responsibility that she had in the Lord and undertake for her people. Haman was also given room to manifest his wickedness and sinful depravity.

Similarly, God also gives us room or space. God said of Jezebel in Revelation 2:21, **"And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not."** God gave an indefinite period of time for response, faith and obedience. Sometimes God gives us a little room in our trials to see how we are going to respond. They may seem to drag out and have no end in sight, but God gives us room in these times to respond to Him. Will we respond grudgingly of necessity or willingly?

Short Thoughts

by Jeff Short

(Short devotionals on Bible verses.)

Small Profits in Religion

I Timothy 4:8

While in college, Jim Elliot was corresponding with his parents about feeling that the Lord was leading him to a foreign field to do mission work. His mother, as most concerned mothers would, sought to persuade her son to stay "home" because of the "need" here (in the U.S.). Jim wrote her, "And Mother, please let's not have any more of this talk about staying home, telling people of the 'need.' That would be *augmenting* the need. There are too many good preachers berating people night after night about a lost world who have never faced the challenge of sacrificial foreign service themselves. I feel as if I haven't got any excuse whatsoever to let a body such as you have given me get fat leaning on pulpits" (Shadow of the Almighty, p. 75).

Jim was obviously concerned about keeping his body in good physical shape in order to meet the demands of missionary life. In fact, even before he was a senior in high school, a friend "saw him running around the outdoor track, training." He was puzzled why someone would just voluntarily work out in this way, so he inquired of Jim why he was doing it. Jim responded, "Bodily exercise is profitable for a little." His friend then knew, "he was building his body for the

rigors of missionary life" (ibid, p. 32).

He continued this discipline into college. "Jim had gone out for wrestling during his freshman year, believing that participation in some sport contributed to his training as a soldier of Jesus Christ." He was willing to take the little profit of bodily exercise to help prepare himself.

This reminds me of a wise saying in the business world, "There are no small profits." What Jim thought of that profit is clear in a letter he wrote to his mother. "It's sure a good feeling . . . not to be waterlogged and flabby while one is studying. I think it definitely stimulates the entire body process, including thinking, to be physically alert. Like the horse in Job, one can rejoice in his strength" (ibid, p. 42).

True to the words of the Apostle Paul, **"And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things"** (I Cor. 9:25), Jim also disciplined himself as to his diet. "He chose his food carefully: fresh fruits and vegetables, preferably raw; few starches, few desserts. He ate too rapidly, but in moderate quantity, in accord with the rules for wrestling training, as well as with his own ideas about preserving a rugged body for missionary work in the future" (ibid, p. 38).

Rees Howells was another man that did not despise the small profits. While doing mission work in a village, he became burdened about the tramps, who were jobless, homeless men. He sought to begin ministering to them and interceding for them in prayer. He knew they ate and slept in government housing. Their diets consisted of two meals daily of bread, cheese, and soup. In order to identify further with them as an aid to intercessory prayer, he determined to stick to the same diet, even though a wider variety of rich food was available to him.

Rees was later invited to London by a wealthy friend. Knowing his commitment to his disciplined diet, he was greatly exercised to find out that his wealthy friend had scheduled a number of lavish dinners for him. On his first night there, "While waiting for the meal, he read out to Mr. Howells all the invitations to dinner. 'What a burden came over me!' Rees said. 'Another stand had to be made. I knew I could only take two meals a day of the simplest food, so what was the use of the dinners?'" When they sat down to eat, his host said, "All this has been prepared for you... and I want you to taste everything on the table." Rees had to confess his position and his host exclaimed, "What have you done with me, Rees? Who will they say my guest is? One of the old prophets?" Rees told him that he had not counted on having to insult him but he must stick with his diet. His host replied, "To think you are doing all this to reach lost souls . . . and here I am now an old man, and I

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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.

LONG LIST OF CELEBRITIES LINE UP TO SUPPORT ABORTION

WASHINGTON (EP) – Pro-abortion groups are gearing up for a national march on Washington April 25, and they are enlisting a slew of celebrities for help. According to LifeNews.com, over 100 television, movie and pop music stars have signed on to support the pro-abortion rally.

Among the stars endorsing abortion: Christina Aguilera, Jennifer Aniston, Kevin Bacon, Alec Baldwin, Glenn Close, Cindy Crawford, Cheryl Crow, Ellen DeGeneres, Kirsten Dunst, Calista Flockhart, Jane Fonda, Helen Hunt, Ashley Judd, Natalie Maines, Ewan McGregor, Demi Moore, Charlize Theron, Uma Thurman and Susan Sarandon.

Bradley Whitford, who plays Josh Lyman on NBC's "West Wing," is among the celebrities scheduled to appear at the march. "My message to politicians will be simple: enough is enough," Whitford said. "We have the right to make our own deeply felt, deeply moral decision."

The full list of stars participating is available on LifeNews.com. And while it seems difficult to think of a celebrity not on the list, at least two Hollywood stars spoke out against abortion and the upcoming march.

Patricia Heaton, the two-time Emmy award winning star on "Everybody Loves Raymond," said abortion is bad for babies and mothers. "I think it is better to make the system conform to what is best for you and your baby instead of making the baby go away to conform to what is best for the system," she said.

She also said motherhood is not held in high regard in the U.S. "Even though we are a very baby-friendly environment, I still think there is a lot of feeling out there that mothers have second-class status in society," Heaton said.

LifeNews.com also reported that former super-model Kathy Ireland, once pro-abortion, spoke out against the upcoming march. "I'm liberal about the rights of the unborn child," Ireland said.

Ireland said when she came to understand that an unborn child is a person at conception, she was no longer able to remain pro-abortion. ">From the moment of conception, a new life comes into being with a complete genetic blueprint," she said. "The sex is determined. The blood type is determined. It doesn't start out as one species and suddenly become a human being."

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES RELEASES ANNUAL YEARBOOK OF

NORTH AMERICAN CHURCHES

NEW YORK (EP) – The National Council of Churches (NCC) released its "2004 Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches" in March. The group releases a compilation of statistics about churches in North America each year.

NCC reported that a fourth Pentecostal denomination joined the list of the 25 largest denominations in the U.S. The Church of God, based in Cleveland, Tenn., ranked No. 25 with 944,857 members. The three other Pentecostal denominations on the list are: The Church of God in Christ (ranked 4th with 5,499,875 members); the Assemblies of God (ranked 10th with 2,687,366 members); and the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World, Inc. (tied for 16th with 1,500,000 members).

The largest single U.S. church remained the Catholic Church, reporting 66,407,105 adherents, followed by the Southern Baptist Convention, reporting 16,247,736 members.

Among the denominations that reported losses in overall numbers of members were: The United Methodist Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod), African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church and United Church of Christ.

The church with the highest growth rate, according to the NCC report, was The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Mormon church remained the fifth largest church in the nation, and reported a 1.88 percent growth

The report also noted a growth in students enrolled in theological education. More than 75,000 students are enrolled in member schools of the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada.

Sidebar: U.S. Membership Denominational Ranking:

Largest 25 Denominations/Communions

1. The Catholic Church – 66,407,105
2. Southern Baptist Convention – 16,247,736
3. The United Methodist Church – 8,251,042
4. The Church of God in Christ – 5,499,875
5. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints – 5,410,544
6. Evangelical Lutheran Church in America – 5,038,006
7. National Baptist Convention, U.S.A.,

Inc. – 5,000,000

8. National Baptist Convention of America, Inc. – 3,500,000

9. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) – 3,407,329

10. Assemblies of God – 2,687,366

Source: 2004 Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches

SUPREME COURT WON'T HEAR CASE OF INDIANA TROOPER FIRED OVER RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

WASHINGTON (EP) – The U.S. Supreme Court said April 19 that it won't hear an appeal from an Indiana state trooper who was fired for refusing to work at a casino because of his Christian beliefs.

Benjamin Endres was designated a full-time gaming officer by Indiana in 2000, and was ordered to report to Blue Chip Casino in Michigan City, Ind., for duty. Endres told his supervisors he was not opposed to general casino crime-fighting, but that he didn't want to appear to condone the casino's activities by working there full-time. He said gambling violates his Christian convictions.

Endres' supervisors refused to change his assignment, and he was fired in April 2000 after being a trooper since 1991. He sued the state and lost. Though a federal law protects people from discrimination based on religion, the 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Chicago said the law did not require police and fire departments to assign workers to duties compatible with their principles.

"Must prostitutes be left exposed to slavery or murder at the hands of pimps because protecting them from crime would encourage them to ply their trade and thus offend almost every religious faith?" the court asked.

But Endres said serving full-time as a gaming officer is different than responding to a call from a bar, a casino or the streets. He said since state law requires the presence of a gaming officer in order to be open, he would have been the man whose presence meant gambling could proceed.

"The role, as I see it, is really one of supporting the industry," Endres told Family News in Focus. "You're paid a bonus directly out of the gambling proceeds; you're there really not to do traditional police work. You're there to regulate the gambling process."

Regulating the gambling process was something Endres said he was not willing to do as a Christian. "In my position as a youth worker within our youth group, we'd had families terribly affected by gambling addictions," he said. "With my position as a deacon at our church, our church has taken a strong stand against involvement with gambling."

Casey Mattox, a Rutherford Institute attorney who represented Endres, said state agencies should be pleased to have officers with strong moral convictions. "You would hope that persons who are committed in their faith would actually be exactly the kind of people you would want to have as police officers," he said.

And Mattox said he believed the Indiana

State Police should have been able to find another assignment for Endres. "The state here has never even had to give Mr. Endres a reason why they could not accommodate him," Mattox told AP. "That is the really disturbing part."

The attorney was also disturbed that the Supreme Court refused to hear Endres' appeal. He said the court should have considered the argument that the lower appeals court overstepped its bounds in giving police and fire departments exemptions from religious discrimination laws. And Mattox said he's concerned that the other judges may take the reasoning behind the lower court ruling and apply it far beyond law enforcement.

THOUSANDS OF PRO-ABORTION ACTIVISTS MARCH ON WASHINGTON; PRO-LIFERS DENIED RIGHT TO COUNTER-PROTEST

WASHINGTON (EP) – Thousands of pro-abortion activists were expected to descend on the Capitol April 25 for a rally dubbed the "March for Women's Lives." But pro-life activists who wanted to march for unborn babies' lives were told 'no' by the National Park Service.

The pro-lifers asked for a permit to peacefully demonstrate along public sidewalks during the rally. They planned to carry pro-life signs along the pro-abortion march route. The Park Service refused to issue the permit, saying the pro-lifers would "disrupt the march."

After their request was denied, the Rev. Patrick Mahoney of the Christian Defense Coalition said his organization would seek a temporary restraining order against the Park Service. He told CitizenLink that he found it outrageous that any viewpoint would be welcome on public property that day except a pro-life view. "If you are holding a sign which has a pro-life message on a public sidewalk," Mahoney said, "you will face arrest."

Brandi Swindell, a spokeswoman for Generation Life, said her group had planned to send a compelling group of pro-life activists to the rally: women who'd had abortions. Those women planned to carry signs saying, "I regret my abortion." Swindell said those voices should be heard.

"I find it very troubling for the women that we have coming out here who have walked the road of having an abortion," she told CitizenLink. "They have experienced that pain and they are very, very passionate about this issue and they feel it's their duty and their obligation to have a presence here."

Mahoney said pro-lifers would attend the rally with or without permission. "We will not surrender our First Amendment rights or free speech rights," he said. "And we will be out there Sunday afternoon even if we have to face incarceration."

The pro-abortion rally was sponsored by the ACLU, Black Women's Health Imperative, Feminist Majority, NARAL Pro-

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Choice America, National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health, National Organization for Women and Planned Parenthood Federation of America, the nation's largest abortion provider.

Several pro-life groups are speaking out against the march, including the National Right to Life, Operation Outreach and Feminists for Life. Patricia Heaton, star of "Everybody Loves Raymond," is a spokeswoman for Feminists for Life. She is part of a tiny pro-life minority in Hollywood, and stand against the hundreds of Hollywood stars who supported the pro-abortion march.

"Many of the celebrities on the list are my friends," Heaton told LifeNews.com, "but when it comes to championing abortion, we go our separate ways.

"I find it impossible to subscribe to a philosophy that believes that the destruction of human life is a legitimate solution to a problem that is mostly social, economic and psychological," said Heaton. "In reality, most women 'choose' abortion because they believe they have no other choice."

VICE PRESIDENT REAFFIRMS BUSH'S PRO-LIFE COMMITMENT

WASHINGTON (EP) – Vice President Dick Cheney said April 20 that President Bush is staunchly opposed to abortion and remains committed to the pro-life cause.

In a speech at a National Right to Life awards banquet, Cheney said the abortion issue is a nonpartisan question of protecting the "weakest members of our society," according to The Associated Press.

"It doesn't matter if you're Republican or Democrat, liberal or conservative, male or female, black or white, ... north or south, east or west, all that matters is your respect for the claim of every life," he said in a 10-minute speech.

"To be part of this cause is to believe that every mother carrying a life, that every child waiting to be born deserves understanding," he said.

Cheney's remarks came just days before pro-abortion groups planned to stage an abortion-rights march in Washington.

Bush has said he supports abortion only in cases of rape or incest or when a woman's life is endangered. He has signed two pieces of anti-abortion legislation since November: one to ban partial-birth abortion and one to recognize unborn children as victims in violent federal crimes against their mothers. He also signed the Born Alive Infants Protection Act which requires health care facilities to provide adequate medical care for newborns who survive failed abortion attempts.

Bush's Democratic presidential opponent, Sen. John Kerry of Massachusetts, has a staunchly pro-abortion stance. Kerry voted against the partial-birth abortion ban and said he would nominate only Supreme Court justices who support abortion "rights."

In his speech, Cheney praised the two pieces

of anti-abortion legislation as "historic action" to extend protections to the "weakest members of our society" and reaffirmed the administration's opposition to cloning.

He vowed that the Bush administration would "confidently and vigorously" defend the partial-birth abortion ban.

"President Bush has often expressed his commitment that in a compassionate society, every child be welcomed in life," Cheney said. "America still has some distance to travel before that hope is realized."

Cheney, who earned a 100 percent pro-life voting record as a member of Congress from Wyoming, also praised the work of National Right to Life and the pro-life community. He called the pro-life movement, "a great movement of conscience" that "reflects the compassion of our country, and our commitment to equality and dignity for every life."

"Your idealism brought the movement into being," Cheney said. "Your energy has kept it strong. Your faithfulness, integrity and good hearts will see it through until this great nation honors the God-given dignity of every life"

MIXED NEWS IN WEST COAST BATTLE FOR TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE

PORTLAND, Ore. (EP) – There was both mildly good news and very bad news April 20 in the fight for traditional marriage on the West Coast.

An Oregon judge ruled that the state marriage statute declaring marriage between one man and one woman was constitutional. Judge Frank Bearden ordered Multnomah County (Portland) to stop issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples, but did add that the Legislature needs to give those couples some access to the benefits of marriage.

Jordan Lorence, senior counsel with the Alliance Defense Fund and co-counsel in the Oregon case, expressed cautious optimism about the order.

"We're happy with the judge's ruling on the marriage statute, though we're not surprised by his other comments," he said. "We especially appreciate the judge's deference to the legislative branch rather than imposing a judicial decision on the people of Oregon."

In California, though, lawmakers took a step closer to legitimizing homosexual marriage.

Members of the California Assembly's Judiciary Committee, on an 8-3 vote, passed a bill that would essentially legalize same-sex marriage in the Golden State.

AB 1967, sponsored by openly homosexual Assemblyman Mark Leno, a San Francisco Democrat, is called "The Gender-Neutral Marriage Act." It would institute homosexual marriage by prohibiting the state from denying marriage licenses to same-sex couples.

Karen Holgate, director of legislative affairs for the California Family Council, said the vote on the bill came as a surprise to many.

"It was quite obvious that the author of

the bill had worked very closely with several pro-homosexual groups," she said. "The room was packed with same-sex couples . . . and only about 30 in opposition were there because they did not have the notification that the other side did."

Moreover, she said some members of the committee, who April 19 told constituents they planned to vote against the bill, actually voted for it.

The bill passed despite the fact that Californians in 2000 overwhelmingly passed Proposition 22, a ballot measure that defined marriage as being between a man and a woman.

If it is passed by the full House and the Senate and signed into law, the bill would allow more than 4,000 same-sex couples who were issued marriage licenses in San Francisco to remain married.

Pro-family analysts believe the legislation has a decent chance of passing the Assembly and the Senate.

New California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger could then prove a key player, since he has not commented on whether he would sign the legislation if it lands on his desk.

Holgate said Schwarzenegger opposed homosexual marriage during his campaign, but last month on NBC's "Tonight Show with Jay Leno," the governor said he opposed the proposed Federal Marriage Amendment, which would define marriage as only between one man and one woman. He also indicated that he was open to amending state marriage law.

"We don't know what to expect from him at any given time," Holgate said, adding that people from around the country should contact Schwarzenegger.

"Let him know that the entire nation is watching what he does with it," she said, "because it may very well come down to his veto or his signature."

CLOSING ARGUMENTS BEGIN IN CALIFORNIA CHALLENGE TO PARTIAL-BIRTH ABORTION BAN

SAN FRANCISCO (EP) – Closing arguments began April 17 in a challenge to the partial-birth abortion ban in a San Francisco federal court. The lawsuit was brought by abortionists seeking to permanently block the legislation signed by President Bush in November.

An attorney for Planned Parenthood, the nation's largest abortion provider, said the partial-birth abortion ban places an "undue burden on women's rights."

Defenders of the legislation said overturning the ban would ignore the rights of the unborn child.

Scott Simpson, the Justice Department's attorney, said the banned abortion procedure "blurs the line of abortion and infanticide."

Two similar cases are underway in Lincoln, Neb., and New York. Federal judges in all three venues blocked the act from being enforced pending the outcome of the court challenges.

The law carries two-year prison terms for doctors and is the first substantial federal limitation on abortion since the Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion three decades ago.

The judges, who began hearing the cases March 29, must decide whether the ban violates the Constitution. The New York case is continuing, and closing arguments in the Nebraska case are set for June. The issue is expected to reach the U.S. Supreme Court.

In the banned procedure, a doctor partially removes a living, unborn child from the womb before puncturing or crushing his or her skull.

Witnesses for the plaintiffs testified that the banned method is often preferred and sometimes necessary to preserve a woman's health. But during the weeks of testimony, doctors testifying on behalf of Congress said the method is never medically necessary, possibly harmful to women and verges on infanticide.

CONSTRUCTION OF CREATION MUSEUM CONTINUES, Baptist activists: Pull kids out of school Resolution urges members to reject government education

By Ron Strom

A resolution supporters hope will make it to the floor of the Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting next month calls on the millions of members of the denomination to pull their kids out of government schools and either homeschool them or send them to Christian schools.

Introduced by a well-known leader of the SBC and a Baptist attorney, the resolution [Editors Note: the text of the resolution immediately follows this news story] asks "all officers and members of the Southern Baptist Convention and the churches associated with it to remove their children from the government schools and see to it that they receive a thoroughly Christian education, for the glory of God, the good of Christ's church, and the strength of their own commitment to Jesus."

The authors use Scripture in the resolution to argue those Baptists who trust the public-school system with their children are being disobedient to God.

"Government schools are by their own confession humanistic and secular in their instruction, [and] the education offered by the government schools is officially Godless," the measure states.

Noting that "the millions of children in government schools spend seven hours a day, 180 days a year being taught that God is irrelevant to every area of life," the resolution says, "Many Christian children in government schools are converted to an anti-Christian worldview rather than evangelizing their schoolmates."

The measure is sponsored by T.C. Pinckney, a retired brigadier general who has been active in SBC leadership for several years, and Bruce N. Shortt, a homeschooling dad and attorney who holds advanced

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degrees from both Harvard and Stanford.

Shortt says the biggest problem he faces in pushing the resolution is that Christian parents are in denial about the dangers of government schools.

"At this point, there are many, many pastors and parents who need to be educated about our obligation to provide a Christian education to our children," Shortt told WND. "In time, most [SBC members] are going to understand better that the little red schoolhouse has really become the little white sepulcher, and it's a seething cauldron of spiritual, moral and academic pathologies."

Shortt says when he talks to parents, he frames the issue very quickly.

"The issue is this," he said, "the government schools are killing our children morally, spiritually and academically. The question we confront as Christian parents is, how dead do we want our children to be?"

He says he views the issue as one of "spiritual blindness," noting that roughly 85 percent of Christians send their children to government schools.

"If you had a congregation where 85 percent of the people had a drug problem or an adultery problem, you'd hear about it from the pulpit," he said, "and yet in most churches right now, this is an issue that's not discussed."

The activist says he considers sending children to government schools as "the grossest kind of sin," saying Christians don't want to be confronted with the issue because it would be inconvenient and financially challenging to kick the public-school habit.

Both Pinckney and Shortt are involved in a ministry called Exodus Mandate, which seeks to educate Christians about the nature of public schools and encourages them to take their children out of that environment.

The resolution went to the SBC Resolutions Committee on April 29. That panel typically makes recommendations to the full convention.

Shortt says he hopes to get an up-or-down vote on the floor of the convention in Indianapolis during the event, which is slated for the second week of June.

"Whether it's voted up or down this time is really not the issue," he said. "What we have to do is simply get a hearing for the issue and bring the debate."

Shortt says a "liberal element" got control of the SBC in the '60s and '70s, but that conservatives began taking control in the 1980s. He says the new leadership repaired what he called the "theological damage that was done to the SBC," and now he is working to repair the "cultural damage." Part of that mission includes exhorting members to educate their children in a Christian manner.

"Much of the SBC leadership understands this issue now," Shortt said. "Jack Graham, who is the current president, is very supportive of Christian education."

Part of Shortt's goal, he says, is to see more Baptist schools started around the country to which members could send their children.

"It's a big job," he commented, "because we have roughly 42,000 churches affiliated with the convention and only 650 schools."

Though some homeschooling advocates also shun age-segregated Christian schools, which they don't see as much different from government schools, the resolution includes the option of sending children to private, Christian institutions.

"There are people who feel called to homeschool," Short said, "and I think it's a wonderful thing if they do. I also think there are some parents who for one reason or another believe that they can't [homeschool] or would prefer not to."

Both Pinckney and Shortt plan to be at the annual meeting of the convention next month to argue for their resolution.

Shortt predicts if 10-15 percent of children are pulled from government schools, the "\$500 billion behemoth" will be delegitimized and will collapse financially – both results he welcomes.

If the resolution were to pass, the attorney says, it would not only "send shockwaves through the Southern Baptist Convention," but other conservatives in other denominations would take up the issue and push similar measures.

Shortt says he hopes the resolution impresses on Christians the need "to focus on rescuing our children from Pharaoh's schools."

**Christian Education Resolution
Submitted Jointly by T.C. Pinckney and
Bruce N. Shortt
To The 2004 Annual Meeting Of The
Southern Baptist Convention
April 26, 2004**

Whereas, the Bible commands that fathers are to bring up their children in the training and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4), and all parents have an obligation to strive by all means to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and

Whereas, all authority in heaven and on earth belongs to Jesus, and He has commanded us to make disciples of our children and teach them to observe everything He has commanded (Mt. 28:19-20), and

Whereas, teaching our children everything that Jesus commanded involves their learning to think biblically about all the spheres of human thought, activity, and life (Dt. 6:4-9) so that they take every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. 10:5), and

Whereas, our thinking is not to be conformed to this world's way of thinking, but our minds are to be renewed and sanctified by the truth of God's Word (Rom. 12:2; Jn. 17:17), and

Whereas, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge (Pr.1:7) and in Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col.2:3), any instruction that does not begin with the fear of the Lord, teaching the centrality of Jesus Christ for understanding all of life cannot properly be

said to impart wisdom or knowledge to children, and

Whereas, Jesus said, "He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters" (Lk. 11:23), the government school system that claims to be "neutral" with regard to Christ is actually anti-Christian, so that children taught in the government schools are receiving an anti-Christian education, and

Whereas, the government schools are by their own confession humanistic and secular in their instruction, the education offered by the government schools is officially Godless, and

Whereas, the government schools are adopting curricula and policies teaching that the homosexual lifestyle is acceptable, and

Whereas, homosexual organizations are present as approved student "clubs" in thousands of government schools and are spreading rapidly, and Whereas, the Bible says, children are like arrows in the hand of a warrior (Ps. 127:3-5), we must understand that children are weapons (arrows) to be aimed for the greatest impact in the kingdom of God. Just as it would be foolish for the warrior to give his arrows to his enemies, it is foolish for Christians to give their children to be trained in schools run by the enemies of God, and

Whereas, training to be a faithful witness should be a vital part of a Christian child's education, and

Whereas, hundreds of thousands of parents who are members of churches associated with the Southern Baptist Convention send their children to the government schools, and

Whereas, the children of those parents are receiving a Godless, anti-Christian education, and

Whereas, the millions of children in government schools spend 7 hours a day, 180 days a year being taught that God is irrelevant to every area of life, and

Whereas, many Christian children in government schools are converted to an anti-Christian worldview rather than evangelizing their schoolmates, and

Whereas, the Nehemiah Institute has discovered through its extensive surveys of student attitudes and beliefs that acceptance of a secular humanist worldview by Christian children attending government schools has increased dramatically over the last fifteen years, and

Whereas, the Southern Baptist Council on Family Life reported to the 2002 Annual Meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention that 88 percent of the children raised in evangelical homes leave church at the age of 18, never to return; and

Whereas, it is anti-intellectual to artificially divorce God from his creation, and many excellent curricula are available that demonstrate the beauty and working of God throughout His creation, and experience has proven the superior intellectual accomplishments of children educated in such curricula, and

Whereas, the Bible teaches that the

companion of fools will be destroyed (Pr.13:20), and that people are prone to be deceived into thinking that evil company will not corrupt them (1Cor.15:33), it is incumbent upon ministers of the gospel to warn God's people that their children are being corrupted by spending half of their waking hours instructed by teachers who are required by law to inculcate a Godless education, and

Whereas, many adult members of our congregations teach in government schools, this resolution should not be construed to discourage adult believers who labor as missionaries to unbelieving colleagues and students; rather, they should be commended and encouraged to be salt and light in a dark and decaying government school system:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the 2004 Annual Meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention encourages all officers and members of the Southern Baptist Convention and the churches associated with it to remove their children from the government schools and see to it that they receive a thoroughly Christian education, for the glory of God, the good of Christ's church, and the strength of their own commitment to Jesus, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the 2004 Annual Meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention encourages all churches associated with the Southern Baptist Convention to work energetically to counsel parents regarding their obligation to provide their children with a Christian education, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the 2004 Annual Meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention encourages all churches associated with the Southern Baptist Convention to provide all of their children with Christian alternatives to government school education, either through home schooling or thoroughly Christian private schools.

DESPITE OPPOSITION

FLORENCE, Ky. (EP) – Though it's been through years of debate over rezoning regulations and has faced frequent arguments raised by vocal opposition groups, the Creation Museum – a museum dedicated to creation science – in Florence, Ky., is well on its way to completion.

The Creation Museum is a project of Answers in Genesis (AiG) – an international ministry that gives Christians information and answers to help them defend the authority of the Bible, including the story of creation as written in the book of Genesis. The organization is a non-profit group that is building the museum through donations as they are received.

According to Mark Looy, Answers in Genesis' vice president for ministry relations, so far the museum's construction is coming along well. "To our knowledge, there are no more issues and we are not expecting any delays due to opposition to this project," says Looy.

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Looy says the ministry hopes to open the museum located sometime during the next 18 to 24 months. The offices of AiG will move into the 95,000-square-foot facility as early as this September.

The \$25 million complex will sit on 50 acres, and will not only include the museum and AiG's national headquarters, but also a multi-purpose theater, planetarium, restaurant, bookstore, classrooms, a large auditorium and the ministry's distribution center. In addition, there are plans to construct a cave with stalactites and stalagmites. Nearly half the money needed to complete the entire project has already been raised.

Plans for the museum also include a walk-through-history beginning with the account of the creation in Genesis through the consummation of the future. Ceilings 48 feet high will allow for large dinosaur models to be displayed. Seventy models have already been built and will be displayed on a rotating basis, including a Tyrannosaurus Rex 40 feet long and 13 feet high.

The Creation Museum will house millions of dollars worth of artifacts purchased from a now closed museum built by the University of Baltimore. Dinosaur bones and a considerable mineral and fossil collection will also be exhibited.

Answers in Genesis is staffed by scientists and scholars who support creationist views. AiG President Ken Ham says, "There is a significant minority of scientists and researchers who believe in creation and the idea of a young earth."

The museum currently staffs a biologist, two geologists, a microbiologist, and a physicist. An astrophysicist will join them in June. The scholars will work to build displays on paleontology, astronomy, archaeology, and anthropology presented from a biblical perspective.

The complex will also feature an 84-seat planetarium imaging the cosmos. The museum's main auditorium will offer comfortable terraced seating. A restaurant capable of seating over 100 guests will be built.

A three-acre fishing lake and nature trails will be the main attractions outdoors.

Answers in Genesis is an active ministry that spreads its message by conducting hundreds of seminars and conferences each year, maintaining a Web site, distributing a free newsletter, publishing a full-color magazine called "Creation," and producing a daily radio program called "Answers."

In March alone, the group reported that millions of hits on the AiG Web site.

Circulation of the monthly newsletter has grown to nearly 120,000, and "Answers," the daily radio broadcast hosted by Ham, is now being broadcast on over 700 stations worldwide.

Ham is adamant that the Bible's history (such as the creation and flood accounts) should be taken literally.

Several prominent Christian leaders support AiG's work. The Creation Museum's honorary national chairperson is Dr. James Kennedy, pastor of the Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church in Florida. Dr. Jerry Falwell and Dr. John MacArthur are also museum supporters.

According to Ham, the museum's most enthusiastic supporters are not just church leaders, but lay people as well. "The whole spectrum, male to female, young to old, are the ones who seem to get the most excited when hearing about the museum and its message," Ham says.

Short Thoughts

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have done practically nothing to reach them." He soberly advised Mr. Howells, "Don't disobey God even if the king should invite you to dinner" (Rees Howells Intercessor, p. 111).

The attitudes of these two men have caused me to think differently in regard to I Timothy 4:8: **"For bodily exercise profiteth little, but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."** The obvious teaching here is that exercise unto godliness is far more profitable than bodily exercise and the main exhortation is to **"exercise thyself rather unto godliness"** (I Tim. 4:7). However, for a long time I have just set aside the first phrase of the verse, understanding it to mean that bodily exercise is worthless in the realm of spiritual things. Jim Elliot understood the verse to mean that bodily exercise was profitable for a little.

The moderation and discipline of our physical bodies may be of small benefits, but they are benefits none the less. Paul said that he beat his own body into subjection (I Cor. 9:27), and he must have been in good physical shape to endure the travels and troubles he had as a missionary.

David was obviously a physically strong and active man. He seemed to have no trouble wielding the giant's sword (I Sam. 17:51). As a youth, he grew up in the outdoors and practiced stone throwing until he became deadly accurate, a skill he was thankful for when faced Goliath. The point is with David, Paul, and many others that physical discipline and training contributed to their service for God.

Do we despise **"the day of small things"** (Zech. 4:10)? Our despising is likely just an excuse because discipline is odious to the flesh. Perhaps it is just an excuse to cover up our laziness. Solomon wrote, **"By much slothfulness the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through"** (Ecc. 10:18). How many of God's people have ruined their bodies through lack of moderation and

neglect of physical discipline. I believe it was Martin Lloyd-Jones that wrote in his book on preachers that most preachers eat too much and exercise too little. That statement did not cost him painstaking scientific research. Can we be glad when we have squandered our physical health because we were too busy with the big things to mind such small things as diet and exercise? Sadly, many today are hindered, and some even sidelined, from God's service through their own systematic destruction of the temple of their body.

An unknown number of business men have become rich by consistently making small profits. If we desire to **"be rich in good works"** (I Tim. 6:18), we must be **"meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work"** (I Tim. 2:21), both spiritually and physically. God help us to consistently make small profits in religion.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Philadelphia Baptist Church and Pastor Doyal Thomas are planning to build a church building this year that will be dedicated to God and to His service, Lord willing. The church requests the earnest prayers of the Lord's people that they will be faithful to Him and that He will supply their every need in this large undertaking. If anyone would like more information, you may contact Pastor Doyal Thomas at 256-773-1474 or via email at coraltom@charter.net.

We have the first quarter of Sunday School lessons ready for sale. Each lesson comes in an individual pack that includes a lesson booklet, a simple craft, and a memory verse. The teacher's pack has the same material as the student's and also includes a sheet of instructions, a song pertinent to the lesson, and a list of needed supplies. Some miscellaneous items, such as paper clips, brads, cotton balls, popsicle sticks, glue, etc. are not included in the lesson packs. The price for the material is \$0.50 per pack. When ordering, we need to know the number of students and teachers for which you wish to purchase the material. For example: if you have 5 students and 1 teacher, you will need 6 packs per week for 13 weeks. The cost for this order would be \$39.00 plus shipping. We sincerely thank Sister Janet Pugh who has labored so faithfully in making this material available. It is the only Sunday School material available by Sovereign Grace Landmark Baptists that I know of.

The third edition of the Berea Baptist Hymnal is in from the printer. The book is comparable in quality to the third edition printed in 2001 in the U. S. The book contains 405 hymns and some of

them have been written by our own people. The cost for the song books is \$7.00 each plus shipping. Based on the number of books ordered, we will determine the shipping charges and upon receipt of payment, we will ship the books to your door.

Brother Joe Wilson went home to be with the Lord on May 11, 2004. We would like to extend our sympathies and prayers to his family at this time.

Brother Wilson was residing in Tulsa, OK with his wife Katie Wilson. Sister Wilson may be reached at 413 South 108 East Avenue, Tulsa, OK 74128, or via telephone at 918-437-3904.

BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 4-1-2004 to 4-30-2004

Beginning Balance	\$1,727.16
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	200.00
Berea B. C., West Point, TN	50.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	100.00
.....	350.00
TOTAL	2,077.16
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio Time	890.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	1,187.16
Bank Charge	-10.00
.....	1,177.16
ENDING BALANCE	\$1,727.16

CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT

Beginning Balance	\$1,411.52
RECEIPTS:	
Total	1,811.52
EXPENDITURES:	
WCCT	200.00
ENDING BALANCE	\$1,211.52

BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 4-1-2004 to 4-30-2004

Beginning Balance	\$5,603.52
RECEIPTS:	
Arthur D. Richardson, Cedarville, WV	100.00
B. C. of Brimfield, Brimfield, IL	31.41
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	680.00
Berea M. B.C., Mansfield, OH	50.00
Berea M. B. C., Westpoint, TN	150.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne WV	300.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	100.00
Cedar Grove B. C., Millport, AL	100.00
Central Ave. B. C., Tampa, FL	25.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL	20.00
Gerald Price, Johnson City, TN	15.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
Grace M. B. M., Marion, IL	25.00
Grace M. B. C., Tulsa, OK	45.00
Indore B. C., Indore, WV	100.00
Joseph Jurzec, Lake-in-the-Hills, IL	25.00
Landmark M.B.C., Moncks Corner, SC	25.00
Leroy Bullard, Albuquerque, NM	100.00
Lord's Church, Goose Creek, SC	200.00
Morris St. B. C., Hobbs, NM	300.00
New Testament B. C., Bristol, TN	10.00
Philadelphia B. C., Birmingham, AL	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Columbus, MS	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Galena, OH	150.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Silsbee, TX	30.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA	200.00
West Milton B. C., West Milton, OH	50.00
Subscriptions	90.00
Dividing checks	265.50
Anon.	180.00
Sub Total	\$4,561.91
TOTAL	\$10,165.43
EXPENDITURES:	
Wages	3,680.00
Printing	517.06
Postage	768.64
Supplies	391.43
FICA taxes	281.47
Dividing checks	265.50
Total Expenditures	5,904.10
.....	4,261.33
Bank charge	-19.26
ENDING BALANCE	\$4,242.07





WORLD SCENE

By G. Russell Evans - Norfolk, Virginia

A Partial List of Accomplishments of Hillary as First Lady



A recent "Letter to the Editor" caught my attention. The Editor was criticized for printing the article entitled "First Lady Rewrites White House Role."

The writer was a supporter of Hillary Clinton who said, "I do not recall an article within this publication written about Hillary Clinton and her accomplishments while in the White House."

The critic accused the Editor of violating one of the fundamental rules of journalism, i.e., your audience. The Editor knows his audience. The writer forgets that every Editor has his own viewpoint, naturally; conservative, liberal, or neutral. I will be glad to accommodate the writer with some of Hillary's accomplishments in the White House. Here is a partial list of the accomplishments of the then First Lady:

Healthcare: Hillary may be most remembered for her convoluted and illegal efforts to put all health care under the government—one seventh of our entire economy. The Hillary Socialized Health Plan would fine doctors \$10,000 a day for billing errors and \$50,000 for unauthorized treatment. Said Hillary to critics: "It's time to put the national interest ahead of individuals."

Her planning featured illegalities galore: secret sessions, secret participants, fraudulent affidavits by "Health Czar" Ira Magaziner who was called "Dishonest and reprehensible" by Federal Judge Royce Lamberth in an ensuing lawsuit.

Travelgate: Hillary's true colors were flying early on. In 1993, she ordered the entire White House travel office replaced with cousin Catherine Comelius's crew from Little Rock.

Then, Hillary initiated an FBI criminal investigation of Director Billy Dale with trumped up charges of embezzlement—all later disproved in court, but not before extensive legal fees.

Filegate: This 1996 scandal was Hillary's brainchild for which she hired former saloon bouncer Craig Livinstone to collect 1000 FBI files on Republican "Opponents"—a felony that was never prosecuted. Clinton sides then constructed a computer database of 300,000 names for later smears. It worked.

Two-Faced Jewish Policy: In 1988, Mrs. Clinton was chairman of the New York based New World Foundation (NWF) that funded many left-wing causes, including the Committee in Solidarity with the people of El Salvador (CISPES) a communist group dedicated to seizing the government.

The NWF gave \$15,000 to Grass Roots International, an anti Israel organization that was funding the Palestine Liberation Organization. When challenged for her two-faced shift, Mrs. Clinton claimed, "She didn't vote on the grant." But she was chairperson and never a shrinking violet, always a take-charge woman.

Leave Us Not Forget: The mysterious Rose Law Firm billing records, with Hillary's finger prints, disclosing the multi million dollar frauds "Whitewater" and "Castle Grande"; Hillary's "Cattlegate" windfall—cover-up after Vincent Foster's mysterious death—Webster Hubbell's "Money for Silence"; Chinagate—bed and breakfast in the Lincoln bedroom—use of Air Force planes on Hillary's book tour and in shuttling back and forth for her New York campaign.

Hillary Rodham Clinton was deeply involved in every one of these major scandals. In all, there were 38 major scandals in the Clinton White house in the most corrupt administration in U.S. history. Almost without exception, Hillary was in the forefront.

It Takes A Village: On the evening news on January 16, 1996 it was interesting to see Mrs. Clinton deplaning from an Air Force 747 aircraft in Little Rock—her first stop on a ten city promotion tour for her book, "It Takes a Village" (Simon & Schuster).

This happening is apparently a "first" for a sitting first lady: authoring a book while still in the White House and, it seems using taxpayer's facilities to promote it—a private enterprise. It does not seem right, even if all profits will go to charity as reported.

For a long time, taxpayers have been concerned about irresponsible government spending. Mrs. Clinton's promotion of her book via government facilities is an example we can understand.

Hillary Seeks Glory: Hillary Clinton is the lady who, in 1993 and new in town,

went hog-wild with a hare-brained scheme for socialized medicine.

She went down in flames, but is back now with senatorial clout, seeking glory as executioner of the Electoral College. She'll get fawning support from Big Media and misguided citizens who still believe we are a "democracy."

We are a constitutional republic, not a democracy!

Hillary and her cohorts are campaigning against the principles of our constitutional republic.

If she succeeds in killing the Electoral College, we may never again see a conservative constitutional president because the greed and power of Big Media, Big Labor and Big Business will control America.

Mrs. Clinton wants to be president, perhaps by the year 2008. Her priority is the popular vote—not the Electoral College and not preserving our republic. Just the votes please!

(Captain Evans is the author of the *Panama Canal Treaties Swindle*. He lives in Norfolk, Virginia with his wife Anne. Portions of this article were excerpts from previous articles.)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Northport, AL will be having special services Friday evening June 4th, Saturday morning and afternoon June 5th, and Sunday morning and afternoon June 6th. Elder Tom Ross will be preaching the services. For more information, contact Pastor Todd Bryant at 205-333-8449 or via email at toddbryant@juno.com.

The Grace Bible Baptist Church of Denham Springs, LA will host their eighth annual Bible conference June 11th through 13th. The preachers for the conference will be Elders Larry Wilson, Mark Minney, Jack Green, David O'Neal, Jeff Short, Tom Horn, Doyal Thomas, and Keith Kennison. There will be a light meal Friday evening at 5:00 and the service will begin at 6:30 p.m. Services will begin Saturday morning at 9:45 a.m. with lunch following at noon. The Saturday evening service will begin at

3:00 p.m. and there will be an evening meal following the service. The service on Sunday morning will begin at 9:45 a.m. and the conference will close for lunch at noon. For further information, contact Pastor Jerry Dodson at 225-664-3223 or via email at jerrydodsonsr@wmconnect.com.

The Philadelphia Baptist Church of Decatur, AL will be having special services Thursday June 24th through Sunday the 26th. Elder Jerry Dodson will be preaching the services beginning at 7:00 p.m. Thursday and Friday evenings. They will be hosting the area fellowship meeting Saturday the 25th with Elders Jerry Dodson and Jeff Short preaching. The service will begin on Saturday morning at 10:00 a.m. and conclude at noon. There will be a meal provided by the host church. For more information, contact Pastor Doyal Thomas at 256-773-1474 or via email at coralom@charter.net.

The West Milton Baptist Church of West Milton, OH will be hosting their annual Bible conference beginning Thursday June 24th and ending Saturday June 26th. There will be a light dinner Thursday evening and the service will begin at 7:00 p.m. The service will begin Friday morning at 10:00 a.m. There will be a noon meal served and the afternoon service will begin at 1:30 p.m. Dinner will be served at 5:30 p.m. on Friday with the evening service beginning at 7:00 p.m. The services will begin at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday and will conclude at noon with a meal served. Preaching in the services will be Elders Don Titus, Wayne Adams, Ted Tweet, Wilbert Ellis, Michael Farmer, Curtis Pugh, Larry Lafferty, Bill Senich, and Larry Killion. For more information, contact Pastor Mark Clark at 937-698-6242, or via email at mdclarkzz@yahoo.com.

The South Park Missionary Baptist Church of Seattle, WA will be hosting their annual July 4th weekend conference Friday July 2nd through Sunday July 4th. The scheduled preachers are Elders Garner Smith, George Kelly, Eugene Plaskett, Larry Killion, Jeff Short, Ted Tweet, Matt James, and others. For more information, contact Pastor Jim Tweet at 206-683-3754, or via email at james_tweet@yahoo.com.

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