

# The Berea Baptist Banner

Displaying Biblical truth for twenty-six years in the printed page.

## The Lord Is At Hand

By Paul Stepp  
of Indore, West Virginia

My text today is found in Philippians 4:5, "**Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.**" The phrase that I want us to concentrate on today, is the sentence that appears at the end of this verse: "**..The Lord is at hand.**"

There are many things that we could say about this phrase. And there are many teachings that are contained in this short sentence. For instance, we could use this phrase to demonstrate that the Lord God is always aware of us, and aware of our sayings and our doings, whether they be good or bad. He is at hand. He is ever near to us, and ever present with us. For this reason we must be diligent and faithful servants of the Lord Jesus Christ.



And then, we could also use the phrase that we have as the title of the message today, to remind us of the scriptural evidence that the Lord Jesus Christ is coming back soon. In

other words, when we announce, "**The Lord is at Hand,**" we are essentially saying that His coming is near, and is even now upon us. Surely the Bible does teach us that the return of the Lord Jesus Christ is imminent.

But, with these thoughts in mind, what I would like us to go on and discuss today, is the context of the verses that

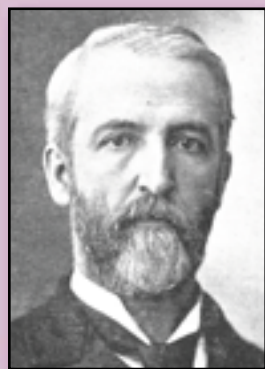
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## The Faith

By Thomas T. Eaton  
(1845 - 1907)

"I was constrained to write unto you, exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3 Eaton's translation).

"**The faith**" is the body of doctrine taught in the Scriptures, centering in Christ and His work. It is written (Acts 6:7) that "**a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.**" In Acts 16:5, we are told "**so the churches were strengthened in the faith.**" Felix and Drusilla heard Paul "**concerning the faith in Christ Jesus.**" Paul tells the Galatians how he "**preaches the faith of which he once made havoc.**" Deacons are to "**hold the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.**" Paul tells Titus about certain gainsayers and adds: "**For which**



**cause reprove them sharply that they may be sound in the faith.**" What we are to believe, what we are to be and what we are to do "**according to the Scriptures**" this is "**the faith**"

which was delivered once for all and for which we are to "**contend earnestly**" --- epi-agonize.

This world is not a friend to truth, any more than it is a friend to grace, "to help us on to God." Error has more of the nature of leaven than has truth. The common saying: "Truth is mighty, and will prevail," is false. Truth is not mighty, and in times without number it has not prevailed. In a perfect world truth would be mighty but not in a world of sin. Many languages have proverbs to the effect that

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## Church Organization Is Not Found in Matthew 18

By Doug Newell IV  
of Argillite, Kentucky



The 18<sup>th</sup> Chapter of Matthew is an important chapter for the Baptist church. Every Baptist should fully understand its teaching. Unfortunately this chapter, rather a couple of verses in this chapter are used to try to prove an unscriptural church organization theory. In this new method of organization, it's claimed that Matthew 18 "clearly" teaches church organization. There isn't even the slightest hint of church organization found in this chapter. We will briefly

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## Following the Crowd

By Milburn Cockrell  
(1941 - 2002)



"**Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgment**" (Ex. 23:2).

This precept must be applied to deed, word, and thought. This law is not needlessly given. The example of the many must be shunned. Servants of Christ must not be slaves to public opinion; they must not follow the crowd to do evil. Running with the crowd can never excuse bad conduct. The broad way is not right, although it is well tracked and crowded. We must not enquire: "What is the majority

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## The Church with A Model Testimony

By Tom Ross  
of South Point, Ohio



The church at Thessalonica was considered to be a model church by the apostle Paul. Even though this group of believers were young in the faith, having only been organized as a church for less than a year, they bore all the marks of a church that was cleaving to the Lord. They had been miraculously saved which motivated them to serve the Lord with a burning love and zeal. The power of God had worked so mightily in them they wanted everyone to know about it despite the fact that they were laboring in the

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*A gracious soul grieves more that God by his sin is grieved and dishonored, than he himself is afflicted and chastened for it.*

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

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## The Lord Is At

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surround our text. And, as we look at the context, let us keep in our minds the two thoughts that I have just mentioned – The Lord is near unto us, and the coming of the Lord is upon us.

If we examine these verses, what we will find, are some things that we, as Christians, should be doing. In fact, what the apostle Paul is instructing us, is that, since the coming of the Lord is at hand, and since the Lord is always near us, there are certain attitudes that we should display; and there are certain deeds that we should be doing; and there are certain words that we should be saying.

### REJOICE

If we go to the verse that precedes our Text verse, we read these words: **“Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice”** (Phil. 4:4). As the servants of the Master of the universe, we should be happy and rejoicing. As those that have had their sins paid for, and as those that have been reconciled unto the almighty and just God of all creation, we should be a joyous and rejoicing people. Our joy should always be obvious to those around us, so that others might ask, “Why is he always happy? Why is he always cheerful? Why is he always joyful?” (Now I know that it is not possible that we should always have a smile upon our faces. There are some sorrows and some sufferings that we must endure in this life. But, as a rule, our lives should reflect the joy and the happiness that we have in the Lord.) Our Lord is near unto us, and we must rejoice as we consider this thought, and as we see evidence of His nearness unto us, and His presence with us.

And then, think about this: as we consider that the Lord is at hand, that He is near unto us even now, and that soon, we will be bodily with Him, we should rejoice. We have wonderful blessings and pleasures to look forward to! Our rejoicing, though it may perhaps have been great in the past, will be even greater rejoicing in the future. The One who has secured for us our salvation is at hand! The apostle Paul, in one of the shortest verses in the Bible, told the Thessalonians, **“Rejoice evermore”** (I Thess. 5:16). This is a command, a blessing, a privilege, an opportunity, and a need, all in one. As Christians, this is what it is our destiny to do – rejoice evermore! And, if this is our future, then let our future begin now – rejoice now and evermore! The Lord Jesus told His disciples, just before the crucifixion, **“A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy**

**no man taketh from you”** (John. 16:21-22). Notice that the Lord Jesus told His disciples, **“...but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice...”** I believe that the rejoicing the Lord Jesus was speaking of, was the joy that the disciples would have, even in this life, when they would once again see the risen Saviour. And, I believe that we, too, have great joy as we, through the eye of faith, behold the risen Saviour. And that joy is held in hope of the return of that Saviour again unto us – even as the disciples rejoiced when He returned unto them. Only now, when He returns unto us, then we shall for ever be with Him, and never be parted from Him again. (See I Thess. 4:17.)

### MODERATION

The title of my message today comes from Philippians 4:5. Let's go back and read the whole verse again, and we can see something that the apostle Paul is requiring of the Philippians (and us today), that they should demonstrate. **“Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.”** In view of the fact that our Lord is at hand, we should be a people that practices moderation.

Now, we could say that we should be moderate because there is no need for us to be covetous or worldly, since we, at any time, could be taken out of this world. The apostle Paul told Timothy, **“But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows”** (1Tim. 6:6-10). So, as far as the flesh is concerned, and the desires of the world, we must show ourselves to be moderate. We must not covet or seek after the things of the world – for that makes it seem as if we count the riches or desires of this world to be lasting, when we know that these things will all be destroyed. In fact, in light of the fact that the Lord is at hand, our moderation should be more and more apparent, because our expectation of His return, and the end of this life, should be more and more obvious in the way that we live our lives.

And, we could say also, that we should be moderate because we ought not to have the world see in us a people that is overcome of the world and the desires and lusts of it. You see, the Lord is at hand. He is near and nigh unto us. Therefore, the desires and concerns of our lives, ought to be those same desires and concerns that the Lord Jesus Christ expressed whilst He was here on this earth. What

I am saying is this: those things that He manifestly thought important, while He was here on this earth, ought to be the very same things that we think to be important – seeing as how He is at hand.

### CAREFULNESS

The verse that follows our text verse begins with these words: **“Be careful for nothing...”** (Phil. 4:6). Certainly this verse is not telling us to be extravagant (remember we were just told to be moderate) or reckless. Nor is this verse instructing us that we should never be cautious. But, what this verse is teaching us, is that we must not have overmuch care or concern for the necessities (or desires) of the flesh. In other words, we must not worry about the things that we might require – for surely our God will provide us with our needs.

We read the words that our Saviour had for His disciples: **“...Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment. Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls? And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit? If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest? Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith? And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom”** (Luke 12:22-32). In the words of the Lord here, He instructs the disciples to **“neither be ye of doubtful mind.”** This is the attitude that Paul is teaching the Philippians to have. In fact, the words of the Lord, **“neither be ye of doubtful mind,”** are very similar to the words of the Apostle Paul, **“be careful in nothing.”** Our care and our doubt should not consume us. As far as the disciples of the Lord are concerned that He was speaking to; and as far as the Philippians that Paul is writing to are concerned; they ought not to be careful, and they ought not to be of doubtful minds.

You know, as the Lord made clear to His disciples, the Father will give the

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Kingdom to the servants of Jesus Christ – how much more will He not also give us everything that we have need of in this life? Remember, the Lord is near unto us at all times, and He knows what we need, even before we ask for it. Therefore, we must have confidence that He will provide for us. And, remember that the coming of the Lord is upon us; when He comes, events will be set in motion that will eventually deliver the Kingdom under the rule of the Lord Jesus Christ and His saints. Therefore, as inheritors of the Kingdom of God, and considering that His return is upon us, we must expect that He will provide for us now, in anticipation of His return.

## PRAYER

As we go on in Philippians 4:6, we read, “**..but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.**” In this verse we learn that prayer is very important – especially since the Lord is at hand. Now, we can say that prayer is important, and prayer is needful, and even that prayer is successful, because of the fact that the Lord is at hand. The Lord is not deaf, and the Lord is not blind. He hears and He sees us. He knows what it is that we need. So, with these thoughts in mind, it behooves us to come before Him in prayer.

But, we could also say, that, in view of the imminence of Christ’s return, we should be a prayerful people. Later, the apostle Paul would tell the Thessalonians, “**Pray without ceasing**” (I Thess. 5:17). Since the Lord Jesus Christ has promised that He will return for us, we should be aware of the love and the care that He has for us. And, since we know that He will return for us; and since we believe that that return is at hand; we have all the more reason to pray unto our God. For, if we believe that He is returning for us, then surely, in the meantime, He will hear us and see us, and give us those things that we require, and be available unto us to carry our burdens for us, and be obviously about us, so that we can praise Him for His goodness.

I think that we can learn a lot about Prayer in this verse. First, we find that we can make a “**supplication**” to God through Prayer. The Lord Jesus Christ told His disciples, “**Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it**” (John 14:12-14). King David said, “**The LORD hath heard my supplication; the LORD will receive my prayer**” (Ps. 6:9). If we

have a need or desire, then who better to take that request unto, than the King of creation? David understood that it was God that was his helper and keeper. And we should understand also, that it is God that gives us what it is that we need. So, since the Lord is at hand (He is accessible and He is near), let us give unto Him our supplications.

And then, second, we find that, if we have a “**supplication**” or “**requests**” that we desire to bring to our God, then let us do so “**with thanksgiving.**” In the Old Testament, under the law of Moses, the people of Israel brought sacrifices of Thanksgiving. The same attitude of thankfulness should be found in the people of God today. Even as we make our requests and our desires known unto our Lord God, we should be also thankful unto Him for the many wonderful things that He has already done for us. Again, the apostle Paul told the Thessalonians, “**In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you**” (I Thess. 5:18).

## PEACE

The last thing that I want us to notice today about the attitudes and deeds and words that we should express since the Lord is at hand, is the peace that comes from God. We read in Philippians 4:7, “**And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.**”

You know, if there is any peace on this earth, it should be had by those that are in Christ Jesus. James said, “**But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace**” (James 3:14-18). And, as far as peace goes, the greatest and most lasting peace, and the best and most apparent peace, should be had by those that are the Lord’s, and that acknowledge that He is at hand. The Lord Jesus Christ told His disciples, just before He left them, only to return shortly unto them again: “**Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I**” (John 14:27-28). Just as the Lord Jesus Christ left the disciples for a short while, and then returned again, even so, we expect that this departure is only for a little while

(and only in the flesh), and then He will return, bodily, unto us again. Therefore, we have the peace that comes from Jesus Christ, knowing that He is at hand.

You know, as another consideration, I want you to think about this: those that believe in a post-tribulational rapture, must admit, that there must be some level of consternation or concern as they await the man of sin and the tribulation. But, those of us that expect that the Lord Jesus Christ will rapture us before the time of tribulation (see I Thess. 5:9) can look forward to that time of peace, without any fear of enduring that great tribulation.

## CONCLUSION

The Lord is at hand. Let us be mindful of this fact. He is always near us and nigh unto us – to behold us and to help us. And, the return of the Lord Jesus Christ is also at hand. With these thoughts in mind, we can confidently and faithfully apply ourselves unto the service of God our King.



# The Faith

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“a lie will get half round the world while the truth is getting on its boots to start.” Did any one, reader, ever tell a lie on you? Did the correction ever overtake the lie? One rotten apple put into a barrel of sound ones will rot them all, while one sound apple put into a barrel of rotten ones will not make them sound, but will speedily rot itself. One diseased man can spread contagion through a city, while one healthy *man* cannot impart soundness to the sick in a hospital. In this world, alas! it is disease, and not health, that is contagious. One bad boy running with a dozen good ones may corrupt them all; while one good boy running with a dozen bad ones will not purify them, but will soon become as bad as they.

Truth is mighty only when it has prophets, apostles and martyrs ready to do and dare and die in its behalf. Such triumphs of truth as we see in history were caused by the power of the Holy Spirit in faithful witnesses. Truth will make no progress by its own inherent power. It will not do to say that since the gospel is in the world it will make its own way because “truth is mighty and will prevail”; so we can take our ease and do nothing while the conversion of the world

goes bravely on. Nay, verily, the gospel will not preach itself. We are to “**go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.**” Indeed no good cause in this world will take care of itself. “Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty” and of everything worth having.

Ideas are the real rulers of the world, and before them the sword drops powerless. It has been truly said: “Load a gun with a bullet and you can kill a tyrant, but load it with an idea and you can kill tyranny,” making future tyrants impossible. The Popes established a far wider and stronger dominion than did the Caesars, because the Popes ruled the ideas of Europe. In vain did king and kaiser appeal to the sword. Henry of England and Henry of Germany were obliged to humble themselves before their weaponless foes. Luther succeeded where warrior monarchs had failed because he attacked ideas with ideas. What deadly things ideas are, and what widespread ruin has been wrought by wrong beliefs! How important then, beyond our power to estimate, that truth shall prevail in the world!

We are to “**contend earnestly**” for the faith. The Greek is – eip-agonize--and it is the strongest word in any language, so far as I know, to express intensity of struggle. It occurs in the New Testament only here. We are to agonize to enter the strait gate, but we are to epi-agonize for “**the faith once for all delivered unto the saints.**” This, then, is the supreme struggle of our existence. It is more important that “**the faith**” be maintained than anything else, yea, than even our own salvation as individuals. We are to agonize for the latter but to epi-agonize for the former.

We are not to let error alone; we are to attack it with all our force and contend against it with all our strength. Of course we must use no wrong means or methods, but our whole power should be exerted against error and in favour of the faith. The oft quoted utterance of Gamaliel has done great harm: “**Let them alone; for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.**” There is not a heresy but has sought shelter behind this utterance. And it is quoted as if it were Scripture, and therefore binding. Luke, by inspiration, simply tells us that Gamaliel said this, but nowhere

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## Tune in to the Berea Baptist Broadcast

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is it intimated that the saying was right. All the Bible is responsible for, is that Gamaliel did say it. Many things are quoted in the Bible that are not Scripture at all. We are told what the devil said on certain occasions, but never is a statement of the devil endorsed. Neither is this statement of Gamaliel approved. Men do not argue in such fashion about the practical affairs of life. A farmer does not let the weeds alone on the plea that "if they be of man they will come to naught, while if they be of God, I cannot destroy them, lest haply I be found even to fight against God." When the yellow fever appeared in New Orleans, the medical authorities did not accept Gamalielism and say: "Let it alone, for if it be of man it will come to nought, but if it be of God we cannot check it, lest, haply, we be found even to fight against God." Such superlative nonsense is tolerated only in the matter of highest importance; only in religion. All that weeds can do is to prevent a crop. All that yellow fever can do is to destroy life; while error destroys the soul. Hence while we are to contend against all that is hurtful, we are to epi-agonize against error.

Saul of Tarsus took the right view of it. Believing the true faith to be in danger, the earnest young Pharisee exerted himself to the utmost to destroy what he regarded as error and to maintain what he believed to be truth. In doing this God blessed him, met him on the road to Damascus and transformed him into the great Apostle to the Gentiles. Whenever a man earnestly acts up to his light, God will give him more light. Earnest, fiery Saul of Tarsus epi-agonizing for his faith is met and converted, but complacent Gamaliel is not saved. There is no hope for such as Gamaliel, but Paul is blessed and crowned. One Paul is worth more to the world than an acre of Gamaliels.

Never was there a time when there was greater need to epi-agonize for the faith than now. Skepticism has become more aggressive than ever. For a time infidelity walked the earth in haughty exclusiveness. Christianity was well enough for the unlearned, for women and children; let them get whatever comfort they could from religion, it would be a pity to disturb their pleasing delusion. Infidelity was for philosophers and other lofty beings who dwelt on the intellectual heights. But now infidelity has professed religion and joined the church. Now it occupies pulpits and theological professors' chairs, and the attack is from within. They seek to evaporate the faith into moonlit mist. They teach an inspiration that does not inspire, an atonement that does not atone, and a salvation that does not save. It was easy to multiply quotations in proof of this. Their special point of attack

is the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ. They emphasize His incarnation and seek to substitute the gospel of the manger for the gospel of the cross. They do not like a "forensic" view of the atonement, as if sin were not forensic, and as if infinite justice could be flanked and the penalty of God's law set aside. They are willing to believe in Christ, yes, but not in Christ upon the cross, bearing **"our sins in His own body on the tree."** It is the same old cry of the priests and rulers who stood upon Calvary---"Come down from the cross and we will believe."

While abounding in euphemisms, the new theology robs us of all hope. I am a sinner. Eternal justice cannot be defeated. If any part of the penalty due my sins is set aside, to that extent divine justice is defeated. Either I must bear that penalty or some one must bear it for me, since infinite justice cannot be thwarted. Only upon the principle of substitution can I hope to escape. If Christ bore my sins for me, suffering in my stead, it is right that I should be forgiven, and I have hope. To convince me that Christ did not bear the penalty of my sins is to rob me of all hope. Despite whole libraries of euphemisms, the new theology is the doctrine of despair. No wonder it decries logic. No wonder its statements are vague and hazy. No wonder it takes refuge in fog.

Similarly the authority of Scripture is assailed. The authenticity of most of the books of the Bible is denied and all statements of Scripture, not in harmony with the preconceived theories of the critics, are set aside. They refuse to believe anything because the Bible says so, but will believe only what seems to them correct. This leaves us without any standard whatever, and makes every man a law unto himself. Then we are complacently told that "external authority" is of no consequence; that just so we have the language stating the truth, it does not matter from whom that language comes--its "religious value" being the same from whomsoever it may have come. John Smith is in need. He is handed a paper containing the following:

"For valuable consideration four months from date I promise to pay John Smith, or order, the sum of ten thousand dollars, with interest from date at the rate of six per cent per annum until paid. Negotiable and payable at the Louisville National Banking Co., Louisville, Ky.

## IS THIS GOING TO BE YOUR LAST ISSUE?

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Given this the 1st of December, 1905. Robert Jones." Smith immediately begins to inquire as to who Robert Jones is, and as to his financial standing. His friends say: "Ah! no matter about the 'external authority,' you have the language of the note, and that is of the same value, no matter who signed it." Smith insists that everything depends on whose name is signed to that note. On that name depends whether or not Smith's necessities shall be relieved. Similarly when we read: **"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life"** etc.; everything depends on the "external authority" of the statement. If God says this, we can trust our souls to it and have peace. If, however, it was simply a Christian of the Apostolic or sub-apostolic age who thought so, then the statement is worthless as a basis for any hope. It is thus with all the teachings of Scripture. If they are from God, we can trust them, but if they are simply from man, they are worthless. "External authority" is everything. Setting aside the authority of Scripture as God's Word, leaves man groping in darkness, with only a guess for a hope, and without the "sure word of promise" for which Socrates longed.

Then we are told to be "broad," and the man who has clear cut beliefs to which he clings is denounced, or pitied, as "narrow." If we reach definite conclusions and insist on them, it is charged that we have thereby "closed our minds to new truth" and have become "narrowed" and "fossilized." This plea of being "broad" and "liberal" has been deadly in many cases, and under its spell many have loosened their grip on **"the faith once for all delivered unto the saints."** Now there are three respects in which a man can be broad or narrow. In two of them he ought to be broad which in one he ought to be narrow. The trouble is people are narrow where they ought to be broad and broad where they ought to be narrow.

1. We ought to be broad in our sympathies. Nothing human should be foreign to us. God loves the whole world and if we be godly we will love the whole world also. That a man is worshipping idols and ancestors in China, that a man is starving in India, that a man is a savage in Africa, that a man is blinded by superstition in Brazil, these ought to be matters of grave concern to us. That a man is of a different nationality or different color or different race from us, should not hinder the outflow of our heart's sympathy to him. We ought to be broad in our sympathies.

2. We ought also to be broad in our horizon. We should be able to see truths in their relations. Our conclusions ought not to be the results of ignorance and prejudice. We should be able to see things lying outside the range of our prejudices. We should think for our selves, and make our conclusions our own, and so make them intelligent. Yes, we should be broad

in our horizon.

3. But in our beliefs we should be narrow, because truth is narrow. Every kind of truth is narrow. Mathematical truth is narrow. Two and two make exactly four---no more, no less, and whoever says they make anything else is wrong. There are thousands of numbers two and two do not make (error is broad) and only one they do make---truth is narrow.

Scientific truth is narrow. Under ordinary conditions at the sea level water freezes at 32 degrees Fahrenheit, just that, no more, no less. There are thousands of temperatures at which water does not freeze. Suppose a man should say: "I am very broad in my scientific beliefs. I am not one of your scientific bigots who insist that water freezes at just 32 degrees, and that all who think differently are wrong. No; I admit that water freezes at 20, 25, 30, 32, 38, 40 degrees, and at any other temperature. Just so a man is sincere, it does not matter at what temperature he believes water freezes. I am broad in my science." What would be thought of such a man?

Historical truth is narrow. A given event took place in one particular way. There are thousands of ways in which it did not take place. It is the business of a jury to so consider the testimonies of the witnesses, each giving his impression, that they can determine just how the event did take place. So the historian is to use the data to determine just how the events he describes did take place. Suppose a professed historian should say: "I have very broad views of history. I abominate the narrow bigotry which says that a given event took place in only one particular way and that whoever says differently, is wrong. I believe the event took place in a hundred ways, and just so a man is sincere it does not matter how he believes it took place."

Geographical truth is narrow. There is but one right direction to London from where the reader sits, while there are thousands of wrong directions. If, dear reader, you point towards London you must point in one definite direction. If you point in either of a thousand other directions, you are not pointing towards London. Suppose a man should say: "I am not one of your geographical bigots, who say that there is only one right direction towards London, from where he stands, while all who point in any other way are wrong. No, indeed, I am broad in my views of geography, and any way a man chooses to start, is the right way to London, if only he be honest; and whichever way he starts he will get to London all the same." What would be thought of such talk?

How comes it to pass that what is recognized as the most arrant nonsense in all other realms, is greedily swallowed when it comes into the realm of religion,

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# The Faith

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where truth is most important? Whether a man be right or wrong in mathematics, in science, in history, in geography, etc., is of comparatively small importance, but his character and his eternal destiny depend upon his being right in religion.

While we must be narrow in our beliefs if we be right, yet it does not follow that we are right because we are narrow. It is just as narrow to say---two and two make five, no more, no less, as to say two and two make four. Hence we may be narrow and be wrong, while if we be broad in our beliefs we are certain to be wrong. Truth is narrow, and hence right belief must be narrow.

Many are deterred from “**contending earnestly for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints,**” by the fear of giving offense. Not long ago in my pulpit I had occasion to speak of Christian Science, and after the sermon a good brother came to me privately and said: “Did you know that Mrs. ---has taken up with Christian Science? I’d advise you to be cautious how you oppose it, because she may be offended, and her family connections are very clannish, so that, if you anger her you will anger the whole connection, and will drive them all away from our church.” Now I am very much opposed to consumption. If I had my way there would never be another case of consumption on earth. Suppose some brother should say: “You had better be careful how you oppose consumption, since Mrs. Jones has consumption. She is a good woman and her relatives are devoted to her. She was a Smith and if you oppose consumption you will offend all the Joneses and Smiths and drive them away from our church.” It is precisely because consumption injures good people and I oppose it. If it attacked only rascals, though, I would pray for their salvation, I would not so vigorously oppose consumption. Similarly it is because error injures people that we oppose it. Those who are affected by religious error have no more reason to be offended at those who oppose the error, than a consumptive has to be offended at those who oppose consumption. Indeed we ought to oppose error far more vigorously than we oppose disease, because disease can only kill the body while error can destroy the soul.

While we ought not needlessly to give offense, we should not in the slightest degree be deterred from “**contending earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints,**” because of the liability of giving offense. It is written “**ye are the salt of the earth**”:---it is nowhere written “ye are the honey of the earth.” The Apostle Paul made enemies wherever he went, getting himself beaten, imprisoned, cast out and finally beheaded. A greater

than Paul made enemies by His faithful advocacy of the truth; enemies so bitter that they hounded Him to His death and jeered at Him while He hung in agony upon the cross. “It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his Lord.” “**Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.**”

“He has no enemies, you say!  
My friend, your boast is poor;  
He who hath mingled in the fray  
Of duty, that the brave endure,  
Must have made foes, if he has none,  
Small is the work that he has done,  
He has hit no traitor on the hip,  
He has cast no cup from tempted lip,  
He has never turned the wrong to right,  
He has been a coward in the fight.”

Those who assail “**the faith once for all delivered unto the saints,**” claim everything with a naivete that is positively refreshing. They put their “assured results” at us as if those results had been established beyond peradventure, whereas there is not an atom of evidence among the documents or the monuments in favour of those results. Their criticism is wholly subjective. They simply evolve their results “out of the depths of their own consciousness.” And yet they attack orthodoxy as if it were no longer possible for a man of intelligence to be orthodox. I have carefully read many thousands of pages of the writings of those who advocate the new theology, and the “higher criticism,” and I have never yet seen a single argument worthy of respect in favour of those “results.” They first form their theory and then manipulate the facts so as to make them fit the theory; while such facts as cannot be made to fit are tossed aside or ignored. This is thoroughly unscientific and thoroughly unreasonable. Even Dr. Cheyne says: “I am far from asserting the ‘bankruptcy’ of the prevalent methods of ‘higher criticism,’ but I do assert their inadequacy.” Dr. Reich has shown their bankruptcy.

Not only do the new theology advocates set aside the atonement of Christ, and the authority of Scripture, but they also set aside the guilt of sin. The sinner is regarded as affected by a malady which makes him suffer and from which we should seek to relieve him, but for which he is in no wise to blame. He is simply unfortunate but not guilty. Dr. Adolf Harnack, perhaps the highest authority among the new theology men, says: “Psychology has given us a new picture of man; the investigations regarding the origin of morality have altered our notions of sin.” Dr. Matheson quotes a leading evolutionist as saying: “The scientific definition I would give to sin would be an unfortunate regress in a

## A Brief Announcement by Elder Tom Ross

Dear Brethren,

I have just completed the second edition of **Teachings on the Local Church** that was first published in 1993. The new edition has been enlarged and will be in a different format if I decide there is enough interest to actually print it. It will be a 6 x 9 book that will consist of approximately 370 pages. All Scripture quotes have been highlighted in **bold** print, and all the quotes by other authors are also highlighted by a different print font for variety.

I have added an entirely new chapter where I answer 23 questions on a variety of subjects relating to the doctrine of the New Testament Church.

I could use your help by way of feedback. I have not yet decided whether to print it in paper back or hard back. I have decided that I will only print a limited amount (probably only 50-100 more copies than I have orders for), and in all probability this will be the last time the book is printed. Depending on how well this is received, I plan on doing the same thing with **Abandoned Truth: The Doctrines of Grace** later on in the year.

The tentative pricing schedule is as follows:

Paper Back \$16 per book plus S&H. For 25 or more \$13 per book plus S&H.

Hard Back \$22 per book plus S&H. No discount for volume orders.

Payments may be made by check or credit card (If paying by credit card add 4% to the total for processing fees). Send no money until I inform you of my decision whether I am actually going to print it or not.

Please consider how many books you and those you know would like to order. If there is sufficient interest, I will proceed, if not then I will shelve this idea for the time being. Please forward this email to everyone in your address book. This will save me the time, energy, and postage of mailing a hard copy.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

A sinner saved by SOVEREIGN GRACE,

Bro. Tom Ross

6339 County Rd. 15, South Point, OH 45680

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development whose tend is manifestly upward.” Doing away with the guilt of sin, they do away with repentance as well.

These “advanced” gentlemen claim that the Bible is full of mistakes, both as to statements of fact and as to many points of its teaching. They admit that it has a “religious value,” as the record of the pious thoughts and aspirations of men who lived between, say, 800 B.C. and 150 A.D., and while these utterances contain some truth, it is so mingled with the wrong and the crude notions of those times, that only a twentieth century critic can distinguish the true from the false. Hence these gentlemen owe it to the public and to themselves to furnish us an up-to-date Bible, whose teachings can be trusted. Why should we be dependent on the thoughts of men, however good and sincere, who lived during a millennium so long ago, while in the centuries since, and particularly during the past century, the world has made such progress? These gentlemen hold that men are inspired now as truly as in the olden time. Then let them eliminate all they regard as false from the Scriptures and add such things as have been inspired since the canon was closed, so as to furnish an up-to-date Bible. According to their theory they cannot escape this responsibility. John Toland published a pantheistic Bible for

those who agreed with him. Mrs. Eddy has done likewise for her disciples.

The record of what the orthodox faith has done in the world is open to all. It has stood the test. Now let the new theology be put to a practical test. Let a mission be opened in the slums of New York where the new doctrine shall be preached, and let it be seen whether the work of the Jerry McCauley Mission can be surpassed. Let missionaries be sent to preach the new theology to tribes as yet untouched by orthodoxy, and see whether such results will follow, as Charles Darwin (and surely they will believe Darwin) said followed the preaching of orthodoxy on the island of Tahiti, for example. When practical tests show that preaching the new theology produces better results than have been produced by preaching orthodoxy, then, and not till then, should these gentlemen have the face to ask us to give up orthodoxy and to accept the new theology. The fact is, the new theology is no match for total depravity.

“**The faith**” was “**delivered.**” It was not invented. It is not the result of human thought, nor the output of human philosophy. It came from God, and was delivered to man. It is to be kept by God’s people, maintained by them, and contended for by them as they contend

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# The Faith

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for nothing else. It is a sacred trust, to be guarded by their highest effort and their heart's blood. Better men and women than we are have died for this faith. Christ died for it, that it might be ours.

This faith was **“once for all”** delivered unto the saints---once for all. It is not subject to change. It is incapable of improvement. “What?” it is asked. “Shall I believe just as my grandfather did? Shall I carry my grist to mill in one end of a bag with a stone in the other, because my grandfather did so? [I have been hunting for a man who would admit his grandfather did that. Mine didn't. He had better sense.] In view of the great progress in all other things, shall theology alone make no progress? Shall we wear clothes like those the apostles wore? Shall we travel on donkeys, and on sail vessels, because they did so in New Testament times? Conditions are so different now from what obtained formerly, shall not the faith be modified to fit these new conditions? Shall we be fossilized in religion while we advance in everything else? My grandfather travelled five miles an hour and I go fifty. Shall I therefore be expected to hold the same faith he did? etc., etc., etc., etc.”

All the changes in human society do not affect the question in the slightest degree. A sinner going fifty miles an hour needs to repent in exactly the same way as a sinner going five miles an hour. A heavy-laden heart working at a handloom needs the same hope as one working in an enormous factory. Changes in conditions do not change human nature nor do they change truth. Truth, before concealed, may be discovered, but it is incapable of change. If two and two did not make four in Adam's time, they do not make four now and never will make four. We are commanded to **“buy the truth,”** no matter what the cost, and to **“sell it not,”** no matter what the inducement to let it go. **“The faith”** is God's truth, delivered to us, and it is final.

Well does Lowell say:

*“In vain we call old notions fudge,  
And trim our conscience to our dealing.  
The ten commandments will not budge,  
And stealing will continue stealing.”*

Let all progress possible be made in all lines where progress is possible. Let customs and fashions change whensoever and whereinsoever they can be bettered, but let no change be attempted in the faith. It is not written: “contend earnestly for a custom, or for a fashion, once for all delivered unto the saints”; but it is written, everlastingly written: “epi-agonize for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints.”

Moreover these “advanced” views, despite the claims made for them really

contain nothing new. Before an assembly in Detroit, Dr. Howard Osgood read from slips of paper what he claimed were the latest conclusions of the higher criticism. In the assembly were many men in sympathy with this criticism and familiar with it. Dr. Osgood asked to be corrected if in any respect the statements read were incorrect. No one offered any objection; thereupon he startled them by saying that all he had read was taken from the writings of infidels of the eighteenth century.

I had heard so much about “new truths,” which made it necessary for us to readjust our theology, that I made vigorous efforts to get hold of some of them. Many writers had much to say about these “new truths” in theology, which rendered it impossible to hold the old views, but none of them, so far as I could find, ventured to give a definite statement to any of these “new truths.” Surely if a man is asked to abandon cherished beliefs on account of certain, alleged “new truths,” he has a right to know what those truths are. Failing in every attempt to learn what are some of these new truths, some months ago I offered, in England and in this country, a reward of \$100.00 for the production of a single new truth in theology discovered since 1850. That date was selected simply because some date must be fixed, and that was convenient as the middle of the last century. Many responses from both sides of the Atlantic have been sent in, but so far nothing new has been presented. One gentleman in the Northwest urged that the doctrine of evolution was a new truth in theology discovered since 1850. It was necessary only to call his attention to the fact that evolution was taught by Sanchoniathon in the fourteenth century B.C. There is absolutely nothing new in the “new theology.”

These loose views have been widely propagated. They are in magazines and newspapers. They are taught by men who stand in professedly orthodox pulpits, and by men who occupy professors' chairs in institutions founded for the maintenance of the faith these men seek to destroy. When some lover of truth arises to make an earnest protest, a great cry is raised---“heresy-hunter!”---“opposed to liberty of speech!”---“trying to stop free investigation!”---“fettered by tradition!”---“animated by the spirit of the Inquisition!”---“reactionary!”---“opposed to progress!” etc., etc. We are reminded that Huss, Wickliffe, Luther and other Christian heroes were denounced as heretics, and it is complacently assumed that because these modern teachers are called heretics, they are thus proved, beyond a shadow of a doubt, to be the Husses, Wickliffes and Luthers of our times. Alas! for the stupidity of people, that such nonsense should pass for valid argument and should actually carry conviction in many cases!

It is the custom of those who assail **“the faith once for all delivered unto the saints”** to pose a very sweet-spirit and to represent those who stand for orthodoxy as harsh and unlovely. Indeed it has long been the tactics of heresy to represent heretics as gentle, mild and lovely, and to represent the orthodox as malignant, spiteful and generally hateful. Let the words of Christ be remembered: **“Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves.”** False prophets always wrap up carefully in sheep's clothing. My observation, however, is that there is no hatred so bitter as that a modern heretic has for a “heresy hunter.” You have only to probe the sheep's clothing and the ravening wolf asserts himself. Time was when it required courage for a man to avow himself a heretic---time is when it requires courage for a man to stand aggressively for orthodoxy. The praise of the newspapers and of many who ought to know better, is for the heretic, while their denunciation is for the man who **“contends earnestly for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints.”**

There is no logical standing-ground between **“the faith once for all delivered unto the saints,”** and bald naturalism, which offers no hope. Every year these new theology men drift farther and farther away. “The radical of today is the conservative of tomorrow.” It has not been many years since Smith's Bible Dictionary was regarded as too “advanced.” Now even Hastings' is considered conservative, and ere long Cheyne's will be thought of as ultra-conservative. Not yet do the new theology men deny everything, but they keep on denying more and more. The end is not difficult to see. Indeed because they do not yet deny everything, they point to what they leave and claim to be “constructive” with a naivete that is refreshing. They do not pretend to offer any assurance that they will not deny tomorrow what they admit today. They do not claim that what they now hold will abide. They have no standard, each man being a standard to himself, and he constantly changing. Some of them talk as if they took Christ as their standard, and yet these very men do not hesitate to flatly contradict many plain statements of Christ. Even with the Bible, recognized as a standard, we have had great variety of opinion; and with no standard at all, generally recognized, we would have chaos.

It is high time Christians were obeying as they never obeyed before the great command to “epi-agonize for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints.” This faith will not take care of itself. It needs for its maintenance, men and women who are willing to dare and do and die in its behalf. Maintaining it and extending it is our chief business in the world. The hopes of all mankind are centered here. Should this faith perish from the earth,

the world will be wrapped in the shadows of a night that is starless. Whatever else fails this faith must conquer; whatever else falls, this faith must be upheld. In the hottest of one of the great battles of our Civil War, in one of the regiments most fiercely engaged, was a fair-haired boy. He was but a child, you could see by his beardless chin and his soft white cheek; but he had begged so earnestly to carry the flag that it had been entrusted to his care. In all the fierce charges of that fearful winter's day, he had held his place in the line unfaltering, and in the last great charge, still grasping the flagstaff in his hand, he was among the foremost. But as decimated and broken the line retreated slowly and sullenly, the enemy caught the gleam of the flag and pressed on eagerly to capture it. Vain all the efforts of our boy hero. Vain all his brave deeds unequalled in that army of brave men. Still, as they crowded upon him and his young life was ebbing from three wounds, he clung to the flag. As he fell at last, he was carried unconscious to the rear, and strong men wept as they strove to staunch his bleeding wounds. Suddenly he started up---“Is the flag safe?” And as the surgeon, too deeply moved for words, placed it in his nerveless grasp, with a smile of blissful content, he laid his pale young cheek against it and died. People of God, let us be as faithful soldiers as that young hero. However the battle may go for us, though we fall pierced by the darts of the foe---oh! let the flag be safe! Let no polluting hand mar its white purity, no insolent enemy bear it from us in triumph, but let us welcome death, if need be, with a smile, if we can lay our weary heads upon its soft folds and know that it is safe!

**“And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death”** (Rev. 12:11).

(Faith and the Faith, pp. 45-57, 1906 edition).



## Following the Crowd

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doing?” Instead, we must enquire: “What would God have us do?”

### THE MAJORITY OFTEN DOES EVIL

According to Moses in my text, the great majority of mankind lives in open sin. They are transgressors of God's statutes and laws. The majority is often wrong on moral issues. The crowd is going in the direction that is contrary to the Word and ways of the Most High. Philippians 2:21 says: **“For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.”**

This has been true since the fall of man. There were only eight righteous

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# Outlines for Country Preachers by a Country Preacher

## Sermon Outlines by Milburn Cockrell

### Interesting Facts About Satan

#### Job 1-2

In the first two chapters of the Book of Job Satan is seen as a real person, not the principle of evil personified. In these chapters we learn much of his person and power, his character and career.

Let us study some arresting truths concerning our great enemy.

#### I. SATAN IS ACCOUNTABLE TO GOD (1:6; 2:1).

1. The sons of God here are angels (Job 38:7). They are such by creation and service to God (Ps. 103:20-21).
2. There is a fixed time at which all the angels must appear before God and give an account of their doings.
3. They come not to participate in the governmental deliberations of God, but to render an account as servants of the Lord (Rev. 19:10).
4. The point is, not that Satan has the privilege of access to God, but that he is compelled to come unwillingly to give an account to God.
5. The arch-rebel cannot evade the rule of God, nor outgrow his responsibilities to God. How then can a puny man?

#### II. SATAN IS NEITHER OMNIPRESENT NOR OMNISCIENT (V. 7).

1. While he is behind much of the evil on earth, he does not have the attributes of God. He is a created and local being. Do not over-rate him, nor under-rate him.
2. He cannot be always tempting us. He leaves us for a time that he may return (Luke 4:13). We know not how soon he may return.
3. Satan is always in a hurry. He passes from place to place in the earth to investigate human affairs. The Hebrew has the idea of heat and hast in his movements.
4. Satan does not admit that he had been out drawing men away from God. Men, like Satan, will not admit their sins.
5. Satan is a homeless wanderer in the earth possessed of jealous evil passions. There is no rest to him (Matt. 12:43; I Pet. 5:8) nor his people (Isa. 57:20-21). He takes no vacation, no holidays, and he never retires (Matt. 13:25, 39). He never sleeps (Matt. 13:25, 39).

#### III. THE DARK MIND OF SATAN IS AN OPEN BOOK TO GOD (1:7-11).

1. God asked the question, not because of ignorance on His part, but to compel Satan to confess where he had been.
  - (1) Satan's sphere of work is on earth as opposed to Heaven.
  - (2) He is a restless spirit who roams the earth to attack God's people.
2. Properly translated God's question is: "**Hast thou set thine heart on my servant Job because there is none like him?**" God knows Satan's thoughts.
3. The very best of saints are accused and attacked by the Devil (Luke 22:31; Zech. 3:1).
4. Satan cannot see into Job's heart, but he thinks he knows what is in it. So he represents Job as a mercenary and a hypocrite (vv. 7-11). He slanders man to God (Rev. 12:10).

#### III. SATAN CAN DO NOTHING WITHOUT DIVINE PERMISSION (1:9-12).

1. A godly man has a hedge around him (v. 10), and there is no gap for Satan to enter (Ps. 34:7; Zech. 2:5). The hairs of our head are numbered.
2. A believer is under God's special care. Grace has made a hedge about his spiritual life and Providence about his natural life.
3. The fence was around Job and his house as well as his possessions (I John 5:18). The church is a hedge, but when a person is excluded the hedge is removed (I Cor. 5:4-5).
4. God constantly keeps a watch over Satan's activities, especially where His people are concerned.

#### IV. IN EVERY PERMISSION THERE IS A DEFINITE LIMITATION (1:12; 2:6).

1. God Himself sets the bounds of the trials of His people. The season, measure, degree and continuance of them He keeps in His own hands (I Cor. 10:13).
2. God withdraws His protection from Job's possessions, but He does not take them away as Satan suggested.
3. God allows Satan to take away his possessions. Good angels dispense God's blessings (Ps. 91:11-12). Evil angels at times take them away.

4. Satan has no independent existence, but he is in the hands of God who uses him as His instrument. This foul fiend, fired with all the passions of Hell, cannot break away from the rule of God.
5. God used Peter's sifting by Satan to make his faith stronger (Luke 22:32) and our trials to be praise, honor, and glory (I Pet. 1:7; II Cor. 12:7-10).

#### CONCLUSION.

1. Hedges of the Lord's making are too thick for Satan to get through. Satan's testimony to the security of God's children is of great value.
2. The unwavering purpose of Satan is to set God and man at variance. He would separate God from Job (Job 2:3).
3. There is nothing that upsets Satan more than a perfect man (1:1). He directs all his energies against such a man.
4. Satan is utterly powerless to touch a child of God, or anything that he has, without God's permission. He can do no harm until he obtains leave from the court of heaven. Adversities are not as bad as we think!
5. Godly men may lose property (1:15-17), position (Job was the greatest man of the East), family (1:18-19), health (2:7) and sympathy (2:9), but never their God and His protection.
6. God permits temporal adversity. If Satan had not sought permission to attack Job there would have been no trials (II Sam. 24:1; 15-16; Luke 13:11, 16; I Tim. 1:20; II Cor. 12:7).
7. God allows adversity to happen to His people to silence the Devil. Job proved his disinterested devotion to God---the perseverance of the saints. There is a reason for all that God does!

## Following the Crowd

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souls when the flood came (Gen. 6:5-6; 7:1). Ten of the spies who searched the land of Canaan were wrong and only two were right. For centuries only the nation of Israel had the knowledge of the true God (Ps. 147:19-20). When the Messiah was born there were few true followers of the Lord. Shortly after the apostolic age there came upon the world the Dark Ages and few faithful churches remained on earth. Most churches who profess to know Christ today are unfaithful and unconverted. God's people have always been in a minority---a seed, an elect remnant, the few of the many (Deut. 7:7; Jer. 42:2; Matt. 7:13-14; Rev. 3:4).

The reason why God's people are a minority is because man by nature is prone to go away from God. In sinful acts his feelings, desires and actions are at home. If the fountain is corrupt, the stream must necessarily be so. If the tree is bad it can only bear corrupt fruit. Children as soon as they can think and act have evil placed before them. Their evil nature causes them to follow in the crooked paths of their elders.

It is man's very nature to want to be like others (Gen. 3:11-12). This grows out of his natural love of companionship and his longing for the good opinions of others. People constantly try to keep up with the "Joneses." Most are influenced by the actions of others. They dress like others, build houses like others, drive cars like others. Everyone wants to be like one he admires. A child wants to be like his parents. A pupil like his teacher. No one wants to be different. Men dread the reproach of singularity. There are those who would almost rather die than be out of fashion.

The tendency is to follow the multitude

even when it is evil. A crowd can ridicule; it can intimidate. It may put pressure upon a man that he may not have the moral courage to resist. Politicians will take any side that promises them a majority. They will stay with their party rather than principle. When asked about their wayward conduct they will justify themselves by saying, "Everybody is doing it. We are just following the polls. Only a fool would be in the minority for the sake of principle and serve only one term." Falling prey to such influences has given us career politicians who may sooner die than be voted out of office. This curse of slavery to public opinion has brought our republic to its knees.

Most preachers of this generation are crowd-pleasers. Pastors find out which direction a church is going and try to stay ahead of the church. The old prophet well said: "**Like people, like priest**" (Hos. 4:9). These men will do anything to keep their church and salary. The religious world calls these good-Lord-and-good-Devil preachers successful pastors and great church builders. The Bible says that these men, who have the backbone of a jelly fish, are not the servants of Christ: "**For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ**" (Gal. 1:10). Preachers should be Christ-pleasers, not crowd-pleasers!

Among our own Baptist people some little preachers are kept in line with the wishes of some big preacher by fearing to incur his wrath. No Bible conference can be attended or any preacher invited for revival services without the approval of the big preacher. If these little preachers begin to think and act for themselves, the big-shot preacher who rides shotgun over the churches will resort to calling them such names as "hardshells," "Pharisees,"

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# Paul The Great Man

By George C. Baldwin  
(1817 - 189?)

(Continued from the last next issue)

Some have supposed that Paul was not an orator, in the ordinary sense of that term. Perhaps this inference

has grown out of the expression in one of the epistles, where we read that **“ . . . his bodily presence is weak and his speech contemptible.”** But



these words afford no ground for the impression, when properly considered. Paul did not say *that of himself*. He says *that certain Corinthians spake thus of him*. It doubtless was the utterance of prejudice, or of persons who could not appreciate the character of the apostle's eloquence. Such utterances in reference to distinguished men are not uncommon. It is said that there were audiences in Great Britain who “despised Foster and sneered at Chalmers and even Hall.” I have myself heard men affirm that Daniel Webster was not orator. It must be remembered that “there are three kinds of eloquence: that of passion and sympathy that of pure intellect, and the eloquence of imagination. To the first of these all respond; of the two last Paul's was a compound, and these have only power upon selected spirits.” It was not therefore adapted to masses of men, as was that of Peter. I beg you, however, to bear in mind, that if there were those in licentious and pleasure-loving Corinth who thought Paul's “speech contemptible,” the people of Lystra named him after Mercury, their god of eloquence.

And more than even this, is the testimony corroborating the view I have presented. Think of him at Athens, the culminating point of earth's civilization. Did a single Athenian orator or sage, a single member of the learned court of the Areopagus, composed as it was of men of the highest culture, accustomed to listen to the loftiest eloquence, before whom he delivered an oration on Mars Hill---did one of these, I ask, utter a word derogatory to the character of his oratory? Verily not. They felt that his oration contained elements of power, unknown in those of Pericles, Demosthenes, or any of their famed orators. They felt “that there was a richness fuller than that of their own Plato, and an awfulness grander than that of their imperial Jove” in those few sublime sentences, in which, with loftiest genius, Paul condensed all the

primal truths of nature and of religion, decorating their utterance with classical quotations, and concluding with majestic and irresistible appeals. Respectfully they said to the “Tentmaker of Tarsus,” “we will hear thee again of this matter,” and one of their number, Dionysius, abandoning his philosophy and paganism, gratefully received Christianity. Specimens of his written eloquence are preserved for us in his epistles. He is emphatically the epistle writer of the New Testament. Fourteen of the twenty-one came from his prolific pen. And as we read them, what power of analysis, breadth of thought, irresistibility of argument, wealth of illustration, weight of pathos, graphicness of picturing, energy of denunciation, sublimities of imagination, depth of tenderness, bursts of enthusiasm and power of practical appeal meet our astonished gaze! He was the profound theologian, triumphant controversialist, invincible defender of Christianity during the age in which he lived. May I not now conclude that your estimate of his character coincides with the title I have given him, “Paul the Great Man.”

We have space left, only to notice a few of the many practical points this subject suggests.

One of these is this: *It is a sorrowful fact in regard to most of those whom the world calls great, that they have been such, not as a whole, but in one or at most a few particulars.*

There have been great warriors, great statesmen, great philosophers, great artists, great orators, great business men, great philanthropists and great religionists. But with greatness in one or more of these particulars, has there not almost always been found weaknesses, deficiencies, and sometimes even contemptible and degrading vices? Is not intellectual greatness often found associated with spiritual and moral debasement? The saddest moan I ever heard over the grave of New England's mightiest mental giant was, that his moral nature attained such poor development when compared with his world-admired intellect. It is a sad fact that many who stand highest now in the world's esteem, on account of their celebrity in single traits of character, or performances on certain fields of action, would lose even the respect of all good citizens, if the whole truth concerning them was known. They are not *great men*.

But in Paul you see one worthy of this title. You see not merely a great thinker, a great writer, a great orator; one possessed of great courage, patriotism, philanthropy and learning; one exerting a great influence, but you see A GREAT MAN. You discover his whole nature, physical, intellectual and spiritual, harmoniously developed. You behold a purity of private character unstained, a public life unblemished, greatness of mind and heart, acquisition and position,

sufferings and exploits, all combined, and the grand combination sanctified to the sublimest purposes by the supernatural power of a divine religion. O, as I look at his character towering up above surrounding humanity, it seems to me

“Like some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,

Swells from the vale and midway leaves the storm,

Which, tho' round its breast the rolling-clouds are spread,

Eternal sunshine settles on its head.”

Another of these points is this. *We can not fail to be impressed with how much this great man was indebted in Christianity.*

With all his rare natural endowments, suppose he had remained in the spiritual condition he was when the exalted and sovereign Jesus met him on the road to Damascus. What would he then have become? Perhaps the successor of Gamaliel; the most learned of the Rabbis; the High Priest; at once the head of the Sanhedrim and the idol of Judaism. But what would his manhood have become? His mind never could have reached the expression and power it did. His heart would have retained its increasingly corrupt and corrupting elements. His influence would have been narrow as the ever-narrowing limits of Judaism. His life would have been a failure! No one knew this as well as he did himself; and, therefore, when his fame was widest, his influence was greatest, he wrote, out of a grateful soul, these words, **“ . . . By the grace of God I am what I am. . . ”** and his epistles abound with similar acknowledgments. What was essential to him is essential to all. Nothing but an experimental acquaintance with the regenerating, sanctifying and inspiring influence of the grace of Christianity can enable any man to become truly great.

The last of these points we have time to notice is this: *What a proof of the truth of Christianity this history presents!*

The main facts of Paul's life, as recorded in the New Testament, are fully confirmed by profane writers. That he was a prominent and powerful enemy of the gospel; that he suddenly and strangely became a convert to it; that he sacrificed the brightest prospects and spent his whole subsequent life in its service, and died a martyr to its principles, and facts as well attested as any recorded in the history of the world. The early writers against Christianity confirm them. I beg you to notice only a simple part of this proof, *that which is found in the conversion of such a man*. To only the facts of the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ is greater prominence given in the New Testament than that which is given to this conversion. It is set forth minutely and repeatedly. Besides allusions to it in the epistles, three distinct and detailed accounts are given of it in the Acts of the Apostles. It was indeed wonderful, amazing. But to none was it so surprising

as to himself. He gloried in it. He related it publicly again and again. We may imagine as exclaiming,

“See me, see me, once a rebel,

Vanquished at his cross I lie;

Cross! To tame earth's proudest, able---

Who was e'er so proud as I?

He convinced me, He subdued me;

He chastised me, He renewed me;

The nails that nailed, the spear that slew him,

Transfixed my heart, and bound me to him!

See me, see me, once a rebel,

Vanquished at his feet I lie!”

What but a divine religion could have wrought this surprising work! Christianity is divine. It is eternal truth. By its fruits we know it. When attended by the Holy Spirit, it is more than a match for the combined trinity of depravity, “the world, the flesh, and the devil.” It can subdue the most bitter opposition, humble the proudest soul, soften and regenerate the hardest heart, and change the most obdurate will. An old writer has said, If Stephen had not prayed, Saul would not have been converted.” O, then, people of God, ye who feel and know that **“the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation,”** fear not to pray for the most wicked men, for those who, like Saul, seem most unapproachable to ordinary influences. He who, in answer, we believe, to prayer, met and sweetly triumphed over the proud, haughty, persecuting Pharisee before the gates of Damascus, still reigns. **“All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.”** Those for whom you pray can not be more hopeless than Saul was, and yet our sovereign Lord had only to reveal Himself, speak the life-inspiring words, and like a child, subdued, melted, humbled, the persecutor lay at His feet. Then pray, pray; pray earnestly, pray believingly, pray perseveringly, and ye shall have occasion to adore anew the omnipotency of grace.

And **“Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen”** (Eph. 3:20-21).





## Following the Crowd

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"Ignoramuses," or "Arminians." By influencing public opinion in his camp the big preacher makes slaves and puppets out of small churches and pastors. I must confess that I have less use for a Baptist pope than a Catholic pope! These people need to break their fetters and stand on their own two feet for the good of Christ and His cause.

### GREAT MEN FOLLOW THE CROWD

On one occasion King Saul was ready to slay his son, Jonathan, but he did not because he was swayed by public opinion (I Sam. 14:45). In this case public opinion was right. King Saul also **"spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good"** (I Sam. 15:9). When the Prophet Samuel reproved the king for his misconduct Saul said: **"I feared the people, and obeyed their voice"** (I Sam. 15:24).

Herod Antipas feared John the Baptist, **"knowing that he was a just man and an holy"** (Mark 6:20). At his birthday party he told the daughter of Herodias to ask what she would, and he would give it her. She asked for the head of John the Baptist: **"And the king was exceeding sorry; yet for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her"** (Mark 6:26). Because Herod followed the crowd John the Baptist lost his head.

Herod Agrippa I **"killed James the brother of John with the sword. And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also"** (Acts 12:2-3). Herod intended to please the crowd by killing Peter also, but God delivered him by an angel.

Jesus Christ, a man without one sin, came before Governor Pilate for being a trouble-maker and a traitor to Rome. Pilate found He was innocent of all charges, but to satisfy the crowd he allowed the Prince of Life to be murdered. Mark 15:15 tells us: **"And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified."** Following the crowd put to death the Lord of glory.

Felix kept the Apostle Paul in jail **"willing to shew the Jews a pleasure"** (Acts 24:27). Festus tried to get Paul to go to Jerusalem for a trial before the Jews, **"willing to do the Jews a pleasure"** (Acts 25:9), but Paul appealed to Caesar. We see here how following the crowd kept an innocent man in jail.

### SOME OTHERS WHO WERE INFLUENCED

Nicodemus came to Jesus by night because he feared public opinion would be against his visit (John 3:2). Joseph of Arimathaea was **"a disciple of Jesus,**

**but secretly for fear of the Jews"** (John 19:38). These two men did not want to risk the disrespect of their fellow Jews. Nicodemus and Joseph desired to be accepted in the inner sanctum of society.

The parents of the man born blind were given to following the crowd: **"But by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself. These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue"** (John 9:21-22). The parents of this man were ambitious to keep their seat in the Jewish synagogue at all cost.

Some more people who followed the crowd are seen in John 12:42-43: **"Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."** These chief rulers wanted to be popular, even if it meant going contrary to God's ways.

### GODLY MEN ARE NOT IMMUNE

Paul knew that circumcision did not belong to the Christian Dispensation (Gal. 5:6), but he circumcised Timothy whose father was a Gentile **"because of the Jews which were in those quarters"** (Acts 16:3). This was done to remove the offense of the unbelieving Jews against the gospel. Had this not been done, they would have regarded Timothy as an uncircumcised Gentile and an apostate from Judaism.

On one occasion when Paul came to visit the Jerusalem church James and the elders required Paul to observe certain Jewish rites (Acts 21:18-26). Paul joined with four Christians who had taken the Nazarite vow (Num. 6:1-21) by paying the expenses of their sacrifices in the temple and worshipping with them. Nothing in the Christian religion required this. It seems this was done to satisfy the Sanhedrin.

In New Testament times the Romans treated Judaism as a tolerated religion. In order to enjoy this toleration some Christians adopted some Jewish ceremonies to relieve themselves of **"the offence of the cross"** (Gal. 5:11). This is why Paul told the Galatians: **"As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ"** (Gal. 6:12). Paul condemned these people for seeking worldly popularity at the expense of truth.

Peter was in a habit of eating with the Gentile Christians. But when the circumcision party arrived he discontinued eating with the Gentiles. Peter had his eyes on men instead of looking to Christ again. He was afraid

## The Sure Guide



JOHN  
17:17

PSALM  
19:7

PSALM  
129:9

PROVERBS  
30:5

ISAIAH  
40:8

MATTHEW  
24:35

LUKE  
8:11

2 PETER  
1:21

**"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path"**  
(Ps. 129:105).

**"Ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place"** (2 Pet. 1:19).

of losing prestige in Jerusalem. Paul rebuked Peter for this (Gal. 2:11-14).

### THE EVIL OF FOLLOWING THE CROWD

The Bible warns us not to follow the crowd to do evil: **"Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil."** God has a claim on us. He has the right to regulate our lives. Failure to recognize this puts us on the level with the beast of the field. The examples of men are not our rule of life, but the commandments of God are. We are going to be judged by our Lord and Master, not our fellow servants. Our great concern must be to follow Christ, not the crowd.

Right and wrong depends on the teaching of the Bible and the example of Christ, not the views of the majority of the people in the world. If a hundred men lie, they are all liars! If a thousand men betray their country, they are all traitors! If a million women commit adultery, they are all adulteresses! If a billion men commit murder, they are all murderers! It is no compliment that people are willing to go to Hell for company!

Following the crowd is a terrible thing. The voice of conscience is silenced, the distinction between vice and virtue vanishes, and right and wrong are abolished. The law of God is trampled in the dust. The Judge of all the earth has no longer any jurisdiction.

A thing does not look so evil when many are engaged in it. Many crimes have

been committed in the frenzy and heat of a mob spirit. Men take the law into their own hands. We are told that some crimes are okay if it is good for business. The destruction of property and the shedding of man's blood is justified, if it will get a new labor contract with an increase in wages and benefits. But the fashion of the day can never make that right which the law of God declares to be wrong. If a multitude is bent on doing evil it is our duty to refuse to go with them.

It is unscriptural to follow the crowd. God demands of His people the very opposite. **"My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not. If they say, Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause. . . My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path"** (Prov. 1:10-11,15). Proverbs 4:14 says: **"Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away."** To follow the crowd is to run in the face of the enemy and to shame our great Commander and Chief.

Those who are following the crowd today are wrong! Many people say that homosexuality is okay as an alternate life style. Multitudes would have us to believe that the murder of the unborn is justified. Many educators and social planners would have us to believe that

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## Following the Crowd

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premarital sex is a fine thing if you use a condom. A growing number want to legalize drugs so our kids can blow their minds and the politicians can line their pockets with more tax dollars. To follow the crowd is to walk according to the course of this world and to be wrong.

To do things because others are doing them is very unsafe. Every person must give an account of himself to God (Rom. 14:12). The crowd that encourages us to wrong doing will not be present to help us when we stand before the judgment seat of God. At this very moment many a man, woman, boy, and girl wish they had not listened to what the majority said. Some of these sorrowful ones are in disgrace, in jail, in hospital beds, in graveyards, and in Hell!

The voice of the multitude is one thing today and another tomorrow. When the people followed and cried, **"Hosanna,"** the crowd united behind Christ. But in a short time when the priests cried, **"Crucify Him,"** the people cried, **"Away with Him. His blood be upon us and our children."** Public opinion is constantly changing while truth and duty remain the same. We must acknowledge the supreme authority of God even when in direct opposition to public opinion!

### CHRISTIANS MUST BUCK THE CROWD

Perhaps more so than ever before Christians need a firm backbone of principles and some independence of mind (Job 31:34; I Kings 19:10). We must not be governed by the fear of man more than the fear of God (Acts 4:19-20). We must not seek the praise of men more than the honor which comes from God. II Corinthians 6:14-17 tells us: **"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."**

Noah did not follow the crowd. The crowd said it would never rain on the earth, much less come a flood. But Noah builded an ark for his family. **"And the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this**

**generation"** (Gen. 7:1).

Moses bucked the crowd. Great numbers told him, "Play your cards right and you will be king of Egypt one day. You will possess all the treasures of Egypt." **"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible"** (Heb. 11:24-27).

Joshua lived in a time when it seemed the majority of Israelites might return to idolatry. Ignoring the crowd and the direction it was going, he boldly declared: **"And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD"** (Josh. 24:15).

The King of Babylon built a golden image and demanded that all people worship it. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego had to decide if they would do like everybody else, or if they would be non-conformists. They might have reasoned that it was useless to resist as many others from Judea had conformed. A living coward would be better than a dead hero. They decided to buck the crowd and Nebuchadnezzar. In their way of thinking it was worse to disobey God than to disobey the king of Babylon. For their courageous stand they were put in a fiery furnace, but Christ delivered them by a miracle (Dan. 3).

Daniel the prophet also bucked the crowd in Babylon. When the law of the land forbade him to worship his God he went right on worshipping Jehovah as he had been in the habit of doing. They threw him in a den of hungry lions, but God delivered him by a miracle (Dan. 6). Oh, may we dare to be a Daniel---dare to stand alone---dare to have a purpose firm and dare to let it be known!

Jesus Christ stood alone. When the disciples all forsook Christ (Matt. 26:56-58) He **"before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession"** (I Tim. 6:13). Christ had no dread of the reproach of singularity. Public opinion meant little to Him. Not even the thought of dying at Calvary alarmed Him in the least. His meat was to do the Father's will and to finish His work. He was obedient unto death.

### CONCLUSION

Any dead fish can float down stream, but it takes a live fish to swim up stream. We must not follow a multitude to do evil. We must take a stand against wrong, even in the face of ridicule and

opposition, if we are to please God. A blessing is promised to those who take a stand for Jesus Christ. Our Lord said: **"Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake"** (Luke 6:22).

It is well in this world to have friends, but not at the cost of leaving the Friend who sticks closer than a brother. It is all right to be popular, if you can do it without compromising your principles and God's Word. But it is far more important to be popular with God than to be popular with the crowd.

The crowd is marching to Hell as fast as time can carry them. If you are now traveling the broad road to destruction, please stop and consider your way. Leave the broad road for the strait and narrow way that leads to life. Christ is the way, the truth and the life (John 14:6). Oh, do not follow the multitude to do evil and end up in Hell!



## The Church with

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midst of severe persecution. There were several virtues and graces that Paul could see operating in them which gave him cause to thank God. Their testimony provides an example which all churches should follow and a standard by which all churches should measure themselves. It would be healthy for every church member to examine their testimony in light of the testimony of the church at Thessalonica. Ask yourself the question: "Am I helping to make my church a model church?"

### THEY PROVED THEIR ELECTION OF GOD

**"We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father; Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake"** (I Thess. 1:2-5).

1. Verse 2 describes the respect and love that Paul had for the members of the church at Thessalonica. He had ministered among them and had seen the power of God operating in their lives. He witnessed the fact that they were chosen of God in Christ before the world began. It was for this reason that he offered thanksgiving and gratitude to God when he prayed for them. Notice that he says that he gave thanks for all of the members, not just the most prominent, but for the whole church. Every member of the church, regardless of their social

## Where's the Forum?

To better help our printer we have moved our printing schedule to earlier in the month. This month's issue had a very short time before going to the printer so the forum writers were given a short Spring break. The forum will return in the July issue as usual.

standing or position is important to the testimony of the church as a whole.

I also find it interesting that Paul did not direct his praise at the members of the church, but rather to God alone. Any good operating in God's people must be attributed to God alone. Philippians 2:13 declares: **"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."** The best of saints would be nothing apart from the power and presence of God working in them. Therefore, no child of God is worthy of praise and admiration. All of our worship and praise must be offered to God, who alone is worthy.

2. There are three virtues mentioned in verse three; faith, love, and hope, that served to prove that the saints at Thessalonica could rightly bear the title of the elect of God. It is not enough for anyone to merely say they are the privileged recipients of God's electing grace. They must prove it by the way they conduct themselves. God's electing grace always results in holiness as Ephesians 1:4 so plainly states: **"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."**

Their lives demonstrated a work of faith. They had not only cast themselves without reserve upon the finished work of Jesus Christ, they also proved their saving faith by their works. All of our good works are useless unless performed by faith as Hebrews 11:6 states: **"But without faith it is impossible to please him. . ."** Though saving faith is entirely a gift of God apart from the merits or goodness of men (Eph. 2:8-9), its evidence is seen by a demonstration of good works. Good works naturally flow from saving faith as James 2:17-18 implies: **"Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works."** You cannot claim to be a partaker of the **"faith of God's elect"** (Titus 1:1), unless works of righteousness wrought by God are evident in your life. This work of faith was clearly seen in the lives of the members of the church at Thessalonica. Is the work of faith evident in your life?

The second virtue mentioned by Paul is their labor of love. Where there is genuine

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# The Church with

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saving faith that produces good works there will also be a serving, sacrificial love. Because of God's eternal love for His chosen people, the seed of love will blossom in the hearts of His people. In salvation an individual is delivered from a life of self-love. They are transformed to love God and His people. This love will not be a sentimental emotion, but a grace that is marked by actively serving God and others. It is called a labor of love because at times it requires sacrifice, suffering, and all out devotion.

The greatest demonstration of the labor of love is seen in the finished redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ. He loved His people so much He was willing to suffer and die in their stead, to bear the guilt and penalty of their sins, and offer Himself as a sacrifice for their sins. The love of Christ is immeasurable and boundless as it costs Him His life. This love is to operate and function within the Lord's church as Hebrews 10:23-24 which states: **"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works."** If we are manifesting the grace of love to God and His people by faithful service we can be sure that God will reward us for it according to Hebrews 6:10 which declares: **"For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister."** The labor of love was evident in the lives of the saints at Thessalonica. Is true love manifesting itself in your life by your service to God and others?

The third virtue mentioned is the patience of hope in the Lord Jesus Christ. This speaks of perseverance, steadfastness, and endurance as they anxiously awaited and anticipated the coming of the Lord. They could bear reproaches, hardships and persecutions for the sake of Christ because they had a fervent hope in His coming. They were **"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ"** (Titus 2:13). The true believer does not give up in times of trial and hardship because he looks forward to the coming of the Lord Jesus who will deliver him from this world of pain and woe.

All the virtues mentioned as evidences of the electing grace of God in verse 3 were being manifested by the saints at Thessalonica in the sight of God the Father. They are characterized by Paul as obedient children who were living lives that were pleasing in the sight of their heavenly Father. So many people serve God only when other people who will

praise them are watching. Oh, that all of God's people would realize that we are to serve and honor Him whether anyone is watching us or not, because the eyes of our heavenly Father are always upon us!

3. When the graces mentioned in verse 3 are operating in our lives, then we can have confidence and know that we are beloved of God and partakers of His eternal election. Paul was not afraid to mention the doctrine of election. In fact he wanted the saints at Thessalonica to know for sure that they were the elect of God. All of God's saints were chosen before the world began. We were sovereignly selected by God the Father in Jesus Christ. This selection by God was not based upon any merit or goodness that He saw in us, but rather His own good pleasure and eternal love.

Jesus declared that being a partaker of God's sovereign, electing love was a cause for rejoicing in Luke 10:20-21 which states: **" . . . But rather rejoice, because your names were written in heaven** (before the foundation of the world, cf. Rev. 13:8; 17:8, TWR). **In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight."** Paul not only knew that the saints at Thessalonica were the elect of God, he continually thanked God for their election in II Thessalonians 2:13 which states: **"But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."** I find it interesting that you often find the word beloved, which is a term of intimacy and endearment, associated with the election of God (see Matt. 12:18; Rom. 11:28; Col. 3:12; II Thess. 2:13). How the saints of God ought to rejoice that they are the eternal objects of the immutable love of God! What a wonderful title to be privileged to wear, the beloved of God.

4. In verse 5 Paul gives another proof that they were partakers of the election of God. Election is the eternal cause of salvation through faith in the Gospel in time. God's ordination or election of certain individuals occurred in eternity and is the cause of their believing in time. This is clearly set forth in Acts 13:48 which states: **"And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: AND AS MANY AS WERE ORDAINED TO ETERNAL LIFE BELIEVED."** Those who die in their sins hear the Gospel outwardly in word only. The non-elect are partakers of the general call of the Gospel only. They always reject and refuse the message of the saving Gospel every time it is declared to them. Their stubborn wills and hardened hearts are never penetrated by

the quickening power of the Holy Spirit. Only God's elect are the partakers of the effectual call of the Spirit where He comes in power to quicken them, thus enabling them to believe the Gospel.

Salvation will never take place where the Gospel comes in Word only. In order for salvation to be wrought, the Word must be accompanied by the power of the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit comes in power, no man is able to resist Him. When God's elect are "made willing in the day of his power" (Psa. 110:3), they will gladly receive the Gospel which is the **"power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth"** (Rom. 1:16). When the Gospel is accompanied by the power of the Holy Spirit, it is like dynamite that penetrates and breaks the hardest of hearts.

Praise God that He exercises His mighty power in the salvation of His elect in the effectual call; otherwise, none would ever come to faith in Jesus Christ. When men are left to themselves they will never believe the Gospel to the saving of the soul. The irresistible power of the Holy Spirit must slay the enmity of their will, subdue their rebellious hearts, and sweetly draw them to faith in Christ. Thus, no man is brought to Christ by virtue of his own intellect, the persuasive power of the preacher, or his own ability to choose. Rather, all the glory and credit must go to God alone as I Corinthians 2:4-5 states: **"And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."**

THEY SET FORTH A PROPER

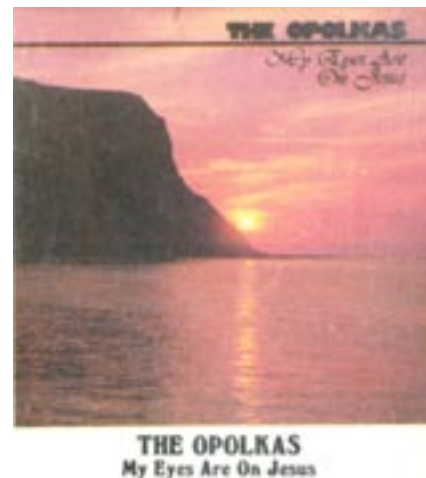
## EXAMPLE

**"And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost: So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia. For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing. For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God"** (I Thess. 1:6-9).

1. A child of God who desires to set forth a proper example to others will be followers of the Lord. To be a follower of Christ means that we must deny ourselves our own way to walk in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. Matthew 16:24 declares: **"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."** The saints at Thessalonica immediately became followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. They wanted to walk in His ways, they wanted to obey His commands, they wanted to hearken to His Word. They also followed the truths that were set forth by their spiritual mentor, the apostle Paul. As long as a preacher is preaching and practicing the truth as he follows the Lord, it is right to follow him. Paul commends the church at Thessalonica because they set forth an example of following the Lord as well as the spiritual leader that God had placed in their midst. If our churches are to be effective examples of the saving

♦ (Continued on page 352)

## More Good Christian Music



The Opolkas have remastered their former cassette tapes "My Eyes Are On Jesus" and "Trust In Him" to CD. The cassette tapes are no longer available. The CD is 77 minutes of Christian music written and composed by Debbie and Karen Opolka with the exception of one song. Many of these songs have played on the Berea Baptist Broadcast. The CD is available for \$12.00. Also, they have a later CD with the Opolkas and April Brewer on guitar for \$7.00 called "Heaven's Road." These can be ordered from George Opolka, 722 E. US HWY- 40, Troy, IL 62294.



## The Church with

(Continued from page 351) ♦

grace of God, we must strive to follow the Lord and those who preach and practice His truth. Are you setting forth a proper example to others as a follower of the Lord? How can anyone claim to be a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ who refuses to walk in His ways? **“And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say”** (Luke 6:46)?

2. The saints at Thessalonica also set forth a proper example by receiving the Word of God in the midst of affliction and distress. The Jews at Thessalonica had successfully stirred up the majority of the citizens against the followers of Jesus Christ. Therefore every time an individual was converted they could expect to be an object of persecution. Yet in spite of all the affliction the saints of God had to endure, they remained joyful in the Holy Spirit. What a testimony to God's power and grace! They had learned to rejoice in God despite their circumstances. It is not too difficult to be joyful when everything is going our way, when there is no difficulty or trial that we must pass through. Yet to maintain an attitude of joy when the chips are down and affliction is all around us is to set forth an example of all that God is sufficient to meet all our needs in all our circumstances of life. What a holy example we could set before one another and the world around us if we would only maintain an attitude of contentment and joy regardless of our difficulties.

When others see us going through rough waters and fiery furnaces with an attitude of joy and trust in God, they see that the Almighty can sustain and strengthen His people. Oh, that we might be able to sing with the prophet of old in times of affliction: **“Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The LORD God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places. To the chief singer on my stringed instruments”** (Hab. 3:17-19). When others see our testimony of joy it serves to encourage their hearts to depend upon the Lord and rejoice in Him as well. Believers in Macedonia and Achaia had heard of the joy and steadfastness of the Thessalonian believers and were blessed by it. Oh, that all of us would realize that our example influences so many people!

3. Verse 8 proves that the Thessalonians also provided an example of enthusiasm for the Word of God. They sounded out the truths of the Word of God not only in tongue, but in deed. They not only said

they believed the Gospel, they told others about their miraculous transformation and demonstrated their salvation by the godly lives they lived. They literally trumpeted the truths of God's Word so that all could hear and know about the Gospel of the grace of God. Their faith toward God and their Gospel witness was being spread all around. Every true church should be known for faithfully sounding out the truth of the Gospel. When a church loses its missionary zeal and desire to see sinners saved its testimony and usefulness will be ruined. May God give us grace to be faithful witnesses for Christ by boldly trumpeting the Gospel to every creature. I fear that too many professing Christians are so busy blowing their own trumpets, they don't have time to blow the trumpet of the saving Gospel of Christ to sinners in need!

4. Verse 9 declares that the Thessalonians had so heartily received the message of the missionaries that they had been transformed from worshipping idols to the service of God. Their culture was steeped in idolatry and paganism, yet they renounced idolatry to serve God. What an example of what genuine salvation brings about. Those who are truly saved will not continue to serve their internal idols of lust and sin or their external idols. All men by nature are idolaters. All men put something or someone before the worship of God. However, when God's grace subdues the heart of an individual he renounces and turns from his idolatrous ways to serve the living and true God alone. When God does a work of grace in the heart a radical change occurs in the life of the sinner as II Corinthians 5:17 declares: **“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”**

Christianity does not merely consist of turning from idols, lusts, and evil habits. So many think that is the substance of their faith. We are not merely to turn from evil, we are to actively serve the living and true God. The idols we formerly served had no power or life. They brought us only misery and decadence. Now we serve a God who is real, living, and powerful! When we consider the idolatry that God delivered us from, we ought to serve Him with fervency and zeal every day. Dear friend, who are you following, worshipping and serving? We must renounce the world and all of its idols to serve the true and living God with all of our heart. May God grant us all the ability to obey the admonition and example of Joshua 24:14-15 which states: **“Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day**

**whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house we will serve the LORD. And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the LORD, to serve other gods.”**

### THEY PATIENTLY EXPECTED THE IMMINENT RETURN OF THE LORD

**“And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come”** (I Thess. 1:10).

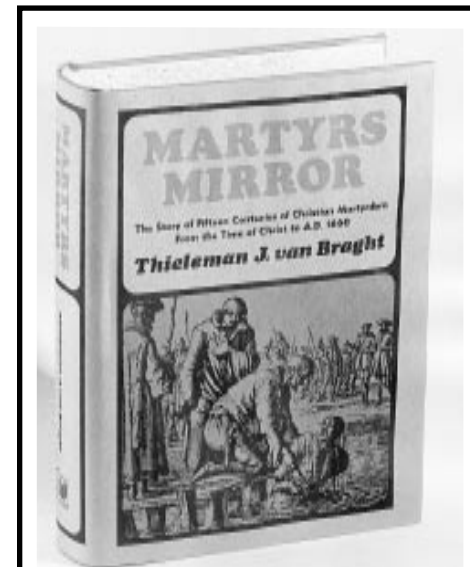
1. The Thessalonian believers were patiently waiting for the imminent return of the Lord while they actively served God. They were following the command of Jesus Christ who told His disciples to **“Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. . . Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh”** (Matt. 24:42; 44). We don't know when the Lord Jesus is coming back for His saints, but we do know for sure that He is coming and that it is imminent. Therefore we must be found patiently persevering in the hope of His soon return.

2. We can be sure that Jesus is coming again from Heaven because God raised Him from the dead. After His resurrection He ascended to the right hand of the Father to intercede for His people until the time when He would come again to catch away His saints. He promised His disciples that He would return in John 14:1-3 which states: **“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”** Every time those verses are read it ought to inspire hope in the hearts of God's children. No matter what time period the saints of God have lived, they have comforted their hearts with the promise and hope of Christ's return. Jesus is coming! What a glorious prospect, what a blessed hope! There is coming a grand and glorious day when Jesus is going to take us away from this world of woe and sorrow to be glorified and bask in His presence!

3. The apostle also tells us the time frame of the coming of Jesus Christ for His saints. His coming in the air, which is referred to as the Rapture, will occur before God pours out His wrath upon the earth during the seven-year tribulation period. We have a promise from God's Word that when Christ comes He will deliver us from the wrath to come. He has already delivered us from the penalty of our sins; in the future he will deliver us from the wrath that will be poured out

upon the earth as described in Revelation chapters 6 through 19. Praise God for such a blessed hope! The living saints will be caught up together with the dead in Christ before the Tribulation Period.

Paul goes into greater detail to prove the Pre-tribulation rapture in chapters 4 and 5 of I Thessalonians. Revelation 3:10-11 states: **“Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.”** There would be little comfort for the saint of God if he had to anticipate the coming and reign of the Antichrist, or the plagues and wrath that God will pour out upon the inhabitants of the earth. But we can comfort one another when we know that Jesus is coming for the saints before the Tribulation. I John 3:2-3 declares: **“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”** May God grant us grace to anxiously await the day when Jesus comes for us in the air to deliver us from the wrath of God. How glorious it will be to be transformed into His blessed image forever more! What a motivation to faithfully serve and love the Lord until He comes! May God grant every reader the desire to live in such a way that if all the members lived as he did, Paul could say they belonged to a model church.



**\$45.00**

This book is an old classic of 1,158 pages of the record of Christian faith and suffering from the first century to the sixteenth century. It was originally written in 1659 by a Dutch Mennonite and translated into German in 1748 through 1749 at the time of the French and Indian War. In 1886 it was translated into English. (Add \$5 for S/H.)

# 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.

## earmarking waste

(EP)--The rural region of Yixing, China, is considered the birthplace of the teapot, according to teapot expert Richard Notkin. Nearly 1,000 years later, the rural region of Sparta, N.C., is set to become the birthplace of a multimillion-dollar, federally funded teapot museum. Citizens Against Government Waste (CAGW), a nonpartisan government watchdog group, reported this month that the yet-to-be-opened Sparta Teapot Museum will receive a half million dollars in federal funding for a \$10 million building that will house a 7,000-piece teapot collection.

CAGW listed the museum's funding in its annual "Pig Book," a compilation of federal funding projects that the group classifies as "pork" or "earmark" spending. Earmark projects are typically tacked onto large appropriation bills and usually pass with no debate or budget review. The projects are often added onto bills in conference sessions after legislation has already passed, giving congressmen an easy way to get federal bucks for projects back home. CAGW identified \$29 billion in pork-barrel spending for the fiscal year 2006.

With an \$8 trillion national debt, pork-barrel spending is an extravagant practice indulged in by Republicans and Democrats alike, but a handful of Republican members are calling for reform. At least one congressman, Rep. Jeff Flake (R-Ariz.), thinks his party's majority status may depend on it: "If we [Republicans] don't fix this, the chickens may come home to roost in this year's elections."

CAGW's 2006 Pig Book identifies nearly 10,000 projects in 11 appropriation bills that constitute the discretionary portion of the federal budget. Some of the projects are practical: road improvements, new traffic lights, police training. Others are outlandish: \$13.5 million for the International Fund for Ireland, which includes funding for the World Toilet Summit; \$1 million for the Waterfree Urinal Conservation Initiative in Michigan; \$234,000 for the Wild Turkey Federation in South Carolina, a project aimed at increasing the number of wild turkeys and wild turkey hunters in the state.

Patrick Woodie, executive director of the Sparta Teapot Museum, says that there's more depth to some of the projects than the names suggest. The museum received an "oinker award" from CAGW for being particularly wasteful, but Woodie says the project is expected to bring much-needed tourism to an economically depressed region in the Blue Ridge Mountains.

"A teapot museum may sound frivolous on the surface, but it's actually a major art and economic development project," he says. The museum will showcase thousands of teapots donated by a California couple from their personal collection, worth an estimated \$5 million, and the museum expects to draw 60,000 visitors a year.

In a long storage room in the back of the Blue Ridge Business Development Center near downtown Sparta, Woodie walks through a dozen rows of metal modular shelves stacked high with bubble wrap and thousands of teapots. The collection includes rare pieces from Europe, antique sets from Britain, ceramic teapots, glass teapots, wooden teapots, and rows of novelty teapots, including one shaped like an oil rig with a lid emblazoned with George W. Bush's face.

Woodie says the museum has raised more than \$1 million in private funds and has received \$400,000 from the state, but he thinks the project also merits federal funding because it will bring employment and growth to the needy area.

Rep. Virginia Foxx (R-N.C.), who helped secure the \$500,000 in federal funds, has been a staunch advocate for spending restraint and fiscal accountability during her first year in office, but said when Congress decided to spend money on economic development, she decided to "fight for economic development projects in Western North Carolina."

CAGW president Tom Schatz says that logic "is exactly what's wrong with the whole process." Instead of fighting for "behind the scenes" earmark funds, Schatz says members of Congress should be competing for federal grants, a process that requires approval and oversight. Congress awards some \$500 million in federal grants for local projects each year.

Schatz also supports earmark-reform legislation that would take the secrecy out of the pork-barrel process. Rep. Flake has joined Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) in co-sponsoring the Obligation of Funds Transparency Act, a bill that would require greater transparency and accountability for congressmen seeking earmark funds.

Flake says Republicans should be advocating for smaller government by leading the way on earmark reform, but admits his party has a long way to go. This year a Republican senator topped CAGW's list for pork-barrel spending per capita: Sen. Ted Stevens of Alaska secured \$325 million in earmarks for his state, including \$1.3 million for "berry research." A spokeswoman for Stevens said the senator had no comment

on the report.

Legislators who push through pork-barrel projects typically say they're merely advocating for their constituents. But Sen. Tom Coburn (R-Okla.), an outspoken opponent of pork-barrel spending, says federal lawmakers should be asking, "Who are my constituents?" To members of Congress, Coburn says: "Your constituents are the taxpayers of the United States of America and the future generation. . . . If you're backing projects that benefit you politically back home, you're not being a good steward of public money."

Coburn recently blasted a \$700 million earmark to tear down a newly rebuilt railroad line in Mississippi. Dozens of blue-collar workers for CSX Transportation worked feverishly for nearly five months to repair six major bridges and 40 miles of train track on CSX's Gulf Coast Line, a major east-west railroad decimated by Hurricane Katrina. CSX and its insurers spent \$300 million to repair the damage, and announced the line's reopening in mid-January. But earlier this month, the Senate appropriations committee approved \$700 million to tear down and relocate the newly rebuilt line.

The head-scratching project is attached to a \$107 billion spending measure to fund the war in Iraq and additional hurricane relief. Mississippi Republican Sen. Trent Lott, who had pushed for the relocation project long before the hurricane, now calls the venture an important part of the state's recovery, citing safety concerns and traffic congestion. "If you're going to recover right, you've got to rebuild right," said Lott spokesman Lee Youngblood.

Sen. Coburn calls the railroad funding "extraneous pork" and says it's "ludicrous" for the Senate to foot the bill. "If the state wants to pay for it that's fine," he told WORLD, "but it's not the obligation of the federal government to move a private railroad." Though the proposal didn't come out in time to make the Pig Book, CAGW's Schatz says it would qualify: "For \$700 million, the Congress could certainly do a lot more to help people that are still without homes."

Wasting taxpayer dollars isn't the only thing that concerns Schatz about pork-barrel spending. "It also has the potential to lead to corruption," he says, pointing to former Rep. Duke Cunningham (R-Calif.). Cunningham recently began serving an eight-year sentence in a federal prison after admitting to tax evasion, mail fraud, and accepting \$2.4 million in bribes from defense contractors. Disgraced lobbyist Jack Abramoff once called the Senate appropriations committee "an earmark favor factory."

Earlier this month, federal prosecutors opened an investigation into the personal financial disclosures of Rep. Alan Mollohan (D-W.Va.), who faces questions about whether he provided earmarks benefiting companies and individuals who helped make him a millionaire, according to The Wall Street Journal. Mollohan, who holds the ranking post on the House ethics committee, has denied any wrongdoing.

Sen. Coburn, whose home state ranked

48th in CAGW's report, emphasizes that pork-barrel spending is a problem in both parties and warns, "We have to fix this now, or we'll have to fix it when it becomes a catastrophe." Rep. Flake says a small catastrophe could greet Republicans in the midterm elections if they don't curb spending: "If Americans want big government, they'll eventually go back to the original article—the Democrats."

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## U.S. HOUSE MOVES TO PROTECT RIGHTS OF MILITARY CHAPLAINS

(EP)--The House Armed Services Committee has approved language to protect the right of military chaplains to pray in accordance with their faith.

The provision, sponsored by two congressmen who are leaders on military issues -- Reps. Duncan Hunter, R-Calif., chairman of the Armed Services Committee, and Walter Jones, R-N.C. -- was inserted into the massive Department of Defense budget authorization bill.

It reads: "Each chaplain shall have the prerogative to pray according to the dictates of the chaplain's own conscience, except as must be limited by military necessity, with any such limitation being imposed in the least restrictive manner feasible."

The sentence would apply to all branches of the military -- including the service academies.

Jones said the right of chaplains to pray unhindered is under fire -- especially evangelicals who are being forbidden to pray "in Jesus' name." The congressman said he got involved in this issue three years ago, when he met with three Navy chaplains at Camp Lejeune, a major Marine Corps base in his North Carolina district.

"They told me that they were restricted from praying in the name of Jesus Christ outside of the church," Jones said. "I started looking into this, and I'll tell you, over a three-year period of time, I have spoken to over a hundred chaplains. Everybody verified that they were being restricted."

He said one of the most egregious examples of censorship involves an Army chaplain in Iraq named Jonathan Stertzbach, an independent Baptist chaplain from Arizona. Stertzbach's company commander requested the chaplain pray over a fallen comrade whose body was about to be sent back to the U.S.

"He had to submit in writing his prayer to the divisional chaplain," Jones said. "The divisional chaplain struck through the words 'Jesus Christ' and sent it back. Stertzbach went to the company commander, who had asked him to pray and said, 'Major, I can't pray, because I cannot pray in the name of Jesus Christ.' The major, being a man of God, said, 'You are going to pray, and you're going to pray in the name of Jesus Christ.'"

Not long afterward, Stertzbach was removed from his chaplaincy. Several congressmen got involved in the matter.

"We wrote a letter to the inspector general asking for an investigation," Jones said, "Since

♦ (Continued on page 354)

# Bible & The Newspaper

(Continued from page 353) ♦

that time, Stertzbach has been returned to the chapel in Iraq.”

Jones said the impact of the restrictions on religious expression goes far beyond the military.

“I am of the belief that if we do not protect the First Amendment rights of people of faith -- in the military and outside the military -- I don’t know what the moral future of this country is going to be,” he said.

Dr. Billy Baugham, a retired Army chaplain and head of the International Conference of Evangelical Chaplain Endorsers, said chaplains are being persecuted.

“A chaplain, when he gives a prayer, is supposed to be accepted as a bona fide member of the military community empowered to speak on matters of morality and religion, just as a JAG (Judge Advocate General) officer would be allowed to speak (legal) talk, or a doctor would talk medical talk,” he said. “I’ve never heard a chaplain give an altar call during prayer.”

Until the late 1990s, Baugham said the understanding in the military concerning religion was always one of pluralism -- the idea that, though there are differences in matters of religion and faith, it was in everyone’s best interests to accommodate everyone else’s faith.

“Everyone could do their thing,” Baugham said. “Although we were different, everyone accepted and accommodated everyone else. The problem now is, ‘pluralism’ has been changed and redefined to be a means of restriction.”

Baugham added that he thinks the Hunter-Jones language “will be helpful.” The Department of Defense authorization bill must still be approved by the full House and Senate.

Congress, meanwhile, is pursuing other avenues to protect the rights of chaplains. Last week, Jones was joined by Reps. Trent Franks, R-Ariz.; Mike McIntyre, D-N.C.; Todd Akin, R-Mo.; Mike Conaway, R-Texas, and Jim Ryun, R-Kan., in a Capitol Hill news conference that called on President Bush to issue an executive order as commander in chief.

The congressmen told Bush in a letter they were “gravely concerned” that the right of military chaplains to pray according to their faith was “in jeopardy” and chaplains were “now being instructed on what to say when they pray.”

“For Christian chaplains, praying in the name of Jesus is a fundamental part of their belief and to suppress this form of expression would be a violation of religious freedom,” they said in their letter to Bush.

“The current demand in the guidelines for so-called ‘non-sectarian’ prayers is merely a euphemism declaring that prayers will be acceptable only so long as they censor Christian beliefs.”

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## NATIONAL BRIEFS

### MASSACHUSETT’S GOVERNOR PLANS TO HEAVILY FUND ABSTINENCE EDUCATION

(EP)—Massachusetts’ Gov. Mitt Romney has announced he intends to designate nearly \$1 million in federal funding to teach middle-school kids about abstinence, the Family Research Council (FRC) has reported. The funding would not replace comprehensive sex-education, but instead would be added to the current program. “We’re saying, ‘Let’s provide an opportunity for parents and school districts to add abstinence to the curriculum,’” Romney told the Boston Herald. “It’s not abstinence only. It’s abstinence also.” FRC praised the move by Romney as a step in the right direction.

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### PRO-LIFE WOMEN MAKE VOICE HEARD IN D.C.

(EP)--On April 26, Wednesday of this week, an event called Real Women’s Voices took a pro-life message to Washington, D.C. Amanda Banks is federal issues analyst for Focus on the Family Action. She said that there are “millions of pro-life women around the country, but the other side” has a louder voice. She added: “It’s that much more important that we, as pro-life women, make our voices heard to compete with that.” Among the groups participating in the event were Concerned Women for America, the National Right to Life Committee and Eagle Forum.

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### MAINSTREAM NETWORKS APPEAL FCC DECISION

(EP)--The ABC, NBC, CBS and Fox television networks have filed appeals of the FCC’s determination that profane language should be banned from the broadcast airwaves. The networks are challenging the FCC’s determination that language broadcast in 2002 through 2004 on various network programs was inappropriate. The FCC did not issue fines in those cases because the incidents occurred before a 2004 ruling that virtually any use of certain expletives would be considered profane and indecent. The networks called the FCC ruling “unconstitutional” and inconsistent with two decades of previous FCC decisions. They also claimed the FCC “overstepped its authority” and acted arbitrarily. Brent Bozell, president of the Parents Television Council, called the networks’ action “utterly shameless” and pointed out that the broadcast airwaves do not belong to the broadcasters, but to the American people.

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### DANFORTH: CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT ON GAY MARRIAGE A “SILLY IDEA”

(EP)--Former Sen. John Danforth says a conservative push to ban gay marriage through a constitutional amendment is “silly,” calling it the latest example of how the political influence of evangelical Christians is hurting the GOP. Danforth, a Missouri Republican and an Episcopal priest, made the comments in a speech to

the Log Cabin Republicans, which support gay rights. He said history has shown that attempts to regulate human behavior with constitutional amendments are misguided. The Senate is scheduled to vote in June on a constitutional amendment that its supporters hope will head off any decision in the federal courts that could legalize gay marriage. The measure would need to be approved by two-thirds of those voting in the House and Senate and then be ratified by at least 38 state legislatures.

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### CHRISTIAN STUDENTS SUSPENDED OVER T-SHIRTS

(EP)—Thirteen Rosemont, Calif., Christian students were suspended by their high school for wearing t-shirts with the message “Homosexuality is sin. Jesus can set you free.” The Oakmont High School students were countering the “Day of Silence,” a project of the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN). The event highlights what GLSEN describes as “anti-lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) name-calling, bullying, and harassment” in schools. Other students at the school wore shirts that openly promoted homosexuality. Brad Dacus, president of the Pacific Justice Institute, is representing the thirteen suspended students. He says a lawsuit on behalf of the suspended students is “very likely.” According to Dacus, “Tolerance must be a two-way street. Our society cannot afford the suppression of religious viewpoints just because some people disagree with or don’t like those views.”

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### IMMIGRATION BECOMES LOCAL ISSUE

(EP)—It was a local election, but it may be an indication of the mood of the nation. Voters in Herndon, Va., tossed out three city officials who had supported a “day laborer” center for illegal immigrants. Last August, the mayor and town council voted 5-2 to establish the center with town funds. On May 2, voters in this Washington, D.C. suburb replaced Mayor Michael L. O’Reilly and two others who backed the center. Mayor O’Reilly remained unrepentant even in defeat. He said his defeat by a political newcomer was the result of “resentment and hatred.” However, Tony Perkins of the Family Research Council said, “Since when is it hatred to ask that the laws be obeyed? You can be sure that the name *Herndon* will be heard on the Hill.” Congressmen on both sides of the aisle are hoping an immigration reform bill will be introduced before the Memorial Day break.

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### METHODIST COURT UPHOLD BAN ON GAY MEMBERS

(EP)--The United Methodist Church’s highest court has decided to let stand a decision by a Virginia pastor to keep an openly gay man from joining his church. In two rulings last fall, the court sided with the Rev. Ed Johnson of South Hill, Va., who refused to admit an openly gay

man as a church member. The court also ruled at the time that Johnson’s due process rights were violated when he was charged by Virginia Bishop Charlene Kammerer with “unwillingness or inability to perform ministerial duties.” Religion News Service reported that an overwhelming majority of other pastors in the state voted to place Johnson on an involuntary leave of absence, but the court ordered him reinstated with back pay.

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### BILL PROTECTS STUDENTS WHO DISPLAY U.S. FLAG

(EP)--Representative Walter Jones of North Carolina’s 3rd District has introduced a bill saying that schools that do not protect the right of a student to respectfully display the flag could lose federal funding. According to Jones, a constituent in his district had asked him to draft a measure because a Colorado school suspended several students for wearing U.S. Marine T-shirts or shirts with U.S. flags.

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### CHRISTIAN ENTREPRENEUR DEFENDS RIGHT TO REFUSE BUSINESS

(EP)--Earlier this year, Tim Bono, owner of Bono Film and Video, was contacted via e-mail by a potential customer, Lilli Vincenz, to reproduce two documentaries. When Bono found out they were pro-homosexual videos, he turned down the business. Vincenz contacted the Arlington Human Rights Commission, asking it to force Bono to duplicate her videos, and last month the Commission ordered him to do so. Bono now has had to hire a law firm to assert his rights to refuse the business. The case is still pending.

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### INTERNATIONAL BRIEFS

(EP)—Mexico’s Congress approved a bill on April 28 that would make it OK to possess small amounts of drugs such as marijuana, ecstasy and cocaine for personal use. President Vicente Fox said he will sign the bill into law. He said it would allow authorities to focus on drug smuggling, rather than busting casual drug users. Calvina Fay, executive director of the Drug Free America Foundation, said, in reality, the measure would give a green light to drug dealers. “It’s going to increase the flow of drugs coming in the country,” she said. “It certainly will increase the demand -- especially along the border areas.” Alberto Baez with Focus on the Family International said it sends a dangerous message to Mexico’s young people. “Usually you want to protect your youth because they are the future of the country,” he said. “How they are going to allow more consumption without trafficking is just very confusing.” Bob Maginnis, an adviser with Drug Watch International, said authorities in countries that have legalized drugs in the past -- such as the Netherlands and Switzerland -- also claimed it would help drug prosecution. “They really don’t spend a lot of their time going after the big guys,” he said.





# CELLBLOCK TO CELLBLOCK

By David G. Hoffman

Encouragement and thoughts from a prisoner to other prisoners and readers.

**“Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried” (Rev. 2:10).**

## Doctrines of God, or Commandments of Men?

**“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good”** (I Thess. 5:21) is my guiding precept with each article I write, and close behind it is **“[searching] the scriptures daily, whether those things [are] so”** (Acts 17:11). The subject following cannot be exhausted in such a short forum; in fact, there are many thick volumes on it. However, I hope in my conciseness I haven’t been ambiguous but have whetted your appetite for further study. Any errors herein are wholly my own.

Calvinists and Arminians have battled for centuries. Each have a system of five core doctrines; one is man-made and the other goes back to an itinerate Preacher from Nazareth. In other words, one is biblical and the other is not.

But which is which?

Jacobus (James) Arminius, from whom ‘Arminianism’ comes, was a Dutch theologian who lived from 1560 to 1609. Arminius began as a strict Calvinist but later changed his views, a change expressed in a document called, *The Remonstrance*, published posthumously in 1610.

Today’s Arminians are not necessarily the same as those of old; modern Arminianism is often confusing because it melds together a number of different theological ideas. One Arminian church may not teach exactly the same doctrine as any other. However, for this article I will adhere to the core doctrines of historical Arminianism, one or more of which can be found in all Arminian churches.

John Calvin, from whose teachings arose the doctrines called ‘Calvinism,’ was a French-born Swiss theologian who lived from 1509 to 1564. Five-point Calvinism as we know it today was not taught by Calvin, instead it was implied by those who carried his teachings to their logical conclusions. Calvinism is often called Reformed theology and was derived from John Calvin’s *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.

Just like the Arminians, not all Calvinists are the same. I have read about three-point Calvinists, four-point Calvinists, and five-point Calvinists who add the heresy of infant baptism to their theology. However, I’m only

interested in five-point Calvinism as I believe it’s understood by the Sovereign Grace Baptists. But before I continue let me explain and be very clear what I mean by Calvinism. I’ve oft been accused by Arminians (who didn’t know enough to know they were Arminians) of following the teachings of “a man” when I’ve identified myself as a Calvinist. By calling myself a Calvinist I was automatically a student of, and in total agreement with, everything John Calvin ever did or taught---or so the Arminians told me, anyway.

Calvinism to me is the neat outline of five points best known by the acronym T.U.L.I.P.; also known as the Doctrines of Grace. This acronym is easy to remember and is a great aid when discussing salvation with an unbeliever. That’s it. And apparently I’m not the only one who calls this acronym and the outline it represents ‘Calvinism’ because Christian Book Distributors has a book called, *Calvinism: Five Points, Two Views\** in their catalog. Outside of a few quotes and a biographical sketch or two I’ve never studied Calvin’s teachings. But I have researched and studied each of the five points and I’m persuaded they are biblically accurate.

Even though five-point Calvinism wasn’t titled as such until after Calvin’s death the biblical doctrines the five points represent have been taught openly since Christ called His circle of twelve; and through a glass darkly even before that. Let’s look at the five points in light of Scripture:

**TOTAL DEPRAVITY:** The doctrine that man is dead in trespasses and sin and totally unable to save himself; the total inability of man, not born of the Spirit, to do anything acceptable or good in the sight of God (Rom. 3:10-18).

Mankind are sinners by representation (Gen. 5:3; Rom. 5:12); sinners by nature (Gen. 8:21; Ps. 51:5; Rom. 7:14); and sinners by practice (Rom. 3:23; I John 1:10). All of man’s faculties are effected (Gen. 6:5; Jer. 17:9; Rom. 8:6-8; Eph. 2:1); and because of such he cannot hear (John 8:47), he cannot understand (I Cor. 2:14), and he cannot believe (John 10:26).

Arminian doctrine---**NATURAL INABILITY:** The teaching that man cannot save himself, but the Holy Spirit must effect the new birth in him. However, along with this they teach that man can turn from his sinful life and turn to God whenever he chooses

by exercising his free-will; all one has to do is have a desire and say the “Sinner’s Prayer” and if sincere it’s a done deal. All I can do is shake my head in wonder at the oversight of John 1:13; 6:44; and Romans 3:10-18, among others.

**UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION:** The doctrine that in eternity past God chose or elected certain people to obtain salvation; the selection of individuals to eternal life based entirely on God’s choice, and not influenced by man (Eph. 1:4-5).

There are many terms in the Bible that describe unconditional election (**“Father. . .draw him. . .”** John 6:44; **“Predestinate to be conformed. . .”** Rom. 8:29; **“Purpose of God according to election. . .”** Rom. 9:11; **“Chosen us in him. . .”** Eph. 1:4; **“Called us. . .according to his own purpose. . .before the world began”** II Tim. 1:9). Election is unconditional (Rom. 9:11-17; 11:5-6; [before creation] Eph. 1:4). Election doesn’t harm those left, all mankind deserves Hell and it’s only because of God’s unmerited mercy and grace that any are saved (SEE: Total Depravity; Rom. 5:12). Election is in Christ (Eph. 1:4-5). The number of elect unknown to man (Rom. 8:29; Rev. 5:9; 7:9). Evidence of election (Matt. 5:3-11; Gal. 5:22-23; I Thess. 1:4).

Arminian doctrine---**ELECTION BASED ON KNOWLEDGE:** The belief that God chose those who would be saved in eternity past based on his foreknowledge of those who would respond to and receive the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In other words, God looked down through history and saw who would believe and based His election on that knowledge. However, if election was based on God’s foreseen foreknowledge (looking into the future and seeing what is going to happen) instead of His ordained foreknowledge (ordering the future beforehand) then God’s will would be subservient to man’s will---who is the Creator here (Rom. 9:15-24)?

**LIMITED ATONEMENT:** The doctrine that Jesus Christ didn’t die for the sins of the entire world; Christ died only for the elect, and by His death redeemed all for whom He died (John 17:9).

The purpose of Christ’s death (Isa. 53:4-10; Matt. 1:21; John 6:38-40; 17:2, 9; Heb. 12:2; I Pet. 3:18). How Christ accomplished redemption (by substitution: Isa. 53:4-10; II Cor. 5:19, 21; by satisfaction: Rom. 3:24-25; Heb. 9:26); what He accomplished (Matt. 26:28; John 10:11, 28; Rom. 5:8-9; 8:33-34; Heb. 2:9-12; 10:14; I Pet. 2:24).

Arminian doctrine---**UNLIMITED ATONEMENT:** The belief that Jesus died for all people, that His blood is sufficient to pay the penalty for the sins of every man, woman, and child who ever lived. Thus, all mankind is

savable. First off, if the Father had given every man, woman, and child who ever lived to Christ then His blood would be sufficient, but the Bible is clear this is not the case. Secondly, if it was true that all mankind was and is savable and one person goes to Hell, and Scripture is clear that many do, then Jesus is a liar: John 17:2,6,9,12,14,16,20-26. Again the Arminians put God’s will subservient to man’s will, for if a man is “savable” but dies unsaved then his human will is stronger than God’s will to save him (SEE: John 10:25-30).

**IRRESISTIBLE GRACE:** The doctrine of the call whereby God brings the elect to Himself, all who are called shall come to the Lord (Ps. 110:3; John 6:37, 45; I Cor. 1:23-24; Eph. 2:1, 5; I Pet. 5:10).

The call is of God (The Father: Jer. 31:33-34; John 6:44; Eph. 2:10; The Son: John 5:25; 11:43; The Holy Spirit: John 3:8; 6:63). The object of His call (Rom. 8:28, 30). Evidence of His call (Matt. 5:4, 6; John 5:24; Gal. 5:22-24).

Arminian doctrine---**PREVENIENT GRACE:** The belief that the preparatory work of the Holy Spirit enables the believer to respond to the Gospel and to cooperate with God in the working out of that person’s salvation. In other words, man does his part, then God does His part, and man is saved (don’t forget, if God does His part first He violates man’s free-will; regardless of what SCRIPTURE says: **“There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God”** (Rom. 3:11).

**PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS:** The doctrine that a true born again Christian cannot lose or give up his salvation because salvation is entirely God’s work, not man’s; all the elect of God shall be kept by God and shall be eternally saved, however, they may walk in disobedience, losing the joy of their salvation (John 10:27-29; Ps. 51:12).

Certainty of preservation by the covenant and decrees of God (Isa. 46:9-11; Jer. 32:40; John 6:37; Rom. 8:28-30). Certainty of preservation by the promise of God (Ps. 94:14; Rom. 8:35-39; I Thess. 5:23-24; Phil. 1:6).

Arminian doctrine---**CONDITIONAL PERSEVERANCE:** The belief that man can choose to reject God, and therefore lose his salvation, even after he has been born again; that you must abide in Christ to be saved, and that you can choose to walk away from God. So much for: **“I give unto them [believers] eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand”** (John 10:28)! Need I say more?

So as you can see, Calvinism, i.e., T.U.L.I.P., i.e., the Doctrines of Grace are biblically accurate and keep a proper

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## Cellblock to Cellblock

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perspective of God's sovereignty. While Arminianism is wholly man-made and seeks to usurp God's sovereignty with man's free-will, **"but in vain they do worship [God], teaching for doctrine the commandments of men"** (Matt. 15:9).

Many a person wrinkles their nose at the Doctrines of Grace as if they put off an odious stench, but they are truth my friend. To the sinner saved by grace they're an odor of sweet smell unto his soul.

It's true that mankind is completely depraved (just turn on your evening news) and if left alone will gladly march through the gates of Hell and fling themselves into the Lake of Fire.

I wasn't looking for God when He began to draw me to Himself (John 6:44), far from it. I was rooting around in the world's pigpen choking on husk; empty and alone, running headlong into Hades. Then came the gentle tug of irresistible grace. No, He didn't drag me kicking and screaming, but made me willing in the day of His power (Ps. 110:3) and opened my understanding to see **"the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord"** (Rom. 6:23). I could truly hang my head in shame, beat upon my breast, and lament with the publican, **"God be merciful to me a sinner"** (Luke 18:13). And merciful He is my friend (Heb. 8:12)!

Are you lost in the world's pigpen? Are you sin sick and in need of a savior? If so, there is hope. The Savior of Sinners, the Great Physician is still taking patients, still **"[seeking] and [saving] that which is lost"** (Luke 19:10).

The world doesn't want Him, in fact; the world hates Him (John 7:7). Do you want Him?

**"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation"** (Rom. 10:9-10). Thus saith the Lord, **"I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation I have succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation"** (II Cor. 6:2).

You cannot save yourself friend, but **"faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it"** (I Thess. 5:24).

May **"the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit"** (Gal. 6:18). God bless you all.

\*Actual title is, "Debating Calvinism: Five Points, Two Views" by Hunt & White.



## Church Organization

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look at the overall context of the message and see if church organization can be found anywhere at all.

Chapter 18 starts off with a question for Jesus, **"Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"** The disciples asked this question because they had been disputing amongst themselves, wondering who would be the greatest. Jesus, knowing the pridefulness in their hearts, then takes a child and tells them that they must humble themselves, and have that childlike faith and humility in service to the Lord. Jesus then goes on to tell us by taking the least among men who trusts in Him, you are taking Him in, thereby letting the air out of some of their pride wondering if they would be the greatest in the Kingdom. **"But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!"** (Matt. 18:6-7). We see in this verse, that it may be a child who believes in Christ, but he is no less a Christian or no less saved than Peter or Paul was a Christian or loved of God. Let's keep in mind the context, the question being answered is "who will be the greatest?" Christ next pointed out that it would be better to have a rock tied to your neck and thrown into the sea, dying a violent, terrible death than to offend the smallest child who has repented and been given saving faith in Him. What the disciples considered great, was most likely themselves and their own attributes. God stands for, loves and keeps even the smallest of His. What a blessed thought---unconditional, perfect love! **"Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire."** It would be better to go through life maimed than to keep sin with you in your life. We need to purge ourselves from sin, and continually mortify the flesh, because though we are saved, we are still sinners, and a profession is not salvation. Now, if the chapter ended here, it would seem that this passage doesn't fit well with the preceding verse, but let's not stop here rather keep going and view the whole message, and see what Jesus is building to in His preaching. **"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."** Again we see that God's love is a perfect love, and He loves His smallest child like He does His greatest child. We are all sinners, and Jesus came to save sinners, and no one is greater than the other, but we all deserve Hell (Matt 18:10-12).

**"Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish"** (Matt. 18:14).

Now we reach verse 15, **"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."** Jesus is now speaking of a brother, a member of the church, committing an offence. Repentance and forgiveness is commanded here. Notice that it is our duty to help a fallen brother, but not our duty to tell every one in three counties of the sin committed behind the brother's back. Jesus tells us distinctly how it should first be handled, between the brethren ALONE. We see it is the duty of the guilty not to begrudge his brother for pointing out his crime. See the harmony of Christian charity and the work of the Holy Spirit, **"if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother."** Often, we would rather ignore a problem, wait until our brother becomes in dire straits, then mock him and gossip about him after he falls, or get mad at the one trying to help and warn us. Jesus says if the guilty will hear him, and if he will humble himself before God and repent, the two would continue their Christian walk in love. **"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."** The matter of discipline is a grave yet important matter for the Lord's churches and should not be taken lightly. It's not a matter of a pastor getting mad at a member and disciplining him, or that a group start bickering and exclude one from the membership for some unscriptural reason. If the brother who has committed this sin will stand in his pride, and refuse the wise counsel of his brother, and continue in his sin, take another brother with you that there may be two or three to witnesses the second time. The others that were to be brought the second time were not prosecutors, rather witnesses. They are there to hear every word, to ensure that false accusations aren't made, and to report back to the church the happenings, and the sayings of the fallen brother. A man can't accuse a brother before the church of a sin, and discipline handed out without established witnesses of the brother's response to the reproof and rebuke of his sin. Without question, a difficult task. We have brothers, who were once in close fellowship in Christ, now rejecting the truth and rather be left in their sins. **"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."**

This next verse is where for some reason, men go haywire in interpretation. We need to follow the rules of language and thought when reading the Bible. Have you noticed the train of thought thus far? First the prideful question of who would be the greatest. Jesus teaches:

1. Humility
2. God's love of the smallest
3. Jesus came to save the lost, which we are all sinners
4. Forgiveness and repentance among the brethren, of which are still sinners themselves.
5. Church discipline for the unpentant.

Charles Spurgeon is known to some as the "Prince of Preachers" but he couldn't compare to the greatest preacher who has ever walked the Earth. Jesus didn't get side tracked and start talking about something now unrelated, but He continues to build upon this thought of how to do the work of the Lord in His church, being that it is made up of sinners. **"Verily,"** or to say truthfully **"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."** What is meant by binding? My pastor and I many times have been in the fields during the summer bailing hay. We came together and purposed to bind hay up into bails. Does this verse teach that for every bail that was bound in the field, a bail of hay was bound in Heaven? Whatsoever is bound on Earth is bound in Heaven! Of course I am being facetious, but only to make a point. We don't have the right or ability to take one verse and take it from its original context. So many false teachings start with taking part of the Bible and applying their own context to twist and turn Scriptures to make them bow to the beliefs they think to be right. To understand what it is to be bound in Earth and in Heaven, we must look at the verses preceding and following the verse at hand. Had Jesus been talking about hay in verse 17, then my silly proposition could have been warranted, but he wasn't, he was talking about the disciplining of an erring brother by the church. In verses 8 and 9 we learned how important it is to rid yourself of sin, the principle is applied to the church now. Verses 8 and 9 were not out of context at all, but preparing us for the teaching of church discipline, and what happens if we do not purge sin from our lives, or continue on in sin. Jesus said for the church to treat him as a heathen and publican. How would you treat a heathen and publican? You would treat him with love, kindness, pray for him, but the fellowship is not there. This verse is telling His church, when you

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## Church Organization

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must take this measure of discipline, you have that power and authority. What the church votes on here is recognized in Heaven. This terrible and sorrowful act is not to be used spitefully but with the understanding how big the implications are in this matter, and to serve stern warning to future offenders, you are not being punished by the church alone, but it is recognized in Heaven as well. **“It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father’s wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying is not good”** (1 Cor. 5:1-6). Paul told the Corinthians that they should have been mourning about the fornication that had occurred in the ranks of the church. Notice when they gathered together as a church to discipline, they were **“To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh.”** What a sobering thought, but it illustrates the power the church has in disciplining within the local church. Now do we see why it would be better to be maimed than to continue in rebellious sin? If you read what Satan did to Job, and consider being delivered unto him to drive us back to God, we think how careless some men are with their own lives and the lives of their families. **“It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God”** (Heb. 10:31). Read of a man who was preaching lies in the church in 2 Timothy 2:17. **“And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.”** Hymenaeus was preaching this heresy, and the church, the pillar and ground of the truth is bound to remove the leaven, and this was done as told in 1 Timothy 1:20. **“Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.”** How terrifying to think that we would be delivered unto Satan. Not losing salvation, but the destruction of the flesh, to be devoured, to be sifted as wheat. Through proper discipline, God would remove His hedge about the rebellious child, that he may repent

and turn back to Him. Chastising is fully in God’s hands. God doesn’t need permission to chasten His children, and it happens outside of the Lord’s church. Understand though, when the Lord’s church disciplines, chastisement’s coming. The truth is kept and perpetuated through the Lord’s churches. But these verses don’t begin to intimate church organization.

**“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”** (Matt. 18:19). The word **“again,”** is also inspired. You don’t start a new topic with the word again. Jesus said **“again,”** or *that is to say*, or *once more*, or *further more*. I know that is elementary to say what again means, but let’s get down to the basics. Jesus is still talking about church discipline. If two of you shall agree, or be in harmony as concerning any thing, it shall be done. If this was the only verse, and the only thing Jesus said, then a lot of heretics and charlatans would be correct. We could agree that I would be rich, and agree you would be healthy, and agree life would be without trouble and life would be void of sorrow, and it would be Heaven on Earth, but that is twisting the Word of God. This verse is a blessed truth much like that in James 5:15: **“And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”** This verse teaches when praying in the will of God, that prayer will be answered. Verse 19 tells us in like manner, when the church comes together, agrees, prays in the will of God that it is answered. It doesn’t make God a genie in a bottle to answer wishes and desires. Neither does this verse say that God would contradict His statutes and precepts just because two saved sinners say so. We see in Acts the model for church organization. Two or three can’t agree on earth contrary to God’s model of church organization, and think that is pleasing to God. What if two or three gathered together and desired a pope to lord over them? Does that mean that it is bound in Heaven, that the Lord’s church now has a pope? Can anyone believe that if Hymenaeus and Philetus could “covenant” together and agree that they would be a church, and that God would honor that and recognize them as a church? Some would have to admit that God would count them as a church. They were two baptized believers, they agreed, then were they a church?, why not?, because the church is given this power of organization, not individuals. It was bound in Heaven that Hymenaeus would be given up for the destruction of the flesh, that he was to be under

the heavy chastising hand of God until brought to repentance and restored to the church. I don’t know if he did repent or not, but that is the design. I know if he was truly saved he would have. **“But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul”** (Heb. 10:39). If he never returned, he was never one of them to start with. This is the God given protection to His church to purge herself of heresy and lies. This is how the truth and ordinances are perpetuated and why God designed church organization to be one scriptural church organizing another of like beliefs that the truth would be carried on through the church, not through men or preachers.

**“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them”** (Matt. 18:20). Back to basics, **“For,”** or *because*, or *therefore*, is used in explanation or intensification of a point says Strong’s concordance. Read the first word in the verses, starting in verse 16, But, And, Verily, For, all these words are the continuation of the same thought. No where in this passage do we see a break in that. Each verse building on the one before. When this is the case, you must acknowledge that there has to be relation in each sentence to the one before and the one after. Jesus ends by encouraging that even if there are only two or three that remain, He will be there with them. Never mind the numbers, if only two or three remain faithful in the Church, Jesus will not abandon them, and the power and authority given to the church is just as powerful and relevant with three as with three thousand. Remember earlier, **“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.”** I know that the church wasn’t being spoken of, but the principle still stands. What is great in man’s eyes doesn’t make it great in God’s eyes. The number in the assembly doesn’t give its power and authority, but it’s her Head, Jesus the Christ. God is neither respecter of persons or numbers. God will be with His faithful church of three and they are just as much a church and their decisions are just as much bound in Heaven as any other assembly. Jesus is telling His churches to leave numbers to Him, do the work of the Lord, and He will be with you. Do what is right, and He will hear and answer that prayer. I am with you, just as I was with Shamgar, one man and an ox goad verses 600 Philistines, which after the battle was one man, one ox goad and 600 *dead* Philistines!

God didn’t inspire chapter and verse in the Bible. He inspired every jot and tittle, each word is given to us by God, but it was the translators who made chapter and verses for our ease. God certainly didn’t inspire the separation found in the

study Bibles, the separate subdivisions within the chapters. In many Bibles there is a separation made in between verse 20 and 21. Who gave these men this power to separate the narrative? Verse 21 is just as much part of the whole thought as any of the previous. Peter, who was never afraid to speak up, had been enthralled with the preaching he had just heard. The question Peter asks also helps us to understand the preceding verses. **“Then (right after) came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven”** (Matt. 18:21). Peter, having just heard a message on an erring brother, and the responsibility of the church to discipline said member had a great question. How many times should we forgive him? You see, many people put down Peter for shooting off at the mouth, and think secretly to themselves, “I would have never said anything like that” or “that Peter, always speaking before he thinks”. Ah, but I think, dear reader, Brother Peter is a better listener than many preachers today. Some read this chapter and don’t listen, but interject their ideas. Peter listened, and heard what Jesus was preaching. Did Peter ask, “So we just agree to be a new church,” or did He LISTEN to Christ and what He REALLY had to say? Peter heard Him, and knew Him to be preaching on sinning church members, discipline and the power the church has in this regard. To believe that these verses speak of church organization you must believe one of two things. Either Jesus was getting sidetracked and Peter was trying to get Him back on topic, which is preposterous to even assert or Peter wasn’t listening or paying attention. If the latter were true, do you not think that Christ would have rebuked him and set him straight instead of leaving the interpretation to the imagination and pointed out the true meaning of what He just said? Think of the chapter as a whole message, like it is. Consider the context, from the disciples’ first question to Peter’s last. There is harmony in the true interpretation. You have to overlook most of the chapter and forget its context entirely to find anything else. It’s strange how some passages men say “in the Greek it says this”, and dissect each syllable as long as it favors them, but when Scripture contradicts their belief it’s “context, who needs context?” How about we read what God said, believe it and follow it, no matter what it does to *our* theology?

I recently read that it was clear this chapter teaches of church organization. When I read that, I thought to myself that I couldn’t remember seeing it in there, and since it is so clear, I had better go back and check it out again. After a closer study, I see it very clearly that

♦ (Continued on page 358)



## Church Organization

(Continued from page 357) ♦

church organization isn't even hinted in these verses. We are accused of reading the Scriptures and trying to prove our beliefs of scriptural church organization by them, instead of believing what the Bible teaches about the subject. We are given a model for church organization in Acts, which one church organizes another, and that is the standard I will live and die with because it's the teaching and method of my King and my Lord. I take that same method of interpretation with this chapter as well, what is Jesus saying, instead of, this is what I heard Jesus say. God Bless.



## A Deficient Gospel

By Curtis Pugh  
of Bocs, Romania

**“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures” (1 Cor. 15:1-4).**

The verses quoted above set forth the essentials of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Gospel, then, is seen to be the finished work of Christ! It is this gospel that has been preached by faithful men of God and believed by countless multitudes down through the centuries. It is *“the gospel”* meaning there is no other. This is the saving gospel!

But today it seems that there is a deficient gospel being preached that results in converts whose experience is less than scriptural and whose genuine salvation is to be doubted when the lives of these people are examined. Poll after poll shows that the lifestyles of “born again” men and women are no different than those of the unprofessing majority around them. What are the causes of this situation? I will list and discuss briefly four reasons that the deficient gospel produces deficient converts.

First of all there is little or no sense of the holiness of God in both preachers and hearers. To many people God is a nice old “grandfather” dozing in the sky somewhere. He is rather disinterested

in what is going on in the earth, but can be appealed to in emergency situations. Mankind, all of us unholy ourselves, cannot naturally conceive of true holiness on the part of another – even of God. The Psalmist wrote: **“...thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself...”** (Psa. 50:21). The God of modern man's understanding is most often a reflection of man himself, rather than the awe-inspiring perfect holy Being called Jehovah. God is revealed in His Word as a God who can have nothing to do with sin! **“Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity”** (Hab. 1:13).

Understood in the light of Scripture, God cannot be properly thought of as a benign old grandfather who overlooks sin. He is not like us! His holy law reveals that His holy nature demands holiness – the very thing man lacks! His holy nature demands that sin be punished – either by the individual sinner or by the vicarious substitutionary death of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, in the place of His people. But modern-day preachers seldom really preach the law of God and so men and women are ignorant of the holiness of God and the need for a sacrifice to pay for their failure to live according to God's holy demands.

Secondly, unbelief in the total depravity of mankind on the part of the preachers has resulted in the idea that lost men can please God by a self-manufactured repentance and faith. Romans 8:8 says, **“So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.”** John 6:44 says, **“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.”** First Corinthians 2:14 says: **“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”** But in spite of such clear statements as these (and others) both preachers and hearers are naturally inclined to think that it is within the power of mankind to “do something” and thus obligate God to save them. Because of this, the average “convert” is one who has “done something” and thus trusts in what he has done, having been assured that if he would do the “something” he would be guaranteed a place in heaven. (Usually the “something” is “pray the sinner's prayer,” “come forward and make a public profession,” “open your heart's door to Jesus,” etc. or some other unscriptural idea that is promoted ad nauseum.) Total depravity as taught in the Scriptures is not that mankind is as bad as he can be, but that he is as bad off as he can be – he is dead in sins and in need of regeneration – a thing which a spiritually dead man cannot accomplish or initiate. This last statement is proved by the following verses: **“And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins”**

(Eph. 2:1); **“Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again”** (John 3:7); **“Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God”** (John 1:13). In spite of these and other similar verses, the idea promoted by modern preachers is that the new birth is indeed initiated by *“the will of man.”* And so it is that people are told in so many words that his eternal destiny is in his own hands and that salvation is brought about by his will – by his making a decision for Christ. Rather than being told that he is a helpless sinner who must be saved by another, he is led to believe he can bring about his salvation by his own actions. Thus he does not seek God, but rests in his own ability.

Thirdly, there is an overriding concern for numbers on the part of preachers and churches alike. There is a wholesome, scriptural concern for numbers in that numbers represent people and the right concern is for lost people, I realize. But the present emphasis is on big evangelists making big numbers of converts which results in big churches – or rather big crowds. (I learned a long time ago that there is a difference between a church and a crowd! It was a crowd that crucified the Lord Jesus and today a similar crowd of lost professors of religion will “crucify” the preacher that dares to preach to them the whole counsel of God. Many of us have found that out to our own sorrow and the hurt of our families.) And so preachers and churches resort to worldly music, theatrics, psychological manipulations and all sorts of gimmicks to “get people interested in the gospel.” Rather, our concern ought to be for the glory and honor of the Triune God and in the preaching of the whole counsel of God. That is the only way we will do the will of God and thus be free from having the blood of men and women on our hands as is clear from Acts 20:26-27 which says: **“Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.”** We ought to settle this in our minds and hearts: only those sinners in whom God works will hear and receive the Word of God. It was only after God opened the heart of Lydia that she heeded the preaching of Paul for the Scripture says about her: **“whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul”** (Acts 16:14). We are not authorized to pare away parts of the truth of God to make it pleasing and acceptable to the majority of sinners – in fact we are forbidden to do it! Let us faithfully proclaim in every legitimate and scriptural way the eternal truths of God's Word – let us proclaim **“all the counsel of God.”**

Fourthly, the preaching of a man-centered rather than a God-centered gospel has been popularized in order

to make the gospel acceptable to lost men and women. As is seen in the first verses quoted in this article, the true gospel is not what man does, but what Christ has done! But today, the benefits of the gospel are preached in lieu of the gospel! The emphasis is on what you can get from God by making a decision for Christ rather than on who Christ is, what is owed Him, and what He accomplished as the Good Shepherd on behalf of His sheep. Remember Jesus said: **“I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep”** (John 10:11). Churches and preachers set about finding out what lost sinners want from them and then occupy themselves with trying to supply lost men and women with what they want rather than what they need as is spelled out in the Word of God. This man-centered gospel is in reality a success-oriented gospel and that purpose drives preachers and churches to adopt practices and methods suited to pleasing the lost rather than preaching the true gospel to the lost.

Why do we have churches filled with deficient converts? Why must preachers harangue and threaten their members in order to keep them in line? Why do most church members willfully absent themselves from the services of their own churches? In short, why are most “converts” still lost? It is not because the Spirit of God no longer regenerates those whom God has chosen. It is because the present-day gospel is deficient in so many ways as to produce converts that are **“twofold more”** the children of hell than are those who preach this false gospel (Matt. 23:15).



## GLEANINGS



### WHEN AMERICA CRIED FOR BIBLES

*Even the U.S. Congress cleared a Printing of Bibles, and American Statesmen helped spread them throughout the land.*

The American Revolution was in full swing. The Bible through more than 150 years of early settlement, remained the base of America's religious devotion, her education, her colonial government. These Bibles had been shipped from England. Now, suddenly the American Revolution cut off this supply, and the stock dwindled.

Here was America in its greatest crisis yet--and without Bibles! Patrick Allison, Chaplain of Congress, placed before that body in 1777 a petition

♦ (Continued on page 359)

# Gleanings

(Continued from page 358) ♦

praying for immediate relief. It was assigned a special committee which weighed the matter with great care, and reported: “. . . that the use of the bible is so universal, and Its Importance so great, that your committee refer the above to the consideration of Congress, and if Congress shall not think it expedient to order the importation of types and paper, the Committee recommends that Congress will order the Committee of Congress to then import 20,000 Bibles from Holland, Scotland, or elsewhere, into the different parts of the States of the Union.”

“Whereupon, it was resolved according to direct said Committee to Import 20,000 copies of the Bible.” During the fall of 1780 the need arose once more.

Robert Aiken, who had set up in Philadelphia as a bookseller, saw the need and set about quietly to do something about it. In early 1781, he petitioned Congress and received from them a green light to print the Bibles needed. The Book came off the press late that year, and Congress approved it. So originated the “Bible of the Revolution.” Now one of the world’s rarest books—the first American printing.

Oh to God that we would cry  
For God’s Word today—  
That it would be  
So important to us  
That we would  
Cherish it. Read it,  
And live by it daily!  
(The Voice of Faith, March, 2006).



## 12 Hindrances to Prayer



By John Wycliffe  
(1324 - 1384)

Here follow twelve hindrances to prayer, whereby men may know better why they are not always heard when they pray to God.

The first hindrance to prayer is the sin of him that prayeth. In Isaiah 59: “Your wickednesses have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden his

face from you, so that he will not hear.” And in Jeremiah 5: “Our sins have kept God from us.” And in Lamentations 3: “We have done wickedly, and have deserved vengeance; therefore thou mayest not be prayed [that is, pleased by our prayer], And off thou hast covered thyself with a cloud, that a prayer pass not through.” And David saith in the Psalter: “If I beheld wickedness in my heart [that is to say, If I loved wickedness], God shall not hear.”

The second hindrance is the doubt of him that prayeth. In James 1 it is said: “Let a man ask in faith, nothing doubting, for he that doubteth is like a wave of the sea, which is driven of the wind, and tossed about. Let not that man guess that he shall get any thing of the Lord.” And Bernard saith: “He is proved unworthy to have heavenly blessings, that asketh of God with doubting desire.”

The third hindrance is this---that a man asketh not that which ought to be asked. In Matthew 20 it is said: “Ye know not what ye ask.” Oft the Church is not heard, when it asketh that tribulations be taken away.

The fourth hindrance is being unworthy of Him to whom we pray. For God, in Jeremiah 7 and 11 saith: “Pray not thou for this people, for I shall not hear thee.” And in Jeremiah 15 God saith thus: “Though Moses and Samuel stand before me, my will is not to this people; cast them out from my face and go they out.”

The fifth hindrance is the multitude of evil thoughts. In Genesis 15, Abraham drove away the birds; that is, he that prayeth shall drive away evil thoughts.

The sixth hindrance is the despising of God’s law. In Proverbs 28 God saith: “The prayer of him that turneth away his ear, that he hear not the law of God, shall be abominable, or cursed.” And in Proverbs 1: “They shall call me to help,” saith God, “and I shall not hear them; for they hated teaching and chastising.”

The seventh hindrance is hardness of soul; and this is of two types. Some is hardness against poor men, of which it is said in Proverbs 21: “If a man stoppeth his ear at the cry of a poor man, he shall cry and he shall not be heard.” Another hardness is to them that have trespassed, when a man will not forgive them. In Mark 11 Christ saith: “When ye stand to pray, forgive ye, if ye have any thing against any man; that also your Father which is in heaven, forgive to you your sins. That if ye forgive not men, neither shall your Father forgive you your sins.”

The eighth hindrance is increase of sin. In James 4 he saith: “Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.” He draweth nigh to God, that ceaseth from evil work. Concerning this hindrance, and that which goeth before, Isidore speaks, and saith thus: “In two manners a prayer is hindered, that a man may not get the things that are asked; one

is, if a man do yet evils, that is, wilfully continueth in sin; and the other is, if he forgive not sin to man that trespasseth against him.”

The ninth hindrance is suggestions of the Devil; that keep many men from prayer.

The tenth hindrance is littleness of desire. Augustine saith: God keepeth that thing from thee, which he will not give soon to thee, that thou learn to desire great things.”

The eleventh hindrance is the impatience of him that asketh. In I Samuel 28 Saul asked counsel of the Lord, and he answered not Saul. And Saul said: “Seek ye for me a woman that hath an evil spirit.”

The twelfth hindrance is the lack of perseverance in prayer. In Luke 11 Christ saith: “If a man continueth knocking at the gate, the friend [that is God] shall rise and give him as many loaves as he needeth.”

Now hast thou here twelve hindrances to prayer, well grounded in Holy Scripture. It is good, before thou prayest, to search thy conscience, so that thy prayer is not hindered by any of these, and so by grace to have the answer to thy prayer, and eventually to come to bliss without end.



### Now Available on DVD!

### Trail of Blood

(video lectures)

by Milburn Cockrell

\$15.00

These are the original six lectures on the history of the Baptists, that were previously on three video cassettes. They have been transferred to DVD. The video quality is not the best, nor is the sound perfect but we had to use an older copy of the VHS tapes to make them from.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Heritage Landmark Baptist Church and Pastor Benjamin Stepp will be hosting their Spring Memorial Weekend Bible Conference May 26-28.

Scheduled speakers are Elders Chris Burke, Chester Powell, Bill Mitchell, Roy Mitchell, Steve Lecrone, Paul Stepp, Mark Minney, Matthew Stepp, Bob Patton, Medford Caudill, and R. C. Dobbins.

Service begin Friday at 6:30 p.m. Saturday at 9:30 a.m. and Sunday at 10:00 a.m.

Contact Pastor Stepp at 304-372-7053 or email at [bmstepp@citynet.net](mailto:bmstepp@citynet.net)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### BEREA BAPTIST BANNER

#### Financial Report

4-1-2006 to 4-30-2006

Beginning Balance.....\$8,189.22

#### RECEIPTS:

Amazing Grace B. C., Stockdale, TX.....	5.00
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS.....	404.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL.....	60.00
Berea M. B. C., Mansfield, OH.....	50.00
Berea M. B. C., Westpoint, TN.....	150.00
Bethel M. B. C., Pasadena, TX.....	100.00
Bible Believers B. C., Naples, ID.....	50.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne WV.....	300.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY.....	150.00
Cedar Grove B. C., Millport, AL.....	50.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL.....	25.00
Faith B. C., Seffner, FL.....	25.00
Faith M. B. C., Lynn, AR.....	25.00
Gail Knowles, Scarborough, ME.....	20.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY.....	100.00
Grace B. C., Winston-Salem, NC.....	50.00
Grace M. B. C., Marion, IL.....	25.00
Grace M. B. C., Tulsa, OK.....	35.00
Hillcrest B. C., Winston-Salem, NC.....	50.00
Joe Jurzec, Richmond, IL.....	50.00
Leroy Bullard, Albuquerque, NM.....	100.00
Leston Farrell, Des Allemands, LA.....	100.00
Lord's B. C., Goose Creek, SC.....	200.00
Morris St. B. C., Hobbs, NM.....	500.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH.....	100.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN.....	50.00
Ocoonita M. B. C., Keokee, VA.....	40.00
Philadelphia B. C., Birmingham, AL.....	200.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL.....	100.00
South Park B. C., Seattle, WA.....	25.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Columbus, MS.....	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL.....	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Wake Forest, NC.....	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Warren, OH.....	75.00
Timothy Willett, Pflugerville, TX.....	50.00
Vicki Mills, Lancaster, KY.....	26.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA.....	25.00
Subscriptions.....	233.00
Anon.....	200.00
Sub Total.....	\$3,998.00
TOTAL.....	\$12,187.22

#### EXPENDITURES:

Printing (2 months).....	1,269.38
Postage.....	1,038.99
Wages.....	2,204.00
FICA.....	152.95
Total Expenditures.....	4,665.32
ENDING BALANCE.....	\$7,521.90

### BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST

#### Financial Report

4-1-2006 to 4-30-2006

Beginning Balance.....\$6,570.00

#### RECEIPTS:

Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY.....	150.00
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS.....	225.00
Berea M. B. C., West Point, TN.....	50.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY.....	100.00
Dividing check.....	150.00
.....	675.00
TOTAL.....	7,245.00

#### EXPENDITURES:

Radio Time.....	360.00
Tape production.....	350.00
Dividing checks.....	150.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES.....	860.00
.....	\$6,385.00
Interest.....	+1.35
.....	\$6,386.35
Less Corbin, KY des.....	-1,131.52
ENDING BALANCE.....	\$5,254.83

### CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT

Beginning Balance.....\$1,291.52

#### RECEIPTS:

TOTAL.....	1,291.52
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#### EXPENDITURES:

WCTT.....	160.00
ENDING BALANCE.....	\$1,131.52





## WORLD SCENE

By G. Russell Evans - Norfolk, Virginia

### Militant Islam Is Still Enemy No. One



Previous columns of mine have been sounding the alarm about the ongoing threats of militant Islam against America--with documentation, including the Muslim holy book, the Koran. But, not all these columns saw the light of day.

Some editors, I suspect, just don't like titles like "Sweet Talk about 'Good Muslims' is Bad" or "Watch out for the Muslims in America." Why? Maybe they don't want to offend Muslim constituents. Or, maybe they don't believe the threat is all that bad. Or, maybe in this case, they prefer profit to national security.

Even so, the threat is still out there, as our strategic enemy number one--and will remain--as any serious observer will agree.

#### 'BUSYBODY'

Playing the part of "busybody," I tried to alert the Hampton Roads captain of the port about shocking background I had researched on militant Muslims, but was quickly reminded that the Christian Crusades were just as bad or worse, and besides, he said he had many other groups to defend against.

Undaunted, but still the "busybody," I approached the editor of the USCG Academy Alumni Bulletin, thinking this background would be helpful. She seemed appalled at my presumption, saying, in effect, "Lots of Coast Guard people are Muslims, you know."

All true! All true! But really: What does the Crusades' bloodletting of a thousand years ago have to do with defending our country from murderous terrorists today? And, what does defending against "other groups" have to do with protecting our ports from militant Muslims today? And truly, the fact that some Coast Guard, Navy and Army people are Muslims is beside the point, absolutely.

#### REPAIR TO ROCKING CHAIR?

So, instead of busying myself with the Islam faith of the Muslims, spending hours in the library and then, writing bad things about "good Muslims," why don't I just repair to my rocking chair and let the world go by--at this late date in my career?

After all, silence could generate more friends, lower blood pressure and certainly produce fewer critics--except that one truism is so haunting: "Silence is the temptation of the informed man who finds himself in the minority."

Our country and our people are far too precious to be silent about--in war or peace. Moreover, our security and our conscience are bound up with the rest of the world today and every citizen of every country is either with us or against us in fighting the War on Terror.

President Bush continues to emphasize that point. When his diplomacy is rejected by our "allies," he moves ahead in the best interests of America, just as he does in military operations against terrorists.

#### DANIEL PIPES SAYS

Veteran Middle East expert Daniel Pipes, now professor at the U.S. Naval War College, warned about the militant Muslims long before Sept. 11<sup>th</sup> and warns that the threat continues:

"If we don't make security our priority, I predict more hits by militant Islam, on a much larger scale than 9/11. I wish we would get serious without the spur of more catastrophes."

Understanding the Islam faith and its goal is essential for defense against its boast to "conquer America." Mr. Pipes says, "Militant Islam is a rabid utopian ideology along the lines of fascism and Marxism-Leninism--(seeking) totalitarian means to overthrow governments and to dominate the world, much like fascism and communism."

Forexample, Yale University Muslim chaplain Zaid Shaker boldly calls the American system "against the orders of Allah." This is a political threat, not taken seriously by our government.

#### AYATOLLAH KHEMEINI AGAIN

Pipes reminds us that Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini was calling for "Death to America" in 1979--and since then, some 600 Americans have been murdered by militant Muslims. And still, the U.S. government fails to "proclaim militant Islam our strategic enemy," but goes along with blandishments about "good Muslims" and "true Islam" being a religion of peace. We should look at the record.

In the Koran, Allah tells Mohammad, "Fight those who do not believe in Allah. . . those who do not accept the

religion of Islam" (Surah 9:29).

Prof. Pipes makes the point that "profiling" should be a priority for airline security--focusing on names, behavior and passenger appearances, instead of the current practice of random searches that often insult 80-year old grandmothers. Qualified screeners should be hired, their judgments about suspicious characters accepted and a little personal inconvenience cheerfully endured for security's sake.

#### CRUSADES NOT FORGOTTEN

The holy war between Christianity and Islam, the Crusades, has not been forgotten by the fundamental Muslims of the Middle East. In many respects, militant Muslims are still fighting that war, while Westerners only faintly remember it.

The "moderate Muslims," living in the West, according to reports, want a "moderate Islam" without the violence and bloodshed that still seems like a "pay-back" for the humiliation of the Crusades.

The fundamental Islamic faith under the Koran, however, includes violence and bloodshed. Moreover, the prophet Mohammad was more successful in Medina with violence and the sword than he was in Mecca with peace and persuasion in winning converts to Islam. Even today, in countries with a Muslim majority, the government persecutes Christians--often with the blessings of the Islamic clergy. These are facts.

Let us also note that our "allies" in the War on Terror, including Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Egypt and Pakistan, routinely persecute Christians on nothing more than their profession of faith. This state-sanctioned inhumanity is legal under the constitutions and laws of these Muslim nations. These also are facts and our media haven't told us much about that, as they go after more sensational stories and second-guessing the President.

Meanwhile, militant Muslims continue to be a deadly threat to America's security and sovereignty. Our Commander-in-Chief is dedicated and deserves loyal backing from all sides, including "allies," media and, as always, the troops. He proclaimed Iran and Syria as the "axis

of evil." He should proclaim militant Muslims as America's strategic enemy number one in order to clarify, simplify and emphasize.

(Captain Evans's columns are distributed by the Americanism Educational league of Buena Park, California.)



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Northport, AL will be having special services June 2-4. Elders Tom Ross and Troy McGahan are the scheduled speakers. Service times are Friday 7:00 p.m., Saturday beginning at 10:00 a.m. with lunch being served by the church. Service begins again at 2:00 p.m. Sunday services are at regular time 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

For more information contact Pastor Todd Bryant at (205) 242-8466 or email [toddbryant@charter.net](mailto:toddbryant@charter.net).

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The Philadelphia Baptist Church of Decatur, AL and Pastor Doyal Thomas will host the Quarterly Fellowship June 24th. Service will begin at 10:00 a.m. Scheduled speakers are Elders Todd Bryant, Jeff Short, and Matthew Stepp. Lunch will be provided by the church.

Also in conjunction with the meeting Elder Matthew Stepp will be speaking on Friday June 23rd at 7:00 p.m. and on Sunday the 25th at 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

For more information contact Pastor Thomas at 256-773-1474 or email: [coraltom@charter.net](mailto:coraltom@charter.net)

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The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church formerly of Raleigh, NC has relocated to Wake Forest, NC. Due to their pastor's recent retirement, they are in need of a pastor. Any qualified elder who is interested may contact Bro. Titus Dickerson at 919-570-6178 or contact the church by email at [sovereigngracebaptist@earthlink.net](mailto:sovereigngracebaptist@earthlink.net) or send a resume and statement of beliefs to 601 Woodland Church Rd, Wake Forest, NC 27587.

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Due to poor health reasons Elder Clyde Hancock has retired as pastor of the Big Creek Baptist Church of Wayne, WV.

Elder Hancock is now available to preach as the Lord leads and wills. He will be glad to supply at any time and place, distance is not a problem. He can be contacted at 304-522-1370 or at PO Box 1102, Lavalette, WV 25535-1102.

Please pray for the Big Creek Baptist Church as they seek a new pastor.

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