

The Berea Baptist Banner

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

Protestant Persecution of Baptists in Early America

A Historical Account of the Brutal Punishment Inflicted Upon Obadiah Holmes, John Clark, and John Crandall

By Joseph Banvard
(1810 - 1887)

Part I: THREE STRANGERS

One Saturday, in the month of July 1651, three strangers, who had journeyed far, and were weary, hungry, and thirsty, arrived at Boston.

"Well pleased am I," said one, whose name was John Clarke, "that Christian people dwell here, although in some points they differ from us."

"Yes," replied one of his companions, who wore a brown coat with long and broad skirts, and great pockets opening on the outside, "yes, this is one of the cities of Zion, and yonder I see their sanctuary," at the same time pointing to the meeting house.

"No doubt, then, Brother Holmes,



the people will remember the words of the Saviour about a cup of cold water given to a disciple, for I feel as if a draught at this time would be exceedingly refreshing."

"I sympathize with you in that feeling, Brother Crandall," said the first speaker, "and I never saw the force of that passage of Solomon as I do now---'As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.' It seems to me I never longed for a good drink as I do at this moment."

"With me," said Obadiah Holmes, "it is not so much thirst as hunger."

"Well, well, cheer up, brethren, for



these Christian friends are doubtless given to hospitality, and will readily relieve our wants; and if not, we can go to the tavern, and pay for meals and a lodging, though we abound not in filthy lucre."

They now reached a house standing by itself on the outskirts of the town. As they approached it, they noticed that a woman closed the door, as if to signify that their approach was unwelcome.

"Perhaps," said John Crandall,

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Feeding On the Word

By Arthur W. Pink
(1886 - 1952)

"Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart" (Jer. 15:16).

Four things are here told us about the Word. First the Holy Scriptures are not of human origination, but of Divine inspiration (inbreathing): **"Thy words."** Therefore do they merit our reverent, loving, daily attention? Second, the Holy Scriptures call for diligent and prayerful study. **"Search the Scriptures"** was the command of Christ (John 5:39; Acts 17:11). This is what the word **"found"** in our text implies. The Word is to be searched daily for the needed and suited message from God to our souls. For the most part, God's truth is not classified and tabulated. Its full teaching on a given subject is never found in a single chapter. The promises of God are not all grouped together, but distributed through the sixty-six books. One reason for this is that the reader is made to search, and search



diligently. This is what Jeremiah had done. Third, God's words are to be "fed upon": **"I did eat them."** How very few there are who know what this means; fewer still act thus. Fourth, it is this which turns a duty into a delight: **"and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart."** The Bible was no longer difficult and dry. It is the third of these points we propose to develop.

"Thy words were found and I did eat them." One of the surest tests as to the condition of a person's health is his appetite; true spiritually, as well as physically. Where the appetite fails, weakness and sickness inevitably follow. Strength goes down the throat. As the body is nourished by that which is extraneous to itself, so it is with the soul. Food must come from without. The "only" food for the soul is the Word

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Pre-Millennialism Defined

By Clarence Larkin
(1850 - 1924)

An Address Delivered at the Prophetic Conference in the Centennial Baptist Church, Brooklyn, N.Y. November 1890.

The common belief today, which is the belief of Post-Millennialists, is that the Gospel is to be preached to all nations, until the whole world shall be converted to Christ, and then shall follow a universal reign of righteousness and peace, called the Millennium, followed by a short season of awful wickedness and apostasy, to close which Christ shall come, and there shall be a simultaneous resurrection of the righteous and the wicked to be instantly followed by a general judgment; that the world is then to be destroyed by fire, that Christ shall then surrender up all to God, and that God shall then be all in all.

Pre-Millennialists, on the other hand, believe that the world, instead of growing better, will grow worse and worse, until

Christ Shall Come

and raise the righteous dead and translate



the living saints, and having gathered them before his judgment seat in the air, reward them according to their works. The Jews are then to be gathered back to their land,

along with the lost ten tribes, all in an unconverted state. Antichrist then sets up his kingdom, enters into a league with restored Israel, and, when he gets them in his power, acts the traitor and subjects them to such an awful persecution that it is called in Matthew's Gospel and the Apocalypse, "The Great Tribulation." After a short period this persecution is ended by the revelation of Jesus Christ with His saints, and the "Man of Sin" is destroyed by the brightness of His coming. The beast and the false prophet are cast into the lake of fire, and Satan is bound and cast into the bottomless pit. The living nations on the earth are then

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"People will not believe it, and yet it is true as the Gospel, that giving leads to thriving." - John Bunyan
"There was a man, and some did count him mad, The more he gave away, the more he had."
"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (II Cor. 9:7).

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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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Pre-Millennialism

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summoned to judgment. The "Goat" nations are destroyed, and the "Sheep" nations, along with Christ's brethren, the Jews, become the nations over which Christ establishes

His Earthly Dominion.

The government is a "Theocracy," with Christ as King and His saints as coadjutors. Then follows a thousand years of Millennial glory, after which, Satan is loosed from the pit, deceives the outlying nations, Gog and Magog, gathers them to battle, and they are destroyed by fire from Heaven. Satan is then cast into the lake of fire; the earth is renovated by fire, God's people being preserved in some way during the operation, and then caused to inhabit the new earth. Then the wicked dead are raised, the fallen angels are summoned from Tartarus, the books are opened and the Judgment of "The Great White Throne" is set; ending with all those whose names are not written in the Book of Life being cast into the lake of fire. Then follow the eternal ages. From the foregoing it will be seen that Pre-Millennialists do not consider

The Resurrection and Judgment Days

as days of twenty-four hours, but as periods, extending over at least a thousand years. They recognize at least two resurrections, those of the righteous and the wicked, a thousand years apart; and they expect four Judgments: first, of the righteous in Christ, for their sins; second, of the righteous for their works when Christ comes and removes His Church; third, a judgment of nations; and fourth, the judgment of the wicked dead, known as the "final judgment."

The Pre-Millennial view of the second advent is no new doctrine. It dates back to the days of the prophets, and is largely the subject of their prophecies. Particularly is this so of the prophets, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Zechariah and Malachi, who prophesied during the period from 700 to 400 B.C. It was clearly taught by Christ, and firmly held by the Apostles and the early Church. It is a common, yet wholly erroneous impression, that the Pre-Millennial faith is based mainly, if not solely, on a disputed passage of the Apocalypse (Rev. 20:4-6). The fact is that the main question at issue (whether Christ's return will precede or follow the Millennium) antedates the Apocalypse, and would have been a question of no less interest and importance through this dispensation if the Apocalypse had never been written. The Old Testament prophets, in plain language, and in glowing terms, foretold an era or age of universal righteousness and peace on this earth, under the reign of Messiah the Prince. (See Joel 3:18; Amos 9:13; Micah 4:3, 4; Jer. 31:34; Hab. 2:14; Daniel 7:13-27.)

That the disciples were not mistaken in their idea of such an earthly kingdom, ruled over by the promised Messiah, is evident from the fact that Jesus never reproved them for holding such a view. And, after His resurrection, and previous to His ascension when they asked Him if He would at that time restore the kingdom to Israel (Acts 1:6), He did not say, "You are mistaken in your idea of a temporal kingdom; the kingdom I came to set up as predicted by the prophets is a spiritual kingdom." But He said, "**It is not for you to know the times and seasons.**" After Christ's ascension the disciples fully apprehended the matter of "**the kingdom,**" their sermons and epistles were full of exhortations to wait for His return. They lived and acted in the firm conviction that He might return at any time, and establish His kingdom and until that kingdom was set up on the earth, they did not look for a fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies, that promised a reign of earthly righteousness and peace. The Apostolic Church was Pre-Millennial in its teaching and belief.

The Origin of Post-Millennialism

For over two hundred years no other idea than that of the Pre-Millennial return of Christ was entertained by the primitive Church. The writings of the Church Fathers abound in evidence of the fact. But about 250 A.D., Origen, one of the fathers, conceived the idea that the words of Scripture were but the husk in which were hidden the kernel of Scripture truth. At once he began to allegorize and spiritualize Scripture, and thus founded that school of interpreters from which the Church and the Bible have suffered so much. As time went on, the prophetic portions of the Word of God became a sealed book, and ignorance, like the gloom of night, settled down upon all Christendom, and innumerable errors prowled through the midnight blackness, threatening the utter extinction of the Gospel. But amid the gloom God was not without witnesses to the truth. The Waldenses, Paulicians and other sects, believed in the Pre-Millennial return of the Lord.

But that doctrine was not the only one that was eclipsed during the "dark ages"; the doctrine of justification by faith disappeared in the thick darkness, and star after star went out. But the gloom was not eternal. When the fullness of time was come, that "Morning Star of the Reformation," John Wycliffe arose and was followed by Luther, and Calvin and Knox and with the resurrection of the doctrine of justification by faith, the doctrine of the Pre-Millennial return of the Lord was revived. When the persecution aroused by the Reformation ceased, the time of peace and prosperity became as it always has been in the history of the Church, a time of peril. Rationalism refused to believe that the world was ripening for judgment and a new way of interpreting

the prophecies appeared. Daniel Whitby, in the early part of the eighteenth century propounded the theory which is generally held at the present time by those who are not expecting the Lord's return till after the Millennium. He taught that the Millennium was not a reign of persons raised from the dead, but of the Church flourishing gloriously for a thousand years after the conversion and restoration of the Jews to their own land; and then Christ would come the second time.

Thus, Post-Millennialism, as advocated in our day is not yet two hundred years old, while Pre-Millennialism dates back to the days of Isaiah and Daniel.

(*The Christian Herald and Signs of Our Times*, Dec. 3, 1890, pp. 774-775).



Feeding On the

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of God. "**As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby**" (1 Peter 2:2). In the Word there is food of all kinds: milk for babes, meat for the fully grown, medicine for the sick, reviving cordials for the faint.

It is only by feeding on the Word of God that the new nature can be nourished. There is no nutriment in man's thoughts or words. Therefore, we need not wonder that so many Christians are weak and sickly, fruitless and useless. It could not be otherwise. Instead of feeding on God's Word for themselves, too many are attempting to thrive on the results of "another's" study of it. It cannot be done. I may attend lectures on dietics and learn all about the chemistry of food, but if this becomes a substitute for three or four good meals a day, I should have no vitality for life's duties. Others feed on devotional books and the biographies of eminent saints; but if these crowd out the devotional reading and feeding on the Word itself, it is like attempting to exist on cakes and candies in the natural world. Still others attempt to feed on their own inward experiences; no wonder they are so lean and anemic.

Now the Bread which God has provided for His people contains in it all that is needed by us. But, as another has remarked, "The Word of God is too often treated like wheat now is. In the grinding of wheat, man has so constructed his mill, that he eliminates from it, automatically; nearly all God has put in it. And what is left is mostly starch, and this is so out of proportion to other substance, that the diastase---that part of the saliva which alone can digest it---is overtaxed, and the bread ferments in the stomach, instead of being digested; hence, rather than doing us good, it does us harm. Meanwhile, our system is so poorly nourished, our

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general health is affected, we feel 'out of sorts' and then we resort to widely advertised medicines or special foods. Man is beginning to discover his mistake. But how does he attempt to remedy it? Instead of going back to what God has provided in the corn of wheat, which contains everything needful, and in right proportions, he concocts various kinds of breads, giving them wonderful names--- which cost more, but do not provide the desired results.

Today it is almost impossible to procure really wholesome bread. And all this has its counterpart in the spiritual realm. The spiritual Bread which God has provided for the nourishment of our souls, namely, His Word, is passed through the denominational mills, and what is not believed by this sect or that ism is either eliminated or avoided. Each has their own "line of things." Hyper-Calvinists reject the important truth of human responsibility. Arminians refuse to bow to the absolute sovereignty of God. Some are all for objective truth, others will tolerate nothing but the subjective side. Some harp all the time on the experimental string; others crave only doctrine. And so we might continue indefinitely. The "whole" wheat is needed by us if we are to be healthy and robust.

Though the whole Word of God is needed by us, we cannot feed upon it as a whole. Jeremiah did not say, "Thy Word was found and I did eat it," but **"Thy words were found and I did eat them."** The loaf must be sliced, and each slice divided into separate mouthfuls, and each mouthful chewed, before it is swallowed. Thus it is spiritually. More benefit is derived by the soul in eating a single verse of Scripture than in reading through a whole chapter or book of the Word. This is a very commonplace remark to make, yet is it much needed today, for very few Christians have formed the habit of daily feeding on the Bread of life. There may be much studying of the Bible, labourious efforts to "rightly divide" it, frequent consultation of men's commentaries upon it, and yet, after all, the heart remain famished.

"Thy words were found and I did eat them." What is meant by this? Eating is an act of "appropriation." It is a placing in the mouth of that which is set before me. It is the taking up of a proportion of food and making it mine own. This is a personal act, which cannot be performed by deputy. No one else can do it for me. You cannot feed by watching other people eat. You cannot be a Bible student by copying of others' studies. And you cannot be nourished in the inner man unless you personally appropriate portions of the Word to your own needs.

First of all, when you open and read

the Scriptures, recognize that in them "God" is speaking to your heart. It is His message direct to "you." It is the Word of the living God to your own needy soul. Until this is realized most of the Bible will appear little more than records of things that happened thousands of years ago. But God has written those histories for "your" benefit, they have a message and meaning for you today. The characters portrayed in Holy Writ were men and women of like passions with yourself, subject to the same temptations, called on to fight the same good fight of faith. Where they triumphed, they are your examples and encouragements; where they failed, they are your warnings and admonitions. Through them God will instruct you, if your heart is open, if you are ready to "appropriate" their lessons.

Having recognized that the chapter or verse you are reading is God's present message "to" you, ask now, what is there here "for" me? Bow your head and supplicate His grace that you may **"receive with meekness"** (James 1:21) His holy Word. The heart must be emptied of pride before there is room for His truth to become an **"engrafted Word."** The **"good ground"** hearer is he that receives it into **"an honest and good heart"** (Luke 8:15). An **"honest"** heart is one that is willing to be judged by the Word, searched by it, admonished, corrected. The verse before you, may not be relished by the flesh, and Satan would bid you turn from it to some pleasanter portion, but the Lamb was only to be fed on in conjunction with **"bitter herbs"** (Ex. 12).

Settle it then once and for all that everything in the Word is "for you." There is not a verse in the Bible which does not apply to you, either directly or indirectly, typically or liberally. Then "appropriate" it day by day, meal by meal, mouthful by mouthful: **"For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little"** (Isa. 28:10). The manna, a **"small round thing"** (Ex. 16), had to be gathered grain by grain. God did not provide Israel in the wilderness with ready baked loaves, but with manna which required collecting, grinding, and cooking.

Again, "eating" is an act of mastication. The teeth have to be used. Food taken into the mouth has to be broken up into small pieces before it is ready for swallowing. The more chewing we do, the more our food is mixed with the saliva, the more nourishment do we derive from it. So it is spiritually. **"Thy words were found and I did eat them."** God's Word is made up of words. To miss a word from, to add one to, to change one in a verse, mars or perverts its meaning. What a difference there is between "Hear what the Spirit said unto the churches," and **"saith unto the churches"** (Rev. 2:7); between, "he that follows Me," and **"he that followeth**

me shall not walk in darkness" (John 8:12); between, "they who win souls are wise," and **"He that winneth souls is wise"** (Prov. 11:30)! Scores of other examples might be given; let these suffice for showing the importance of noting carefully and weighing prayerfully every word and letter of Holy Writ. But this can only be done by mastication.

"Meditation" stands to reading as mastication does to eating. In Luke 2:19 we read **"Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart."** It is not sufficient to hear or read the words of God, they need pondering. Let each word in the verse before you be weighed separately. Ask God to write them upon your heart. Come back to the same verse again and again during the day; pray over it till its meaning is opened up to you. No matter how familiar the verse may be, or how simple the language, do not make the mistake of supposing you already understand all there is to it; spiritual food must be turned over and over again in the mouth before its full flavor and sweetness is discovered. It must be **"mixed with faith"** (Heb. 4:2) – the spiritual saliva before it is ready for digestion.

David meditated in God's law **"day and night"** (Psa. 1:2). "In the plainest text there is a world of holiness and spirituality; and if we in prayer and dependency on God did sit down and study it, we should behold much more than appears to us. It may be, at one reading or looking, we see little or nothing; as Elijah's servant went once, and saw nothing, therefore was he commanded to look seven times. What now? Says the Prophet, 'I see a cloud rising, like a man's hand; and bye and bye, the whole surface of the heavens was covered with clouds. So you may look lightly upon the Scripture, and see nothing; 'meditate often' upon it, and then you shall see a light, like the light of the sun.'" The great value of meditation and rumination (chewing the cud) is shown in Psalm 119:99.

Finally, eating is preparatory to "assimilation." The food which I have appropriated and masticated now becomes a part of me. It imparts richness to my blood, strength to my nerves, flesh to my bones. It is thus my body is sustained and maintained. So it is with the new man: **"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe TO DO according to all that is written therein: for THEN thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and THEN thou shalt have good success"** (Joshua 1:8) (Emph. AWP). God's words are given us to live by, to mould our whole deportment, to regulate all our ways. Then, may we be **"doers of the word, and not hearers only"** (James 1:22).

(Studies in the Scriptures, August 1929).



Persecution

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"she thinks we are thieves, and that she would not be safe in our company."

"A word of explanation will remove her error."

They soon reached the house and knocked at the door; but no one opened it. They knocked again, louder than at first.

"Ye had better go along," said the shrill, cracked voice of an old woman on the inside.

"We are wayfaring strangers," said Mr. Clarke, "faint and hungry who wish merely to rest for a few moments, and obtain some refreshments."

"Ye must go then to the magistrates," replied the shrill feminine voice, "for I have no license."

"License! License! What does she mean by that?"

"We are not acquainted with your magistrates," said Clarke, speaking through the door.

"And we hope we may never be officially," added Crandall, in an undertone, which could be heard only by this companions, who smiled at the remark. "And we know not what you mean by a license," continued Clarke.

The shrill cracked voice now came from the window. It proved to be that of the short, crooked-back, loquacious Mrs. Strangger. Putting her head out of the window, she said:

"Why, la, didn't you know that the General Court had passed a law that nobody should entertain strangers without a partickler license from two magistrates? Gracious, I thought everybody knew that, for it has made talk enough. Why, no longer that yesterday, one of our godly elders refused to receive a trader, although he had every reason to believe him a good man--jist because he had no license, and said the laws must be obeyed."

"Well, can thee not furnish us a little bread and water?"

"If ye can make it appear that that is not entertaining strangers I can," replied the prudent little lady."

"Do ye not remember what is said about entertaining strangers unawares?"

"I would do it with pleasure, if I only had a license. Our magistrates are so afraid of entertaining Anabaptists, Familists, and other heretics, unawares, that they have passed this law for our protection."

The three strangers looked at each other with a singular but significant expression of countenance.

"Go ye, and get a permit from the magistrates, and I will give ye the best my poor house affords."

Mrs. Strangger would gladly have admitted them for the pleasure of having

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Persecution

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someone hear her talk, and for the opportunity which their visit would have afforded of picking up some new items which she could have converted into materials for gossip; but she knew that she was already a "suspected person," and she feared to increase these suspicions. Seeing, just at this moment, one of the colonists in the distance, coming along the road towards them, she said to the strangers, in a hurried manner, and in tones indicative of fear:

"If ye would not get a poor, lone woman into trouble, ye had better go 'long, Here are witnesses at hand, and it might go hard with me if I let ye in my house."

They felt the force of this appeal, and moved on.

"Strange place this," said Crandall, "where a stranger can not have given him a crust of bread, nor a cup of water without the permission of two magistrates."

"If the magistrate happen to be absent when strangers arrive, I suppose they must fast and sleep out doors until the magistrates return, and, in their great kindness, license someone to perform the first acts of hospitality."

"In our case," said Clarke, "it is probably that no license would be given. If that timid old woman assigned the true reason of this law, it was designed as an embargo upon such as we. No one could get a license to entertain us without telling who and what we were; and to reveal that would be fatal to the application. The one would be forbidden to harbor us."

"Our prospects are not the most flattering; but here comes a person who may perhaps help us."

Part II: A Singular Invitation

The individual referred to at the close of the last chapter was no other than the brother at the mill, whom the old lady had seen in the distance, and who had now reached the travelers. They accosted him, told him that they were strangers, and asked him where they could receive hospitality.

"As to that, our rulers are very jealous lest hospitality should be extended to unsuitable persons, and therefore require the license of the magistrates to authorize the virtue; but if ye will go with me, I will show you where there is a house which no one will prevent you from entering and where there is food which no one will forbid your eating. If ye understand, follow me."

There was something so original, hearty, and frank in this invitation that they accepted it. They did understand, and were resolved not to compromise the stranger for his kindness. During the walk to the house, the conversation assumed such a chatter that the parties found that they were in sympathy with each other in their religious views. The walk was not long. When they reached the threshold, the brother said:

"This is my house. I will neither invite ye in nor forbid ye to enter; ye may do as ye please. But as yet ye have commenced following me, ye will probably continue."

They understood, and followed him in.

When the dinner was ready, he said, at the same time preventing, with difficulty, the smiles from playing upon his countenance:

"Here is food. I will neither ask ye to taste it nor prohibit ye from eating it. Ye may do as ye please; but hungry men, with a meal before them, are never at a loss." They understood again, and were soon at work discussing, with a relish which keen hunger alone can give, the plain, but healthful diet before them. It is scarcely necessary to intimate to the reader that the object of this caution on the part of Eaton was to throw the whole responsibility of their proceeding upon the three men themselves, so that he might avoid the liability of a conviction under this arbitrary law.

During the conversation that ensued, the trio of travelers understood that the colony was agitated upon the subject of baptism; the ministers and rulers were exceeding fearful of Baptist sentiments, and were vigilant in discovering, and severe in treating all of that sect.

Leaving this hospitable family, they continued their journey toward Lynn,

where they arrived in the latter part of the afternoon.'

At a distance of two or three miles from the main village stood a small house, partly built of logs, in which resided an old man by the name of William Witter. He was a member of the Baptist Church which had been gathered at Newport. In consequence of his age, he was unable to meet with his brethren at Newport, and therefore had requested his church to send some of its members to visit him. His request was complied with, and John Clarke, Obadiah Holmes, and Crandall were appointed to that service. Clarke and Holmes were both Baptist ministers. Clarke was the pastor of the church. Subsequently, Holmes became his successor in that office.

Whether these representatives of the Newport church attracted attention and awakened suspicion by inquiring where Witter lived, or whether this brother had given notice that he was expecting some of his church to see him, it is difficult now to tell; but certain it is, the magistrates were alarmed, and ordered the constable to be on the alert for the apprehension of any suspicious persons. The travelers found Witter's house, and received a cordial greeting. The old man was overjoyed to see them. He little thought of the protracted and painful trials which this fraternal visit would occasion. Both parties had so much to say that conversation was continued until late in the night.

Part III: The Results Of A Meeting

The next day being the Lord's Day, and the meeting house being at so great a distance. It was proposed that they should have worship where they were, and that Mr. Clarke should preach. Father Witter would thus have an opportunity of listening to his own pastor, whom he had not been privileged to hear for a long time.

Accordingly, in this rough-built, solitary private house, social religious services were observed. After the offering of praise and prayer, Mr. Clarke announced his text. Believing, from his own experience, and from the indications of the times, that a period of unusual temptation and trial was about to befall the people of God, he had selected, as an appropriate passage from which to discourse, Revelation 3:10:

"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."

During the delivery of his introduction, four or five strangers unexpectedly came in, and quietly took seats with the little domestic congregation. Having finished his introduction, Mr. Clarke said: "In opening this interesting passage of Holy Writ for your serious meditation, I shall in the first place show what is meant by the hour of temptation; secondly, what

we are to understand by the word of His patience, with the character of those who keep it, and thirdly, the soul-cheering encouragement which is furnished by the promise, that those who keep this word shall themselves be kept in the hour of temptation and trial."

He proceeded in his discourse with increasing earnestness, the little audience, in the meanwhile, giving the closest attention, Father Witter, sitting in an old, high-back arm-chair, in one corner of the room, was listening with tearful eyes and open mouth, as though he had not heard the true doctrine for many months. It was to him a great luxury to hear his own pastor, in his own house, treat so appropriate and comforting a subject as the one he had announced.

Alas! the sweetness of the occasion was soon converted into gall. These unknown, harmless strangers, observing Lord's Day worship in a remote part of the town, for the especial comfort of one of their aged brethren, had (as we have intimated) attracted the attention of the magistrate, and were destined to furnish, in their painful experience, an illustration of the truth of the text. During the progress of the discourse, two constables entered the room.

"What does this mean?" said the first. "Why hold this unlawful assembly? Is not the meeting house good enough, nor the doctrines preached there pure enough for ye, that ye must hold a gathering of your own, to the scandal and injury of the place?"

Mr. Clarke paused in his discourse. The little audience turned their eyes with surprise and grief upon the disturber.

"Ye have no business here," said the second. "Ye must disperse, or take the consequences; and they'll not be pleasant, I tell ye."

"We do not intend, friends," said Mr. Clarke, calmly, "to break any good and wholesome laws of the land."

"No parleying," replied the first. "Come, shut up your book, and go with us; we have come to apprehend you."

"Apprehend us!" replied Clarke, with astonishment; "we wish to know by whose authority. We should like to see your warrant."

"We come with authority from the magistrates; and as to our warrant, I will read it."

He then drew forth a document, and read as follows:

"By virtue hereof, you are required to go to the house of William Witter, and so to search from house to house for erroneous persons, being strangers, and them to apprehend, and in safe custody to keep, tomorrow morning by eight o'clock, to bring before me.

ROBERT BRIDGES."

During the reading of this precious paper, the hand of the constable trembled, as though he were conscious

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Tune in to the Berea Baptist Broadcast

STATION	TIME	DIAL	WATTS
WCNA, Myrtle, MS.....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.....	95.9	3,000 FM
WCTT, Corbin, KY	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.....	680	5,000 AM
WFAM, Augusta, GA	Sunday 4:00 - 4:30 p.m.....	1050	5,000 AM
WFTA, Tupelo, MS.....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.....	101.9.....	3,000 FM
WIJD, Mobile, AL.....	Sunday 8:00 - 8:30 p.m.....	1270.....	5,000 AM
KARI, Blaine, WA	Saturday 10:30 - 11:00 a.m.....	550	5,000 AM
KXKS, Albuquerque, NM ..	Saturday 2:15 - 2:45 p.m.....	1190	10,000 AM
DXUM, Davao City, Philippines	Sunday 2:30 - 3:00 p.m.....	819 Khz.....	10,000 AM
DXDS, Digos City, Philippines...	Sunday 12:00 - 12:30 p.m.....	1161 Khz	1,000 AM

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he was engaged in a bad cause. After he had finished, Mr. Clarke said:

"It is not our intention to resist the authority by which you have come to apprehend us, but yet I perceive you are not so strictly tied but if you please you may suffer us to mark an end of what we have begun; so may you be witnesses either to or against the faith and order which we hold."

"We can do no such thing."

"You may," repeated Clarke, "in spite of the warrant, or anything therein contained."

After as much uncivil disturbance and clamor as the pursuivants of the English bishops, under Archbishop Claude, indulged in when they arrested the Puritans, and broke up their conventicles in England, the two constables apprehended the two ministers, Clarke and Holmes, with their brother Crandall, and led them away. There being no jail or other place of confinement in Lynn, the three prisoners were taken "to the alehouse." It was a deeply affecting scene to old Father Witter to see his beloved pastor and brethren taken from his own house, prisoners for no other offense than worshipping God according to the constraint of their own consciences. A recollection of the fact that they had visited him (and had thus been caught in the snare) by his own invitation, added to his sorrow. As the three prisoners left the house, the pastor said to the venerable man:

"The hour of temptation and trial has come, but let us keep the word of His patience, and He will sustain us in the time of trouble."

At the tavern, whilst at dinner, one of the constables said:

"Gentlemen, if you be free, I will carry you to the meeting."

To which they replied: "Friend, had we been free thereunto, we had prevented all this. Nevertheless, we are in thy hand, and if thou wilt carry us to meeting, thither will we go."

"Then I will carry you to the meeting."

To which the prisoners replied: "If thou forcest us into your assembly, then shall we be constrained to declare ourselves that we cannot hold communion with them."

"That is nothing," said the constable. "I have not power to command you to speak when you come there, or to be silent."

Seeing the determination of the officers to take them to the meeting of those whose principles and practices they disapproved, Mr. Clarke repeated the course of conduct which they should feel themselves compelled to pursue.

"Since we have heard the word of salvation by Jesus Christ, we have been

taught, as those that first trusted in Christ, to be obedient unto Him, both by word and deed; wherefore, if we be forced to your meeting, we shall declare our dissent from you, both by word and gesture."

From this frank disclosure, the magistrates knew what to expect. They saw that if they took these strangers to meeting, it must be by compulsion. The prisoners would not go willingly to a meeting of those from whose principles of state-and-church government they so widely differed; they saw, moreover, that if they compelled them to go, a disturbance would be the consequence. The prisoners forewarned them that they should feel constrained, from a sense of duty, to express publicly their dissent, and the constables knew that this would at once kindle a conflagration. For a moment they hesitated; but after consultation with the tavern-keeper, they decided to take them.

The three men, whose own worship had been broken up, were now taken, without their own consent, to the meeting of the "standing order." The congregation was at prayer when they arrived. As they stepped over the threshold, they raised their hats and civilly saluted them. A seat was then assigned them, which they occupied. After they had taken their seat, they put up their hats. Mr. Clarke opened his book, and commenced reading to himself. Mr. Bridges, who had made out the warrant for their apprehension, seeing them sitting with their heads covered, became excited, and ordered the constable to remove their hats from their heads, who at once obeyed, but not in the most amiable manner.

After the prayers, singing, and preaching were over, to which the prisoners listened without offering the least interruption, Mr. Clarke rose, and, in a respectful manner, said:

"I desire, as a stranger, to propose a few things to this congregation, hoping, in the proposal thereof, I shall commend myself to your consciences, to be guided by that wisdom that is from above, which, being pure, is also peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated." He paused, expecting, as he subsequently said, that if the Prince of Peace had been among them, He would have received from them a peaceable answer. But the pastor probably fearing that some difficult questions might be asked, and a troublesome theological controversy ensue, replied:

"We will have no objections against the sermon."

"I am not about to present objections to the sermon," answered Mr. Clarke, "but as, by my gesture at my coming into your assembly, I declared my dissent from you, so, lest that should prove offensive unto some whom I would not offend, I would now, by word of mouth, declare the grounds, which are these: First--from the consideration we are

strangers, each to other, and so strangers to each other's inward standing with respect to God, and so can not conjoin, and act in faith, and what is not of faith is sin; and in the second place, I could not judge that you are gathered together and walk according to the visible order of our Lord--"

"Have done!" cried Mr. Bridges, with the authority of a magistrate. "You have spoken that for which you must answer. I command silence."

After the meeting, the trio of prisoners were taken back to the tavern, where they were as vigilantly watched during the night as though they had been guilty of robbery.

The next morning they were taken by the constables before Mr. Bridges, who made out their mittimus, and sent them to the prison at Boston, there to remain until the next county court.

This mittimus charged them with "being at a private meeting in Lynn on the Lord's day, exercising among themselves--offensively disturbing the peace of the congregation at the time of their coming into the public meeting in the time of prayer in the afternoon, with saying and manifesting that the church in Lynn was not constituted according to the order of our Lord, with "suspicion" of having their hands in rebaptizing one or more among them, and with refusing to put in sufficient security to appear at the county court."

In addition to these charges, it was alleged against Mr. Clarke, that he met again the next day after his contempt, as they called it, of their public worship, at the house of Witter, and in contempt of authority, being then in the custody of the law, did there administer the sacrament of the Lord's Supper to one excommunicated person, to another under admonition, and to a third that was an inhabitant of Lynn, and not in fellowship with any church; and yet, upon answer in open court, did affirm that he never rebaptized any.

They were all three found guilty. Mr. Clarke, the pastor, was fined twenty pounds, equivalent to about eighty dollars, or to be well whipped. He desired to know by what law of God or man he was condemned. The governor, who did not deem it beneath his dignity to be present on this important occasion, stepped up, and, with much earnestness, said to Mr. Clarke: "You have denied infant baptism. 'You deserve death.' I will not have such trash brought into my jurisdiction. You go up and down, and secretly insinuate unto those that are weak; but you cannot maintain it before our ministers. You may try and dispute with them." To this violent harangue of the chief magistrate of the colony, Mr. Clarke would have replied at length, but the governor commanded the jailer to take the prisoners away. They were accordingly all three remanded to prison.

Part IV: A Challenge

During his confinement that night, Mr. Clarke thought much of the insinuations which had been thrown out against him by the governor the day before, and especially of the challenge which had been given him to discuss the question of baptism. It seemed to him as if the great Head of the church had placed him in that position that there he might be a defender of the truth. He looked upon it as a most favorable opportunity to remove the various aspersions which had been unjustly cast upon the Baptists, and show that in doctrine and practice, they were true Christian men. By speaking in behalf of his brethren, it appeared to him that he might possibly be the instrument of removing the unjust disabilities to which they were subject, but especially that he might, by presenting the arguments for their peculiar belief, and their objections to infant sprinkling, be the means of opening the eyes of others, and convincing them of the truth.

Yet when he thought of his own inability to do full justice to the subject, and of the disadvantages under which he would labor in having the ministry of the standing order and the government arrayed against him, his heart sank within him. "But will not the Saviour be with me? Have I not faith to believe that, according to His own promise, it will be given me in that same hour what I ought to speak?"

The taunting permit of the governor, "You may try and dispute with the ministers," was constantly ringing in his ears. He offered earnest prayer for direction and assistance, and finally resolved that, by the grace of God, he would accept the governor's challenge. He did not, as a Christian minister, dare to refuse.

Accordingly, the next morning, he addressed a document to the court which had condemned him, accepting the governor's proffer of a public discussion of the points at issue between the Congregationalists and the Baptists, and asking the appointment of a time and place for the occasion.

This threw the court into a peculiar position. A prisoner, who had been condemned and sentenced mainly for his religious views and practices, but to whom the governor had thrown down the gauntlet for a discussion, had accepted the challenge. For the court to refuse its sanction would be a tacit rebuke of the governor, and a silent admission of the weakness, or their fear of weakness, of their cause.

After much ado, therefore, Mr. Clarke was informed by one of the magistrates that the disputation was granted, and the time fixed for it was the next week. When this became known to the ministers of the colony, it created great excitement. They had no wish to enter upon the discussion;

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they desired to have it abandoned. They therefore saw the government, and earnestly besought them to avoid it; but it seemed too late. They had gone too far to make an honorable retreat.

But finding the ministers so averse to a disputation, the magistrates had Mr. Clarke brought into their chamber, and there endeavored to change the issues between him and them. They inquired whether he would dispute upon the things contained in his sentence, and maintain his practice; "for," said they, "the court sentenced you not for your judgment and conscience, but for matter of fact and practice." But Mr. Clarke was not to be misled by any partial or erroneous statements of the matter; neither was he willing that such statements should go un rebutted. He therefore manfully replied to these magistrates:

"You say the court condemned me for matter of fact and practice; be it so, I say that the matter of fact and practice was but the manifestation of my judgment and conscience, and I maintain that that man is void of judgment and conscience who hath not a fact and practice which correspond therewith." He then continued: "If the faith and order which I profess is according to the Word of God, then the faith and order which you profess must fall to the ground; but if your views of truth and duty are Scriptural, mine must be erroneous. We cannot both be right." To these statements the magistrates apparently assented.

Although Mr. Clarke had been informed that the disputation had been granted, and the time appointed, yet it was all "informal" and unofficial. He desired to obtain an official permit, or order, for the discussion, under the secretary's hand. He would then, he felt, be protected; otherwise, the debate might be referred to as evidence of his being a disturber of the State, and a troubler of Israel. He therefore availed himself of the opportunity which was furnished by this private interview with the magistrates, to say to them that if they would be pleased to grant the motion for the public disputation "under the secretary's hand," he would draw up three or four propositions, embracing the points which he presented in his defense before court, and would defend them against any one whom they might choose to dispute with him, until, by arguments derived from the Word of God, he should be removed from them.

"In case your speaker convinces me that I am in error," said Mr. Clarke, following up the subject, so as to reach some definite practical point, "then the disputation is at an end; but if not, then I desire the like liberty, by the word of God, to oppose the faith and order

which he and you profess, thereby to try whether I am not become an instrument in the hand of God to remove you from the same."

To this the magistrates replied: "The motion certainly is fair, and your terms like unto a practiced disputant; but, as the matter in dispute is exceeding weighty, and as we desire that in the controversy all may be said that can be, we propose, therefore, to postpone it to a latter day."

Poor Clarke was therefore taken back to prison, to wait for the arrival of this "latter day."

Part V: Fundamental Propositions

During this period of delay for the accommodation of the Congregational clergy, Clarke, though kept a prisoner, was not idle. He applied himself to the proposed service of drawing up the propositions which he had pledged himself to the magistrates to defend. These propositions, or theses, were four in number.

The First

Asserted that Jesus Christ, the anointed One, was the great Head of His church; that as the anointed Priest, He alone had made atonement for sin---as the anointed Prophet, His teachings were authoritative; that as the anointed King, He had gone to His Father for His glorious kingdom, and would ere long return again; and that it is His PREROGATIVE ALONE to make laws and ordinances for the observance of the church, which NO ONE HAS ANY RIGHT TO ALTAR.

The Second

asserted that baptism, or immersion in water, is one of the commandments of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that the only proper person to receive this ordinance is the penitent believer in Christ.

The Third

maintained that it was both the privilege and duty of every such believer to improve the talents which God had given him, and in the congregation may either ask for information to himself, or may speak for the edification, exhortation, and comfort of the whole; and out of the congregation, at all times, upon all occasions, and in all places, he ought to walk as a child of life, justifying wisdom with his ways, and reproving folly with the unfruitful works thereof, provided all this be shown out of a good conversation, as James speaks, "**with meekness of wisdom.**"

The Fourth

was in the following language:

"I testify that no such believer or servant of Christ Jesus hath liberty, much less authority, from his Lord, to smite his fellow-servant, nor yet with outward force, or arm of flesh, to constrain his conscience---no, nor yet his outward man for conscience sake, or worship of his God, where injury is not offered to the person, name, or estate of others, every man being such as shall appear before the judgment seat of Christ, and must give account of

himself to God, and therefore ought to be fully persuaded in his own mind for what he undertakes, because he that doubteth is if he eat, and so also if he act, because he doth not eat or act in faith; and what is not of faith is sin."

These points Clarke resolved, in the strength of Christ, to defend with all his ability.

The next day, as the first days of the morning sun were gilding the hill tops, and drinking the early dew, one of the magistrates of Boston visited the prison. Having aroused the jailer, he asked to be admitted to an interview with Clarke. After being introduced to the cell of the imprisoned Baptist, he inquired if the conclusions which he intended to advocate were drawn up. Mr. Clarke informed him that they were. He asked for a copy of them. Mr. Clarke demurred. No official sanction had yet been given to the anticipated controversy, and he was unwilling that his conclusions or propositions should be known until that point had been gained. The magistrate urged him with much importunity to part with a copy of them; but he refused until the promise was given him that the motion for the disputation "should be granted officially," under the secretary's hand. He then complied with the urgent request of his early visitor. Whilst Mr. Clarke was expecting this permit, and was preparing for the public discussion by the diligent study of the Bible, he was greatly surprised by being informed by the jailer that the order for his release from prison had come.

Some friends had, without his consent, and contrary to his judgment, paid his fine, and secured his discharge.

As it was generally known that a public disputation was at hand, in which the points of difference between the Congregationalists and Baptists were to be discussed, as rumor said, between Mr. Clarke on one side and Mr. Cotton on the other, great expectations had been raised as to the result. Clarke, being fully convinced that if this disputation did not come off, the responsibility of the failure would be attributed to him, and inferences be drawn unfavorable to his side, as if his brethren feared the results of the discussion, and therefore paid his fine, so that he might return to Newport, and thus not be on hand for the controversy, immediately prepared an address, in which he stated that if the honored magistrates or general court of the colony would grant his former request, under the secretary's hand, for the disputation, he would cheerfully embrace it, and would come from Newport to defend the opinions he had professed. Having in this manner evinced a willingness to meet his opponents at any time they might appoint, he threw the whole responsibility of the failure, in case there should be any, upon them. By so doing, he maintained his own manliness, and gave public evidence that neither he nor his friends had any fear of exposing their principles to the closest scrutiny.

(To be continued in the next issue)



From the Pen of a Country Preacher
 Milburn R. Cockrell
 (1941 - 2002)



How Men Treat Their Sins

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Prov. 28:13).

From the physical and social standpoint men and women differ greatly in many ways, but from the scriptural standpoint they all have one thing in common. They are equally sinners before God. "**For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not**" (Eccl. 7:20). ". . . **for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God**" (Rom. 3:22-23).

Sin is a little word, but it is a terrible thing. It always implies law, the power of understanding the law, and the capability of obeying or disobeying that law. I John 3:4 says: "**For sin is the transgression of the law.**" Both Jew and Gentile are under obligation to keep the everlasting moral law of God. Any breach of this law is sin.

All men have sins and must do something with their sins. Sins are not among the things we can deal with or not. We must deal with them in some fashion. We can no more avoid them than we can avoid eating and sleeping, if we are to preserve life. Men deal with their sins foolishly or wisely. My text points out the twofold treatment.

THE FOOLISH TREATMENT

The text begins: "**He that covereth his sins. . .**" To "**cover**" sin is to conceal it, to deny it, or to excuse it. The proud sinner wants people to think he is better than he really is. He believes a confession of sins is disgraceful and a sign of weakness. He gloats in the pride of his depraved nature. This is why he takes all necessary steps to banish any conviction of sin from his

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mind, and then is prone to try to convince himself he is happy.

How do men cover their sins? First, to escape the evil consequences of sin a person may lie about it. Cain disclaimed any knowledge of the murder of his brother (Gen. 4:9). When Joseph's brethren sold him to the Ishmaelites they told their father an evil beast had eaten him (Gen. 37:31-35). David, to hide his sin of adultery, had Uriah the Hittite killed (II Sam. 11:15,26). Ananias and Sapphira lied about the sin of robbing God (Acts 5:1-8). The fear of punishment tends to induce a lie to cover sin, and then another lie is necessary to cover the first. Jeremy Taylor well said: "To hide a sin with a lie is like a crust of leprosy over an ulcer."

Second, men try to excuse their sins. They did wrong but they had no bad intentions. Nearly everybody is doing it. Why the temptation was sudden and very strong, and it seemed the right thing to do at the time. Some will say this is only a first offense and it should be ignored. Others will plead the depravity of their nature by asking, "What could you expect of such a weak and sinful creature as man?" Hyper-Calvinists even blame the decree of God and say, "We could not help doing this evil, for God decreed that we do it." The Prophet Jeremiah asked: "**Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not: And come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations?**" (Jer. 7:9-10).

Third, to preserve a good opinion of themselves before the general public some will shift the blame for sin to others. When God asked Adam about his sin he said: "**The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat**" (Gen. 3:12). Eve was asked the same question and said: "**The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat**" (Gen. 3:13). When Moses asked Aaron about the golden calf he blamed the people (Ex. 32:21-24). When Samuel inquired of Saul as to why he had disobeyed God regarding the Amalekites he blamed the people for his sin (I Sam. 15:20-21). Governor Pilate blamed the Jews with the crucifixion of Christ (Matt. 27:24-26). Many others have followed in their steps.

Fourth, often sin is blamed upon the Devil. In substance Eve told God, "The Devil made me do it." Satan is a tempter and tempts people to sin, but he cannot make them sin. So it is wrong to blame sins on the Devil. It would not be possible to make such a claim if men had not willingly sold themselves to the service

of the Prince of Darkness.

Fifth, some folks attempt to forget their sins by engaging in excesses of things. Some resort to alcohol and drugs. Some others go after excess of sex or pleasures of this world. These things are feeble and futile attempts to dull the tormenting conscience and stifle the conviction of sin. Paul wrote of some who were "**past feeling**" and had "**given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness**" (Eph. 4:19).

Sixth, there are a few that seek to cover their sins by doing good deeds as a compensation: "**Wherewith shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?**" (Micah. 6:6-7). Some can lie, steal, and cheat during the week, but on Sunday they go to church and give an offering to God. By mixing a little good with much evil they hope for some sort of balancing so as to enter the gates of pearl.

FIG-LEAF COVERINGS NO GOOD

The text plainly says that if a person covers his sin he "**shall not prosper.**" All attempts to cover sin are not only futile but injurious. Such a person cannot obtain the pardon of sin nor have any peace of mind and conscience. If he pretends to be virtuous when his life is full of sin and wickedness his whole life is a lie. He lives in a continuous falsehood. At his best state he but lives in a fool's paradise.

Sin is not destroyed by being covered from the eyes of men. Sooner or later sin will reveal itself. It will break through the fig-leaf covering made by a man. Numbers 32:23 says: "**Be sure your sin will find you out.**" God summoned Adam from his hiding place to receive his sentence (Gen. 3:9). Abel's blood cried from the ground in the ears of God (Gen. 4:10-12). Joseph's brethren suffered tormenting consciences for selling their brother (Gen. 42:21). Despite all effort, a man will never prosper in his attempt to cover his sins. Unconfessed sins will break forth in a mighty storm upon his head and heart before he knows it.

Jesus Christ said that secret sins will be declared before an assembled universe: "**For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known**" (Luke 12:2). Job 34:22 declares: "**There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.**" The darkest deed wrought in the most secret place is in the open face of an omniscient God (Job 34:21).

The covering of the disease precludes the possibility of cure. As long as a man

attempts to cover his sins he will never be free of the burden of guilt. The psalmist said: "**When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer**" (Ps. 32:3-4). To attempt to hide his is to add sin to sin: "**Woe to the rebellious children, saith the LORD, that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin**" (Isa. 30:1). Such acts only increase misery (Isa. 28:20).

THE WISE TREATMENT

King Solomon continues in my text: ". . . **but whoso confesseth. . .**" Here is the wise thing to do with sins. Confess them to God. I do not mean in some cold, formal confession, but I mean a deep, penitential, humble acknowledgment of them. Confession here does not mean to parade sin before the public view, but it means to uncover it to God. "**I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin**" (Ps. 32:5).

Confession is to be made to God against Whom all sin is committed. In confessing sin a man takes shame to himself and gives glory to God as a righteous God, owing His just displeasure with him (Josh. 7:19). The person who confesses a sin must own that he did the deed and that it was wrong. Job said: "**Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee?**" (Job 40:4). Like the prodigal son he must say: "**I have sinned against heaven. . . and am no more worthy. . .**" (Luke 15:18-19). God does not need this confession for His own information, but He demands it for our spiritual good.

There are some cases when sins are to be confessed to man, especially if he has been sinned against. The people confessed their sins to John the Baptist (Matt. 3:6) and the apostles (Acts 19:18). James 5:16 commands us: "**Confess your faults one to another.**"

Among the Israelites the high priest on the great Day of Atonement confessed the sins of the people, laying them upon the scapegoat, by which legal purification was obtained (Lev. 16). Numbers 5:6-7 says: "**Speak unto the children of Israel, When a man or woman shall commit any sin that men commit, to do a trespass against the LORD, and that person be guilty; Then they shall confess their sin which they have done. . .**" The very offering of a trespass offering (Lev. 5) was a public recognition of guilt, which was shown by the offerer laying his hand on the head of the victim (Lev. 1:4).

THE RENOUNCEMENT OF SIN

For some reason many seem to miss the next part of the verse which says: ". . . **and forsaketh them shall have mercy.**"

Modern thinking has been so influenced by Arminian evangelism that almost nothing is known of this truth. Most Christians today believe in a Savior from Hell, not a Savior from sin. To forsake sin involves real repentance, and most church people never hear anything about this topic. According to fashionable doctrine of this day, a man may make a little decision for Christ and continue in his sins, and yet remain eternally secure in Christ even if he never goes to church a day in his life. My friend, there is no security in sin!

The confession of sin required is more than a confession like Pharaoh (Ex. 9:27,34), who returned to his sins after confessing them. A truly penitent soul will forsake the sins he has confessed. Repentance is a change of mind which leads to a change of conduct. The proof of the sincerity of a man's confession can be seen in his forsaking the sins he is sorry for. To confess without forsaking sin is to be a hypocrite and to never find mercy. The penitent sinner fears to sin again.

A forsaking of sin is required in order to obtain mercy: "**Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon**" (Isa. 55:7). If a man repeats the sin he confessed there is no forsaking and consequently no mercy. When sin is confessed and forsaken there comes mercy from the Lord. The penitent will then experience a new joy in his soul and a sense of blessed forgiveness. He no longer will live in the fear of being "found out."

Strictly speaking, it is not our confession and renouncement of sin that finds mercy. Neither is it our faith from which the confession arises. These things do not claim God's mercy, but they prepare a man for the reception of it. The ground on which mercy is obtained is the propitiatory sacrifice of the Mediator between God and men. As Bunyan so well pictured it--not at the wicked gate, but at the cross, did Christian find the grave of sin.

CONCLUSION

1. Sin is the source of misery and ruin in the case of men. It is a dreadful thing which turned angels into demons. It must never be covered or excused, for it is a hideous monster. Without sin, earth might have been a lower heaven.

2. The modern world has no sense of sin. By rejecting the Bible and its code of morals the world has no standard of right and wrong. People no longer know what sin is. To make bad matters worse, religious leaders tell the people we are not under the moral law of God in this age. No wonder even church people don't know what sin is. Romans 3:20 says: "**For by the law is the knowledge of sin.**" There is so little knowledge of what sin

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How Men Treat

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is because there is so little knowledge of what God's law is!

3. Under the law the offerer of an atoning sacrifice was required to lay his hand upon the head of the victim as a token of the transfer of guilt unto his sacrifice. In the New Testament we are to confess our sins with a dependence on that sacrifice which takes away sin (John 1:29), claiming our pardon through Christ whose soul was made an offering for sin. By Christ all who believe are justified from all things which they could not be justified by the law of Moses (Acts 13:39).

4. The moment sin is seen to be sin, let it be confessed and laid on the Surety's Head. Any attempt to cover sin adds to its guilt and burden. Big and little sins need the immediate application of the cleansing blood of Christ. **"The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin"** (I John 1:7). **"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"** (I John 1:9). Oh, sinner, **"Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou has transgressed against the LORD thy God"** (Jer. 3:13), and you shall discover the mercy of the Lord.

5. If you cover your sins they will come up in the face of the all-seeing God. **"Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance"** (Ps. 90:8). **"For mine eyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes"** (Jer. 16:17). But when a man uncovers his sins before God in confession (as David: **"My sin is ever before me"**), God casts them behind His back. The Prophet Isaiah said: **"For thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back"** (Isa. 38:17).



The Great Greek Bailout: Debt-Ridden America Chips In

By Mark W. Hendrickson

(EP News)--The sovereign debt crisis—centered on Greece for the moment, but bound to spread to other heavily indebted national governments—has taken an ominous turn.

The European Central Bank (ECB), the Federal Reserve, and the International Monetary Fund unveiled a trillion-dollar bailout package for the bankrupt Greek government. The intent was to defend the euro, which has been depreciating rapidly vis-à-vis the dollar.

Indeed, the bailout worked—for all of

a few hours. Then the market dismissed it as ineffectual and the euro resumed its downtrend. The reason for this is obvious to anyone who understands Economics 101: If you greatly increase the supply of something, the value of each individual unit generally goes down. Since the ECB's bailout includes making available "unlimited" amounts of newly created euros to sop up some of the flood of sovereign debt instruments issued by spendthrift governments, it seems reasonable to conclude that the euro will continue to depreciate.

There is, however, another factor that may temporarily offset the effect of this "quantitative easing" (money creation) by the ECB: The Fed is adopting a similar policy. As reported by Bloomberg on May 10, "The U.S. Federal Reserve will restart its emergency currency swap tool by providing as many dollars as needed to European central banks to keep the continent's sovereign debt crisis from spreading."

The Fed's involvement in this ongoing crackup has received far too little attention. Consider the following implications:

First, we live in a world of finite wealth and limits, yet central bankers are flirting with an infinitely elastic money supply when they talk about "unlimited funds" and creating "as many dollars as needed."

Second, who authorized the Fed to bail out European governments? Our own government is drowning in debt, so how can we afford to provide hundreds of billions of dollars to Europe? Is Congress asleep? Where's the media? There was an enormous brouhaha in the fall of 2008 about the emergency bailout of Wall Street. Today hardly anyone has questioned the bailout of foreign institutions. Have we become that desensitized to bailouts? Or is it just that the media will give Obama a free pass for his role in pushing for this bailout plan?

Third, does anyone think that the other European governments teetering on the brink of insolvency will be able to convince their voters that they should tighten their belts through a government austerity program when the central bankers have made it clear that they stand ready to supply bailout funds? Moral hazard, anyone? The path of least resistance seems to be the creation of additional monetary units in vast quantities for an indefinite period of time.

The monetary and political systems of the western democracies are broken. Central bankers—unaccountable not only to the voters of these countries, but to their duly constituted governments as well—seem to have *carte blanche* (blank check) to do what they want. One of the most startling YouTube videos I have ever seen featured Congressman Alan Grayson (D-FL) questioning the Inspector General of the Federal Reserve

about which financial institutions received the trillion dollars that the Fed created *ex nihilo* (out of thin air) after the 2008 financial crisis, and she had no idea.

The modern democratic welfare state seems doomed to live up to Alexander Tytler's dictum, "A democracy ... can only exist until the voters discover that they can vote themselves large sums from the public treasury ... with the result that a democracy always collapses over loose fiscal policy."

Have we passed the point of no return in the United States? Perhaps. According to the Tax Foundation, some 60 percent of Americans now receive more in benefits from government than what they pay into government. We may think, "Those crazy Greeks," when we see them protesting proposed reductions in government payments to them, but are we Americans any more willing to bite the bullet of fiscal reality? Let Congress try to cut spending, and we'll hear howls of protest from Americans who fervently believe that whatever they get from government is social justice and their inalienable right.

The president of the European Council, Herman de Rompuy, has stated, "We can't finance our social model anymore."

The system is broken. In democracies, politicians get elected by making unaffordable promises to voters. This culminates in national bankruptcy.

According to the Bank for International Settlements, 11 other countries in addition to Greece—including the United States—are about to "hit a wall of debt." It now appears that these governments are counting on central bankers to try to print their way out of this fiscal corner into which they have painted themselves.

This is the beginning of the end for fiat dollars and euros. The Fed and the ECB have made an "all-in" bet, risking the viability of their respective currencies in a desperate attempt to save a failed political model. The coming years will be tumultuous indeed.

"And when money failed in the land" (Gen. 47:15).



What Is Satan's Greatest Weapon Today?

By George L. Opolka
of Troy, Illinois

Many things come to our mind when we think of this question. For instance, could it be the racial strife and protests that are surging through America? Or is it the great unification effort by Protestants and Catholics? What about the disrespect for the things that used to be considered holy? As I pondered these things, I realized that they had come about because of one great weapon that Satan is employing today, and that is to cast doubt upon the Word of God!

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God..." (II Tim. 3:16).

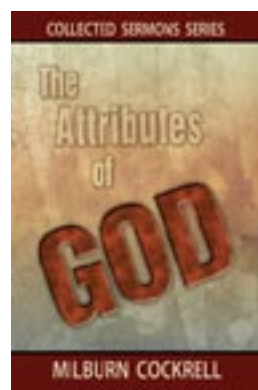
I don't know of a Baptist College or Seminary in existence today that believes in the verbal inspiration of the Bible! A friend of mine was talking to a professor recently in one of the better Baptist colleges, and he asked him if he believed in the inspiration of the Bible. The professor answered that he believed the original was inspired, but when asked where one could obtain the original, his reply was, "That's a good question."

I know this problem has always existed, but in these last days of hundreds of new (?) translations and versions of the Bible, there seems to be a tremendous effort to doubt just one word here and one word there, until the reader becomes confused and begins to doubt the complete infallibility of the Bible.

Before I continue, let me say this: I believe the King James Version to be without error in every respect. While there are some words that might help some folk if they were changed into our present day language, it will only take the earnest Bible student a few moments to extract the true meaning. I have found that in most cases where words have been changed in modern versions, that the context has also been changed. The best example I can give of this is the R. S. V.

Now let me give you a few reasons why I believe the K. J. V. to be the only version for English-speaking people, and to be without mistakes. As everyone knows, most of the translators belonged to the Church of England, and they believed in Baptismal Regeneration; yet I can find no hint of it in the Bible. Who else could have accomplished this but the Holy Spirit? If there was ever a time for the world to be deceived, this would have been it. Why didn't these scholars write in their translation that all of the redeemed belonged to the church? I'll

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Satan's Greatest

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tell you why, because the Holy Spirit moved through the translators to bring about a perfect translation! There is no need for a better translation, we have the best now. Even the words that modern scholars would have us change, do not throw a new light on certain Scriptures, unless the reader has never really studied the context anyway. I am convinced that God has allowed some words to remain in the Bible to cause the heretics to rave and rant and stumble and fall over them, while the true Bible student will be pressed to his knees and to a deeper study of its meaning.

The story of how the Bible was translated into English is so unique in itself, that only the blind could not see God's hand in it. Man tried every means available to destroy the Scriptures and keep them out of the hands of the laymen. (Read the story of William Tyndale).

There is much ado today about verses that were not in the original. But the original manuscript has long ago ceased to exist. What most people are talking about is the three most ancient manuscripts when they say material (papyrus) that they were written on, it was necessary to keep making copies, as the material deteriorated or was lost, and therefore whole sections are missing in the ancient manuscripts while the copies would be complete. An example of this is Wycliffe's translation which was translated from

the ancient Vulgate and is not a complete Bible. However, Tyndale used the Greek and Hebrew manuscripts; and Tyndale's was one of the main translations that the K. J. V. translators used.

The K. J. V. multiplied swiftly and for over 400 years has been about the only Bible for the English-speaking people. Suddenly now, there appears a multitude of new versions (or per-versions) and they are being acclaimed as just the thing we have needed for years. Yet, as I talk to people who are studying these new versions, they are becoming more and more confused about some things they used to be sure of. Satan has gotten the door of their minds opened just a little and if he can get his foot in the door, they will never be able to close it. If he can cast doubt upon just one Scriptural truth, how can we be sure of the next one? How can we be sure about the way of salvation? Security? Heaven? Hell? Where does it end after that first doubt has crept in? If a seminary starts out with two teachers teaching this, the school can turn out a hundred preachers preaching it! In ten years a thousand Baptist churches can be in the clutches of Satan!

What do I believe to be Satan's greatest weapon today; Cast doubt upon the Word of God!

"Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar" (Prov. 30:5, 6).



passages from Numbers 4 that reinforce this line of thinking: **"But thus do unto them, that they may live, and not die, when they approach unto the most holy things: Aaron and his sons shall go in, and appoint them every one to his service and to his burden:"** (Num. 4:19). **"And this is the charge of their burden, according to all their service in the tabernacle of the congregation; the boards of the tabernacle, and the bars thereof, and the pillars thereof, and sockets thereof, And the pillars of the court round about, and their sockets, and their pins, and their cords, with all their instruments, and with all their service: and by name ye shall reckon the instruments of the charge of their burden."** (Num. 4:31-32). **"From thirty years old and upward even unto fifty years old, every one that came to do the service of the ministry, and the service of the burden in the tabernacle of the congregation, Even those that were numbered of them, were eight thousand and five hundred and fourscore. According to the commandment of the LORD they were numbered by the hand of Moses, every one according to his service, and according to his burden: thus were they numbered of him, as the LORD commanded Moses"** (Num. 4:47-49). Do you see how specific the Lord is in assigning the burdens and tasks that must be done? And, remember, these were all necessary tasks. If these were not accomplished, then how could the worship in the Tabernacle continue? We find that the Lord is specific in the details of the work that is to be done, and He is also specific in the details of the persons that will accomplish this work.

The concept of labor and work and tasks and burdens in the service of God is not confined to only the Old Testament. We read the words of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 11:28-30, **"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."** Here the Lord issues a call to all of those that **"labour and are heavy laden"** – all of those that know that they need someone or something to save them. The Lord calls these out, and He calls them unto His "yoke" and His "burden." Surely, when compared to the burdens and yokes of this world, the service of God is much easier and much lighter! If only we will commit the keeping of our souls unto Him, and trust in His strength and mercy and grace, then we will find relief from all the troubles and trials of this world!

But, back to the topic at hand: God intends for us to work and bear the burden in the service of God. We read in Ephesians 2:8-10, **"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of**

works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Our salvation includes being **"created in Christ Jesus unto good works."** And, our predestination unto salvation includes that God has **"ordained that we should walk in...good works."** Do you see how the Old Testament pictures, and the New Testament Scriptures direct us unto the duty we have to bear the burden that the Lord has given unto us? I pray to God that we will not slip or fall under this burden; but, that even in these troublesome times we would rejoice in the work that the Lord has called us unto!

SUCCESSFUL SERVANTS ARE THOSE THAT LABOR

Having established that we all have a burden to bear in the cause of Christ, let's move on to prove the successes of our service. In other words, I want each of us to know that it is not enough just to know about the burden; and it is not enough just to be a servant. But, the servants of God can only be successful if they will be diligent and faithful in their labors unto God.

We read in Proverbs 10:16, **"The labour of the righteous tendeth to life: the fruit of the wicked to sin."** The righteous must labor. In today's environment and today's society of entitlements, most people seem to think that the government or other men owe them something. And, many folks even think that they really don't have to work for anything at all – the government or society will take care of them. Well, of course this attitude is wrong, and certainly this attitude is anti-Scripture. But, somehow this attitude seems to creep into the churches of Jesus Christ. We must not let it be so! Our anthem should be, **"Let the righteous labour in the cause of Christ!"** Truly the **"labour of the righteous tendeth to life."** If we want **"life"** for ourselves or for others, shouldn't we be willing to labor for that **"life?"** Now, I know that we do not work for our salvation; but, I think that the verses that we have just read in Proverbs and in Ephesians and in Numbers must certainly prove that God intends for us to work and bear a burden after that we are saved. Later on Jesus Christ said this in John 6:27, **"Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed."**

Let's consider earthly servants for a moment. Isn't it true that those that are successful in the world, are diligent and zealous in their efforts and in their labors? How much more should we be diligent and zealous in our labors for God? Do we desire success in our service? Then work and labor and bear the burden. We

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Cheerfully Bearing the Burden

By Paul Stepp
of Indore, West Virginia

I thought that it would be good for us to think about the good place that God has set us in today. Sometimes we get distracted by the terrible times that we live in; sometimes we get depressed when we consider the sinfulness that surrounds us in the world; sometimes we get disoriented when we try to find our place in these last days. But, just stop and consider how good God has been to you – if you are a child of God, and especially if you are a member of one of the churches of Jesus Christ.

Now, I do not want you to think that God's goodness guarantees you a life of ease; nor do I want you to think that God has done all that He has done so that you can do nothing. Indeed, there is much for you to do, and God has not called you to stand around and be lazy.

In fact, this is what I want us to consider: that God is good to us, and therefore we have every right to be happy and cheerful; and God also expects much work and labor from His happy and



cheerful children.

THERE IS A BURDEN TO BE BORNE

First of all, I want to establish the fact that there is a burden to be borne. We read in Num. 4:15 , **"And**

when Aaron and his sons have made an end of covering the sanctuary, and all the vessels of the sanctuary, as the camp is to set forward; after that, the sons of Kohath shall come to bear it: but they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die. These things are the burden of the sons of Kohath in the tabernacle of the congregation." In the worship of God in the tabernacle of Israel, there were very specific burdens to be borne, and very specific tasks that were given to the children of Israel – and especially the children of Levi. These tasks and burdens could not be carried by another, but they were meant for certain tribes, families, and individuals.

Let me read to you a few more

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. Do you know what significance the directions given in Leviticus 1:11 (Northward) and 16 (East) were for? I know that everything our God says has meaning. - Maine

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Leviticus 1:11 and 16 state: **"And he shall kill it on the side of the altar northward before the LORD: and the priests, Aaron's sons, shall sprinkle his blood round about upon the altar... And he shall pluck away his crop with his feathers, and cast it beside the altar on the east part, by the place of the ashes."**

First and foremost, all of the precise instructions regarding the burnt offerings that were to be prepared and offered by the priests were types and pictures that pointed to the ultimate burnt offering, the Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. All of the blood of bulls, goats, sheep, and birds that was offered by the priests pointed to a time when **"God was manifest in the flesh"** in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ as the appointed sin-bearer for the elect on the cross of Calvary (I Pet. 1:19-20; 2:24; 3:18). In the Old Testament these sacrifices and offerings had to be repeated over and over. They could only cover sin. They had to be offered by qualified priests. When Jesus Christ died, He was both the qualified High Priest, as well as the perfect sacrifice offered. Christ Jesus offered Himself, His perfect righteousness and blood as the ultimate sacrifice for God's elect. Christ's sacrifice accomplished what no Old Testament offering could, namely the putting away of the elect's sins and the perfecting of their standing before God. Hebrews 10:10, 12, 14 make this crystal clear: **"By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all... But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God... For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified"** (cf. Heb. 9:26-28).

There was a practical reason why the offering of the flock was to be killed on the north side of the altar. It was a large place and was most fit for the purpose of killing the larger animals.

John Gill, Matthew Henry, and Matthew Poole in their respective comments on the passage also believed there was a typical significance regarding the killing of the animals on the north

west side of the altar as it pertained to the sacrifice of Christ.

Matthew Poole offered the most concise comment on Leviticus 1:11: "... because here seems to have been the largest and most convenient place for that work, the altar being probably near the middle of the east end of the building, and the entrance being on the south side; so the north side was the only vacant place. Besides, this might design the place of Christ's death, both more generally, to wit, in Jerusalem, which was in the sides of the north, Psalm 48:2; and more specially to wit, on Mount Calvary, which was on the north and west side of Jerusalem." (Vol. 1, p. 204).

The entrails, guts, and feathers of the birds offered in Leviticus 1:16 were to be cast off to the east side of the altar with the ashes of the burnt offering, the most remote place away from the holy of holies which was on the west end. Later the ashes would be removed outside the camp (Lev. 4:12; 6:10-11).

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I must say this question has certainly boggled me to the point I am very disappointed at my inability to ascertain the significance of northward and east in Leviticus Chapter 1. I do know as much as this, verse 11 gives that it is before the Lord. North is always north and when finding direction or determining what direction to proceed one must find north. Apparently the altar was always facing northward, thusly the side that the ashes were placed was on the eastern side of the altar.

I am sorry for not having more. I look forward to any information others can give. You have my address and I am willing to learn about this subject... lay it on me.

MIKE DEWITT



Cheerfully Bearing

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read what Paul had to say to the Romans about some faithful Church members in Romans 16:6, 12, **"Greet Mary, who bestowed much labour on us... Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord."**

I suppose that we can even say that those that are successful laborers in the vineyard of the Lord ought to be commended. And, Paul even made it a habit to call them out by name – just as he did in the passage that we have just read. But, we also read what Paul had to say to the Thessalonians, **"And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves"** (I Thess. 5:12-13). Paul is apparently telling us that faithful servants that labor in the service of the Lord ought to be commended, and we ought to **"esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake."**

We should notice, also, what Paul said about faithful elders in the churches of Jesus Christ: **"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine"** (I Tim. 5:17). Whether the **"double honour"** that Paul is speaking of here is some tangible earthly benefits, or just an attitude of thankfulness and praise; whatever the **"honour"** might be, Paul is obviously recommending that the Churches would reward those faithful **"elders that rule well,"** and **"who labour in the word and doctrine."**

CHEERFULNESS IS NORMAL IN FAITHFUL SERVANTS

So, there is a burden to be carried by those that would follow Jesus Christ. And, amongst those followers some are more successful and faithful than others. But, what I want us to consider now is the cheerful attitude that should be fostered amongst all of those that carry the burdens. We read in Psalms 128:2, **"For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee."** Isn't it ironic that much of our society is too lazy to work today, and yet they are more depressed, angry, and resentful than ever before? And yet, it seems to me that work and exercise and diligence in following a cause would be of benefit to the attitudes and psyche of so many of the angry and foolish men and women of today! In fact, the verse that we have just read, reminds us all to be **"happy"** in our service unto God. And, if we desire true happiness and true peace, these can only be obtained by those of us that will **"labour"** with our **"hands."**

Therefore, as we labor in the Cause of Christ, let us be happy and joyful

– especially when we consider how good God is to us! We read in John 13:15-17, **"For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."** The Lord was perfectly faithful in the dispensation of His duties, and in the labor and work that He was called unto. If He was willing and obedient to labor in the work that He was given, how much more willing and obedient should we be?

Also in these verses that we have just read, the Lord gives us a fair promise: If we will only **"know"** and **"do"** the things that Jesus Christ has done; and if we will only imitate the work and labor and effort and faithfulness of our Lord and Saviour; then, **"happy are ye."** Just as any earthly servant might manifest happiness or joy at the commendation of his or her master; even so we can demonstrate joy and happiness at the pleasure that our Lord will show in us – if we are only faithful and obedient and diligent. Quite simply, if we are true disciples of Jesus Christ, then faithfulness and success will inspire happiness. But, laziness and failure will inspire discontent and sadness.

GOD LOVES THE CHEERFUL SERVANTS

Lastly, let me point out that God loves and rewards the faithful, successful, and cheerful servants. We read in II Corinthians 5:9, **"Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him."** Our desire is to please our Master, and to be accepted of Him. Just as any earthly servant desires the approval and commendation of their earthly master, so we desire these from our heavenly Father and God. And, when we are assured of these things, we know and experience the love of God.

We could also put it this way: cheerfulness in the attitudes of the people of God is not only normal, on behalf of God, it is expected. We read in II Corinthians 9:7, **"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."** Besides being expected or accepted of God, cheerfulness is also a cause for which God will demonstrate His love for His people.

CONCLUSION

So, for just a little while, forget the cares, turmoils, and distractions of the world – which might normally bring you down – and, instead, concentrate on the happiness and joy that is found in the service of God. But, while you reflect on these things, remember, that hard work can bring contentment, peace, and joy much better than laziness or a lethargic attitude. Let's at once be busy and happy.



The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. What is the meaning of Romans 15:1? - Mississippi

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"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Rom. 15:1).

The strong in faith and doctrine need to have patience concerning those who are babes in Christ, those that are not so strong in the faith and doctrine of God. The strong need to take into consideration their own selves, and are to hearken back to whence their own understanding of faith and doctrine was weak and lacking in sanctification.

This bearing the infirmities of the weak is not an allowance of sinful practices by the weak brethren but a forbearance of practices that are indifferent to and not subversive to the doctrine of God.

The not pleasing of ourselves tends to the understanding that the rules we enforce are not the ones that indulge our fleshly appetites.

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Romans 15:1 states: **"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves."**

Those who are strong in the faith and spiritually mature are commanded to bear the infirmities of their weaker brethren. Those who are experienced in grace and knowledgeable of the truth should be patient and kind to those who are weak in the faith. We are not to be critical and mean spirited toward any of our brethren, but especially not toward those who are struggling. The infirmities referred to are not heresies, but rather errors in doctrine or practice due to ignorance or lack of sound teaching. These brethren need the prayers, patient instruction, and a consistent gracious example by those who are strong in the faith.

Those who are strong should not despise their weaker brethren for what they perceive is lacking. Instead, the strong are commanded to follow the

example of Christ (Rom. 15:3) and not please themselves. We all must be careful to look out for the welfare of others. Philippians 2:3-5 is a companion passage: **"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."** It would be a profitable exercise of humility if we would all remember what we are in comparison to Christ and how far short we fall of His gracious example. Yet our Lord is so patient and kind to us. He never leaves us or forsakes us in spite of our ignorance and failures. May God give us grace to be more like the Master as we strive to be a blessing and help to one another.

TOM ROSS



Loved Before Time

By Milburn Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)

"The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee" (Jer. 31:3).

The 30th and 31st chapters of Jeremiah are a delightful change from the prolonged warnings and threatenings which have characterized the earlier chapters. Beginning in these two chapters we have a series of good and comfortable words designed to encourage God's people in the sorrows of their exile. The weeping prophet in my text declares that the love of God is the real cause of all that has befallen Judah and Jerusalem.

THE HISTORY OF LOVE

The text begins with the history of God's love: **"The LORD hath appeared of old. . ."** The appearance of God is not to the prophet, but to Israel in the days of old. The first appearance was to Abraham (Gen. 12:7; 17:1; 18:1; 26:2,24), and then to Jacob (Gen. 35:1,7,9; 48:3), and then to Moses (Ex. 3:2,16; 4:1,5). God appeared to Israel in the pillar of cloud and fire in their wilderness journey. But these appearances were in olden times. Now that Judah and Jerusalem is under the heel of the Babylonians it seems that God is hiding His face (Isa. 45:15).

Under the old dispensation God often

appeared unto man in various forms, but there is a sense in which God must appear to every converted soul in his experience of grace. God's dealings with us are never understood until He appears to us. God is working in providence and grace long before this, but we are unaware of it. Like Saul of Tarsus, the scales must be removed from our eyes. God is His own Interpreter.

Fallen man is not in a condition to see and understand God until he has a divine revelation from Heaven. By nature man is blind and dead to God. Left to himself he is by nature an atheist. Alienated from the life of God, man cannot see the working of God's grace and mercy (Isa. 44:28-45:4).

This appearance of God in my text was an act of grace. **"Of old"** is better translated "from afar." The Jews thought that God dwelt in Zion, and if His mercy was to reach the Babylonian exiles, it must come from afar (II Chron. 6:20, 38). Even so, the grace and mercy of God comes to Gentiles which **"were far off"** (Eph. 2:13). Christ must come to the sinner before the sinner can ever come to Christ.

THE PERSON OF LOVE

The next thing I see in the text is the person of love: **". . . unto me. . ."** The Lord God had appeared personally unto the fathers of the nation of Israel and delivered them in times of trouble. In the old dispensation He did not so appear to any other people. In this sense Israel was a nation highly favored by God. They had the knowledge of the true God. They had the oracles of God. They enjoyed the promise of the coming Redeemer.

There must be a personal appearance of God to every elect soul. Reading the Bible is not enough. Going to church is not enough. Hearing the gospel preached is not enough. There must be a clear manifestation of the Lord Jesus Christ unto the conscience and the heart of a man. There must be a divinely wrought vision of Christ. Only those who see the Son and believe on Him have everlasting life (John 6:40). The Holy Spirit must reveal Christ to the sinner; otherwise, he cannot repent and believe the gospel. The giving of the knowledge of salvation is a divine operation (Luke 1:77). Jesus Christ said: **"It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me"** (John 6:45).

As the text indicates, this appearance of God needs to be repeated. In the context of the text it seemed that God had forsaken His people and given them up to the hands of their enemies. The Lord had appeared **"of old"** unto them, but He had not appeared lately. He had appeared to Abraham and Jacob. He had appeared to Moses in the burning bush. He had appeared at other times and in other periods of their history. They want

Him to appear to them again and deliver them from the Babylonian Captivity.

THE FACT OF LOVE

As the verse continues I see the fact of God's love: **"Yea, I have loved thee. . ."** There is great positiveness in this statement. Here God's love is not equivocal, nor conjectural, nor conditional. The verse does not say, "God loves you because you love Him." God's love for His people is not prompted by our love for Him. Man can in no way merit the love of God, for His love is free and spontaneous. We read in Deuteronomy 7:7-8: **"The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers. . ."** In Hosea 14:4 the Lord says of His people: **"I will love them freely."**

No more soul-cheering words can be heard from God than **"I have loved thee."** God does not say, "I have pitied thee," nor "I have thought about thee," but **"I have loved thee."** I, the great God, the Creator of the ends of the earth, the High and Lofty One, the Father of Lights, the Judge of all the earth, the King of kings and Lord of lords, have loved thee. I, the God in whose hands is your breath and the life of all creation, have loved thee. I, the God Who sits on My throne in Heaven in purity and power and do all My pleasure, have loved thee separately and distinctly, though you are a vile and sinful creature. **"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us. . ."** (I John 3:1).

This is amazing love beyond description. God is holy and delights only in holiness. Why then should He love transgressors from the womb? If the Bible said He hated and despised the whole human race and was determined to cast them all in Hell, I would not be surprised. I would not marvel, for we are all corrupt and vile. We have all forsaken His ways, abused His blessings, ignored His love, trampled His commandments, insulted His mercy, and done despite to the Spirit of grace. But the great truth of my text is that God loves these unlovable sinners!

"God is love" (I John 4:16). He loves because He cannot but love, for love is His very nature. God delights in love, and His love is ever flowing in all directions. It is not the attraction of the objects, but the character of the Lover which accounts for its perpetual flowing. The love which God has for us comes not from us to Him, but from Him to us. He loves us not because we are lovable, but because He is loving! Such love is not destroyed by the unworthiness of its objects. Romans 5:8 tells us: **"But God commendeth his love toward us. . . while we were yet sinners. . ."**

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A Dose of Reality

"Common Sense Comments"

by Joseph Harris

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What Exploded?

Shades of Carl Sagan! The master storytellers just keep on spinning their yarns. Now "Ida," the missing link has been found, according to a National Geographic News story on nationalgeographic.com. Notice examples of the unsure language found throughout the article: "missing link" (they placed it in quotations marks), "suggests," "the closest thing," "lemur-like skeleton," "primate-like," "looks like," "big gap," "unsure." Also, there are some unsure sentences in the article. One thing is for sure: they do not sound very sure about this new discovery. By the way, there is a reason the missing link has not been found: you can't find what doesn't exist. All this reminds me of the big bang theory with its "Long, long ago, in a galaxy far away . . ." beginning. We have heard again and again the tired old tale of everything being created by a huge explosion about 13 to 14 billion years ago. And it's presented as unchallenged truth. I have always liked science fiction, but please: Darth Vader and Mr. Spock sound more believable than the big bang THEORY.

Several years ago, scientists found "evidence" of when starlight first penetrated the jet black darkness of the lifeless universe billions of years ago. By looking through their super telescopes, they can see time as it was billions of years ago in light years. Notice how they throw "millions" and "billions" of years around, as if they were talking about minutes. Never mind solid, empirical evidence. You are just supposed to believe their words because their answer to the origin of the universe has GOT to be truth. Case closed. Why? Because they are scientists and are therefore, infallible.

Science insists on empirical evidence for everything, except when certain scientists want to pick and choose. Empirical means observable, or in layman's terms, it can be reproduced before the eyes. Sounds like that leaves out the big bang THEORY and the human evolution THEORY, for starters.

Robert Becker, a professor of physics at UC Davis, was once quoted as saying in the *Associated Press*, "It took a long time for gravity to get its act together and start clumping the gas together . . ." and he was talking about the formation of stars. Notice, he almost personifies gravity with intellect and volition, and

the ability to create. If only Robert would keep searching, he might reach the God of gravity, and hit pay dirt.

I think the most unanswerable and important question in the big bang THEORY is: What Exploded? Logic demands an answer to this question of: "If something exploded, what was it that exploded?" Maybe more importantly, where did it come from? The big bang doesn't answer the question of origin. It simply does, as the book of Genesis, make an emphatic statement of existence. "In the beginning GOD . . ." I am honest enough to admit that both the Genesis account and the big bang THEORY require faith, but at least Genesis names GOD as the first cause and admits faith is necessary, whereas the big bang just leaves you hanging.

"IN THE BEGINNING GOD CREATED THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH" (Gen. 1:1).



Loved Before Time

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Some of the Babylonian captives might have said to Jeremiah: "What do you mean by saying that God loves us? We are a scattered people. David's throne has been overturned. Our kings are slain with the sword or in exile. Our people have died by the thousands in battle and our children have starved to death. Our temple and city have been burnt with fire. We are helpless and hopeless. Where is the love of God in all of this?" The prophet would have answered such an inquirer by saying, "God chastens those He loves. All that we have suffered as a people is the evidence of God's love to us. The existence of a remnant of our people is a miracle of watchful, unceasing divine love."

THE FORM OF LOVE

The form of love is presented in the words **"with an everlasting love."** Judah had many lovers professing regard and offering service. Now they were cold, careless, and hostile. These professed lovers had only what we might term "a love of advantage," and now there was for them no advantage. Unlike these false lovers, God loved Judah with an everlasting love. His love had not diminished because of their downfall and despair.

Here we see something of God's love for His people. The everlasting God loves His elect with an everlasting love. This love is from everlasting, and therefore it did not begin in time with repentance and faith. Repentance and faith are the fruits of God's everlasting love. This is because of His choice of the persons He loved in Christ. According to II Thessalonians 2:13, those chosen by God to salvation are **"beloved of the Lord."** Ephesians 1:4-5 declares: **"According as he hath**

chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." God's everlasting love for His covenant people prompted Him to predestinate them. The highest expression of love is to be chosen to salvation by Christ.

In retrospect God's great affection for His people is everlasting. It is not recent, but vastly remote in its origin. God, in a manner of speaking, is saying, "I loved thee before I made the earth and heaven. I loved thee before I made the sea and the shore. When the sun, the moon, and the stars slept in my great mind I loved thee. When I alone inhabited eternity and all creation was but an embryo in my thoughts I loved thee with an everlasting love." There is a beginning of angels, men, and the world, but there is no beginning of God's love to His people. The people God loves today He has always loved.

Everlasting love means ceaseless constancy. It does not change from day to day as ours sometimes does. When Judah was in Zion or "far off" in exile God loved them. Never for a moment has God ever ceased to love His people. His love knows **"no variableness, neither shadow of turning."** He loves His people as much today as He did 1,000 years ago. His love like a river is ever flowing and overflowing. What was from everlasting shall be to everlasting. That which has no beginning shall have no end! The ages to come shall not exhaust God's everlasting love, for what is everlasting lasts for ever! Nothing can separate us from it. The Apostle Paul said: **"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord"** (Rom. 8:38-39).

When my days shall know their number, and I put my head on my dying pillow, I shall recall the words of my text: **"I have loved thee with an everlasting love."** When my spirit is severed from my body of clay and departs to the spiritland I shall be cheered on by God's everlasting love to me. When the trumpet sounds and I stand before the judgment seat of Christ I shall still rejoice in the assurance of Jeremiah 31:3 where God said: **"I have loved thee with an everlasting love."** As the ages roll on that everlasting love of God for me shall abide. When Heaven and earth pass away and time is buried in eternity it will be Heaven of heavens to remember that the Lord said: **"I have loved thee with an everlasting love."**

It is impossible to enjoy a sense of this love without returning it in some measure. I John 4:19 says: **"We love him, because he first loved us."** God's love to

us is the source of all our love to Him. His love to us begets love in us. Our love in its character, not in degree, resembles that of God for us. Oh, let us love Him more each day of life. May we strive to keep ourselves mindful of this great love. After God's love in giving His Son for us it would be monstrous for us not to love Him.

THE EVIDENCE OF LOVE

In the last words in the text I see the evidence of God's love: **"Therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee."** Those the Lord loves with an everlasting love He will draw into covenant and communion with Himself. The work of alluring souls to reconciliation begins with God. It is not the sinner who commences the work as Arminians and Calvinians teach. God's love and grace draws the sinner, and the sinner is then **"made nigh"** by God Himself. Christ said: **"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd"** (John 10:16).

Because the Bible says God must draw the sinner to Himself, this supposes the weakness of the sinner to come on his own. The Bible says he is **"without strength"** (Rom. 5:6) and that **"without"** Christ he can do nothing (John 15:5). Verily if the sinner can come to Christ on his own he does not need the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. If he has the power to enter the kingdom of God by his own free will, he does not need to be born again. The Scriptures teach that man must be drawn by the power and efficacious grace of God. Jesus Christ declared: **"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him"** (John 6:44).

The sovereign grace of God must draw the sinner out of a state of disgrace and bring him into a state of grace (Eph. 2:1-10). It must pluck him out of the hands of Satan (Acts 26:18) and from the kingdom of darkness and bring him unto God and the kingdom of light. **"The love of the Spirit"** (Rom. 15:30) causes Him to take the sinner **"out of the pit wherein is no water"** (Zech. 9:11), the horrible pit and the miry clay (Ps. 40:2), and to sit his feet upon the Rock of Ages. The Spirit brings the sinner to the blood and righteousness of Christ and enables him to repent and believe the gospel. He also leads him to water baptism and membership in a New Testament Baptist church (I Cor. 12:13). This loving kindness of God goes with us in the Christian life and finally receives us to glory.

God does not draw the sinner to Heaven against his will. He does not drag him up to paradise when the sinner is screaming and crying to be allowed to go to perdition. The force which draws the sinner is **"loving kindness."** This drawing is done without any violence or

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Loved Before Time

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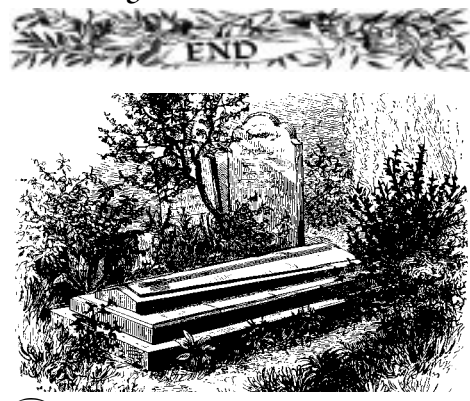
force to the will of man, for when drawn he comes willingly to Christ. Since it is loving kindness which draws the sinner there is no violence in this operation of God's love. In Hosea God says of His people: **"I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love..."** (Hos. 11:4). When God's everlasting love is revealed to the sinner he comes running to Christ (S. of S. 1:4). In the heart of such a sinner the love of God is shed abroad by the Spirit (Rom. 5:5).

CONCLUSION

1. Every Spirit-regenerated and grace-saved soul recalls with the greatest delight when the Lord personally appeared to him. At that time he beheld Christ dying by the eyes of faith. How his heart melted when he saw that his sins crucified the Lord of glory! His cup was made to run over when he came to see Christ loved and gave Himself for him. Oh, how precious Christ's name, His gospel, His people, His ordinances, and His church have been in his sight since that happy hour!

2. Before the wings of an angel disturbed the silence of eternity and before a ray of light ran down the measureless path of space God loved His people with an everlasting love. Centuries before earth was created God loved His elect. Before God even made man upon the earth He loved His covenant people with an everlasting love. According to holy Scripture, he loved us before time. In John 17:23 Jesus said: **"Thou. . . hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."** Christ then adds: **"For thou lovest me before the foundation of the world"** (John 17:24).

3. The great truth of the gospel is that God loves sinners. How One glorious in holiness could love a poor, lost, undeserving, ill-deserving, and Hell-deserving sinner is a thing to be wondered at. To receive the assurance on this side of eternity that God loves you is all that any mortal can hope for. Oh, to be able to say, "I am a poor sinner and nothing at all, but I am an object of everlasting love." May this be the glad hour when God will draw you to Himself in loving kindness. May it be today that He will appear unto you and say: **"I have loved thee with an everlasting love."**



- A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF HAGGAI -

A Message of Encouragement in Discouraging Times

By Timothy Hille
of Ashland, Illinois

Haggai 2:1-9

vs. 1 – One month's time had passed while the people had been working in the rebuilding of the temple, and God now sends another message of encouragement. What the people had begun to do **"in the four and twentieth day of the sixth month,"** (Hag. 1:15), they needed to continue to do now **"in the seventh month, in the one and twentieth day of the month."** It would have been both sinful and shameful to become discouraged and leave off the work of building God's house after having so recently repented and returned to this very work (Gal. 5:7-9; 6:9 Phil. 3:16). If the work which we have done for the Lord is a good work, then we ought not to leave it now, though seemingly there is much cause for discouragement. We are to wait on the Lord to do His work, and we are to work for the Lord while we wait.

Many in churches in these days in which we are living have worked, as it were, for a little while, but then have ceased from the work. They attended the services of the Lord faithfully for a time. They gave of their substance to the support of the ministry. They brought their children to the services of the Lord. They seemed interested and earnest in seeing others saved, and in seeing the Word of God prevail. Yet, they endured only for a little while. After a period of time, they departed from the work. For many today, the work of the Lord has lost its value in their eyes. The work is too demanding and the results are too disappointing. They are not happy or satisfied with working for God God's way. They desire something which is more pleasing to the flesh. The people in Haggai's day were facing discouragement, but God sends them a message of encouragement to sustain them in the work. If you look at things from a fleshly or worldly perspective, then you are going to become discouraged. You are going to have to trust the Lord, and keep obeying Him.

Many churches, pastors, and preachers today are setting time limits on the work of the Lord. They will start a mission work, or some endeavor which they say is by Holy Spirit leadership; and then after so much time is passed, they will abandon the work which they started to build. Most churches today disband if they get down to a certain number in their membership or attendance, or if they go without a pastor for a certain period of time. The outward circumstances become discouraging, and the people



give up (Luke 9:57-62; 14:25-35). Nothing is so great or of so much value as the work of the Lord. Never stop building in the house of God, and never stop seeking to progress in your own Christian life.

Never stop seeking to have a better and more effective testimony for the Lord. Never stop seeking to serve Him who loved you and died for you on the cross, if truly you are a blood-bought, blood-washed child of God.

vs. 2, 3 – God sent a message to the leaders and the remnant of the people. **"Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory?"** There were some still living who had seen the temple that Solomon built at Jerusalem. That temple had been destroyed by the Babylonians when Judah was carried away captive. Now a remnant of the people had returned, and they, under the direction and providential care of God, were rebuilding the house of God at Jerusalem. This was a great blessing, but things were not as they once were. **"Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do ye see it now? is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing?"** Those who had seen the original temple and were now at Jerusalem as the temple of Zerubbabel was being built knew that the former temple of Solomon far exceeded this present temple in grandeur and glory. The temple which Solomon built was built with the most fine gold and silver, the most outstanding cedar, and with great quarry stones. The temple of Solomon was built under the guidance of a great king who ruled not only all of Israel, but also over many heathen nations. This temple was being built by a poor remnant of people under the leadership of a governor who was under the authority of a heathen king. The temple of Solomon had so far exceeded this temple in glory and beauty that this present temple was **"in comparison of it as nothing"** (Ezra 3:8-13). While many shouted when the foundation of this new temple was laid, the older generation wept, because they remembered the first temple, in all of its exceeding glory, and they remembered how that it had been destroyed because of their sins.

In churches today, many things are not as they once were. Not that many years ago, God's house would be full of people who would come to hear the preaching of God's Word. Not that many years ago, folks would participate in the service of

the Lord. Not that many years ago, special services and revival meetings would last for weeks at a time, with services in the morning and in the evening. Not that many years ago, Baptist churches had choirs that would sing for the honor and glory of God, and youth groups that would get together to pray, study the Bible, and go out and witness and invite people to come to the house of the Lord. When we see churches today, we think to ourselves, "What in the world has gone wrong?" Nothing has gone wrong in the world, beloved; but the world has been brought in to the churches: and things are not what they used to be. You wouldn't hear of a divorced man being the pastor of a church years ago. Today, it's not too much minded. Many things today are not too much minded by the majority of Baptists. They don't mind if women cut their hair short and put on pants. They don't mind if folks aren't in the services of the Lord. They don't mind if their children and grandchildren miss out on being at God's house. They don't mind if the song leader has long hair. They don't mind if more time is spent on entertaining the young folks and pacifying the old folks than is spent actually teaching and preaching the Word of God.

vs. 4,5 – Now, when we see that many things are not as they once were in the work of the Lord, what should we do? You hear many people complaining about what used to be done in churches. Is that what we are to do, complain about what used to be? Some people believe that the work of the Lord today can never be like it used to be: and in some ways, that is very likely true. Some folks just want to sit down and weep, because they long for the former times, but yet they need to rise up and work. Those in Haggai's time who had seen the temple before it was destroyed, and now saw this temple being built, perhaps thought that this temple would never amount to anything as the former one had, would never have so much glory, and never be so blessed a place. **Eccl. 7:10; 9:10**

"Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the LORD; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the LORD, and work." God told the leaders and the people to **"be strong . . . and work."** They were not to become disheartened or discouraged by the tears and the mourning of those who had seen the former temple, or by the difficulty and seeming insignificance of the work. Most oftentimes those who are weeping about how things used to be are not heard too often to weep over their sins. Nevertheless, God tells these that they were to not be faint or give up, but to continue in the work to which God had called them. God's work always requires and deserves our strength. All that we

♦ (Continued on page 354)

Study in Haggai

(Continued from page 353) ♦

have and all that we are should be poured into the work of the Lord. We ought not to do but half-hearted work; much rather we should give all our heart to the work, and do all that our hands can do. This work was a great work because God was in it. **"For I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts."** The one who had said, "I am with you," (Hag. 1:13), nearly a month prior to this, was still with the people in the work. God is still in the work of His New Testament churches. He says to each of His faithful churches, "Lo, I am with you alway," (Matt. 28:20). And so they are to be strong and continue to work.

"According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my spirit remaineth among you." God had not left His people. His Spirit was still among them, dwelling in their midst. He had not broken His promise, or left off to fulfill His Word. Jesus is still in the midst of His churches. **Rev. 1:10-13, 20 John 20:26 Matt. 18:20** Jesus still meets with His true churches, and He is still blessing them. He still has a work to do in them and by them and through them. God was not done with the children of Israel. His word which He covenanted was not made null or void, by time, by human failure, or by human frailty. If we forget that God is with us, then we will become discouraged. If we forget about the purpose and the plan of God, and if we forget about the Person of the Holy Spirit, who abides with us forever, and who leads us and guides us into all truth and in the work of God, then we are going to become disheartened and afraid. But God says to us, **"Fear ye not."** Why should we fear? Why should we be afraid? God is with us. The question is, "Are we being strong in the Lord, and are we working in His work?"

vs. 6-9 – God here tells the people what He will do. We are privileged in that God tells us what He is going to do. Some today act like they do not know what God's will is. That's a shame, because it is a sin to not know the will of God. We are commanded to know God's will. **Eph. 5:14-17 "For thus saith the LORD of hosts: Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land."** God now begins to tell Zerubbabel, Joshua, and the remnant of the people what He would do. He was going to disturb the natural order. He was going to disturb the earth and all things, and cause them to be shaken. We know from the scriptures that He who shakes and disturbs all things worldly and temporal is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. **Heb. 12:26-28** Did you know that one day the Lord is going to shake this earth? He is going to even cause it to be removed altogether. **II Pet.**

3:10-14

The day of the Lord will come, and when that day comes, then will God do great and terrible things in the earth. **Matt. 24:4-8, 29-31** One day the Lord will shake this earth, and He will shake the people on this earth. He will shake the false religions of this world – Catholicism, Protestantism, Mormonism, Jehovah's Witness-ism, Judaism, New Age-ism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, and all the rest – and bring them to an end. He will shake the governments of this world. He will shake the monetary and financial systems of this world. He will shake the educational systems of this world. **"And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come."** These things will occur when the Lord Jesus Christ comes to this earth. When He comes and sets up His kingdom, then will all the nations of the earth come and worship the true and living God and honor His Son as King of kings at His holy temple in Jerusalem. The desire of all nations will be toward the Lord and His temple. **Isa. 60:1-16 Acts 3:19-21**

"And I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts." This house that Zerubbabel and the people were building was not so glorious as the one which had preceded it. Herod the great, the heathen king who sought to kill the infant Jesus, he refurbished and redecored and remodeled the temple of Zerubbabel, and the temple which he built prior to Jesus coming to the earth is called by his name historically – the temple of Herod. That temple far exceeded this temple for outward beauty and grandeur. **Mark 13:1,2** The Jews of Jesus' day were greatly enamored with the temple as refurbished and built up with gold and great stones and decorations by Herod the great. Yet, that temple was made by them a den of thieves and a house of merchandise! One who was greater than the temple was there, and they knew it not! God filled the temple with glory by being there Himself, as the Word made flesh, full of the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. God will fill the temple at Jerusalem one day with His living glory and presence.

"The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the LORD of hosts." Not only does this verse of scripture teach us to avoid covetousness, and to pay our tithes to God, as all the income is His to begin with: but we also see that the things which are needed for the work, and the things which, to men's minds, are often full of glory, are the very things which already belong to God. Whatsoever was needed for the work of building the temple, God could and would provide. Whatsoever is needed in the work of God today, He can and will provide. **Phil. 4:19 Heb. 13:5** What do you really need that God does not already possess? There is not anything that you can ever need that God does not already

own and have power to give you as you need and as He sees fit. Today people strive for silver and gold. One day they are going to bring the silver and the gold and lay it at Jesus' feet.

"The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the LORD of hosts." God was going to glorify His house. He would glorify the temple that was being built, although it seemed to be insignificant to all who were engaged in the work, and to all who viewed the work. Never think that God's house is insignificant or unimportant. God will one day glorify His kind of church. Amen! He is going to come one day, and take out of His kind of church a bride for Himself. One rendering of this verse is, "the latter [future] glory of this house shall be greater than the former." That is certainly true of the Lord's kind of church. I do not think that everyone who has his or her name on the membership roll of a Baptist church is going to be in the Lord's

bride. But I am positive that those who faithfully are serving God in and through His kind of church are going to make up the Lord's bride one day. **Rev. 3:4-6, 11-13, 20-22**

"And in this place will I give peace, saith the LORD of hosts." One day the Prince of peace will come to His holy temple in Jerusalem, and will sit upon the throne of His father David, and rule this earth in righteousness and peace. Those who dwell in God's house, they have the peace of God. One of the greatest blessings you can have is, while living in this troubled, troubling, distressed, and distressing world, peace with God and peace in your heart and soul. **Rom. 5:1** You will never have peace with God until you are saved by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. You who are saved will never have the peace of God in your lives until you are living in the will of God.



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.

AMERICA STILL SPLIT ON HEALTHCARE REFORM

(EP News)--Half of Americans oppose the recently passed health care law, according to a new poll from The Associated Press. Throughout the health care debate, The AP had shown an even split between those who supported and those who opposed. Last week's numbers show 50 percent oppose, 39 percent support and 10 percent have no opinion. Ashley Horne, federal policy analyst for Focus on the Family Action, said it won't get better for Democrats. "Most polling has consistently showed that a majority of Americans opposed, and still oppose, the president's health care plan," she said. "Democrats should brace for November."

SCHOOL GIVES CREDITS FOR PARTICIPATION IN PRO-GAY EVENT

(EP News)--Students in Bedford, N.H., will be awarded credits toward graduation for participating in the recent Day of Silence, sponsored by the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network. The school offers "Real World Learning" hours, a requirement for graduation. Kevin Smith, executive director of Cornerstone Action in New Hampshire, said the move is stirring protests from parents who weren't notified about the plan. "This is another intrusion of the gay-lesbian-transgender agenda into the lives of children, which parents have every right to object to," he said. He wonders if the same will apply for

Christian students who take part in things like the Day of Truth.

SAME-SEX DIVORCES GENERATE TEXAS TWISTER

(EP News)--Two recent rulings in Texas have granted divorces to same-sex couples, even though the state does not recognize gay marriage. Attorney General Greg Abbott is appealing the most recent decision, which involves a lesbian couple married in Massachusetts in 2004, saying in court filings that because Texas doesn't recognize gay marriage, there can be no divorce. Kelly Shackelford, president and CEO of Liberty Institute in Texas, said the ruling is an attempt to subvert the vote of the people of the state. "The judge went so far as to declare our constitutional amendment unconstitutional, which is just unbelievable judicial activism," he said. "This is an attempt for them to have a new definition of marriage recognized and a divorce granted."

JUDGE SAYS NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER VIOLATES SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE

(EP News)--A federal judge in Wisconsin has declared the National Day of Prayer unconstitutional. Judge Barbara Crabb ruled in mid-April that government recognition of the day violates the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. The decision "carries out the Founders' plan of preserving religious

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liberty to the fullest extent possible in a pluralistic society," wrote Crabb. Attorneys with the Alliance Defense Fund want President Obama to appeal the decision. The National Day of Prayer is Thursday, May 6. Historically, all 50 governors, along with U.S. presidents, have issued proclamations in honor of the National Day of Prayer.

PRO-LIFE BILL HITS SNAG IN GEORGIA HOUSE

(EP News)--The Georgia Senate has passed a bill banning abortion in cases of coercion, gender selection and racial discrimination. But the landmark legislation has encountered problems in the House of Representatives. Catherine Davis, director of minority outreach for Georgia Right to Life, said she was convinced SB 529 was near the finish line. "We are now being told that the speaker of the House feels the bill goes too far because it will challenge Roe v. Wade," she said.

NEW PROVISION WOULD REQUIRE CORPORATE TRANSPARENCY

(EP News)--Democrats in Congress are poised to introduce legislation that would require corporations to reveal any contributions or involvement in political campaigns. The move comes after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in January that part of the McCain-Feingold campaign-finance law that regulates such contributions was unconstitutional. The effort is being spearheaded by Sen. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., and Rep. Chris Van Hollen, D-Md. The bill is expected to be introduced in April. Van Hollen said in an interview with the New York Times that it is necessary to get the bill passed before the midterm elections. "We'll see millions and millions of dollars in corporate money," he predicted, "funneled into these campaigns through dummy corporations and front companies."

TWO STATES MOVE FORWARD ON PRO-LIFE BILLS

(EP News)--Nebraska and Missouri lawmakers are entertaining several pro-life laws. The Nebraska Women's Health Protection Act has already passed, making it the first state to require doctors to screen women for possible mental and physical issues before performing an abortion. Dave Bydalek, executive director of the Nebraska Family Policy Council, said LB 549 will guard against coerced abortions. "It's going to reduce the number of injuries, both psychological and physical, suffered by women due to abortion," he said. A hearing was held in a Missouri Senate committee to amend a bill (HB 1327/HB 2000) that would require abortionists to notify prosecuting attorneys about abortions performed on women under age 17.

ANOTHER SUPREME COURT

VACANCY

(EP News)--U.S. Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens announced today he will retire this summer. This will be the second vacancy on the court to be filled by President Obama. Tom Fitton, president of Judicial Watch, said conservatives will have to be vigilant knowing the president is empathetic to justices who sidestep the Constitution. "Conservatives," he said, "are going want President Obama to replace Justice Stevens with a person who will apply the constitution strictly and not substitute beliefs." Fitton said Stevens' voting record included new rights for terrorists, affirmative action decisions and swipes at the Second Amendment.

OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE OVERRIDES GOVERNOR'S VETO OF PRO-LIFE BILLS

(EP News)--Oklahoma has some of the strongest pro-life laws in the country, after the state's House and Senate overrode two vetoes by Democratic Gov. Brad Henry. One law requires a woman to undergo an ultrasound and be given a description of her preborn baby before having an abortion. Tony Lauinger, chairman of Oklahomans for Life, said the measure is meant to protect the preborn and the mother's mental health. "Many women suffer severe emotional trauma as a result of having had an abortion," Lauinger told The Oklahoman. "With this, women will have the full benefit of having all the information. We believe the effort not only saves the lives of unborn children, but it spares women from emotional or psychological distress that follows an abortion." The other law prevents "wrongful-life" lawsuits, where a parent could argue that a child with disabilities would have been better off aborted.

ARIZONA FIRST TO OFFICIALLY OPT OUT OF ABORTION COVERAGE IN HEALTH CARE

(EP News)--Gov. Jan Brewer signed a bill into law in April making Arizona the first state to opt out of the federal health care abortion mandate. The Legislature had already been working on language to keep abortion funding out of state plans. Cathi Herrod, president of the Center for Arizona Policy, said lawmakers took that language and tailored it to apply to the federal mandate. "Once Obamacare passed," she said, "we were able to get an amendment on the bill that opts Arizona out of abortion coverage in any insurance exchanges." Brewer signed SB 1305 at a Center for Arizona Policy Family Dinner. "We had somewhere close to 40 legislators on stage as Governor Brewer did a live bill signing," Herrod said. "It was very much a celebration."

SUPREME COURT CONSIDERS KEEPING PETITION-SIGNERS' NAMES PRIVATE

(EP News)--The U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments in April over the privacy of Washington state voters who signed a petition last year — Referendum 71 — to overturn the state's "everything-but-

marriage" domestic-partnership law. Gay activists and news organizations want the names and home addresses of marriage supporters to be made public. Family advocates say they are tired of being harassed for simply supporting marriage. "No person should suffer harassment for participating in our political system," James Bopp, who represented organizers of the petition drive called Protect Marriage Washington, told USA Today. Justice Samuel Alito seemed to side with Bopp. According to The Associated Press, he questioned Washington's attorney general, Robert McKenna, on whether his office was willing to give out the home addresses of its lawyers. Justice Antonin Scalia argued on the other side. The Supreme Court is expected to rule in June.

GAY ACTIVISTS CLAIM VICTORY WITH ILLINOIS SCHOOL BILL

(EP News)--Gay activists have succeeded in getting special protections for homosexual categories — like "sexual orientation" and "gender-related identity" — added to a so-called anti-bullying bill in Illinois. The concern is that the bill will be used as a tool to justify homosexuality teaching in classrooms. The Illinois Safe Schools Alliance — a partner organization of the national Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) — was heavily involved in the legislation, which is sitting on the desk of Gov. Pat Quinn, who is expected to sign it. Illinois mom Tammy Schulz said she's concerned the bill could be used to justify the type of homosexuality promotion she is fighting in her school district. "They used the language of anti-bullying," she said, "but the content then was education about homosexuality."

NEBRASKA GOVERNOR SIGNS PRO-LIFE MEASURE

(EP News)--Gov. Dave Heineman signed the Pain Capable Unborn Child Protection Act last week making Nebraska the first to ban abortions after 20 weeks. LB 1103 asserts that pre-born children experience pain during an abortion. Mary Spaulding Balch, state legislative director for the National Right to Life Committee, said research has shown that at 20 weeks, pre-borns have all the receptors necessary to feel pain. "Doctors who do routine surgery on unborn children now use anesthesia to make sure those unborn children do not feel pain," she said. She expects the law will be challenged and may even make it all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. "It will be the first time that the U.S. Supreme Court has been presented with the question of whether or not a state has a compelling interest in protecting the pain-capable unborn child." The law goes into effect Oct. 15, 2010.

ARKANSAS WILL ALLOW COHABITING COUPLES TO ADOPT

(EP News)--Pulaski County Circuit Judge Christopher Piazza ruled Friday that the Arkansas Adoption and Foster Care Act of 2008, which prohibits cohabiting couples from being foster or adoptive parents, violates

the state constitution. Piazza agreed with the American Civil Liberties Union, which brought the lawsuit, claiming Act 1 unfairly limits the number of homes available to waiting children. Jerry Cox, director of The Family Council of Arkansas, said the judge has thumbed his nose at the 600,000 voters who supported the measure. "So much for government by the people," he said. "This was government by the judge." The Family Council of Arkansas will appeal the decision.

STATES OPT OUT OF PAYING FOR ABORTION IN HEALTH CARE

(EP News)--Concern over federal funding of abortion in the health care reform law has prompted several states to move toward "opting out." Tennessee is the first state to get a bill to its governor that prohibits taxpayers from funding abortion. Lawmakers in Georgia, Oklahoma, Virginia and Louisiana are all considering similar measures. Mary Harned, staff counsel with Americans United for Life, said AUL has model legislation ready for states to use, and many are taking advantage. "There are currently 15 states that are actively working toward getting this done," she said, "and at least another 11 that we know of who are planning to do this."

SUPREME COURT SAYS VETERANS MEMORIAL CROSS CAN STAY

(EP News)--The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in April that a veterans memorial cross currently covered up by a box in California's Mojave Desert can stay right where it is. In a 5-4 decision, the court agreed that the 9th Circuit decision holding the memorial unconstitutional needed to be reversed, even though there were not five votes for any particular legal basis for the reversal. The case now goes back to the trial court level. The lower court order was the result of a suit filed by the American Civil Liberties Union in 2001 on behalf of a former Mojave Preserve employee who claimed to be "offended" by the cross. The cross will remain covered pending the district court's review.

HAWAII HOUSE APPROVES CIVIL UNIONS

(EP News)--The Hawaii Legislature has passed a bill allowing civil unions. HB 444 gives same-sex couples all the spousal rights of marriage. It now goes to the governor. Dennis Arakaki, executive director of the Hawaii Family Forum, said the bill was a surprise. "They chose to do it on the last day of session, at the 11th hour," he said. He thinks the chances of Gov. Linda Lingle vetoing the legislation are good. "For one thing, there are flaws in the bill," Arakaki said. "The other thing is, her lieutenant governor has taken public stances against the bill." The governor has 45 days to sign or veto it, or it automatically becomes law.

VIRGINIA GOVERNOR RESTORES JESUS-PRAYERS BY POLICE CHAPLAINS

(EP News)--Virginia Gov. Bob McDonnell

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restored the rights of six state police chaplains to pray publicly "in Jesus name," reversing the policy of his predecessor, Gov. Tim Kaine. "This victory comes after our two-year campaign for Jesus name," said Chaplain Gordon James Klingenschmitt, who led a 1,000-person rally outside the governor's mansion in 2008, then submitted up to 15,000 petitions to reinstate the chaplains jobs and free speech. Now that McDonnell has fulfilled his campaign pledge, the six chaplains including Rex Carter and Mike Honaker, who had turned in their badges rather than deny Christ, will be invited back to their chaplain jobs, and will be able to pray "in Jesus name."

SENATOR SEEKS PARENTAL- RIGHTS PROTECTIONS

(EP News)--U.S. Sen. Jim DeMint, R-S.C., has introduced a resolution that asks the Senate to refrain from ratifying an anti-parental rights treaty. Senate Resolution 519 defines the Constitution as the primary safeguard for children in the U.S. It also states that the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child "undermines traditional principles of law regarding parents and children." Parental rights supporters are also calling for a constitutional amendment that would make protection of parental rights explicit within the text of the Constitution. "The courts have indicated to us that the Constitution is not specific as far as parental rights," DeMint said. "That's why a number of us feel like a constitutional amendment that clarifies the rights of parents is really important at this time."

SAME-SEX COUPLES CHALLENGE MINNESOTA MARRIAGE LAW

(EP News)--Three same-sex couples have filed suit against a Minnesota law that defines marriage as the union of one man and one woman. The group, calling itself Marry Me Minnesota, claims the 1997 Defense of Marriage Act violates its rights to due process, equal protection and freedom of conscience and association under the state constitution. Tom Prichard, president of the Minnesota Family Council, said the lawsuit is the same tactic used to legalize same-sex unions in Iowa and Washington, D.C. He's concerned about the vulnerability of Minnesota's law. "We believe, fundamentally, we need a marriage amendment in our state Constitution," he said.

NEW YORK GIVES SAME-SEX PARTNERS PARENTAL RIGHTS

(EP News)--New York's Court of Appeals has ruled in two separate cases that the non-biological parent in same-sex relationships should have full parental rights. First, the court found that a lesbian who had given birth while in a relationship can ask for child support now that the relationship is defunct. Second, the court ruled that a former lesbian

partner could seek visitation rights even though she is not the biological parent of the child and the mother repeatedly refused to allow her partner to adopt the child. The two entered into a civil union in Vermont, after the child was conceived through artificial insemination.

COURT COULD LET PEOPLE DECIDE ON SAME-SEX MARRIAGE IN D.C.

(EP News)--A federal appeals court heard arguments in early May in a case that would stop the recognition of same-sex unions in the District of Columbia and give people the chance to vote on the issue. The Court of Appeals is under no time limit, but a decision is expected sometime this year. The D.C. City Council voted to legalize same-sex marriage in December, and pro-family groups have been turned down by the Board of Elections several times as they tried to put together a ballot initiative. A recent Washington Post poll showed 59 percent of adult D.C. residents believe voters should be allowed to vote "Yes" or "No" on the definition of marriage in the District.

FLORIDA NIXES ABORTION FUNDING IN HEALTH CARE

(EP News)--Florida is the fourth state to pass legislation opting-out of federally-funded abortion. The fundamental objective of HB 1143 is making sure insurance plans that cover abortions and participate in the federal health care network don't receive tax money. John Stemberger, president of the Florida Family Policy Council, said it's the most significant piece of legislation in the state's history. "The latest polling shows 72 percent of citizens don't want taxpayers' dollars going to fund abortions," he said.

STILL THROWING MORE MONEY AT EDUCATION

(JBS) Senator Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) has introduced legislation, S. 3206. The Keep our Educators Working Act of 2010. "This bill would create an Education Jobs Fund that states can use for retaining or hiring employees, at the pre-K and K-12 levels, and also at public institutions of higher education," proclaims Senator Tom Harkin. This is a \$23 billion bill that would bail out municipal and university school teachers, with the funding to be used in six months.

It's very true that every aspect of our economy has been affected by the recession and families and businesses have had to cut back their spending in various ways; even items once looked upon as necessities have had to be eliminated. Not so with the government-run schools. They are not expected to reduce wasteful and unnecessary spending, or live within a scaled-back budget. They have the federal government to bail out at least the teachers' salaries and benefits with another \$23 billion of taxpayer money, even though public schools are already receiving \$150 billion for education over two years from the stimulus bill.

The gift of \$23 billion to educators will be

used in 2010 for compensation, benefits, and "other expenses." The bill is aimed at retaining or hiring "150,000 or more" government school employees. With \$23 billion being spent on 150,000 jobs that equals \$153,333 per job. But with the average teacher salary, according to the teachers' union's own data, at around \$51,009, where is the other \$100,000 going.

Not only is this a favorite bill of the 26 cosponsors -- all Democrats but for one "independent" -- it is also a favorite of teachers' unions -- the National Education Association (NEA) and American Federation of Teachers (AFT), colleges and universities, and individual teachers, of course. These "teacher advocates" insist that if they don't receive these perks, education will suffer, so they are engaged in a "massive 24/7 lobbying campaign" to get Harkin's bill passed.

NEW BAILOUT: THE LOCAL JOBS FOR AMERICA ACT

(JBS) Introduced in the House of Representatives on March 10, 2010, H.R. 4812 is a gigantic bailout of government employees and union jobs. Rep. George Miller (D-Calif.), who has garnered 154 cosponsors for his bill, insists that the first stimulus did a "pretty fair job" but "clearly is not going to be sufficient" to reduce the current 9.7 percent national unemployment rate, so he'd like to get another stimulus-type bill passed. However, this new piece of deficit spending will come at the expense of hardworking American taxpayers.

In a summary provided by the House Committee on Education and Labor, this specialized and narrowly focused bill which

has no pay-as-you-go restrictions in Congress on its \$75 billion price tag, is supposed to create one million jobs, support and maintain public sector jobs, help community organizations (ACORN?) and all without raising taxes. But the terms solidly indicate that mostly union jobs will be supported and maintained; no job creation is actually included in the bill, just job training.

Rep. Miller, is only too happy to bring home more pork to his state's unionized government employees. The city of San Francisco is already planning on rehiring 17,000 laid off workers. In a city like San Francisco, over 9,000 employees earn at least \$100,000 a year, and many, earn well over \$200,000. Across the Bay smaller municipalities, about 15, are salivating over their share of tax money as well, expecting as much as \$340 million between them.

H.R. 4812 would bail out union jobs for large cities and postpone large public sector layoffs until after election time. While many Americans are losing their jobs, having their wages frozen, or seeing their wages or salaries cut back along with all sorts of benefits, this newest scheme would keep the unionized government employees in the pink. Private sector workers will once again bailout the fat cats in the public sector and in the community organizations that have no constitutional right to taxpayer money. The ridiculous claim that one million jobs will be created by this legislation must be seen for what it is -- a ludicrous lie to get Main Street Americans to look the other way while their money is being poured into the pockets of those who elected the present administration and Congress.



Your Duty To Your Church

By Roy Mason
(1894 - 1978)

1. ATTENDANCE AND SERVICE.

"Seek that ye abound. . .to the **upbuilding of the church**" (I Cor. 14:12 B.U. Version).

AS TO WORSHIP

"And, . . .as his custom was, he went **into the synagogue on the sabbath day**" (Luke 4:16).

If the Son of God had a custom of regularly going to the house of public worship, ought not you to have a similar custom?

"**Not neglecting---as some habitually do---to meet together**" (Heb. 10:25 Weymouth's Trans.).

"**. . .In the Spirit on the Lord's day**" (Rev. 1:10).

AS TO SERVICE

"**Let all things be done unto edifying**" (I Cor. 14:26).

"God has set the members, every one of them in the body as it hath pleased Him" (I Cor. 12:13).

"**But covet earnestly the best gifts**" (I Cor. 12:31).



"The Spirit. . .**dividing to every man severally as he will**" (I Cor. 12:11).

"**Let nothing be done through strife and vainglory; but in lowliness of mind**" (Phil. 2:3).

Every new relationship that we enter into involves us in new duties and responsibilities. For instance when one gets married, they necessarily take upon themselves new obligations. Unless there is the willingness to shoulder all of the responsibilities that married life entails, no one should get married. Nowadays many persons hurriedly and thoughtlessly enter into the marriage contract without counting the cost; consequently the divorce courts are full all the time. In reading over divorce court proceedings some time ago I saw the account given of a man who during four years of married life bought his wife one pair of shoes. That

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pair of shoes constituted the sum total of all that he had contributed towards her clothing. Evidently that man did not consider that marriage involved him in any new obligations or responsibilities of any kind.

Just as in other relationships, the new relationship entered into when one joins a church, involves one with new obligations and responsibilities. No one has any business becoming a church member unless they are willing to shoulder their part of the responsibility. In many of our churches today the whole burden of maintaining the church and of carrying on its work, is borne on the shoulders of about ten per cent of the membership. It is sad, but true, that many church rolls are cluttered up with a lot of names that only represent so many "dead heads." Those whom the names designate never amount to a thing as church members. A church is not an end in itself, but a means to an end. It is an organization to foster the spiritual growth and development of its members, and to propagate the Gospel of Christ among the lost. Hence in the very nature of the case, a church is to be a "going" concern. Now any business that is really a "going" business is one that is making dividends, and when any business ceases to be a going business, it soon is in the hands of the receiver. There are many churches today that have ceased to be going concerns. Such ought to have these words written above the doorway: "This church is in the hands of the receiver."

These pages are written primarily to those who have been saved and have united with a church. I will just assume in writing this that you are a church member. If you are, be willing to accept the obligations, duties, and responsibilities that church membership entails. Be of some use to the church that you have united with, or else have the honesty to tell the church to take your name off the church roll and no longer consider you a member. Don't pretend to be something when you are nothing. The powerlessness of many of our churches today is to be explained upon the basis of their being weighted down with a lot of "dead timber," a lot of members who cannot be depended upon for anything. Such churches are like a ship weighted down with barnacles. If the ship is to regain its former speed, the barnacles must be scraped off.

Church membership means something---it means a very great deal if properly interpreted. Every member that unites with a Baptist church is supposed to subscribe to a church covenant. A covenant is nothing less than a contract. In other words, when you united with the church you entered into a contract before God, and with the other Christians

of that church in which you solemnly vowed to accept certain obligations, and to faithfully perform them. Below is given the church covenant that is almost universally used among Baptist churches. Read it carefully and thoughtfully, that you may get a sense of what it means to be a church member, and may see clearly some of the obligations that are assumed by those joining a church.

CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ, as our Savior, and upon the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of our Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, we do now in the presence of God, angels, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church, in knowledge, holiness, and comfort, to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines, to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotion; to religiously educate our children, to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances, to walk circumspectly in the world, to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements and exemplary in our deportment, to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger, to abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage, and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the Kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another with brotherly love, to remember each other in prayer, to aid each other in sickness and distress, to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech, to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place, we will as soon as possible unite with some other church, where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

Now let us think of some of the things that may be rightfully expected of every church member; things that you should be very careful to observe if you are to be worthy of a place on the membership roll of a church:

The first thing relates to church attendance. I remember that an evangelistic campaign was carried on in a certain town once; it was one of those superficial "whoop 'em up" campaigns so characteristic of a certain type of revivalist. At the close of the meeting there was a great string of "converts" to be baptized. They were baptized, and that was the last of most of them. Months elapsed, and there were numbers of those who had been

baptized who were never seen inside the church building. Evidently they looked upon salvation as a sort of fire insurance for eternity, and church membership as being in some way essential to make the policy valid. I doubt seriously if those just mentioned, were any of them, really saved. Yet it is true that in some cases persons who are genuinely converted have not the proper conception of their duty as regards church attendance. It is to their way of thinking, a negligible something. If everything is perfectly auspicious, and there is nowhere else to go, they will occasionally go to church.

The trouble with many people along the line of church attendance is that they have the wrong conception of what church attendance is for. When they go to church it is with a wrong motive. Many apparently go to church as a form of entertainment. Churches are largely to blame for this. Many of them plan their music, and indeed the whole program, to catch the aesthetic eye and ear. The service is designed to please and entertain, and appeal to the flesh. With those who go for entertainment, if they fail to be entertained as they wish, or if they discover that something else will furnish them with a more pleasant diversion, they readily quit the church, and spend their time elsewhere. Many will not go to church to hear the Gospel no matter how purely and earnestly it is preached. But let the church put on something a little bit extra, some sort of a program, or something of that sort, and watch the crowds! Then again, many people go to church solely because they happen to like the preacher. He is a "good mixer," a jolly good fellow among the people of the community, and in addition to this speaks quite well, so many go to hear him.

But are the reasons mentioned above, those that should prompt you or any other genuine Christian, to go to church? A thousand times NO! "You should go to church to worship." You should not go to church to be entertained, to while away some time pleasantly, to merely listen to a pleasant discourse, because you happen to like the preacher, or because you have a curiosity to know what such and such a person will have on. The church building is God's House; it is a trysting place with God, a place where the Lord's people are to meet to collectively offer prayer, praise, and to bow themselves before God, heart and soul, in worship and adoration.

You should not neglect the public place of worship, because God through the inspired writer has commanded that we "Forsake not the assembling of ourselves together." After we have been the recipients of divine favor for a whole week, having received from God everything, surely it is but right that we should on the Lord's Day assemble with other Christians, to make public recognition of our indebtedness to God,

and to render to Him the thanks that are His due.

How often should a Christian go to church? The answer is, every time the doors of your church open for worship, you should be there. You have no right to look upon the prayer meeting as a meeting for the pastor and a few of the women of the church. I have known church members who never attended prayer meeting but who each week were regularly found at the lodge. Suppose that all of the members of the church had acted in like manner? In that case the prayer meeting would have ceased. I have known other Christians to load into an automobile on Sunday morning and go out somewhere on a drive for the day. Others go visiting and spend the worship time in gossiping and feasting. Others lounge and loaf around home all day Sunday, or sit immersed in the newspaper. Suppose that all Christians should do likewise? Churches would have to close their doors. "**Despise ye the church of God?**" asked the Apostle Paul of those who abused their privilege as church members, in his day. Those who subordinate their church as those mentioned above are despisers of the church of God, in the strictest sense of the term. Not one Sunday should pass without your having attended public worship, unless of course prevented by sickness or circumstances beyond your control. You covenanted to support the church by your attendance when you joined, and you should either live up to your covenant, or withdraw from the church.

Occasionally you will hear some one try to excuse themselves for what they, deep down in their hearts know to be a sinful, negligent life, by saying, "I can worship God just as well at home, as I can at church. I had just as well stay at home and mean no harm, as to go to church and mean no good." The trouble with the statement about worshipping God, "just as well at home," is that it is not so. God has commanded that we assemble ourselves together, and that person who ignores what God has said about it, and substitutes their own opinion, cannot worship as acceptably as the person who tries to do what He says in the way that He says to do it. Besides those who are most devout in private worship, are always the ones who are most regular in their attendance upon public worship.

I have observed some strange things about church members. Some put off their headaches until Sunday, and are prevented from attending church, but they invariably recover by Monday morning in time to go to work. They will wade through rain, and plow through the snow to their places of business all through the week without difficulty, but the slightest drizzle on Sunday will keep them from church. The slightest

♦ (Continued on page 358)

Your Duty To Your

(Continued from page 357) ◊

indisposition or the least inclemency in the weather keeps numbers of people from church in every community. Ought this to be? Ought we to deem the Lord's work and the Lord's business of less importance than our own? Ought any indisposition that will permit one to go to work on Monday morning, keep one from worship on Sunday?

As we remember how our fathers in ages past met for worship when it endangered their lives to do so; as we remember the persecution, suffering and even martyrdom that they suffered for Christ, ought it not shame us as we think of the puerile excuses that are resorted to today by those who let the slightest adverse circumstance keep them from worshipping and serving Christ?

As a new Christian and church member, you are going to have to face the question as to what kind you will be. Will you be among those whose faces are familiar around the house of God? Or will your name have to go down on the inactive list? Will you be "an asset to your church," or will you "be a liability?"

Let us next consider your duty to your church along another line, namely, that of *SERVICE*. It is all very well for one to be a regular church attendant, but one should be something more than that. No one ought to want to be merely a "bench warmer." Not every one is cut out for the same thing, or designed to render the same service. Talents are God-given. To some He has given a talent for one thing, to others talent for another. The Lord never intended that every church member should become a pastor or an evangelist. Probably He never intended that every one should teach. Some think that because they are unable to sing like some one they know, or preach, or teach a Sunday school class, that therefore the door of service is closed to them. "I can't do these things, therefore I will not do anything," that seems to be their attitude. Paul tells us that there is one Spirit, but a "diversity of gifts." God does not require that you do something for which He has never fitted you, but He does expect you to make the best use possible of that which He has endowed you. There should be a willingness on your part to do anything, and to take any part in the life and work of your church that it is possible for you to do or take. It is a matter of regret to many that they are unable to get up and speak in the meetings of the church. While there are many other things that are important besides speaking in public, it still remains that it is a very fine thing for a Christian to be able to speak well in public. And really, there are very few persons who cannot learn to very clearly express themselves in public if they begin in time and will persist in their efforts.

Many join the church at an early age, and never take any public part in the work of the church, or attempt anything that requires them to stand up before a congregation and speak. Rather than suffer a little embarrassment, they just go on through life and never learn to say anything in a public assembly. When they have gotten well along in years, they feel that they are then too old to learn. Few persons are ever handicapped by greater natural timidity than the writer of these lines. I realized when I joined the church that I would have to overcome this and I decided that when called upon to do anything at the church I would get up and make the attempt even if my knees smote together and my teeth chattered like castanets. I kept my resolution, and today I am most thankful that I did. Let me advise you who read these pages to make a similar resolution. When you are asked to do a thing, don't excuse yourself just because it will cost you some effort or cause you some embarrassment; try it. Do the best you can. Your effort may be none to good at first, but you will gradually make improvement.

The word "Service" is to many, more or less an abstract term. It is a term freely used today, and often it means very little. Let us be as concrete as possible and think of some of the avenues of service afforded by the church to which you belong. Or we might put it this way: "What are some of the ways in which you can serve in your church?"

The first and the most important way in which you can serve your church is *for you to become an intercessor*. Churches need pray-ers, as nothing else today. Have you begun the practice of daily taking to God the needs of your church in prayer? Do you remember those of your community, to pray for their salvation? Do you remember those who teach and minister to your congregation? All cannot render the same kind of service, but every member of the church can pray. A church that has faithful intercessors will become a mighty church. Above all things, in considering your place and part in the life of your church, don't leave out or forget intercessory prayer.

Another line of service open to you is, *soul winning*. The commission to "make disciples," was not given solely to ministers; it was intended to apply to all Christians. You cannot shake the responsibility to win the lost off upon the pastor of your church, or upon someone else---it rests upon "you"! Every person has a certain circle of friends and acquaintances. There are persons whom they have access to and influence over such as has no one else. Perhaps there is some one that you can reach with the Gospel that no one else in the world but you could win. You don't have to get upon a rostrum, or mount a pulpit in order to preach the Gospel. As you come in touch with others and the opportunity opens,

tell them about Christ and salvation, invite them to church and Sunday school. Persist in your efforts until you have done your utmost to accomplish what you started out to do. I recall that in a certain pastorate I once held, there was a man and his wife who were very faithful Christians. They went to the trouble of inviting the people around them to church, and they did it so cordially and persistently that those whom they invited usually came. Time and again strange faces in the audience could be traced to their work. A number of those whom they succeeded in bringing to church were later baptized. Now that is the kind of service that can be performed by any Christian, no matter how lacking in talents and gifts he may be.

I am acquainted with one layman who for years has made it the practice of his life to seek to win to Christ those of the lost with whom he happens to be associated. Sometimes within the space of a year's time he wins twenty-five or thirty persons to Christ by his personal efforts. If such is possible in the case of this man, why is not the same possible with you?

The need today is for Christians who care not for any glory for themselves but who will work without prospect or hope of any earthly reward. Sometimes people work and serve, not because they love Christ, or desire the welfare of their fellows, but simply for what honor and praise they may derive from men. "Verily such have their reward." The person who serves for praise always wants the "highest seat in the synagogue." They are not content unless they are in the place of a leader. One of the finest ushers in a certain city church was one of the leading business men of that city. Many would not have wished what might have seemed to some a menial place, but this man seemed to enjoy himself immensely in that position. He wished to be useful, and seemingly had no desire to exalt himself. It is well for us to remember that those things that we do merely for the praise of men are of little value in God's sight. All of the reward that we will ever get for such service is the enjoyment we get out of hearing ourselves praised.

Again, as regards service, there is need in our churches for those who will lead in *public prayer, direct the music, teach in Sunday school, discharge the office of deacon, etc.* Great faithfulness and efficiency in conscientiously discharging the duties pertaining to any of these things will go far towards making a church what it ought to be. Many of our churches are lacking in life and usefulness as the direct result of poor leadership; no one among all the members able in prayer, no one able to lead in song, no one competent to teach. The pastor finds no one willing to help him, and with this state of affairs he finds himself unable to accomplish very much. Our churches need laymen

who show some interest in their Lord's business as well as their own. A few persons in a church, young or old, who are willing to be used, and who will try to fit themselves for use, can absolutely transform that church.

This would seem an opportune time to consider what is generally termed, "*Special Service*." For reasons unknown to us, but consistent with His eternal purposes, God often lays it upon the hearts of individuals to dedicate to Him their lives for special service, such as the gospel ministry, missionary service at home or abroad, the work of a gospel singer, etc. If you live and walk within "calling distance" of the Lord, he may call you for such service. If He does, don't be ashamed of the call, don't fight the call; it will only result in your leading an unhappy life if you do. Hear the call, heed it if it comes, and yield to it! God's plan for your life is best. Of all foolish things in this world, the most foolish is for one to try to go in opposition to what they know to be God's will or plan. It took a good "whaling" to bring Jonah to his senses. If God calls you to a certain work in His kingdom, don't rebel and force Him to deal with you as He did with Jonah. I have actually heard preachers tell about how long they fought a call to preach, as though it was something to be proud of. If that had been my experience, I would be so ashamed of it, that I would want to keep silent on that point! Why should any one rebel against God's plan for their life? Would it not be an honor for God to signal you out for His special use? Out of all the countless thousands on earth, why should the God of Heaven and earth, thus signally honor you by setting you apart to be an ambassador for Him? Paul was not ashamed to be an ambassador for Christ. He said, "For unto me, who am the least of all saints is this grace given, to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ."

There is one thing with reference to special service that needs to be said with emphasis, and that is that no one should enter such service without a definite, clear call from God. To be called into the ministry by some friend is not enough. To be lured to the foreign mission field by the romance that hangs about the thought of foreign lands, is to make a mistake that will inevitably bring years of repentance. I have known of cases where some great speaker came to a college, and after a masterful address, concluded with an emotional appeal to the students to dedicate their lives to work on the foreign field. Under great emotional stress many hastily pledged themselves, but as the months passed their missionary ardor cooled, and they renounced all thought of becoming missionaries. I cannot believe that God called those who so easily relinquished the thought of going out to do His service. The God-called worker will have a purpose as deep and as abiding

◊ (Continued on page 359)

GLEANINGS



these there is no truly moral life, no faith, no hope, no love, no knowledge of God. The Bible is translated into all languages, exceeding that of any other book. It has the largest circulation of any publication in the world or in history. (News & Truths, 1929).



Your Duty To Your

(Continued from page 358) ♦ as life itself. Don't settle the question of a call from God on your own initiative and merely according to your natural desires and inclinations. It is no trifling matter to be settled lightly or hastily. Be sure God is leading, and if once convinced that He is, step out, believing that He Who calls, is able to go with you every step of the path that He has chosen for you.

And if you are certain of a call from God to perform some particular mission for Him, don't let yourself despise the things that lie close at hand, and don't get the idea that they are unimportant. I have known young men to decide that they would study for the ministry; seemingly they had the idea that some day, after they had taken a certain amount of training and gotten out into the world, they would do great things for the Lord. Until that time came, they seemed content to loaf in the Master's vineyard. They were of no use to the pastor of the church to which they belonged. They could not be depended upon to render any service around their church. They seemed to think that by some mysterious alchemy a sea voyage to foreign land would transform them into soul winners.

Take heed, lest you make the mistake mentioned above. If you plan to give your life to some special service for the Lord, begin your service to Him by seeking to be of some use to Him "now." Start out by being of some account to your church at home. "He that is faithful in little, is faithful in much," says the Scriptures. If you are not faithful in the small things pertaining to the work of your church now, how may you expect God to entrust great things into your hands after awhile? Hudson Taylor, the founder of the great China Inland Mission, would not have a missionary who was not a soul winner in the home land. In his biography it is told that he and a number of volunteers set sail for England, bound for China. He told his companions that there was little need for them to expect to win the Chinese to Christ, if they were unable to win the sailors on the vessel. They began to pray and to labor, with the result that by the time they landed in China, nearly the whole number of that rough, godless crew had been won to Christ, and their lives marvelously changed.



Any man who doesn't believe in missions doesn't believe the Bible, and is, to that extent, an infidel. If there is one single principle in the Bible that stands out as supreme it is that of missions. It is found in types and shadows, in prophecy, and is the keynote of the New Testament. "God so loved that he gave his only begotten Son;" Jesus "came to seek and to save the lost." His last words to the church---involving every member---were: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." Any man who loves the Lord or the souls of lost men can never get away from those words. This is the hope, and the only hope of a lost and doomed world. "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved, and how shall they call upon him in whom they have not believed, and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a preacher, and how shall they preach except they be sent?" (Rom. 10:13-14). The Lord, speaking to the church at Antioch, said: "Separate unto me Paul and Barnabas to the work whereunto I have called them." If these Scriptures mean anything, they mean that God calls, designates the place of service, and that the church sends and supports those called. They can mean nothing else, and any fair-minded man knows that they do mean that. If there be any of contrary mind, and there seems to be, it is a case according to the age-long proverb: "There are none so blind as those who will not see!" The only question involved is: Do I believe the Bible? --- Hillard (News & Truths, 1928).

The Book of Books is the Bible. There are two realms of fact and existence, the natural and the supernatural. The proper field of science and other forms of human investigation is the realm of the natural. This natural can never reach up into the supernatural. Any attempt at this must always repeat the folly of the Tower of Babel and result in the same confusion and disappointment and failure. The only way the knowledge of the Supernatural can come down to the natural is by a revelation from above. The Bible is this Revelation, and it is the only source of knowledge of the supernatural from which man came and the supernatural to which he returns. The Bible contains two great elements: the truth revealed by the Holy Spirit through chosen men, and the personal presence of Jesus Christ Who came down from Heaven to declare God and His will in His own person. Without

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Indore Baptist Church and Pastor Paul Stepp have announced a Spring Bible Conference June 11th - 13th.

Scheduled speakers are Elders Jeff Short, Benjamin Stepp, Joe Collins, Tom Ross, Shawn Trescott, Roger Frame, Carl Barnette, and Dan Stepp.

Service times are Friday 7 p.m., Saturday 9:30 a.m., and Sunday at 10 a.m.

For more information visit the church's website at www.indorebaptistchurch.org.

The Mt. Zion Baptist Church of Whitestown, IN would like to announce a weekend meeting July 23-25th.

Service times are Friday evening at 7 p.m., Saturday at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m., and Sunday at 9:30 a.m. and 1 p.m.

Elder Wayne Gregory from Morrisville, NC is scheduled to speak as well as several visiting pastors.

For more information call (317) 769-3247 or (317) 769-2998

The New Testament Baptist Church of Burton, OH is seeking a pastor.

For further information please contact the church at PO Box 840, Burton, OH 44021 or you can email your inquiry to ctiber@hughes.net.

If you would like to know more about the church, please visit their website at www.newtestamentbaptistchurchoh.com.

The Grace Baptist Church in Fredericktown, OH is currently seeking a pastor, and also guest speakers.

Our current services: Sunday school at 10:00 am, Worship service at 11:00 followed by lunch and an afternoon service at 1:00 pm. Wednesdays at 7:00 pm.

Any brethren that may be interested in filling in to help our ministry can contact Bro. Tory Smith at (614) 205-0729 or by email toremup@columbus.rr.com.

The Bethel Bible Baptist Church, PO Box 85, Mansfield, LA is in need of a pastor.

Any interested Elder should call Connie McMellon at 318-872-1647.

The Landmark Baptist Church of Collinsville, IL is in need of a pastor.

Any interested Elders may call (618) 288-4236 for more information.

Any church that is without a pastor, please feel free to send your information in regards to the pastoral position for publication in these announcements.

We have now completed all the discs of the piano accompaniment for the Berea Hymnal. The latest discs are: disc 13 (hymns 301-325), disc 14 (hymns 326-350), disc 15 (hymns 351-375), disc 16 (376-395), and disc 17 (hymns 396-405).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 4-1-2010 to 4-30-2010

Beginning Balance	\$11,216.90
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	225.00
Berea B. C., Westpoint, TN	50.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	100.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
.....	475.00
TOTAL	11,691.90
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio Time	922.40
Tape Production	195.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	1,117.40
.....	\$10,574.50
Interest	+ .85
.....	10,575.35
Less Corbin, KY des.	-923.72
ENDING BALANCE	\$9,651.63

CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT

Beginning Balance	\$1,406.12
RECEIPTS:	
TOTAL	1,406.12
EXPENDITURES:	
WCTT (Mar-Apr)	482.40
ENDING BALANCE	\$923.72



BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 4-1-2010 to 4-30-2010

Beginning Balance	\$2,514.87
RECEIPTS:	
Amazing Grace B. C., Stockdale, TX	25.00
B. C. of Brimfield, Brimfield, IL	36.87
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	418.53
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL	60.00
Berea M. B. C., West Point, TN	150.00
Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX	100.00
Bible Believer's B. C., Naples, ID	50.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV	300.00
Bob Phillips, Nespelem, WA	4.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	150.00
Buffalo Valley B. C., Clay, WV	50.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL	25.00
Faith M. B. C., Lynn, AR	25.00
Gail Knowles, Scarborough, ME	5.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
Grace M. B. C., Marion, IL	50.00
Grace B. C., Winston-Salem, NC	50.00
Grace M. B. C., Tulsa, OK	35.00
Helen Sturm, Ashland, KY	100.00
L. H. Ferrell, Des Allemands, LA	60.00
Landmark B. C., Moncks Corner, SC	50.00
Leroy Bullard, Albuquerque, NM	100.00
Mrs. Edie Jurzec, Richmond, IL	25.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH	100.00
New Testament B. C., Bristol, TN	10.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN	50.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL	100.00
Portland B. C., Plumersville, AR	50.00
Southside B. C., Fulton, MS	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Columbus, MS	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C. Silsbee, TX	30.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Wake Forest, NC	100.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA	25.00
Subscriptions	140.00
Dividing checks	150.00
Anonymous	341.00
Sub Total	\$3,265.40
TOTAL	\$5,780.27
EXPENDITURES:	
Printing	581.00
Postage	974.20
Supplies	97.00
Wages	2,300.00
FICA	191.42
Total Expenditures	4,143.62
ENDING BALANCE	\$1,636.65

Joy Unspeakable

By Rosco Brong
(1908 - 1985)

SALVATION BY THE CHRIST OF THE BIBLE BRINGS JOY BEYOND EXPRESSION

“ . . . In whom (Christ), though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory” (I Peter 1:8).

The false Christs of modernism, of the “social gospel,” of so-called neo-orthodoxy, of every other infidelity – the false Christs of Satan’s deceptions and man’s imaginings – can bring only disappointments and grief to deluded souls that trust in them. Only the Christ of the Bible can give genuine and eternal salvation to every soul that trusts in Him, and with that Biblical salvation a **“joy unspeakable and full of glory.”**

Only a fool or a hypocrite can claim to honor the Christ testified of in the Bible and at the same time dishonor by contradiction the Bible that testifies of the Christ. Both the fool and the hypocrite may **“enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season”** (Heb. 11:25), but they will certainly come to a sad end unless they repent.

But true believers in the true Christ, the Christ of the Bible, the incarnate Word faithfully presented in the written word of God, simply believe the record that God has given of His Son (I John 5:10). We simply believe the word of **“God, that cannot lie”** (Titus 1:2); we believe the truth (John 17:17) about the Truth (John 14:6). And so we **“rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.”**

IN THIS LIFE

Real Christians ought to enjoy life. We ought to be the happiest people in the world, and we ought to show it.

Some of Satan’s most successful propaganda has persuaded most people that only sinners can have what is called “a good time.” But exactly the opposite is true: God’s people are the blessed (happy) people, and **“the way of transgressors is hard”** (Prov. 13:15).

If we are unhappy Christians, it is usually because we have been living sinful lives, and God will not permit His children long to enjoy sin. It is right for us to enjoy life, provided this life is obedient to God: **“For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it”** (I Pet. 3:10, 11).

IN ETERNAL LIFE

Joy in physical life well spent is really more delightful and more lasting than the **“pleasures of sin,”** but the child of



God is in present possession of life on a higher plane – life which is capable of experiencing higher joys. Jesus said: **“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me**

hath everlasting life” (John 6:47).

Note the present tense, “hath.” Jesus did not merely suggest that the believer may have, might have, or will have, subject to some other condition, everlasting life. Jesus’ statement is that the believer has everlasting life – right now.

Everlasting life as described in the Bible is not just any kind of life that lasts forever. It is life that partakes of the divine nature (II Pet. 1:4) and so is able to know God (John 17:3). Here is capacity for joy beyond the fondest dreams of a lost world.

FORGIVENESS OF SINS

All earth’s sorrows, pains, tears, and death are the result of sin, inherited and personal. Souls that have felt something of the burden of sin and then have had that burden removed by God’s grace know the happiness of which David wrote, as quoted by Paul: **“Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness . . . Even as David also describeth the blessedness (happiness) of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin”** (Rom. 4:3-8).

FRIENDSHIP OF JESUS

Among the sweetest and most enduring of all the joys of life are the joys of true friendship. Indeed, he who has found one true friend has found wealth beyond measure. A true friend can know all our faults and still love us. And **“there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother”** (Prov. 18:24).

“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth . . . I have called you friends” (John 15:13-15).

To be friends of Jesus, to have Him as our Friend, this is our joyful privilege as His disciples!

PRIVILEGE OF PRAYER

Even as we enjoy the abundance of God’s blessings we find ourselves wishing for more as our capacity for enjoyment increases. Yet we cannot desire so much but that God can give us more than we ask for and more than we have room to receive (Eph. 3:20; Mal. 3:10). Jesus said: **“Hitherto have ye asked nothing in name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full”** (John 16:24).

ASSURANCE OF VICTORY

“In the world ye shall have tribulation,” Jesus tells His disciples (John 16:33). We are not to suppose that Christians are promised immunity from the troubles common to humanity in this world. But the bitterness of our sorrow makes our joys all the sweeter. Further, we have the assurance that our sorrows are temporary but our joys all the sweeter.

Further, we have the assurance that our sorrows are temporary but our joys are eternal. Our ultimate victory is as certain as if the battle were already over. Our great Captain has already met and overcome the enemy, and we are victorious in Him: **“For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?”** (I John 5:4, 5).

Note that according to God’s Word it is not the “second blessing” Christian, not the Christian who claims extraordinary advancement to a “higher” or “deeper” spiritual life unknown to ordinary Christians, but simply “whatsoever is born of God” that “overcomes the world.” Hallelujah!

SALVATION COMPLETE

“Believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving

the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls” (I Pet. 1:8, 9). The apostle is here speaking of the continuing, present-tense aspect of salvation (that is, sanctification) as the circumstance attending unspeakable joy.

Stunted Christians are generally not happy Christians. If they will attend to God’s appointed means of spiritual growth (such as submission to His will in prayer, Bible study, church fellowship, and active obedience), they will get happy and obtain the salvation of their souls (lives) hitherto wasted in disobedience.

Biblical salvation in human experience begins in regeneration, continues in sanctification, and will be perfected in the resurrection.

If our present joys surpass our powers of expression, how much more when our Lord comes back and takes us to Himself in the likeness of His glory!

Then He will **“change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself”** (Phil. 3:21).

Then at last **“God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away”** (Rev. 21:4).



ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Philidelphia Baptist Church of Decatur, AL and Pastor Ted Tweet would like to announce a special meeting July 7th-11th.

Elder Tom Ross will be the guest speaker.

The Grace Bible Baptist Church of Denham Springs, LA will be hosting a Bible conference June 11th thru June 13th. All are invited to attend.

Scheduled speakers are: Elders Leroy Pack, Larry Wilson, David O’Neal, Tom Horn, Al Horn, Jose Seranno, and Nathaniel Hille.

Service times are Friday at 6:30 p.m., Saturday at 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., and Sunday at 9:45 a.m.

For more information contact Pastor Jerry Dodson at (225) 664-3223.

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Northport AL, and Pastor Todd Bryant would like to announce a special meeting July 16th-18th.

Elder David O’Neal of Tulsa, OK will be the guest speaker.

Service times are Friday at 7:00 pm, Saturday at 10:00 am, with a meal provided, and Sunday at 10:00 am.

All are invited to attend.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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