

The Berea Baptist Banner

"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." Matt. 21:22

The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly

By Roger Reed
of Mansfield, Ohio

"For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him" (Isa. 64:4).

"But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him" (I Cor. 2:9).



"The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly," from the sixties, is one of my all-time favorite Western movies! I used to listen to the soundtracks from the movie for hours while I put together car models that I would paint and put on a bookshelf. Of course, that was before the Lord saved me. I still like the movie and the music soundtrack. But now the Lord has burdened me to

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Sharing The Lamb

By John R. Gilpin
(1905-1974)

"And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying: This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb,



according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house: And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb" (Exod. 12:1-4).

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Cleansing A Leper

By Joseph M. Sidders
of Guntown, Mississippi

"And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them" (Matt. 8:2-4).

"And there came a leper to



him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean. And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed. And he straitly charged him, and forthwith sent him away; And saith unto

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Congregationalism: A Baptist Distinctive

By David Green
of Hortense, Georgia

Matthew 20:20-28 says, "Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him. And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom. But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism



that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father. And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren. But Jesus

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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.
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9. To make the Devil and his demons as mad as possible.

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The Good...

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write an article, which has nothing to do with the western movie, other than the title. It is amazing how He gave me the title and then said write an article. (Usually, it is the other way around, write the article and struggle for a title!)

Let us first look at the "Good"! Jesus said, (I do not believe we can do any better than what Jesus said), **"And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God"** (Mark 10:18). A. W. Pink said, "The "goodness" of God refers to the perfection of His nature: **"This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all"** (I John 1:5). There is such an absolute perfection in God's nature and being that nothing is wanting to it or defective in it, and nothing can be added to it to make it better.

We cannot do better than the "Goodness" of God. "God is not only the Greatest of all beings but the Best." **"Thou art good, and doest good; teach me thy statutes"** (Psa. 119:68) **"God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged"** (Rom. 3:4). **"Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness"** (Psa. 143:10).

There is no doubt that God is good, man is not **"For my people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge"** (Jer. 4:22).

"When others behave badly to us, it should only stir us up the more heartily to give thanks unto the Lord, because He is good; and when we ourselves are conscious that we are far from being good, we should only the more reverently bless Him that He is good. We must never tolerate an instant's unbelief as to the goodness of the Lord; whatever else may be questioned, this is absolutely certain, that Jehovah is good; His dispensations may vary, but His nature is always the same" (C. H. Spurgeon).

Now let us look at the "Bad"! When we think of the "Bad" it is everything that is evil and wicked, and that of course is Satan. The most famous saying of Satan is found in Genesis 3:1 **"...And he said unto the woman, ...Yea, hath God said?"** It is said that Satan is **"more subtil (subtle) than any beast in the field."** Subtle means: cunning, wily, or crafty: a subtle liar. Again, Jesus said, **"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it"** (John 8:44).

So, we learn from this verse that Satan is a liar, murderer, and a deceiver. **"And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him"** (Rev. 12:9). T. P. Simmons said this about Satan, "Even if the Bible said nothing of the existence of such a being, perhaps we should be compelled to believe in his existence as an adequate explanation of the subtle

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Cleansing the Leper

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him, See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them. But he went out, and began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places: and they came to him from every quarter” (Mark 1: 40-45).

“And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy: who seeing Jesus fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And he put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will: be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him. And he charged him to tell no man: but go, and shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, according as Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them. But so much the more went there a fame abroad of him: and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by him of their infirmities. And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed” (Luke 5:12-16).

(Beneficial reading for the Bible student with this article in hand would be Leviticus 13 which provides us a review of the history of leprosy concerning the Israelites. Also, Leviticus 14 gives us reference to what should be done to cleanse the leper should he be found healed of his/her leprosy.)

Before we go too far into this particular event let us consider for a moment what it must be like for

the leper. Imagine the isolation of this leper. Alienated and secluded due to his association with the disease, he was fated to be broken from society and his presence was to ever be announced by the phrase “unclean, unclean.” This might not have been something many of us could imagine until COVID. Have you sneezed in an airport lately? Have you experienced the crowds turn on your presence?

Now imagine the hopelessness

of the leper. It was the most dreaded disease of the time and there was no cure. Anyone who came in contact with a leper would also be considered unclean until proven otherwise. Leprosy has always been a picture of sin, which is why the priest was the one entrusted to handle the requirements dictated in Leviticus 13 and 14. Think of what little medical training they would have had. This was not a medical situation to be

handled, but a sin situation that required much prayer and careful precaution. Has this handling of deplorable diseases ever really changed in the eyes of God? Man certainly has benefited from medical advancements, but have we ever been taught of God to abandon prayer and sovereign intervention?

Let us think again of the sin that is pictured here. Sin is dangerous and cureless by man’s means. If we handle sin appropriately the unrepentant sinner would feel isolated and without hope for they (we) truly are without hope apart from Christ Jesus! Without Jesus...without being born-again we cannot hope to be cleansed. In Leviticus 14 the priest has declared the leper healed he then must be cleansed. **“Then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed two birds alive and clean, and cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop: And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water: As for the living bird, he shall take it, and the cedar wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water: And he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose into the open field. And he that is to be cleansed shall wash his clothes, and shave off all his hair, and wash himself in water, that he may be clean: and after that he shall come into the camp, and shall tarry abroad out of his tent seven days. But it shall be on the seventh day, that he shall shave all his hair off his head and his beard and**

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Cleansing the Leper

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his eyebrows, even all his hair he shall shave off: and he shall wash his clothes, also he shall wash his flesh in water, and he shall be clean. And on the eighth day he shall take two he lambs without blemish, and one ewe lamb of the first year without blemish, and three tenth deals of fine flour for a meat offering, mingled with oil, and one log of oil. And the priest that maketh him clean shall present the man that is to be made clean, and those things, before the LORD, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: And the priest shall take one he lamb, and offer him for a trespass offering, and the log of oil, and wave them for a wave offering before the LORD: And he shall slay the lamb in the place where he shall kill the sin offering and the burnt offering, in the holy place: for as the sin offering is the priest's, so is the trespass offering: it is most holy: And the priest shall take some of the blood of the trespass offering, and the priest shall put it upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot: And the priest shall take some of the log of oil, and pour it into the palm of his own left hand: And the priest shall dip his right finger in the oil that is in his left hand, and shall sprinkle of the oil with his finger seven times before the LORD: And of the rest of the oil that is in his hand shall the priest put upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot, upon the blood of the trespass

offering: And the remnant of the oil that is in the priest's hand he shall pour upon the head of him that is to be cleansed: and the priest shall make an atonement for him before the LORD" (Lev. 14: 4-18). Again I ask you, has God called for us to abandon this practice when dealing with sin? **"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God"** (II Cor. 7:1).

This washing is a picture of the believer cleansing himself from filthiness of the flesh and spirit. After we have been saved, we have a responsibility to keep our lives blameless and holy; to **"abstain from all appearance of evil"** (I Thess. 5:22); to put off the old man (Eph 4:22 and Col. 3:9)!

What now of the leper that has found healing? The leper in Leviticus was barred from coming into the camp, so the priest had to go "outside the camp" to him. What a picture of Christ who came to us and died "outside the camp" that we might be saved. **"We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle. For the bodies**

of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach" (Heb. 13:10-13). We did not seek Him; He came to seek and to save the lost (Luke. 19:10).

This leper came to Jesus. For this unclean man to approach anyone, let alone this teacher (Jesus), would have been unheard of, and no doubt met with much scoffing. A man would be crazy to do something so dangerous... lest he was drawn!

By faith he bowed before the Messiah acknowledging His power and authority. He did not presume to "allow" nor command a healing. **"...Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean"** (Luke 5:12). What is your will, oh Lord God of Heaven? Dear sinner, this is all you can do as well. It is certainly a wonderful sign for you to be concerned about your eternal state, but the power to change it is His! Confess His authority and your unworthiness

that the scepter might be raised; **"Lord if thou wilt..."**.

The full sympathy of our Lord was on display for the reader here. We see Him **"put forth His hand"** I think of Him reaching to elevate His lost sheep upon His mighty shoulders. Who could bypass those powerful arms that created the universe to harm me now? Secure! Secure! Forever secure!

We see that **"He touched him"**. "Unclean, unclean!" Oh how wicked our sins may be yet Christ saw fit to touch us. To lift us and bring us to His righteous estate! Safe and secure now in His bruised hands; He has removed the pockmarks of our shame and healed us whole from our disease. No more isolation or hopelessness! "Reborn! Reborn!" shall now be our cries...our banners!

Let us consider in closing the charge our Saviour gives to the leper. **"Tell no man: but go, and shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing."** The latter part of this verse is what we see dictated in Leviticus. We should not be too surprised that the man did not listen. After all we are commanded to tell "all men" what we have secure in Jesus, yet how often do we pass up this sacred duty?

So why was the charge to **"Tell no man"** given? **"And He [Jesus] said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent"** (Luke 4:43). A result of this previously leprous man's disobedience is as follows: **"But he went out, and began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places: and they came to him from every quarter"** (Mark 1:45).

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Genesis 37:28

"Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt."

Sharing the Lamb

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Our Scripture takes us back to the day the Jews were slaves in the land of Egypt. For 430 years they had been there, during a great part of which time their lives had been made miserable in actual servitude and slavery. Now God puts His hand to the task of redeeming them and delivering them out of Egypt unto Canaan.

A series of nine plagues has already fallen upon the land of Egypt, and now God tells the Jews to get ready for the tenth, and the last of the plagues, which was the death of the first-born throughout all the land of Egypt. He told the Jews that they were to kill a lamb and sprinkle the blood of this lamb on the door posts and the lintel above the door of each of their homes, and that wherever there was no blood when the death angel passed through the land, the first-born within that home was to die.

Growing out of this experience of the Jews' preparation for the Passover, we find Moses giving the instructions concerning the lamb; and if the household were a small one, then that lamb might be shared with the family next door.

Of course, all this is typical. The lamb looked forward to Jesus, the Lamb of God. Listen: **"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world"** (John 1:29). **"For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us"** (I Cor. 5:7).

Therefore, since it was enjoined upon the Jews of Egypt to share the lamb with the household next to them, and in the light of the typology of this Scripture, then we ourselves should share the Lamb, or should attempt to tell others

about the Lord Jesus Christ, when once we have come to know Him as our Saviour.

In fact, this is the teaching of all the Scriptures—namely, that we are to share the Lamb, or to seek to lead others to a saving knowledge of Jesus. Listen: **"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever"** (Dan. 12:3). Here is a promise that a preacher, a teacher, or any Christian can claim. It is a promise that anyone who definitely shares the Lamb, or leads men to Jesus Christ, shall shine with eternal glory. Looking into the skies on some beautiful night, one is amazed at the way in which the moon shines and the manner whereby the stars, as the golden sentinels of the night, twinkle through the evening. Yet, some day that individual who has been faithful to Jesus, and has led others to an acceptance of Christ, is going to out-shine the stars in the heavens.

When you come to the New Testament, you find similar truths scattered through the length and breadth of the Scriptures. Listen: **"And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men"** (Matt. 4:19). In this instance, Jesus was speaking to Peter, Andrew, James, and John, who were fishermen. He thus took four fishermen and made **"fishers of men"** of them. They had had a material task heretofore, but now they have a spiritual task henceforth. Theirs had been a task of catching fish, and now they are to **"fish"** for the souls of men.

Then again in the same gospel of Matthew, Jesus said, **"Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage"** (Matt. 22:9). We are not to wait until the lost seek us to

be saved, nor are we to wait until they are impressed to come into the house of God; instead, we are to go out wherever they are, and invite them to come to the Lord Jesus Christ and thus be saved. No man in all the world believes in the doctrine of election more firmly than I -- namely, that God elects men to salvation; and yet at the same time, I firmly believe that the God who elects men to salvation also predestinates that we are to preach the gospel unto them, and thus it becomes our duty to go out after the lost and bring them to Jesus.

That you might see how important this task is in the light of the Scriptures, then may we notice the closing words of Jesus as recorded in Mark's gospel: **"... Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature"** (Mark 16:15). I do not know who it is that shall be saved, but I am to preach the gospel to **"every creature."** It is my business to witness of Christ's saving grace to all, and it is God's business in turn to do the saving.

Then in the book of I Corinthians, Paul gives us a simple statement as to his own life's activity. Listen: **"For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some"** (I Cor. 9:19-22). Thus, you see that

the apostle Paul was attempting to share the Lamb. It was his desire to gain as many as possible who might be converts to Jesus. Therefore, he endeavored to reach the Jews, and those under the law, and those without the law, and the weak, and the strong—he endeavored to reach all classes. In his day, Paul was the outstanding exponent of the doctrine of election. He knew God elected men to salvation, but he knew also that it was his duty to go out after the lost and therefore seek to bring them to Jesus. In order that the elect might be won, and that men might be brought to Jesus, and that Paul might share the Lamb with them, he used all the tact and diplomacy possible in carrying out the Master's commission.

There is another Scripture in the Old Testament which I had almost overlooked, which bears on this same truth—namely, that we are to share the Lamb. Listen: **"...he that winneth souls is wise"** (Prov. 11:30). What a mighty text, for it declares that he who wins men to Jesus and thus shares the Lamb with them, that that individual is wise. To be sure he is wise right now, though the world may not think so; and when he gets to glory, the reward that will be his then will prove the fact that he was wise here.

In this connection, notice the verse preceding, which bears on this same truth. Listen: **"He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him..."** (Prov. 11:26). Corn is food. In this connection, it refers to the Bread of Life. Here then is a statement that the man who withholds the Bread of Life—that he shall be cursed by the people. Many times, the unsaved today resent our speaking to them about Jesus. Oft times they do

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Congregationalism

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called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

This may seem like a strange text for an article about congregationalism, but I have noticed a trend among some churches and some of the brethren lately ... a trend to be like John and James in being ready to be set on thrones in the kingdom.

While this subject is a Baptist distinctive, not all Baptist churches believe it. Let me explain. From 2007-2020, I pastored a church in Ohio where the women members of the church could not vote, something that was foreign to me prior to accepting the pastorate there. Many years before I came, that church had made this into a rule and placed it into the bylaws. After I had been there for a while, I preached a message presenting a Biblical defense of the whole congregation voting, but the church never changed its position.

Fast forward a few years and now I am pastoring in Georgia where we do not have such a rule (praise the Lord), but I was on the phone with a Baptist preacher who told me the reason our church is small is because we have not adopted elder rule with a plurality of elders.

This got me to thinking about the subject again, and this is the reason for the article. I am here

to tell you that some churches might not be so bold as to make it a rule, but they have "second class" members or a certain ruler or rulers who make all the decisions. Brethren, this ought not to be.

From our text, we learn that Jesus forbids anyone to practice over-lordship over His brethren. This would include even forbidding the Pastor from becoming a dictator.

"I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not" (III John 9).

The Bible does have examples of those who would rule over the churches but they are not good examples! Diotrephes was one who was a "mini-pope" in the church, forbidding John from coming.

J.M. Carroll, in the book, *The Trail of Blood*, gave marks of The New Testament Church. Mark number 4 is its polity being CONGREGATIONAL. We would agree with this identifying mark, and even go so far as to say that if the church you are a member of is not congregational... if it is something else... it is not patterned after the New Testament.

J. B. Moody, in his book, *Distinguishing Doctrines of the Baptists* wrote, "The churches of Christ are congregational in a double sense: 1st, in limiting all authority to the congregation, and 2nd, in extending authority to all in the congregation" (page 135).

David Benedict recorded this in his book *Fifty Years Among the Baptists*: "There is a tradition that the famous Thomas Jefferson caught the idea of some things in the Constitution of this republic while witnessing the doings of a small Baptist church in his neighborhood. As the story goes, some of the primordial

principles of the great document which he afterwards penned were conceived from observing the successful movements of a little self-operating body which acknowledged no allegiance to any other power. This story has been currently reported, and on good authority, as I am inclined to believe."

"Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues" (I Cor. 12:27-28).

Words do mean things. This is true in the Scriptures. Notice God has set the pastor "in" the church...not over the church. This means he falls under its authority.

"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ..." (Eph. 4:11-12)

Notice he gave pastors, not to rule over the church, but to perfect the saints and edify the body of Christ. This is quite the opposite of what some pastors think or act like, is it not?

What about those passages which seem to indicate pastoral authority or headship over the church?

Let us examine these: **"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). **"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they**

watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you" (Heb. 13:17).

Some preachers slam their fist down on the pulpit and say if that does not mean absolute pastoral authority, then what does it mean? Well, I can tell you it does not mean what they say it means!

"The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock" (I Peter 5:1-3).

In *Teachings on the Local Church*, Brother Tom Ross wrote that the Pastor "has been appointed by the Holy Spirit to exercise spiritual oversight in the church which consists of leading and guiding the flock by example. He must not push the people, but gently lead them as a shepherd would lead a flock of sheep."

Look over at what is commonly termed the "Qualifications for the Pastor." **"This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how**

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Sharing the Lamb

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not appreciate our attempts in sharing the Lamb. Yet, if we pass them by and fail to do so, some day in hell, they will curse us for having withheld the “corn”—the Bread of Life from them. What a contrast then these texts present. The man who shares the Lamb is wise, but the man who fails to do so, shall be cursed by those in hell whom he has passed by in life.

May we notice one other great Scripture relative to this truth of sharing the Lamb. **“And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire...”** (Jude v. 23). Every time we lead a soul to Jesus, we literally pull that one out of the fires of hell. This is to be our task, and this is that which we are to give ourselves to day by day.

A few weeks ago I was called to the hospital in Ironton to visit a lad who was dying, though at that time I did not realize the seriousness of his physical condition. When I dealt with him, he was saved, and then before he died, he even had a chance to witness to others relative to his salvation. Of course, when I left the hospital after having led him to Christ, I was indeed happy. Before I came home, I ran across an old friend who had just closed a very successful financial deal, having made approximately ten thousand dollars in that afternoon. He was jubilant and running over with joy over what he called the biggest deal he had ever made in life. After I left him, I came home to think of his experience in contrast with mine. I never had made a deal in any one day wherein I had made ten thousand dollars. He had scarcely enough education-to read and write. In contrast, I realized that I have spent practically the entirety of my life trying to study and

thus prepare for my work. And you know, beloved, the devil just began to whisper temptation after temptation to me, and pretty soon I found myself actually jealous and resentful and rebellious in view of that man's good fortune in contrast with mine; and then, believe it or not, the Lord whispered a message of peace to me concerning the soul that I had just led to Christ in the hospital. That man had put over the biggest deal of his life, but I had put over one that was bigger. When his ten thousand dollars that he made that afternoon is all gone, I will still have a glory and a reward in heaven for that soul that was led to Jesus. Why if that businessman had made the biggest deal of his life, to be sure I had made one that was even bigger; and my personal conviction is that every time a child of God leads a lost one to Jesus and thus shares the Lamb, that that Christian has made one of the biggest deals that is possible for a child of God to make.

These Scriptures then would indicate the immensity of this task of sharing the Lamb and would show us how important it is that we seek to lead the lost to Jesus. In order to do so, there are certain requirements which God makes of us.

I

First, in order to share the Lamb, it is necessary that we have a perfectly clean heart. Listen: **“If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me...”** (Ps. 66:18). God does not say that it would be well for us to do so, nor advisable; but rather, He demands it emphatically. Here then is a solemn utterance, **“The Lord will not hear me.”**

You remember when the children of Israel came across the Jordan River and attacked the city of Jericho, that God had told them

that all of the spoil of that city was to be His. However, Achan stole a wedge of gold, a wedge of silver, and a goodly Babylonish garment, and carried them home and hid them in a hole in the ground in his tent. When they went out to battle the next day against the city of Ai, Israel was defeated, and thirty-six Jewish warriors were slain. Then when Achan had confessed his sin, and he and his family and all of his possessions had been stoned, Israel defeated the city of Ai. So complete was their victory that they hanged the king, and burned the city, and routed the inhabitants. What a contrast between Israel when there was sin in her ranks and when that sin had been confessed and purged and put away.

The same is true with the disciples in the days of Jesus. As they journeyed along with Jesus, they argued as to whom was to be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Then when Jesus went up on the Mount of Transfiguration and left the disciples in the valley below, they failed in casting a devil out of a lad. Listen to this Scripture: **“And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for oft times he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him”** (Matt. 17:14-16). When Jesus came down from the Mount of Transfiguration to the plains of service, He found the father with his child, and the disciples standing helplessly by. Jesus said, **“...O faithless and perverse generation...”** He knew that they had failed because of sin within their lives.

Many a child of God cries out

unto God for soul-winning power, and yet he remains powerless because God has closed his ears against the cries of their unclean hearts. I say again that in order for one to be able to share the Lamb with others, he must first of all possess a perfectly clean heart himself.

II

Then in the second place, in order to share the Lamb, one must realize that men are lost. Too many people think of men as being just barely removed from God, and therefore they are not in a very bad state after all. I have even heard preachers say that there is a spark of Divinity in every man, and that all one needs is just to get that one into the proper environment and the spark of Divinity will burst forth into a flame.

Not at all, beloved. There is no Divinity in any man until God puts His nature there when that one is born again. Instead, every man is spiritually dead to God and absolutely lost. Listen to this Scripture: **“...he that believeth not shall be damned”** (Mark 16:16). This is a solemn searching text---**“...he that believeth not shall be damned.”** In the light of this Scripture, surely all of us must realize that men are lost—actually and irrevocably lost without Jesus Christ.

We have the same truth presented to us in the words of Jesus when you hear Him say, **“...except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish”** (Luke 13:5).

No man will ever share the Lamb with others, nor be a successful soul-winner, nor even attempt to bring the lost to Jesus until he first realizes that men themselves are lost. I would to God that I might burn it into your hearts today in such a way that

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Congregationalism

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shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil" (I Tim. 3:1-7) Notice right there in verse 5 the comparison is made between the way a man manages his home versus the church. **"For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?"** Note there are two different words used. According to Vine's Dictionary: Rule - "to stand before," hence, "to lead, attend to" (indicating care and diligence), is translated "to rule" (middle voice), with reference to a local church, in Romans 12:8; perfect active in I Tim. 5:17; with reference to a family, I Tim. 3:4 and I Tim. 3:12 (middle voice); I Tim. 3:5 (2nd aorist, active). See *"Maintain."* Care - "to take care of," involving forethought and provision (epi indicating "the direction of the mind toward the object cared for"), Luke 10:34-35, of the Good Samaritan's care for the wounded man, and in I Tim. 3:5, of a bishop's (or overseer's) care of a church—a significant association of ideas.

Check this out, folks. If my children get out of line I can whip them with a rod. The Bible is clear on that. (See Prov. 13:24; 23:14) I rule my house. However, the same does not apply in the church. It is a different word. If a man cannot rule his house, how can he care for the church? The Bible leaves no room for dictators in the church house, even if they have the title of a pastor but gives a great example of how the church

should be.

Let us look at some New Testament examples: First let us consider the Example of the body. **"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not of the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked: That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one**

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The Good...

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and enslaving power of sin."

I believe Satan is the originator of sin in the Cosmos (universe). Brother Simmons also stated, "Satan introduced sin into the human family (Gen. 3:1-16), and he possesses and controls the world (Job 9:24; Matt. 4:8-9; John 12:31), and accuses God's people (Job 1:6,9; 2:3-5; Rev. 12:9-10). "Devil" means "accuser" or "slanderer." Also, he (Satan the old Devil) tests, hinders, resists, and buffets them. He seeks to oppose and hinder the work of God (Matt. 13:39; Mark 4:15; II Cor. 11:14-15). The Devil tempts, ensnares, and leads men into evil, and he controls and blinds the lost (John 8:44; Acts 5:3; II Tim. 2:26)."

There are many more Scriptures, but you, dear reader, can take some time and look into this further, if you so choose. Satan's reign will eventually come to an end **"And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone"** (Rev. 19:20). **"And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever"** (Rev. 20:10).

Lastly, we come to the "Ugly"! I will direct this last one concerning my Baptist Brothers and Sisters. Now before any of you pop a blood vessel, this is my opinion, observation, and discussions I have had with other Baptists the last few months. Let me also

remind you, dear readers, before you hang me out to dry and boil me in oil **"Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them"** (Psa. 119:165). And to be sure, I am not out to offend anyone, but to just state the truth whether you agree or not!

There seems to be the "Ugliness" of the disease we call the "I" syndrome. It is "I" this, and "I" that, look at what "I" have done, look how great "I" am, sounds like the forty-fourth President of the United States. We should be more focused on what we are doing for God or how God is using us for His glory. We should do everything for God's glory and not seek the glory of men **"For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ"** (Gal. 1:10). I heard this not too long ago, "Why are things not going well for me, look at all the things I have done for the church?" Well, there is the problem, that is self-seeking, it was not done for God, but to get a big pat on the back, focusing on self instead of God! Solomon calls it vanity in Ecclesiastes, if God is not in it, it is all together vanity.

I have been listening to a few preachers the past year on the internet and at conferences and noticed a trend that appears to be more of a contest with many than just preaching a good sermon. Why is it needful to see who can out do the other or scream the loudest? When others have approached me with this type of behavior, the realization sets in that it is not just me that sees it. I have a question to my Baptist brethren, when did seeing who can scream the loudest become needful to get your point across? I believe, it is "Ugly" and uncalled

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The Good...

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for, but again that is my opinion, and apparently some others as well.

When the Lord called me and ordained me, He did not call me to be popular or an entertainer, but it seems others do not hold that belief. We have an obligation to the church we pastor first, everything else is secondary. Is your congregation growing? Are people coming forward confessing Jesus Christ and asking to be baptized? If not, then we are not holding true to the great commission found in Matthew 28:18-20. We should never be satisfied, but always looking for that lost soul to be saved in our churches.

The “Ugliest” is how Baptist can be influenced by the “Bad” instead of the “Good?” I heard the other day that a church member wanted to cancel services on December 25th because Xmas was on Sunday. Baptists are going to sporting events on the Lord’s Day instead of being in church, show me where the Lord is pleased with that. Was it not Paul who said, **“Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices”** (II Cor. 2:11). How is it that we have fallen in the pit of “Ugliness”?

Churches are being ripped apart; brother has turned against brother. About ten years ago I wrote an article “Is There A Judas Among Us?” **“And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death”** (Matt. 10:21). This past year I have seen firsthand how this is going to happen, and it is about as “Ugly”

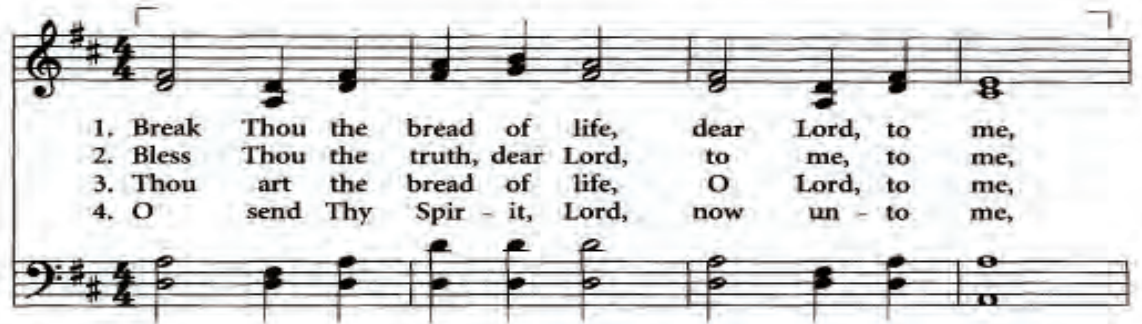
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Heavenly Hymns

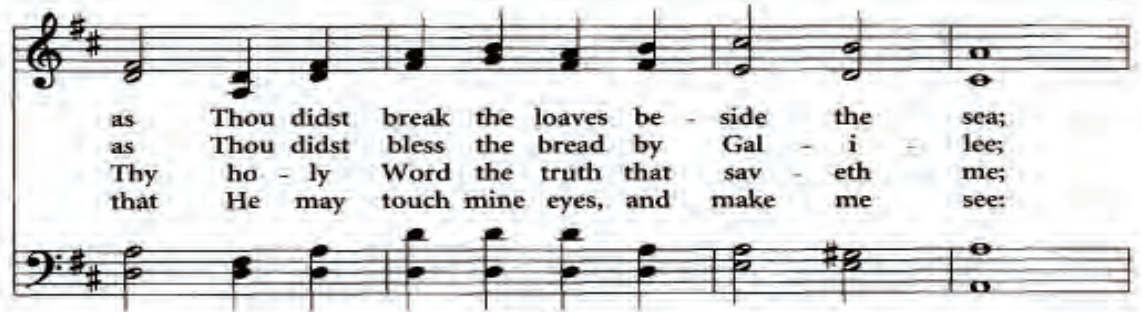
“...Be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Ephesians 5:18-20). [This hymn was printed with permission from the Olmstead Baptist Church and written by Mary A. Lathbury in 1877. You may access their free-domain hymnal by going to www.olmsteadbaptistchurch.org/hymnal.pdf]

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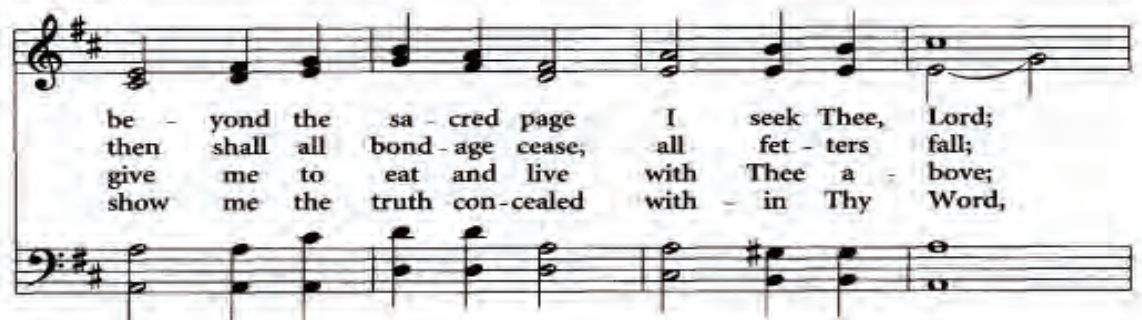
BREAK THOU THE BREAD OF LIFE



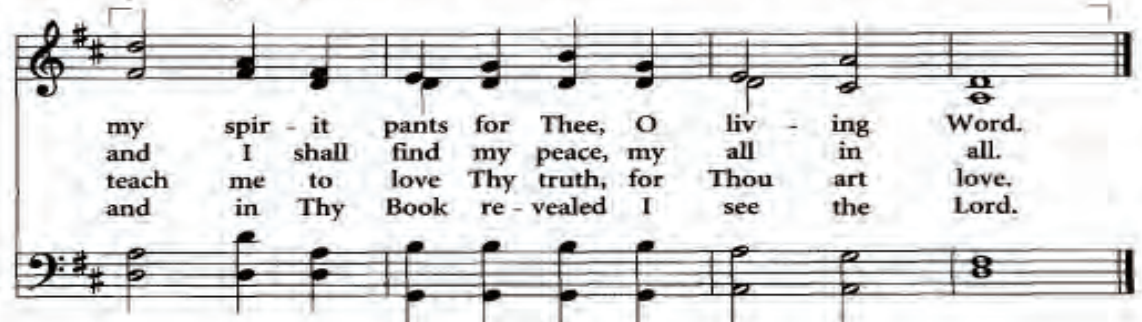
1. Break Thou the bread of life, dear Lord, to me,
 2. Bless Thou the truth, dear Lord, to me, to me,
 3. Thou art the bread of life, O Lord, to me,
 4. O send Thy Spir - it, Lord, now un - to me,



as Thou didst break the loaves be - side the sea;
 as Thou didst bless the bread by Gal - i - lee;
 Thy ho - ly Word the truth that sav - eth me;
 that He may touch mine eyes, and make me see:



be - yond the sa - cred page I seek Thee, Lord;
 then shall all bond - age cease, all fet - ters fall;
 give me to eat and live with Thee a - bove;
 show me the truth con - cealed with - in Thy Word,



my spir - it pants for Thee, O liv - ing Word.
 and I shall find my peace, my all in all.
 teach me to love Thy truth, for Thou art love.
 and in Thy Book re - vealed I see the Lord.

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as it gets. When Baptist act like the world, that is "Ugly." These are surely the "Last Days," **"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away"** (II Tim. 3:1-5).

Can we please get rid of the backbiting and the "Ugly" and get back to that which is "Good" and pleasing to the Lord? **"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen"** (Heb. 13:20-21). God Bless!



Cleansing the Leper

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Notice that those He called still came and they came even from every quarter. Nothing could thwart the mission of Christ Jesus! **"Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be**

the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1:21-23). Even the lost reader of this article, if written in the Lamb's book of life, will succumb to the calling of the Lord in the fullness of time.

The greater of Christ's mission was to preach repentance. Salvation is a much better healing than our temporal bodies could ever desire. At the close of this text we see that the Lord once again secludes Himself in prayer in desolate places. Reminding us of our further responsibility with this message and text. May the Lord see fit to meet us there with the blessing!



Sharing the Lamb

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you would never get away from the truth, and thus cause you to know that men are spiritually dead, and blind, and deaf, and impotent, and that they are lost and in need of Jesus Christ.

III

In the third place, in order to share the Lamb, it is necessary that you have a passion for the lost. This completely characterized the Lord Jesus. You doubtlessly recall how He condemned the Scribes and Pharisees for their hypocrisy. In one chapter alone, thirteen times He called them fools, blind guides, and hypocrites. Then after denouncing them for their sins, He wept over their sinful estate. Listen: **"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"** (Matt. 23:37). Although He condemned

them, He wept because of their lost condition.

This is the same teaching that we have in the book of the Psalms. Listen: **"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him"** (Psa. 126:5,6).

Years ago, after Jerry McCauley had established the Water Street Mission in New York City and had led thousands to Christ through this mission—then after his death, the mission did not prosper as it had heretofore, and souls were not saved in as great numbers as they had been previously. One day the superintendent called the janitor in, who was also janitor there when Mr. McCauley was at the head of the mission. He said to this man, "We are not having the souls saved that we had when Mr. McCauley was living. Is there anything he did that you know of that I do not do; or is there anything that I am doing that he did not do?" After mature deliberation, this humble servant of Christ, said, "Yes, there is one thing that he always did that you do not do." And he said to this superintendent, "Sit down here beside this table, and fold your hands, and then bow your head upon your hands and weep like as if your heart would break." When this new superintendent of the mission declared that he did not feel it and could not weep thus, this janitor exhorted him by reminding him that that was the human reason for the lack of souls that were being saved.

Certainly it is true today that if we are to lead the lost to Jesus and share the Lamb with them, we must have a passion for the lost.

IV

In the fourth place, in order to

share the Lamb, you must realize that you are responsible for the lost. Every saved man stands with a definite responsibility under God concerning those that are unsaved. Listen to this Old Testament Scripture: **"But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand. So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand"** (Ezek. 33:6-8). That which was true of Ezekiel, is true of every child of God. We are to stand as a watchman, and it is our duty to warn the lost, and if we fail, there is a tremendous responsibility resting upon us.

Realizing this responsibility, Paul said, **"For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more"** (I Cor. 9:19). It was because that he felt this responsibility that Paul did everything within his power to lead the lost to Christ; and when he came to the end of his way, he could say, "I am free from the blood of all men." Very few of us can say the same. Yet, each of us are as much responsible for the lost as was the apostle Paul.

V

In the fifth place, one must have a working knowledge of the Bible. Though one may be

◊ (Continued on page 16)

Congregationalism

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member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular" (I Cor. 12:12–27).

Look at your physical body. Your foot cannot say because it is not the hand it is not important. The leg cannot say the arm is less important. How can a man say the woman is not important? Or how can those adult members discount the younger members? Did not Paul under the inspiration of the Spirit address them all equally in the letter to the church at Ephesus (even the children see Eph. 6:1).

"Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican" (Matt. 18:15–17).

The Saviour gave us the rule for the adjustment of private differences among brethren: **"--if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault."** If the offender, when told of his fault, does not give satisfaction, the offended brother is to take with him **"one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established."**

But if the offender **"shall neglect to hear them,"** what is to be done? **"Tell it to the church."** What church? Evidently, the

particular congregation to which the parties belong. Note well, we are not told to tell it to the men of the church for that would only be a part of the church. We are to take it to the entire church.

Secondly, let us consider the Example of Jerusalem. **"These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren. And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,) Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry. Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, The field of blood. For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick let another take. Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection. And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of**

all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place. And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles" (Acts 1:14–26).

J.B. Moody wrote in 1901 in his book *The Distinguishing Doctrines of Baptists*, in commenting on this passage, "Who were the 'they' that voted in verse 26? Evidently the hundred and twenty, and that included the women. It can be settled by grammar as well as by Scripture."

Thirdly, consider the churches of the New Testament admitted members into their communion. **"Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations"** (Rom. 14:1). The language of this directive is "Receive into your fellowship and treat as a Christian him who is weak in the faith." To whom was this addressed? Not to the pastor. Not to the "ruling elders." Not even to the men of the church only. Hear me now, this was written to the church, **"To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints..."** (Rom. 1:7).

Fourthly, the churches of the New Testament had the right to exclude unworthy members, and they exercised that right. **"In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus"** (I Cor. 5:4–5). Paul "judged" that the guilty man should be excluded, but he himself did not remove him. Who, then should remove him? For that the answer needs to

be found by going back to whom this epistle was written to... To whom was this epistle written? It was not written to the pastor. It is not addressed to the ruling elders. It is not even addressed to the men of the church. Look back at I Corinthians 1:2. It was written unto the church of God **"which is at Corinth..."**

"Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us" (II Thess. 3:6). Again who is this written to? A board of deacons? The pastor? The men of the church? No! II Thessalonians 1:1, note the words **"..unto the church of the Thessalonians..."**

And our fifth consideration is that the churches of the New Testament had the right to restore disciplined members. **"Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him"** (II Cor. 2:6–8).

In the second letter to the Corinthians, Paul could not restore such a one any more than he could exclude him in the first place (he was not a member of the church in the first place). The apostle bowed to the great truth of church independence. Who was this addressed to? Let me be repetitive. Was this letter written to the pastor? The ruling elders? A board of deacons? The men of the church? No! It was written to the church. Notice the wording in II Corinthians 1:1.

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1) What is your advice for a church without a pastor today?

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July 14, 2015, I submitted an article to the BBB titled "Are You Calling & Are You Called?" The article was to help churches and preachers to get with the program. I will borrow from that article to answer the next two questions.

This is the reason I wrote the article; in one of the conferences I attended back in 2015, the pastor of the church holding the conference asked for all the preachers there to stand up. I was amazed how many there were that were still members of their home church. Now, I do not know who was who, or how long they had been called to the gospel ministry, but I encouraged them not to stay too long in the "comfort" of their home church, and also to be careful and not be in a hurry to jump right into pastoring a church unprepared (in fact I wrote a whole book on my experiences as a pastor to help preachers to see some of the pitfalls in pastoring, the book is free for the asking). But what I do know is that there are preachers out there without churches and churches that need pastors.

So, now let me address the first question that is asked. Again, so we are clear, I am pulling my answer from the Article in 2015.

Not much has changed since then.

I am ever amazed at the announcements in the two Baptist papers I receive every month concerning "Churches in Need of a Pastor"! They appear month after month and year after year. I can not recall ever seeing many new ones added to the list over the years, but always the same ones.

What is the problem? Why is there such a difficult time with so many churches in need of pastors? The last I heard, there was some forty New Testament Baptist Churches in need of a pastor.

I have pondered this for quite some time, and the Lord has given me a couple of insights on this and I would like to share them with the reader, but mainly this is meant to churches without pastors and pastors without churches.

Three things have been brought to my attention (I am sure there may be more, but these stick out as the three to be taken under consideration). The three are these; "Comfort," "Fear," and "Faith." So, which one of these three fits you, dear reader, young preacher, church member?

Let us start with "Comfort"! And let us begin with the Lord's churches that are currently without a pastor. I have been very frustrated, as I said, that the request for prayer for these same churches, month after month and year after year continue. My home church even has those churches without pastors listed in the bulletin for prayer. I have no problem praying for them but

after years of seeing the same ones the question comes to mind... Why? Several churches have been asking for prayer for years. I got up this morning thinking on this article and I looked in the mirror to make sure I did not have stupid written on my forehead, because I think some might think that we who have been praying are stupid.

Let me be clear, I am not writing to point any certain church group out but to bring to our attention some issues that churches and preachers are facing. And I am not wanting to offend any, but simply to point out the facts and the truth of this matter **"Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them"** (Psa. 119:165). Why would any church that has over the course of the years had top notch preachers in to preach in view of a call and never called any of them...Why? Many of these preachers are now pastoring very good churches and I would stack them up against any that we have today, church and preacher. I know some of these men personally and I have a hard time understanding why any church would turn them away. I have my belief why they were not called in some of these cases but I reserve the right not to express it here but to give a general idea why good men are not called.

Now out of the forty that I have heard, about five or six have been listed in the papers for prayer. I would ask that if you have been that long in asking for us to pray for you, then stop, because apparently you are not interested if you have men in to preach in view of a call and can not come to some kind of decision. I do not mean to sound harsh or tell any church what to do (I can not do that anyway), but allow me to illustrate my point. Most of us have heard the story of the

man that was praying for God to save him because of being caught in a flood. As the man prayed there was one that came along in a boat and offered for him to get in and he would take him to safety. Well, the man refused and said that God will provide and save me. Meanwhile the water was still rising even higher to the point the man caught in the flood had to make his way to the roof of his house. Still praying for God to help, a helicopter flying by saw the man and dropped a ladder and yelled down for him to take hold and they would pull him to safety...again the man refused, and said God will provide and save me. Well, the man drowned. Standing before God, the man asked God, "Why did you not save me?" God simply replied, "I sent you a boat and a helicopter, what more would you have Me to do?"

I have had people (generally in a backslidden condition) ask me to pray for them, and a year later they are still asking. God has always answered my prayers, but if a person is unwilling to change their backslidden habits, God is not just going to reach down and miraculously help you if do not care enough for Him to make a change for the better. All the prayers in the world are not going to help if you can not get right with God first. I have gotten to the place if such a person asks me and is not willing to change, I respectfully tell them NO!

What we have here is a simple case of the Laodicean church in Revelation chapter 3. Something is wrong and great care should be taken not to be as this church was. In fact, that is the warning. Now I know every church may have their reasons for not calling a certain man. Sad to say, but there

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2) What is your advice for preachers who are not pastoring? Are they obligated to take a pastorate?

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These are difficult questions for me to answer. I was saved by sovereign grace in November of 1980. I surrendered to the call to preach in June of 1981, and I have been teaching and preaching ever since. Before I was sent out of Wilmington Baptist in the Spring of 1986, I served in the Lord's church as faithfully as I knew how while preparing for the ministry. I filled in for Pastor Ferrell when he was away, I was active in the visitation ministry and the jail ministry. I worked a full-time job as a meat cutter and went to Temple Baptist College to finish my degree. I was a Sunday School teacher and taught in the Baptist Voice Institute to help train young preachers. In the Spring of 1986, I was sent to Xenia, Ohio to do mission work. Providence Baptist Church was organized on August 1, 1987, and they called me to be the pastor. I labored there until October 17, 1993, at which time I accepted the call of Mount Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church of Chesapeake, Ohio where I am still pastoring. The point I am making is that I have been preaching and teaching my entire adult life. It is hard for me to imagine what it would be like not pastoring one of the

Lord's churches.

I would encourage preachers who are not pastoring to faithfully serve the Lord wherever He has placed them. Strive to be an example in word and deed. Be a support and help to the pastor. Be faithful to church services, teach and preach when called upon. If their health permits, make themselves available to supply preach for churches in the area. If they have retired, learn how to rest, relax, and spend time with their wife and family. I am sure it is a major adjustment, especially for those who have pastored churches for many years.

God blessed our church when He added Elder Al Malo and his dear wife Wanda. Brother Malo retired from pastoring due to a variety of serious health issues. They are faithful members and are a real blessing to the church. Brother Al teaches and preaches whenever he is called upon to do so. They sing specials and are a source of encouragement to our church body. I know it has been a difficult transition from pastoring for over 40 years, but they are handling it with such grace. I hope if the Lord ever retires me that I am able to do so with as much grace as Al and Wanda Malo have displayed as members of our church.

I believe that preachers are only obligated to take a pastorate if God calls them to a church and they are spiritually, physically, and mentally able to accept the call. Such matters are between the preacher, the Lord, and the

church. I would never presume to criticize a preacher who is not pastoring, especially in light of the fact I have never walked a mile in their shoes.

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Now, I will address preachers from the same Article that I answered the first question with.

Preacher, the time has come to put away "Fear" and get down on your knees and ask God Almighty for a church or mission work to preach to! I will touch upon mission work a little farther along in this article.

I preached at a Bible Conference that I had never been to before, and it was their 65th and over half the preachers and people there I had never met. I was scared to death, but I needed to be. Many older preachers have told me the day you start not being afraid and nervous when you preach is the day you should fear the most **"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God"** (Heb. 10:31). If I am not fearful, then it is me preaching, not God using me by the leadership of the Spirit of God! "Fear" is an important part of a man's ministry. I believe it helps our maturity. I am ready to face my death for the cause of Christ and the ministry of the church. Preachers are you better than hard working pastors? Are you too good and proud to be counted as a sheep for the slaughter? **"Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter"** (Psa. 44:22). **"As it is written, For thy sake we**

are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter" (Rom. 8:36). Are you better than Jesus? **"As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep"** (John 10:15).

My mission pastor encouraged me often to read I and II Timothy. It is aged Paul writing to young Timothy who was pastoring a church full of older folks than Timothy. He told me to read it over and over. I encourage you young preacher to do the same **"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid"** (John 14:27).

Young preacher, you need to have the "Faith" to leave your homes, leave your home church, and yes leave your jobs if need be to pastor one of the Lord's churches that He may call you to. Two of the five preachers I mentioned earlier did that very thing. One is my daughter's pastor and the other is now pastoring a church I helped in calling this young man for a candidate, whom they did call and he accepted. Both these men had families, jobs, and a home church. They moved to the area they are now in without jobs or homes. Because of their "Faith" God found them a place to live, and a job to help support their families. Do you think they had fear? Yes, but they had something far greater, they had "Faith"! **"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen"** (Heb. 11:1).

Preachers without churches, do you have that kind of "Faith"? These are just two men who were obeying God and they are just two out of many that have done the very same thing. Are you one of

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Forum Question #1

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are many issues with doctrine today and some preachers that do not want to make a stand or think they can change churches that have been around for a long time. And some churches think that they do not want some preacher who believes in the old paths. And, sad to say, there are certain church members that just are too stubborn to let the rest of the membership call a certain man. Again, I am not stupid or blind! I do not believe any more in tiptoeing through the tulips, but I do try to lovingly tell it like it is. God did not call me to be a people pleaser or an entertainer but to preach the gospel and the truths that are in His Holy Word.

Back to the first word "Comfort." Man's nature is not hard to figure out...The Bible tells us it is a depraved nature that all have from birth **"The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies"** (Psa. 58:3). **"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"** (Rom. 3:23). We need to ask a question here. What happens to a flock of sheep that have no shepherd? Let the reader study the question. The first thing is that they wander and many go astray. Many churches (not all) have become "Comfortable." Maybe too much so, and really do not want a pastor because they can do as they want, come, and go as they please without correction or consequences. Basically, they do not have to answer to anyone. I know of some churches that if the pastor is not there, they simply cancel church. So, imagine a church without a pastor for years...they get "Comfortable," and they like it. Let us not lie

about it, God sees all, so who are we fooling? I have learned over the years, that even God's people will justify their sinful actions. So let me ask you, dear church, are you "Comfortable?" Be careful of your comfort because Ichabod could be written across your door.

One thing I really hate to see in our churches today are those that are not committed and are just playing church, I think that is a slap in the face to our Lord and Saviour, and I believe it is an abomination to God and a stench in His nostrils!

Now the same question to young preachers, those that are still in the "comforts" of their home church. How about it young preachers (not in age necessarily) are you "comfortable"? Do you get to go places and preach with the "comfort" of knowing you get to come back home? If God called you to preach then He has a church or mission for you to pastor. I can give you the names of those who thought they could just preach and not pastor a church and soon found out later that it does not work that way. I would rather pastor a church than be a missionary but the Lord had other plans for me, unawares to me. Preachers are not called to be "comfortable," and about the time they get that way the Lord may move them. Paul was a Jew, and he would have been more comfortable to preach to his own people but the Lord gave him charge to preach the gospel to the Gentiles **"And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain"** (Gal. 2:2). What about Peter? He got a rude awaking about preaching to the Gentiles in Acts

10. And Paul rebuked Peter for his attitude toward the Gentiles when the Jews were around (Gal. 2:11-14).

We could tell you of Moses, Elijah, Jeremiah, and others whom God called and they had some kind of excuse not to leave their "Comfort" zone. If you want to save yourself from hardship and grief, submit to those that are in need of you.

The second word I believe may be the problem is "Fear." There is nothing wrong with "Fear," but we should fear God and nothing else **"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man"** (Eccl. 12:13).

For the church to be fearful is a good thing, but not to the point of using it for an excuse. Even Paul warned **"For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock"** (Acts 20:29). Some may have lost their pastor and may find it difficult to call another. That is understandable. My daughter and son-in-law struggled hard to go to a church of like faith that was 3 minutes from their home versus an hour and forty-five minutes where I was pastoring. I was the only pastor they ever sat under their entire saved life. But I want them to be faithful and enjoy getting up on Sunday morning and going to church. So, when one preacher is all you may have known it will be hard but not impossible (they are now driving the hour and forty-five minutes, because the church there lost their pastor and closed its doors). I think that a church that has lost their pastor for whatever reason should ask themselves, if our former pastor were here and had seen that we have been so long

without a pastor what would he say, what would he tell us to do?

There are many reasons a church may be fearful, **"And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible"** (Mark 10:27). Make it a priority, if you have not already, to have a special meeting just for praying for a pastor...if you really want one!

The third and final word to be considered is "Faith." We lack so much "Faith" today it is a terrible thing. We need to study and cross-reference Hebrews chapter 11. Look and see what these great men of "Faith" accomplished, and sometimes they only had God to help them, no one else.

Oh, church you have to have the "Faith" without wavering; that God will send you the right man **"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;.) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching"** (Heb. 10:23-25).

Again, I do not know all the reasons these some forty churches do not have pastors but I am sure there is at least one man in every one of them that does and should heed the words of our Lord to the church at Laodicea **"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me"** (Rev. 3:20). You know the problem? Then be brave, bold, and have the "Faith" to fix it.

Now, I did have one of these

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Forum Question #1

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churches without a pastor call me, and he was a little upset with me. And I told the Brother, this may not be your situation why you have not called a pastor, and that my belief is in general. I realize that every church does not fit in the category I have stated above.

On the other hand, I had a young preacher who told me that the Article I had written was an encouragement to him and got him moving to fulfill his ministry. So, every situation is different! God Bless!

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I will offer some general suggestions with the understanding that each church faces different circumstances in the calling of a pastor. For example, some churches are accustomed to changing pastors every five to ten years, whereas there are other churches who have had the same pastor for thirty to forty years. Each church is unique and faces different challenges in calling a pastor.

First and foremost, be united in earnest prayer to ask God to appoint and send a pastor that He is pleased to provide. Seek the Lord earnestly, fervently, and perseveringly in faith. Certainly, the calling of a pastor requires much wisdom and grace so it would be appropriate to apply James 1:5-8: **"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall**

be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways."

Until God gives you a pastor, urge each member to serve the Lord faithfully in personal and family devotions, corporate worship, witnessing, tithing, and church attendance. A church without a pastor will test the membership to see if they are really serving God or a pastor. If the membership is devoted to God and truly under the headship of Christ they will be united together in faithful worship.

Until God gives you a pastor, seek out qualified men within the membership to lead in teaching and preaching. Every pastor ought to be discipling and training qualified men who are able to teach and preach in his absence. If there are already capable men in place who can fill in until a new pastor is called it will be a tremendous help and blessing to the church. If this is not possible, seek out qualified preachers who are able to fill the pulpit until a pastor is called. Do your best to maintain your existing meeting times.

Develop a plan of action to call a pastor. The men of the church should meet periodically to discuss possibilities. Or a church can appoint a group to serve as a pulpit committee. Do not act in haste, but at the same time do not drag your feet. Generally speaking the longer you wait in calling a pastor, the more difficult it will be on the church. The important thing is to not give up or give in to apathy. It is not an easy thing for a church to call a new pastor. There

will be obstacles, difficulties, and trials along the way. You must be committed and persevering in your desire for the right pastor.

When looking for a pastor consider only those who are morally pure, who are already faithfully serving, and doctrinally sound. Look for a man of character, humility, and integrity. I would never consider calling a man who has a history of inconsistency or unfaithfulness in service. Nor should you consider a man who is blown about by every wind of doctrine. You want a steady, faithful, diligent man who is committed to study and evangelism to shepherd the flock of God.

When you do feel led to have a man come in view of a call be respectful. Do not speak ill of your former pastor. Ask pertinent questions. Answer any questions he may have. Take time to pray and seek the Lord's leadership about the man. If there is mutual interest give him an idea whether you can support him and his family full time or whether he should prepare to be bi-vocational. Ask him what he thinks he needs by way of support. Be honest and fair in your proposals.

The foregoing suggestions are offered as a practical way in which to proceed in the process of calling a pastor. Ultimately, you will need to wait on the Lord, earnestly seek His will, submit to His providence, and depend upon God to send you the man of His choosing. Hopefully you will recognize and call the man who fits the qualifications listed in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 to be your pastor. On the flip side pray that the man you call will diligently heed the charge given to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20:28: **"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock,**

over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

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Get one! You need one! A church without a pastor is not functioning as the Lord designed His churches. A flock of sheep needs a Shepherd, and while Jesus Christ is the Great Shepherd, He has designated under-shepherds that will perform the daily tasks necessary in leadership and teaching. In John's revelation of Jesus Christ, the pastor is pictured as an Angel/Messenger that will deliver the letters and sermons of God to the congregation, and are peculiarly pictured as being in the very right hand of God! **"The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels (pastors) of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches"** (Rev. 1:20). Selah! Think about it!

The best ways for our modern flocks to find a Shepherd are to 1) Advertise in the various Baptist Papers, like "The Berea Baptist Banner," "The Voice in the Wilderness," and "The Landmark Baptist". Itinerant preachers and potential pastors will be reading these godly periodicals and the Lord can lead them to your need in this manner. 2) Let other local churches and pastors know of your need for a leader. Not only

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Sharing the Lamb

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decidedly clean in his living, though he realizes that men are lost, and that he is responsible unto God to witness to them, and though he may have a passion for the lost, this is not enough: —He must have a working knowledge of the Bible.

When the Psalmist would declare that we must have a passion for the lost, in the same verse he also declared that we should bear precious seed, for he said, **“He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed...”** (Psa. 126:6). No one will ever be saved without the Word of God, for it is the Scriptures which bring men to salvation. Listen: **“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”** (Rom. 10:17). Without a working knowledge of the Bible, one can never be a soul winner.

Too many times, zealous, but unthinking Christians, urge the unsaved to “make a profession,” and go forward, or “go on up,” when in reality what that lost one may need most of all is to have someone show him from the Word of God just what God says relative to the plan of salvation.

A good illustration whereby we can see that one needs to have a working knowledge of the Bible, grows out of the experience of Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch. When Philip would deal with this eunuch, we read that he **“... began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus”** (Acts 8:35). You will notice that Philip was able to take the Scriptures that that man was puzzled over, and to lead him to Jesus and share the Lamb with him.

It is my desire that God would take each of you who are saved and thus show you that it is your

duty to share the Lamb with others.

Over in Culpepper, Virginia, in Culpepper County, a revival meeting was in progress several years ago, and one night a lad named Johnny was saved. The next day, like every new-born babe in Christ, he began to think of those who were lost, and wondered who he might lead to Jesus. However, everybody on his side of the town was already going to church, and he could not think of a single one that he might even invite to the house of God. Then he remembered over on the far side of town, a poor halfwit named Sandy, some four or five years older than himself. Going to the lad's home, he told Sandy that he had been saved the night before, and said to Sandy, “Would you not like to be saved too?” Making an appointment with him, he met Sandy that evening, and they went together to the house of God. Needless to say, Sandy was saved, and when they returned home, Sandy put out his hand and said, “Thank you, John; good night, John.” The next day when Sandy met him on the street, he stuck out his hand and said, “Howdy, John; thank you, John.” Johnny went away to college, and when he returned home, it was the same greeting, “Howdy, John; thank you, John.” Johnny became one of the professors in the Seminary at Louisville, and when as a mature man nearly fifty years of age, he walked down the streets of Culpepper one day, another man, mature in years, but still a child in mind, met him with his hand outstretched, “Howdy, John; thank you, John.” Just a little while before he died, I heard John A. Broadus say that he would not think that it was Heaven itself unless he met Sandy, and with his hand out-stretched, heard him

say, “Howdy, John; thank you, John.”

May God help you today to be saved yourself, and then go out and share the Lamb with others.

[This article was first printed in The Baptist Examiner, Issue 153, December 14, 1940]



Congregationalism

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Certainly, there is a place for the pastor, the women, and the men. But all equal. None have more authority than the other. Go back in history in the Trail of Blood books and you will find a small slip in error here that led to a great big monstrous heresy later when one man became extremely power-hungry and even decided he could take the place not only of the authority of the church but of the headship of Jesus Christ. Congregationalism is a Baptist distinctive because it is Biblical. Let us hold to this precious truth!



Forum Question #1

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do you need their help in finding out if any “unattached” ministers of the Gospel are out there, but their prayers should be coveted, as well. It will be an immediate priority for sympathetic saints to help your dire situation. 3) Utilize local supply preachers to fill the church's pulpit and the Lord might lead you to call one of them. It is so important that the flock continues to be fed spiritually, and these generous preachers will gladly give their time and study to make sure that the Lord will have a direct avenue to speak to your church. Many supply preachers are retired and

elderly, so they may not be able to pastor again, but there have been times that the Lord has strengthened and enabled some of His servants and they have come back out of retirement to serve as pastor, once again. Some of the supply preachers may be young one's that are not ready yet to pastor, but as they grow along with you, the Lord may bring them of age in time to fill that post with your church as their first pastorate. Selah! Think about it!

The best advice for what to do until God sends you your new pastor (and He will!) is to 1) Continue to be faithful in worshiping Him regularly. God has not changed, just because you have lost a pastor. He still requires obedience, reverence, and worship! If at all possible, do not cut back on services. The needs of the flock are still relevant and pressing. Exhortation, instruction, and correction cannot go on hiatus, just because there is not a pastor called, yet. Both personal and congregational encouragements are necessary. 2) Godly men from within the church body must be called upon to take up the positions of authority and leadership. If the church is fortunate to have ordained deacon(s) and called-out teachers, then they will have to pick up the slack of the missing pastor. If the church does not have any currently, then a search must be made within the assembly for qualified men that must be elevated to positions of responsibility. God will lead in such soul-searching and the church will likely find out that God has prepared men “for such a time as this,” and even after the church has found a new pastor, these new “jewels” in the rough should be given ample

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Baptist History



Taken from *This Day in Baptist History*
Written by E. Wayne Thompson and David L Cummins

ILLINOIS'S INITIAL ICY IMMERSION

“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the like ness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin” (Rom. 6:1-6).

Our Baptist forefathers were a hardy breed, and they were determined to obey the Lord regardless of the cost. I wonder if our suave sophistication does not oftentimes hinder our willing sacrifice to follow the Lord.

Can you imagine gathering at an ice-covered creek in February and then cutting a hole in the ice and descending into the icy water to observe the ordinance of baptism? And yet that is exactly what took place on that February day in 1794 when James Lemen, his wife Catherine, and two others

were “buried in the likeness of His death” in Fontaine Creek, in Monroe County, Illinois.

James Lemen had been saved curing one of the visits of the first evangelical minister to sojourn in Illinois in 1787. The Reverend James Smith of Kentucky brought the gospel to the area. However, Lemen delayed his baptism until Elder Josiah Dodge from Kentucky decided to preach in the area. On inquiry, Elder Dodge discovered that Mr. and Mrs. Lemen, along with two others, John Gibbons and Isaac Enochs, were desirous of receiving baptism, and the date was set for the occasion. On the appointed day a great multitude gathered from all parts to witness the first baptism in Illinois. At the water's edge a hymn was sung, the Scripture authority for the ordinance was read and explained by the preacher, and prayer was offered. As the newly immersed followers of Christ came up out of the water, another stanza was sung, the benediction was pronounced, and the multitude dispersed. One shivers just thinking about those hardy candidates! What about Elder Dodge who remained in the waters throughout?

Two years later the Lemens, along with a few others, united in forming the first Baptist church in Illinois, and their pastor was the Reverend Mr. David Badgley.

Even before his conversion, Lemen had been in a small company who met together

on the Lord's Day to read the Bible with a sermon whenever they could secure the services of a preacher. After Lemen was baptized, he grew rapidly in the Word of God, and in 1808 he was licensed to preach. Though already fifty years old, he was an active, zealous minister until his death on January 8, 1823.

In our days of heated baptisteries in air-conditioned auditoriums, we do well to consider the privations of the early Baptists of America whose faith overcame many obstacles. The next time some modern-day convert calls to postpone baptism because of a slight cold, I am going to insist that he consider the Lemens, John Gibbons, and Isaac Enochs! Thank God for our heritage in this great land!

1Edward P. Brand, *Illinois Baptists: A History* (Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing Co. 1930), p. 24.

2William Cathcart, *The Baptist Encyclopedia*, ed. Louis H. Everts (Philadelphia: Louis H. Everts, 1881), 2:683-84.



Forum Question #1

(Continued from page 16) ♦

opportunities to continue in teaching and devotional positions within the growing church.

Expect that Satan will attempt to attack the church during this time of transition. Just as he attacked Eve in the garden, while Adam was away, the old Devil will not pass up this opportunity to create division and chaos within the church family. Circle the wagons to defend the weak in the midst, but do not stop serving and growing stronger. Prayer is a very important part of getting through this time without an under-

shepherd. Prayer is going straight to the great Shepherd, is it not? He will be watching out for you with tenderness, compassion, and strength! Keep Him constantly at the forefront of your pastoral search and do not ever give up! Some churches have gone very long periods of time without a pastor, whether through neglect of a diligent and persistent search, or through a time of true drought of available pastors. But there is no doubt that a faithful church will be rewarded with a good pastor! And what will make him a “good pastor”? Not any eloquence or social skills, but that he has been set apart by the Sovereign Master to this work. Do not wait on any perceived “perfect” pastor, but rather find the “imperfect” man that is “perfect” for you, by the grace of God! Selah! Think about it!



Forum Question #2

(Continued from page 13) ♦

them?

America is full of vile, wicked, and evil people! I keep hearing, “America needs revival,” but it can not have revival without godly churches and godly men to preach in them. I implore you men, young and older, called of God, seek God to put you in one of the Lord's churches, **“Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me”** (Isa. 6:8). And church, seek God to have Him bring you a preacher; do not rely on others to do what you should have been doing all along.

One last thought! I mentioned about missions. America needs missions; churches need to send out missionaries here at home. Do you realize that here in America

♦ (Continued on page 18)

Forum Question #2

(Continued from page 17) ♦

there are some states that have not one of the Lord's true churches in them, and some states like Pennsylvania and New York there is maybe one, two at the most... that is a shame considering how large they are. To my knowledge there is one mission in Arizona and not one church. How many other states are there with few or none? Folks we have failed the Great Commission here in America, no wonder she is in the shape she's in. God help us! God help our churches to raise up godly men and godly wives to help our preachers go forth with the gospel message. **"Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations"** (Jer. 1:4-5).

Also, at this present time we are supporting two missionaries: Elder Enrique Cantu out of Faith Baptist Church to the Spanish speaking people, and Elder Paul Stepp in Wyoming (Lord willing we hope to take on more, as He leads). I had the pleasure of visiting Brother Paul and his family in Wyoming, and I would say this took Brother Paul many hours on his knees and more faith than any man can have to start a Mission Work in the State of Wyoming. These two men combined (not because we support them) are in my opinion the epitome of missionaries and very dedicated, in my opinion. So, if you are fearful, and unwilling to fully surrender to your calling, I would encourage you to contact these two men. As far as that goes, any of our Brethren in the Mission Field will give you

encouragement, I am sure.

As far as I am concerned, the answer to the last question "Are they obligated to take a pastorate?" is yes! Whether it be a church or be a missionary, I can not see God call a man to just run around the country filling in and preaching with no responsibilities. God Bless!



First, concerning the obligation of preachers to pastor. In this day and time, he had better have a real reason to not be a pastor of one of the Lord's churches, with the many flocks out there in need of a man of God to lead them. If the preacher is qualified, then, yes, he should be pastoring, except in rare cases. I would encourage them to "Fear not!," but trust that the Lord will indeed be their Enabler and Helper. Whether we feel we are fit, qualified, or able is irrelevant if God has opened a door of service for us. **"Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child. But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD. Then the LORD put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the LORD said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth"** (Jer. 1:6-9). Let us Go! Selah! Think about it!

Until the Lord shows you your new sphere of service, there is good advice found in Scripture:

1) Choose a good mentor (maybe God has already chosen one for you?) that is grounded in a love for God's Word and Baptist heritage. As God provides, he will be conservative and just "a phone call away!" A good mentor is not afraid to rebuke you, and he will always be there to love and guide you into the Scriptures. If he is constantly giving you "words/books of men" rather than "Words of God," you may have to reconsider his mentorship and find another! **"Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers..."** (Titus 1:9-10).

2) Avoid modernism and liberalism in both your studying and your close friendships. Satan has drawn away many of the last few generations from a firm foundation on the inerrant Word of God (the KJV in the English Language) and our Trail of Blood Heritage in Landmark Baptist Church History (II Tim. 3:1-17).

3) Avoid social media outlets as a place to vent and debate or to "recruit a following." The temptation to see an increased number of watchers and virtual attendees is secondary to feeding your flock (Rule #1 in Acts 20:28). The proper usage of social media today is as an additional pulpit of the declaration of truth. Do not allow fractious debates and frivolous time-wasters (in the comments, etc) to distract the attention of your members and place within them the seeds of doubt. Satan is already doing that full-time! The public forum is not the place for iron to sharpen iron, but is rather to be a public proclamation of truth!

4) Do not preach a passage

until God gives clarity and understanding. Youthfulness is not stupidity, but it is ignorance. As the Lord gives light and maturity, the truth will resonate in Scriptural context!

5) Read much! Particularly in the Scripture, as God will open up passages already preached into deeper and more precious truths. But be very careful in your reading after men. Commentaries are very useful for word studies, where educated men's wisdom can be very helpful in revealing God's manifold wisdom in the Hebrew and Greek tongues that our English minds will have missed. But very few Sovereign Grace Landmark commentaries are available to draw correct conclusions from Scripture, so typically "Word Studies" is where commentaries' usefulness ends. Do not place confidence in men's writings, but continually compare them to Scripture and Baptist Heritage, as God has preserved His truths generationally to His precious Baptist pastors and churches. Generally speaking, the older the commentary, the more likely it is to have value for the studying time. Gill, Spurgeon, Pink, Cockrell, and Ross have written extensively, and these and other Baptist writers should be prioritized as we grow in the truth with solid foundations. Jamieson, Fausset and Brown, Barnes, Henry and Morris have commentaries that I have personally used for reference to preach beneficial sermons on practical and fundamental matters, but again, your doctrinal messages will come direct from Scripture more times than not. Daily reading and studying the KJV Bible will cause the errors in men's writings to ring "untrue" and "empty." **"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think**

♦ (Continued on page 24)



Short Paths

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

Gleanings: The Headcovering

By Elder Paul Stepp

"Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you. But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God. Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven. For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered. For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man. For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels. Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God. Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered? Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering. But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God" (I Cor. 11:1-16).

The subject of the head-covering, which is taught in our text passage, is a touchy one for many in Christianity. No doubt this doctrine is something that is very important, since Paul addresses this subject in the same chapter in which he also addresses the subject of the observance of the Lord's Supper. This is not a trivial doctrine! This is not something that we should leave to a few Presbyterians and the Holiness movement to contend for! An argument that many folks use to dispute the necessity of the doctrine of the head-covering in churches today, is that this particular doctrine was only meant for the Corinthians – or for the churches of that time. But, if this is the case, do we not have to throw out the rest of Chapter 11 as well, since these were written to the Corinthian Church at the same time? This is a dangerous precedent to set: now, if we are able to pick and choose what is applicable to our place and time in this particular chapter, might we not be able to do the same with other portions of Scripture?

Headship

In our text passage the Lord reveals to us the order of authority: the man is the head of the woman; Christ is the head of the man; and the Father is the head of Christ. This is very plain. There is not, necessarily, a division of strength importance here; but, rather, this is

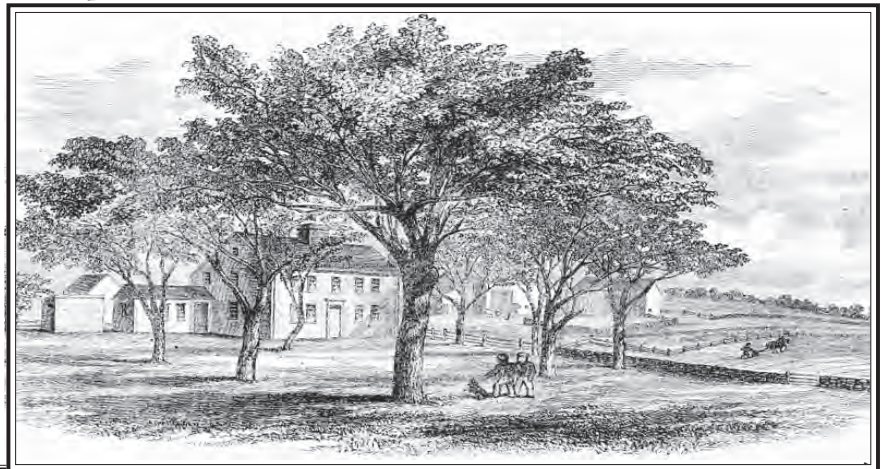
the set order of authority through which God will deal with mankind. Should every man not be quick to humbly submit to the fact that Jesus Christ is our head? Is there any shame in the admission of this fact? Whether we will admit it or not, Christ is our Head! Likewise, should every Christian woman not be ready and willing to admit the fact that Christ is over the man, and the man is over the woman (in authority)? Is there any shame in the admission of this fact? Was not Adam first made? Was not Eve made for the man? Was not Eve deceived in the Garden of Eden? Did not God clearly establish this headship in the very beginning? (Read I Cor. 11:3, 7-9; John 4:34; John 6:38; Phil. 2:5-9; I Cor. 11:11-12).

The Hair

This is not something solely taught in the church; this is something that is taught in nature. Long hair on a woman, has long been a sign of beauty. This hair is commendable in nature, as this hair is the glory of the woman. And, in the world, the woman, as the glory of the man, is not required to cover up this hair. In the House of God – or in the worship of the Holy God, and Christ His Son – the woman ought to cover that glorious hair, since the hair is more directly a glory to the man, unto whom she is subject. In the worship of God and Christ, we only want Christ and our God to be glorified. We do not desire to see the glorious beauty of the woman – for she was made for the man, and she is the glory of the man. Conversely, the man should have short hair – nature even teaches us that man's hair should be (normally) shorter than a woman's hair. When a man will worship God – in particular, when a man will enter into public worship of the Godhead – the man's head should be uncovered.

The Covering

This is not something taught in nature; this is something that is taught in the church. This covering that is spoken of, is not something that a man or a woman already naturally possesses – else, how could the covering be put on and taken off? This covering that is being spoken of is something that is artificial – not natural, like the long hair and the short hair that nature demonstrates. The head-covering in the case of the woman, and the un-covered head in the case of the man, is also necessary in the public worship service of the Church of Jesus Christ, because of our fellow saints, who will worship with us. We must carry an attitude of submissiveness – the man to Christ, and the woman to the man – so that we can each play our proper role in the public worship of Jesus Christ.





From the Pen of a Country Preacher

Milburn R. Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)



Children in the Home

“Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right” (Prov. 20:11).

Children are wonderful creatures. They can be lovable and laughable, thoughtful and thoughtless, comforting and cruel. Parents and psychiatrists try in vain to explain them. Tupper well said of them: “A babe in the house is a well spring of pleasure.”

WHAT CHILDREN ARE

Children are not demons from the Devil; they are gifts from God. **“Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD”** (Gen. 4:1). These words probably mean the child was born with the help of the Lord. Esau asked Jacob: **“Who are those with thee? And he said, The children which God hath graciously given thy servant”** (Gen. 33:5). It is written in Genesis 24:3: **“And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed, and gave him Isaac”** (Gen. 24:3). **“So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife: and when he went unto her, the LORD gave her conception, and she bare a son”** (Ruth 4:13). The gift of a child is the evidence of Divine favor (Gen. 30:2). Children are to be welcomed with joy and affection. They are a sacred trust and a solemn responsibility. They

can become the greatest blessing or the greatest curse.

Kids are a blessing to their parents: **“Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD; and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate”** (Ps. 127:3-5). Children are an inheritance given by the Lord. The fruit of the womb is to be a reward, not a regret. Children are like arrows. Sticks are not by nature arrows, but they can be made so by cutting off what is knotty and rugged. When at home children are arrows in the hand which we may direct to the mark of God's glory and the service of their generation. When they leave our home they are arrows out of hand, and it is too late to trim and train them. If they are not properly reared, they can become arrows in the hearts of their parents.

Children are a blessing to grandparents: **“Children's children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers”** (Prov. 17:6). Grandchildren are a crown to their grandparents when their parents have brought them up in the discipline and training of the Lord. Grandchildren are such when they have rightly used the privileges they enjoyed.

Joseph was a crown to his aged father: **“And Joseph nourished his father, and his brethren, and all his father's household, with bread, according to their families”** (Gen. 47:12). Ungodly children are a crown of thorns to their parents and grandparents.

CHILDREN MUST BE TRAINED

We live in a time when the state thinks our children belong to it. Liberals and leftists say, “It takes a village to raise a child.” The state has no children. Children are the property of their parents. The state would limit the birth of children by abortion on demand and by RU-486. God has some birth-control laws in the Bible (Lev. 12:1-8; 18:19; 20:18), but the state ignores these as outdated and old-fashioned. The state seeks to brainwash our children in government schools by evolution, Satanism, humanism, and one-worldism. These schools assign so much home work for the parents to do at night that little time is left for family life and play.

God holds parents responsible for the teaching and training of their children. **“Give ear, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old: Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done. For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children: That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born;**

who should arise and declare them to their children: That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the words of God, but keep his commandments” (Ps. 78:1-7).

This is seen in other scripture: **“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it”** (Prov. 22:6). **“Tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation”** (Joel 1:3). **“And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord”** (Eph. 6:4).

The proper training of children cannot be over emphasized. Every baby born into the world has a depraved nature (Job 14:4; Ps. 51:5; 58:3; Isa. 48:8). Childhood is to be a time when parents seek to develop the intellectual and moral powers of the soul for good. You train a tree when it is a small sapling and a horse when it is a colt. You cannot begin too early to train a child. In childhood children are trained, either for good or bad. The process goes on, and it cannot be stopped. We cannot make our children to be children of God; only God can regenerate a lost sinner. However, we can train our children in moral things, and teach them moral truths found in the Bible. We can teach them from Scriptures how God saves sinners (II Tim. 3:15).

Generally speaking, Christian parents have utterly failed in rearing their children. Many of these revolutionaries, draft card burners, potheads, rock-n'-rollers, non-churchgoers, Bible-haters, and good-for-nothing slobs grew up in what was supposed to be Christian homes! Many Christian parents do no better (in some

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Country Preacher

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cases worse) than the unsaved in the training of their children. God help us as Christian parents!

Lot, though a righteous man (II Pet. 2:6-9), lived only for his flocks and the fine grassland of Sodom. This resulted in his married daughters being burned in Sodom, his wife turned into a pillar of salt, and his two single daughters had illegitimate babies by their own father! Eli was a priest and a godly man, but he had wicked sons who were also priests (I Sam. 2). This resulted in God cutting off his family tree (I Sam. 3:12-13). King David was a man after God's own heart, yet he had wicked offspring. Amnon, one of his sons, raped his sister (II Sam. 13:11-14). Adonijah (II Sam. 3:4), another son, was a rebel (I Kings 1:5-53). Absalom was a murderer (II Sam. 13:29) and a rebel (II Sam. 17:1-14). Lot, Eli, and David were failures at child training!

As these cases prove, when children are wrongly trained they will grow up to break the hearts of their parents. **"A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother"** (Prov. 10:1). **"A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him"** (Prov. 17:25). **"The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame"** (Prov. 29:15). **"There is a generation that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother"** (Prov. 30:11). **"Send thine hand from above; rid me, and deliver me out of great waters, from the hand of strange children; Whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood. . . . Rid me, and deliver me from the hand of**

strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood" (Ps. 144:7-8, 11).

Zacharias and Elisabeth did a good job in bringing up John the Baptist. Their son was one of the greatest men ever born of a woman. Timothy's mother and grandmother did well in his training, even though Timothy's father was an unbeliever. Paul said of Timothy: **"And that from a child** (Greek *brephos* - "new-born babe" or "infant") **thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus"** (II Tim. 3:15). Again he writes of Timothy: **"When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also"** (II Tim. 1:5). Children must not be permitted to grow up as wild animals or untended gardens. We must not leave our children as a prey for the Devil!

Many children today are conceived in lusts and born in the world unwanted. Sadly neglected by their parents, they grow up to be moral morons, home-wreckers, school dropouts, social problems, criminals, and serial killers. Some parents kill their offspring before they are born, and others cast them off as soon as they are born. These outcast babies are left every place from commodes to churches. They are neglected and forgotten because they are in the way of worldly pleasures and money-making. Such parents will burn in the very lowest Hell! People who have children must accept responsibility for taking care of them materially, mentally, and morally.

A good childhood can be the

genesis of great strength in a person's life. A bad childhood unleashes demons that haunt an individual till the day of his death. Abuse and neglect in childhood in later years produces loneliness, depression, anxiety, sexual difficulty, fears, marital discord, and addictive behavior. No one ever completely outgrows his childhood. The child lives on in the adult. About 85 percent of a person's ultimate personality is formed by the time he is six-years-old.

Young children in today's homes suffer a dad deficit. Fathers are too busy making money to have time to train and love their children. Thanks to the influence of feminism, the next generation will not only be yearning for fathers, but also for mothers as well. Today fifty percent of all children under the age of five are in some kind of regular daycare arrangement, and half of these are under two years of age. Mothers find themselves in their careers, but lose their children to the Devil in the process!

DUTIES OF CHILDREN TO PARENTS

First, children are to honor their parents: **"Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee"** (Ex. 20:12). **"Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise"** (Eph. 6:2). The word "honor" (*timao*) involves respect toward both fathers and mothers. I believe it also includes grandmothers, grandfathers, stepfathers, stepmothers, guardians, school teachers, etc. This is the first command which contained a promise of long life indicating particular divine approval.

Children should honor their parents in gestures and behavior.

Joseph did his father: **"And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Israel his father, to Goshen, and presented himself unto him, and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while"** (Gen. 46:29). Solomon is another example of this: **"Bath-sheba therefore went unto king Solomon, to speak unto him for Adonijah. And the king rose up to meet her, and bowed himself unto her, and sat down on his throne, and caused a seat to be set for the king's mother; and she sat on his right hand"** (I Kings 2:19).

Second, parents should be feared and respected: **"For every one that curseth his father or his mother shall be surely put to death: he hath cursed his father or his mother; his blood shall be upon him"** (Lev. 20:9). Any child who spitefully uses his parents flies in the face of God who will see parental dignity and authority is not insulted and trampled upon. God puts rebellious children under a curse: **"Cursed be he that setteth light by his father or his mother"** (Deut. 27:16). **"The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it"** (Prov. 30:17; cf. Ex. 21:15; Deut. 21:18-21).

Young people should respect old people: **"Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the LORD"** (Lev. 19:32). The hoary head is a crown of glory. Those whom God has honored with long life should be honored by the younger generation. The comfort of old people must be sought and their counsel sought out: **"Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom"**

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BEREA BAPTIST BANNER	
Financial Report	
4-1-2023 to 4-30-2023	
Beginning Balance	\$10,103.30
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	750.00
The Willetts, Cottonwood Shores, TX	125.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL	25.00
Grace B. C., Gladwin, MI	50.00
Grace B. C., Germantown, NC	25.00
The Lord's B. C., Goose Creek, SC	100.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH	100.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL	100.00
Portland B. C., Plumerville, AR	50.00
S. G. B. C., Wellington, KS	200.00
Beauty Mtn. B. C., Edmond WV	50.00
Indore B.C., Indore, WV	300.00
Berea B.C., Stonington, IL	60.00
Big Creek B.C., Wayne, WV	200.00
Victory B. C., Courtland VA	25.00
Grace B. C., Corbin KY	100.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen IN	100.00
Faith B. C., Lynn AR	12.50
Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX	50.00
Parkway L. B. C., Springfield OR	100.00
West Jefferson B. C., West Jefferson OH	75.00
S. G. B. C., Texarkana, TX	50.00
Grace M.B.C., Tulsa, OK	150.00
Bible Believers B.C., Naples ID	300.00
Michael Sherman, Ashland, KY	45.00
Eld. Donald Parker, Millport, AL	100.00
Subscriptions	10.00
Anonymous	1,525.00
Sub Total	\$4,777.50
TOTAL	\$14,880.80

EXPENDITURES:	
Postage:	899.21
Printing	459.10
Wages	2,000.00
FICA	153.00
Adobe	58.84
Total Expenditures	\$3,570.15

ENDING BALANCE \$11,310.65



BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST	
Financial Report	
4-1-2023 to 4-30-2023	
Beginning Balance	\$5,559.40
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	150.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
Calvary I. B. C., Sumas, WA	100.00
.....	350.00
TOTAL	5,909.40
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio time	363.98
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	363.98
.....
Interest	+0.23
ENDING BALANCE	\$5,545.65

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(Job 32:7). How tragic to hear in this age of cultural chaos of old people being robbed, beat up, and even murdered by the young. Well did Isaiah warn: **“And the people shall be oppressed, every one by another, and every one by his neighbor: the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honourable”** (Isa. 3:5).

Third, mothers and fathers should be loved, but not more than God: **“He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me. . .”** (Matt. 10:37). These words of Christ strongly suggest that father and mother are to be loved. It would be a great error to assume Christ by these words took lightly family ties and duties, or that He took lightly the first commandment with promise. The truth He is teaching is that while father and mother must be loved they must not be loved more than the Lord.

Fourth, parents should be obeyed: **“My son, keep thy father’s commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother”** (Prov. 6:20). **“Hearken unto thy father that beget thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old”** (Prov. 23:22). These are not options, but commands from Almighty God. Esther is an example of this: **“Esther had not yet shewed her kindred nor her people; as Mordecai had charged her: for Esther did the commandment of Mordecai, like as when she was brought up with him”** (Esth. 2:20). Christ is the greatest example of a child obeying its parents: **“And he sent down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them. . .”** (Luke 2:51).

It is written in Ephesians 6:1:

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.” In Colossians 3:20; **“Children, obey your parents in all things for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.”** The verse in Colossians is in the present tense. The verb *hupakouo* (“to obey”) denotes the action is to be continual. The word implies a readiness to listen and a willingness to carry out the parental instructions given. This obedience pertains to “all things.” Filial obedience should be prompt and cheerful, not dilatory and reluctant. Obedience to parents in what is right is obedience to the Lord. It is the way of safety and happiness.

This obedience is qualified and limited by Divine approval: **“For this is well pleasing unto the Lord.”** The commands of the parents must be in harmony with the will of God. Parental authority must be exercised in subjection to the higher authority of God (Acts 5:29). Obedience to parents is to be encouraged, but not at the expense of allegiance to Christ and His truth.

Parents are to be obeyed in things not commanded nor forbidden by God: **“And I set before the sons of the house of the Rechabites pots full of wine, and cups, and I said unto them, Drink ye wine. But they said, We will drink no wine: for Jonadad the son of Rechab our father commanded us, saying. Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your sons for ever: Neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have any: but all your days ye shall dwell in tents; that ye may live many days in the land where ye be strangers. Thus have we obeyed the voice of Jonadad the son of Rechab our father in all that he hath charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives,**

our sons, nor our daughters” (Jer. 35:5-8). **“And Jeremiah said unto the house of the Rechabites, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jonadad your father, and kept all his precepts, and done according unto all that he hath commanded you Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Jonadad the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me for ever”** (Jer. 35:18-19).

Fifth, mother and father should be cared for in old age. Joseph nourished his father in a time of famine: **“And Joseph nourished his father, and his brethren, and all his father’s household, with bread, according to their families”** (Gen. 47:12). Ruth gleaned for Naomi, though only her mother-in-law: **“And she took it up, and went into the city: and her mother in law saw what she had gleaned: and she brought forth, and gave to her that she had reserved after she was sufficed”** (Ruth 2:18). Ruth’s son nourished her in her old age (Ruth 4:15). David, though in a state of exile himself, provided for his father and mother to be with the King of Moab: **“And David went thence to Mizpeh of Moab: and he said unto the king of Moab, Let my father and my mother, I pray thee, come forth, and be with you, till I know what God will do for me. And he brought them before the king of Moab: and they dwelt with him all the while that David was in the hold”** (I Sam. 22:3-4).

DUTIES OF CHILDREN TO GOD

First, a child should keep to God’s ways: **“Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my**

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ways" (Prov. 8:32). In the Bible are maxims to rule the life. These are not so much for creeds as for moral codes. They come from God and have a great binding force. The child who lives by the Bible will have no regrets.

Second, a young person must avoid youthful lusts: **"Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart"** (II Tim. 2:22). **"Youthful lusts"** refers to passions and desires which are so tempting to young people. It means to avoid strong drink, fornication, filthy talking, dope, and fast driving. These things war against the soul and hinder conversion. The indulgence of corrupt passions can lead to the policeman's club, jail, reform school, and the penitentiary.

Third, a young person must remember his Creator: **"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them"** (Eccl. 12:1). The tendency of the fallen nature is to forget God, and this tendency is very strong in youth. The young should remember God is the Author of his being, and that he is dependent upon God for all things. The Devil says, "Youth is for pleasure; middle age is for business; old age is for religion." This is a fearful delusion!

CONCLUSION

1. The news media and the movies of this country are antagonistic to Christian families. They are very defensive of perversion, free love, and divorce. The media and the movies portray parents as tyrannical, as out of touch with today's life, as void of

understanding, and as dedicated to keeping the kids from having a good time.

2. Jesus Christ taught a childlike disposition is essential to entrance into the kingdom of Heaven: **"And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven"** (Matt. 18:2-3). Like a little child, you have nothing to offer the Lord. A little child does not aim at greatness, and he trusts in one greater than he is. To rise to the greatness of the kingdom you must go down to the littleness of childhood.

3. **"Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial; they knew not the LORD"** (I Sam. 2:12). Don't live and die a son of Belial—a young person who has no saving knowledge of Christ.



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Points to Ponder

"Living Fossils – A Deceitful Title"

By Elder Perry Ames

"Deceit is in the heart of them that imagine evil: but to the counsellors of peace is joy" (Prov. 12:20).

Scientists define living fossils as creatures or plants found in the fossil record (geological record) that scientists have declared to be extinct but the creature or plant has been found living in this

present age.

This is how a plant or animal becomes a living fossil; First, a scientist finds the fossilized remains of a creature or plant that he has never seen, heard of or read about. Next, he checks with his peers to see if they have. This is called a peer review but really it is just checking with his buddies (scientist friends) to see if they know of a living example. Then after his buddies concur that they have never seen, heard of or read about a living counterpart they submit their conclusions to a scientific organization. The scientific organization is really just a high class club that the scientist and his scientist buddies belong to and support with dues. After the scientific organization reviews the information, they

collectively declare that plant or animal extinct.

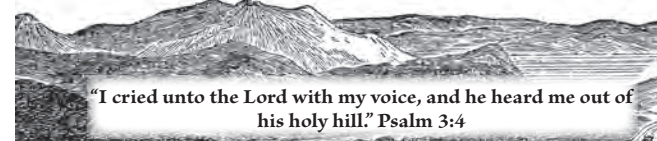
Think about it; these scientists and the club they belong to really try to make you and I believe that they know everything and that everything they say is a fact. But do not let them fool you. They do not know everything.

There are many, many so-called living fossils. Each one of them testifies to the fact that scientists do not know everything. Furthermore, part of what these scientists are trying to do is discredit the Scriptures, God's Word, by the use of the fossil record. However the fossil record agrees with, **"In the beginning God created..."** and "they shall bring forth after their own kind" (Gen. 1:1, 11-12, 21,

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Selahs

By Tomas Julius G. Salacup
Christological Baptist Mission
Vallejo, CA



Fallen But Not Destroyed

"Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand" (Psa.37:24).

Most of those who do not believe in the eternal security of the saints of God, will try to ignore this verse. But this verse clearly states **"though they fall"** God cannot utterly cast them down, for it is Him that upholds them.

Let us put it this way: Think of a father walking along with his young son by his side. There are two ways father and son might hold hands. The young boy may reach up with his tiny hand to grasp his father's huge hand. That works until the child stumbles and he is forced to let go of his father's hand. But if the father places his huge hand around his son's tiny hand, the boy is safe no matter what happens because his father's hand holds him up. He may stumble but the father's hand "upholds" him.

Thus it is with His saints, His precious children. We are not holding on to Him, He is!

Sinner, do you have that assurance? If not, throw yourself in His loving arms, repent of your sins, and rest alone into the finished work of His dear Son, Jesus Christ. Selah!

Points to Ponder

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24-25). There has never been a so-called missing link found in the geological record to validate that evolution is or ever has happened.

Ponder this: almost all fossils have a living counterpart. There may be minor differences in size and looks, like you and your sister or brother. Why do scientists not call these living fossils? Should not all fossils that have a living counterpart be called living fossils?



Forum Question #2

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ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" (John 5:39). You have found the good stuff, when you find Him! Selah! Think about it!



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Grace Baptist Church of Gladwin, MI is seeking to start a mission work in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. We are also seeking a sound preacher to go there. If you are interested and feel led of the Lord please contact Pastor Sam Wilson at 989-701-5564. You may also contact Brother Tom

Coffee, who is currently working in the area at 843-254-3018.

This ministry currently has a blog written by Bro. Coffee that can be read online at <https://thefaithfulofgod.com/blog/>

The Maranatha Missionary Baptist Church located at 14460 Ravenna Avenue, Alliance, OH, 44601, is seeking a pastor. The church was organized in 1981 and currently has seven members that are grounded in sound Baptist doctrine. Any interested elder can contact Brother Denny Morgan at dennymatco@gmail.com or call (330) 324-3038.

The Grace Landmark Baptist Church of Buckhannon, WV, is seeking a pastor. The church is Sovereign Grace and Landmark in doctrine and practice. Any interested called pastor of like faith may contact Brother Brad Butcher at (304) 669-4738 or (304) 745-6226.

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Caldwell, KS is in need of a pastor. For more information please contact the church in writing at SGBC, 400 N. Main St., Caldwell, KS 67022, or by phone Brother Darin Wiley 620-863-2431.

The Victory Baptist Church of Chehalis, Washington is in need of a

pastor. Any interested brother may call Gerry Greisen at (360) 985-7975, or Mark Fenison at (360) 751-2929.

The Lord's Baptist Church in Tacoma, Washington is in need of a pastor. For more information please contact Gaylen Russell at 360-879-5565 (home) or 253-495-4567 (cell) or by Email: gaylenr@rainierconnect.com.

Bethel Baptist Church, which is located at 2603 Penfield, Pasadena, TX 77506, is in need of a pastor. Any interested Elders should call Brother Risinger at 832-564-6350 which is his cell phone or you can call him at home at 281-476-5099.

Grace Missionary Baptist Church in Tulsa, Oklahoma is in need of a pastor. This calling has a parsonage located right next to the church building. Interested persons are to contact Brothers Charlie Hodges at 918-633-2713 or David Thorne at 918-373-6057.

Bethel Bapist Church of Lawton, OK is looking for a pastor. They have been an independent, sovereign grace Baptist Church since the late 1950's and they are seeking to call a man of God to guide, lead, teach, and rebuild their modest congregation. If you are interested please contact Bennie Burnsed at 580-695-4473.

The Philadelphia Baptist Church of Decatur, AL by God's grace is seeking a pastor. The church is Sovereign Grace, Landmark, Independent, Missionary, KJV Bible in faith and practice. If you desire a copy of our Articles of Faith please let us know. Any interested Elder of like faith may contact: Glenn Gilbreath (256) 476-1033 or Mike Gibson (256) 303-7747.

Sovereign Grace Baptist Church

of Hortense Georgia will be hosting a Bible Conference on Saturday, June 24 and Sunday, June 25. Services begin on Saturday at 9:30 AM and Sunday at 10:00 AM. Lunch will be provided on both days. Our theme this year is "PREACH THE WORD." Preachers include the following brethren: Tate Pierce, John Pruitt, Tom Horn, Kendall Brantley, and Larry Lafferty. If you are interested in coming to worship with us and need more information, please call or text Pastor David Green at 912-215-3144. We meet at 226 Willow Drive, Hortense Georgia 31543. All are invited to come. We look forward to a great time of fellowship around the Word of God.

In Remembrance

Elder George Thomas Kelley, Sr. went home to be with his Lord and Saviour March 14, 2023. He was pastor of the Philadelphia Baptist Church of Decatur, AL for the last 4 years.

In recent years he was plagued with heart problems, diabetes, and migraines that at times hindered his ability to preach. Even through these physical challenges, he very seldom missed being in the Lord's house. But praise be to God, Bro. Kelley does not have any physical challenges anymore. He is with Jesus Christ rejoicing every minute of every day.

His work here on earth was finished, and he fulfilled what the Lord had given him to do. All who knew Bro. Kelley will have fond memories of the time spent with him. Pray for his family that the Lord will comfort them. Bro. Kelley can say as Paul said in II Timothy 4: 7-8 says: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

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