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Prerequisites to Spiritual Fruitfulness

By Tom Ross

South Point, Ohio

“. . .The root of the righteous yieldeth fruit” (Prov. 12:12b).

“Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God” (Rom. 7:4).

It is obvious from the Scriptures cited above that God’s children, identified as “**the righteous**” and “**brethren**,” are those who have been joined to Jesus Christ for the express purpose of bringing forth fruit unto God. As God’s children we have not been justified merely to escape the fiery punishment of the Lake of Fire we so richly deserve. God’s design in saving us goes beyond complete deliverance from the penalty of the law to



Tom Ross

include a deliverance from the power of sin operating in our lives. Those who have been justified by faith in Christ’s blood will also be sanctified by the Spirit of Christ. God’s purpose of grace involves the entire transformation of the saint’s moral faculties, enabling him to bring forth spiritual fruit

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What's the Good News?

By Rosco Brong

(1908 - 1985)

A short study of the gospel as taught in the Bible—good news for sinners

“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain” (I Cor. 15:1,2).

Many people talk loosely about “the gospel” without any clear idea as to the meaning of the word as used in the Bible. Oftentimes men say “the gospel” when they mean the Bible, but this is an incorrect use of the word. The gospel is contained in the Bible. But many people read the Bible and some preachers may even preach much Bible truth without ever know-

ing or preaching the gospel.

It is a tragic fact that countless souls are on their way to Hell while they think they are saved because they obey some Bible commandments. Not the law nor the prophecies nor the moral teachings contained in the Bible, but “the gospel of Christ” is “the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth” (Rom. 1:16).



Rosco Brong

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Consider Christ

By Milburn Cockrell

Mantachie, Mississippi

“Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus” (Heb. 3:1).

No one on earth, or in Heaven, deserves and demands more consideration than Christ. No man or angel can compare with Him. Christ is the sublimest contemplation. The theme of the Book of Hebrews is “**consider Christ Jesus**.” “**But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man**” (Heb. 2:9). Still again: “**Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. . . .For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself. . .**” (Heb. 12:2-3). We are to consider what is written in the Scriptures concern-

ing him, for He is greater than the angels, greater than Moses or Joshua, greater than Aaron, and greater than all the heroes of faith.

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Noteworthy Statements about Christ's Limited Atonement

By Bruce Oyen

Miles City, Montana

As the title indicates, this article contains noteworthy statements about Christ’s limited atonement, by which we mean that Christ’s atonement was not a general one for all humanity, but

was limited to those whom he had chosen to save by His wonderful grace.

Those who believe in a general atonement believe Christ’s death made the salvation of all men possible, but not certain. But those who believe in a limited atonement believe Christ’s death made certain the salvation of all those whom He has chosen to save, and that Christ died only for those so chosen. In other words, those who believe in limited atonement believe Christ’s death made atonement for sin a certainty, not only a possibility. So, then, all those for whom Christ died will certainly be saved.

The doctrine of limited atonement is considered by many Christians to be heretical. But the following quotes of respected Christians who believed this doctrine prove it to have been

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The Eternity of God

By Milburn Cockrell

Mantachie, Mississippi

“**Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hast formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God**” (Ps. 90:2).

Moses, the writer of this Psalm, in these words gives God the glory of His eternity. He discloses how he serves an eternal God Who existed when nothing else did. Mountains to God, though white with the snows of ages, are young things whose birth was but

yesterday. Before the universe and angels were created God existed in all His glory. All creation is mere novelties of time. Our God is without beginning of days, or end of life, or change of time.

Angels and the spirits of men are immortal and without end. But all of these did have a beginning. They were created by the everlasting God. The world is to abide for ever (Eccl.

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"THOU HAST GIVEN A BANNER TO THEM THAT FEAR THEE, THAT IT MAY BE DISPLAYED BECAUSE OF THE TRUTH" (PSALMS 60:4).

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What's the Good News?

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What, then is the gospel? Let us see what the Bible teaches as to the *meaning, content, source, description, extent, effects, and possession of the gospel.*

MEANING

The meaning of the word "gospel" is "good tidings," that is, good news. Compare these two quotations for proof: **"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good"** (Isa. 52:7). **"As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!"** (Rom. 10:15).

We can easily see from the very meaning of the word that the gospel does not include God's moral law given through Moses. That law **"is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good"** (Rom. 7:12), but it is bad news, not good, to sinful man. **"The commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death"** (Rom. 7:10). **"As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in**

the book of the law to do them" (Gal. 3:10).

CONTENT OF THE GOSPEL

If the gospel is good news, what is the content of the message? What has happened that makes us glad to hear about it? The content of the gospel is given in I Corinthians 15: 3-5: **"I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: and that he was seen."**

Four facts are brought to us in this "gospel" or good news: First, **"Christ died for our sins."** *Not merely that Christ died, which is a historical fact believed by lost sinners, but that He died "FOR OUR SINS."* Second, **"He was buried."** This is proof of the first fact. Those who put Him to death made certain He was dead before delivering His body to His friends for burial. Third, **"He rose again."** He **"was raised again for our justification."** He was **"declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead"** (Rom. 4:25; 1:4). Fourth, **"He was seen."** This is proof of the third fact, the fact of His resurrection. The apostle goes on to mention some of the chosen witnesses to the resurrection, who included a crowd of **"above five hundred brethren at once,"** most of whom were still living when Paul wrote this epistle.

SOURCE OF THE GOSPEL

The gospel is "good news" because of its Source—the One from Whom it comes. We would rather hear from some persons than from others. We always want to hear news from our friends. We want to get news reports we can depend upon as true. Newspapers and radios and human "friends" may deceive us with false reports, but *we can depend upon it that this good news is true, because it comes from "God that cannot lie"* (Titus 1:2). **"If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater"** (I John 5:9).

DESCRIPTIONS

We can get a better understanding of the gospel by noticing the various descriptions of the gospel as given in the Bible.

It is called **"the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God"** (Mark 1:1), because it tells of a divine Person. The gospel is *personal* news. Its emphasis is not upon principles or doctrines, important as these are, but upon the person and work of Jesus Christ. *When we have believed the good news of Christ, we will have no trouble in accepting His teachings.* The real reason that some people dislike some of the doctrines

of Christ is that they hate Christ Himself. **"Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep"** (John 10:26). We need first of all and at all times to preach **"the gospel of Jesus Christ,"** with complete confidence that **"He that is of God heareth God's words"** (John 8:47).

"Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God" (Mark 1:14). This description reminds us that God is on *His throne*, ruling over the affairs of men, and especially ruling in the hearts and lives of His people. **"The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again"** (II Cor. 5:14-15).

In Acts 20:24, the gospel is called **"the gospel of the grace of God,"** because it is the good news of God's grace or favor toward us in the person of His Son when He died for our sins.

In Ephesians 6:15, it is called **"the gospel of peace,"** because it announces peace between the holy god and sinful man. **"He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world"** (I John 2:2). **"God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them"** (II Cor. 5:19).

In Ephesians 1:13, it is called **"the gospel of your salvation,"** because it brings personal deliverance to all who believe it.

In II Corinthians 4:4, it is called **"the glorious gospel."** It is **"the glorious gospel"** because it is the **"gospel of Christ, who is the image of God."** It tells of a glorious Christ, and it brings to us the promise of a resurrection when He **"shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body"** (Phil. 3:21).

In Revelation 14:6, it is called **"the everlasting gospel,"** because it never grows old. "News" of this world soon gets stale, and we are not much interested in worldly events of long ago. We have no use for newspapers and magazines a few months old, and even the world's best books are out of date in a few years and soon perish from the memory of man. But *God's message of salvation in Christ for sinful man remains timely and of vital interest.* As long as this sinful world shall stand, sinners shall rejoice in the good news that Christ died for our sins; and in an eternity beyond, the saints of God shall never cease to praise Him of Whom it is written, **"Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by**

thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation" (Rev. 5:9).

EXTENT OF THE GOSPEL

The extent of the gospel is universal in its appeal. **"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature"** (Mark 16:15). **"I am debtor to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you"** (Rom. 1:14-15).

The gospel is of limited extent, however, not in its message, but in its reception. *The good news shall be told to all, but it is good news only to those who believe it.* **"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned"** (Mark 16:16). **"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth"** (Rom. 1:16). **"We trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, specially of those that believe"** (I Tim. 4:10).

EFFECT OF THE GOSPEL

The effect of the gospel, as already noted above, is to save the believer and aggravate the guilt of the unbeliever. **"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."** **"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him"** (John 3:18, 36).

These opposite effects of the gospel, according as we believe or do not believe, are plainly stated in Second Thessalonians 1:3-10: **"We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth; so that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure: which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer: seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from**

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the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day."

POSSESSION

Finally, how about the possession of the gospel? Whose good news is it?

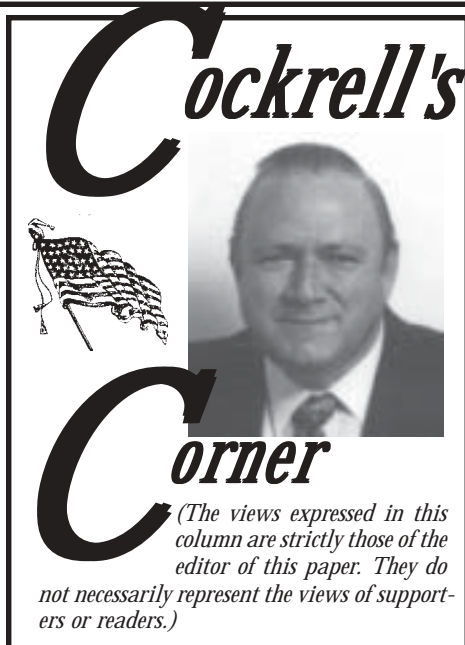
It is "Christ's gospel" (II Cor. 2:12) because it is good news of Him, to Him, and for Him. "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." "For the joy that was set before him" He "endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Isa. 53:11; Heb. 12:2).

Jesus shares this good news with His people. In Second Corinthians 4:3 it is called "our gospel." "If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together" (Rom. 8:17).

But to enjoy the benefits of the gospel it is not enough that we be associated with God's people. "Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are: then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity" (Luke 13:23-27).

The gospel not only tells of a personal Savior, but it appeals to a personal sinner. Hence in Romans 16:25 Paul calls it "my gospel." Oh, happy thought! This gospel is not only good news of and for and to the Son of God; it is not good news to and for many of my friends, and spoken of by them; but it is good news for me, it brings salvation to me, it has become my message to a lost world.

Friend, this is my gospel. Is it yours? "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts 10:43).



COMMENTS UPON THE IMPEACHMENT TRIAL

The trial of the century is over. President William Jefferson Clinton has been acquitted of both charges of impeachment by the Senate of the United States. The first vote of perjury was 55-45, against, with 10 Republicans joining all 45 Democrats voting not guilty. The second vote, on obstruction of justice, was 50-50, with five Republicans breaking ranks to join Democrats voting not guilty.

Our liberal press and politicians now assure us that it is all over with and things will get back to normal. This is doubtful. Members of Congress will for years be trying to explain their votes. There is ill will between the House and Senate. There is animosity between Democrats and President Bill Clinton, and hostility between President Clinton and the Republicans. The American people are divided over Clinton's guilt or innocence. The trial is over, but the repercussions are just beginning.

At the height of Watergate in August 1974, candidate for Congress Bill Clinton said of President Nixon: "If a President of the United States ever lied to the American people he should resign." Two days later, Clinton elaborated even further in an interview with the *Arkansas Democrat*: "There is nothing left to say. There's no point in putting this country through an impeachment since (Nixon) isn't making any pretense of innocence now. This country has suffered so long." President Clinton did not heed the advice of candidate for Congress Bill Clinton! Hence the year-long investigation and trial of the president with millions of dollars in cost to American taxpayers.

THE CONSTITUTION

People are telling us the Constitution worked. This is a matter of question in the minds of some of us. Article II, Section 4, reads: "The President, Vice-President and all civil officers of the United States, shall be removed from office on impeachment for, and conviction of, treason, bribery, or other crimes and misdemeanors." In law there are "felonies" and "misdemeanors." A "felony" is an act which the state regards as particularly vicious and punishes by death or incarceration in a state prison. All other crimes are misdemeanors (we sometimes all them "minor offenses"). These could include speeding your car on the highway or overtime parking of an automobile.

According to the Constitution, "the President, Vice-President, and all civil officers of the United States" must not violate the law in any manner. They are not to be guilty of the slightest breach of the law of the land. To put it plainly, the upholders of the law must not be breakers of the law! They are to be an example to the ordinary citizen.

The Republican House, aided by five Democrats, voted two articles of impeachment against William Jefferson Clinton and sent them to the Senate for a trial. This was all according to the Constitution. But did the Senate conduct a proper trial of the president? Did they fill their role as proper jurors in the trial?

The answer in the case of many senators is, "No." Some of the Democrats and Republicans decided the case before they heard the evidence, and some of them publicly declared this. Others boasted of "sleeping" during the trial. None of this would have been allowed in an ordinary court of law. There is little doubt that all Democrats and some Republican senators decided the case even before the trial started. Therefore you cannot say that our president had a proper trial. Few witnesses could be called. Why was this? I thought they were all under oath to hear the evidence and then decide the case?

Did the House Managers prove their case? Senator Robert Byrd (D.-W.Va.) said on national television that our President was guilty of "high crimes and misdemeanors," but then voted to acquit the president. After the trial better than thirty Democrats wanted to severely censure the president for his bad behavior, but were blocked by the Republicans. Question: why censure a man you just voted to acquit? Is he guilty, or not guilty? Men who are not fit to be jurors are not fit to be senators!

In reality better than 67 senators knew that president Clinton was guilty on both charges, but less than half

voted to convict. Having sworn to hear the evidence and do their duty about half perjured themselves and obstructed justice—the same thing the president did! So the trial of the president was a kangaroo court that makes the O. J. Simpson trial look like a Sunday school picnic. Now these senators must explain to the people why they think that perjury and obstruction of justice are not a crime in the United States.

The statement on the Supreme Court Building which says, "Equal justice under law" now means except for the president and bigshot politicians. We now have a double standard in this country. Now a popular president is immune from the strictures on others below his rank. This is a serious breach of the basic American principle that no one, not even the president, is above the law. We have set the stage for a tyrant to rule over us. The last man on earth to be told "anything goes" is President Bill Clinton, but this is what the Senate of the United States did.

There is nothing wrong with the Constitution, but there is much wrong with Senators who lack the courage and conviction to vote to convict a man which seventy-percent of the American people believe is guilty on both charges. Many Senators voted the polls and the party. A wayfaring man or a fool knows this is so.

The legalistic and political arguments in Clinton's defense cannot mask the fact that the president has been held to a lower standard than his fellow citizens. Corporate executives, military officers, federal judges and ordinary Americans have, and presumably will, face loss of their jobs or worse for offenses similar to Clinton's.

THE PRESIDENT

We have learned much about our president in this ordeal. He is a dishonest and manipulative president. Senator Bob Bennett of Utah said that the very name "Clinton" will become part of the lexicon as "a synonym for an elegant, well-crafted life." Clinton lied to his family, friends, staff and the nation. He has done and will do anything to hold on to power. A man who had any sense of honor would have long ago resigned as did Richard Nixon. We all know now what honor, God, and country means to William Jefferson Clinton. He knows nothing of honor or shame.

He will surely have a place in the history books. He will be remembered for being nearly impeached for perjury and obstruction of justice. Some of his memorials will be that he sodomized America, raised taxes, reduced the military, promoted social-

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ism, made immorality look respectable, destroyed "equal justice under law," sent our military to patrol the world, etc. He was the man who disgraced himself and dishonored the presidency. Some will long remember the millions which had to be spent because of his immorality in a futile attempt to bring him to justice. Our president believes that 21-year-old girls are for sexual pleasure.

Having now been given a green light by the Senate that he will not be impeached no matter what he does, there is little telling what the next two years may bring. Will Waco be many times repeated?

THE PRESS

The liberal media has done little or nothing to hold him accountable. Because of their biased views, they have been complicit in defending and condoning Clinton's conduct. While they agree his behavior was "inappropriate," they are quick to say it's no big deal because "everybody is doing it." According to the leftist press, we should turn a blind eye to our president's conduct because we knew the kind of man he was when we elected him.

When it comes to the truth, our amoral press is about as believable as our president.

THE RULE OF LAW

Great harm has been done to the rule of law, for we now have a double standard. White House Counsel Charles Ruff sat in the Senate chamber and explicitly argued that, if necessary, the Senate must suspend the rule of law specifically to preserve the person in the Oval Office. The majority of the senators agreed with these arrogant remarks.

Can our legal system survive the idea that lying under oath is not a crime? Can you imagine this scene in our court rooms? The witness is asked: "Do you swear to tell the whole truth, nothing but the truth, so help you God?" The witness then replies: "I will according to the circumstances."

THE FAMILY

Perhaps nothing has suffered more than the family. Our president's wife and daughter have greatly suffered during this whole ordeal.

Imagine a mother and a father trying to convince their children that oral sex is real sex. The child will tell the parents that the president of the United States said that oral sex is not sex. Pity the mother that must try to explain what the president does with cigars when he is not smoking one. Pity the parent who tells their children if they lie they will be punished. The

child may well say, "But the president lied, and he was not punished."

Are we now going to dispense with a trial by jury where witnesses testify? Will we now merely consult the polls and then by these decided all criminal cases? Will we give the majority what they think is right regardless of what the law of the land may say? Time will tell.

THE PEOPLE

I have learned much about the American people during the trial of the president. A great many of them do not know what form of government we have. We have a constitutional republic. We do not have a democracy in the absolute sense. A republic is a government in which the supreme power resides in a body of citizens entitled to vote and is exercised by elected officers and representatives responsible to them and govern according to law. The Constitution of the United States is the greatest governing document ever composed by men, but most Americans are pitifully ignorant of what it says.

Our people in the main serve the almighty dollar instead of Almighty God. As long as they have money in their pockets, they do not seem to care how immoral our leaders are, nor how much money they steal from the taxpayers. We are not a moral people, nor are we a Christian nation. Now Americans get their morals from Larry Flynt, the porno king who heads Clinton's secret police. We do not see the Trojan horse in our gate. We do not see the hand of God writing on our wall TEKEL ("**Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.**" Dan. 5:27).

The American people all owe a debt of thanks for the House who voted two articles of impeachment. These Republicans and five Democrats voted principle, not party. Heartfelt thanks goes to the House Managers who proved the charges before the Senate, even though they were jeered and threatened by some. Here are some men who love the Constitution and the rule of law in this country. Praise goes to those brave Republicans who voted that our president was guilty, despite the polls and the people. They showed a character like our first president. George Washington once said: "If to please the people, we offer what we ourselves disapprove, how can we afterward defend our work? Let us raise a standard to which the wise and honest can repair. The event is in the hand of God." These people believe that a half-truth is a whole lie!

The American people have made a god-like man out of Bill Clinton; he can do no evil. The majority of the Senate believes this, and about 80

percent (if you can believe the polls) of the American people are of the same opinion. Why should such a man give up his office when his term is expired? Why not declare a national emergency when the computer bug hits in the year 2,000 and bring in troops from the United Nations to keep people in line and himself in power? If this fails, he can always start a war with some country like Iraq. Have we voted on our last president in this country? Time will tell.

"Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people" (Prov. 14:34).



Noteworthy Statements

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held by some very "orthodox heretics."

I frankly believe that this point, along with the other points that make up what is commonly called "Calvinism" are rejected by many simply because we don't think the Bible should teach such doctrines, and we don't want it to teach them.

Well, what did others say about this subject?

BAPTIST PREACHER, CHARLES SPURGEON

Spurgeon made no apology for preaching "the doctrines of grace," also known as five-point Calvinism. For instance, in his sermon, Particular Redemption, preached on February 28, 1858, Spurgeon said, "Now you are aware that there are different theories of redemption. All Christians hold that Christ died to redeem, but all Christians do not teach the same redemption. We differ as to the nature of atonement, and as to the design of redemption. For instance, the

Arminian holds that Christ, when he died, did not die with an intent to save any particular person; and they teach that Christ's death does not in itself secure, beyond doubt, the salvation of any one man living." "Now we believe no such thing. We hold that Christ, when he died, had an object in view, and that object will most assuredly, and beyond a doubt, be accomplished." "We hold—we are not afraid to say that we believe—that Christ came into this world with the intention of saving 'a multitude that no man can number;' and we believe that as a result of this, every person for whom he died must, beyond the shadow of a doubt, be cleansed from sin, and stand, washed in blood, before the Father's throne." (These quotes were from his sermon on Matthew 20:28.)

Readers are encouraged to read Iain Murray's important book, *The Forgotten Spurgeon*, in which he thoroughly documents Spurgeon's war against Arminianism in favor of Calvinism.

THE LONDON BAPTIST CONFESSION OF FAITH OF 1689

The following quote is from the chapter on justification: "God did for all eternity decree to justify all the elect. And Christ died in the fulness of time die for their sins, and rise again for their justification; nevertheless, they are not justified personally, until the Holy Spirit doth in due time actually apply Christ unto them."

In case someone might think the foregoing quote does not necessarily refer to our subject, limited atonement, let them consider this statement concerning God's decree from the same Confession of Faith: "By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are

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F u n n y b o n e

"... A time to laugh..." (Eccl. 3:4).

Pastor Brown preached a powerful sermon on how Heaven is a place of rest for the departed souls of the righteous.

Sister Johnson told the pastor as she went out the door after the message: "A right good sermon on Heaven, and I believe every word of it. If Heaven's a place of rest, little Jimmie is going to be practiced up for it."

A very wicked and wealthy man in Possumtrot was dying. He seemed so worried that his family asked Pastor Brown to come and comfort him.

"I wouldn't mind dying so much," the old man said, "if I could take my

money with me and keep it safe."

"Don't worry about that," Pastor Brown came back. "It'll all burn up anyway."

"Mama, don't men ever go to Heaven?" asked little Jimmie Johnson.

Sister Johnson answered, "Of course they do! What makes you ask?"

"Because I never saw any pictures of angels with whiskers," he replied.

"Oh, that's because most men who go to Heaven get there by a close shave!"

Noteworthy Statements

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predestinated, or foreordained to eternal life through Jesus Christ, to the praise of his glorious grace; others being left to act in their sin to their just condemnation, to the praise of his glorious justice. These angels and men thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished."

**BAPTIST THEOLOGIAN,
JOHN L. DAGG**

Dagg, long dead, wrote two "manuals": *Manual Of Theology*, and *Manual Of Church Order*. In his *Manual of Theology* a chapter titled, *Sovereignty Of Grace*, deals with election, particular redemption, and effectual calling. The following quote is from the chapter on particular redemption: "An unrestricted invitation to all who hear the Gospel, to come to Christ for life, seems to imply that universal provision has been made in him; and in order to the making of universal provision, it appears necessary that he should have borne the sins of all men. But the supposition that he bore the sins of the whole human race is attended with much difficulty. Multitudes died in impenitence before he came into the world, and were suffering for their sins in the other world, while he was hanging on the cross. How could he be a substitute for these, and suffer the penalty for their sins, when they were suffering it in their own persons?"

"And if he endured the penalty for the sins of all who have since died, or shall hereafter die in impenitence, how shall they be required to satisfy justice a second time by personal suffering?"

**BAPTIST PREACHER, W. J.
SEATON**

Seaton's book, *The Five Points of Calvinism*, ably expounds the five points. Consider this quote from his book: "We do not overlook the fact that there are some Scriptures which refer to the 'world,' and many have taken these as their starting point in the question of Redemption. However, when we compare Scripture with Scripture, we see that the use of the word 'world' need not imply 'every man and woman in the world.' **'Behold, the world has gone after him,'** they said of Jesus; ever person, however, had not gone after Christ. The expression means 'every kind of person' - and normally Gentile as well as Jew. The over-riding question must always be the divine intention; did God intend to save all men, or did He not? If He did not intend to save

all men without exception but only the elect, then, the work of Christ on the Cross is a glorious success, and we right well believe: **'All that the Father giveth me shall come to me. . .'** (John 6:37). If, on the other hand, it was God's intention to save the entire world, then the atonement of Christ has been a great failure, for vast numbers of mankind have not been saved. Christ paid our debt! Whose debt? The world's, or the elect's? Surely, if a man has been redeemed by a redeemer, then the law which he has broken must be satisfied by reason of the work of the Surety on his behalf."

**BAPTIST THEOLOGIAN,
JOHN GILL**

Gill was such a prolific author that Spurgeon wondered when he had time to sleep. The following quote is from Gill's large book, *A Body of Doctrinal And Practical Divinity*, from the chapter, *Of The Objects Of Redemption By Christ*: "Now either he has made satisfaction for every man, or he has not: if he has, then they ought to be set free, and fully discharged, and not punishment inflicted upon them, or their debts exacted of them; if he has not made satisfaction by redeeming them, this lessens the value of Christ's work, and makes it of no use, and ineffectual; and indeed, generally, if not always, the advocates for general redemption deny the proper satisfaction, and real atonement by Christ; plainly discerning, that if he has made full satisfaction for the sins of all men, they must all be saved; and so the work of reconciliation, which is closely connected with, and involved in satisfaction, is not perfect according to the Scriptures."

**BAPTIST THEOLOGIAN, A. W.
PINK**

One of my favorite books is Pink's, *The Sovereignty Of God*. Unfortunately, some editions do not have the chapter on reprobation, and other material has been left out, too. The Baker Book House Edition has four appendices, the last of which deals with I John 2:2. The following quote is the last paragraph of that appendix: "However men may quibble and wrest the Scriptures, one thing is certain: the Atonement is no failure. God will not allow that precious and costly sacrifice to fail in accomplishing completely, that which it was designed to effect. Not a drop of that holy blood was shed in vain. In the last great day there shall stand forth no disappointed and defeated Savior, but One who **'shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied'** (Isa. 53:11). These are not our words, but the infallible assertion of Him who declares, **'My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure'** (Isa. 64:10).

Upon this impregnable rock we take our stand. Let others rest on the sands of human speculation and 20th-century theorizing if they wish. That is their business. But to God they will yet have to render an account. For our part we had rather be railed at as a narrow-minded, out-of-date, hyper-Calvinist, than be found repudiating God's truth by reducing the Divinely efficacious atonement to a mere fiction."



Prerequisites to Spiritual

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in this life that honors and glorifies God. It is a plain fact of Scripture that every genuine believer who has been born of the Spirit and justified by faith in Christ will, without a doubt, bring forth a measure of spiritual fruit in a lesser or greater degree. John 15:5 and 8 declare: **"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. . . Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples."** Spiritual fruitfulness is the evidence of true discipleship. Everyone who claims to be a learner in Christ's school of grace, and a follower of His ways must bring forth the fruits of holiness to prove that they are indeed the servants of God. Romans 6:22 brings this truth out in sparkling clarity: **"But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."**

While faith in Christ is absolutely necessary and vitally important, there is more to the Christian life than just the initial experience of salvation. I fear that so much emphasis has been placed on the death of Christ *for* the saint, that the life of Christ *in* the saint is a subject that has been sorely neglected. Spirituality, Christ-likeness, godliness, and fruitfulness are subjects that are rarely preached upon in our pulpits today. Sadder still they are qualities that are scarcely practiced by those who profess to be saints. The spiritual fruit that God is pleased with is clearly set forth in Galatians 5:22-23 which states: **"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."** The cultivation and development of these qualities is what forms the key to unlocking the mystery of spiritual fruitfulness. Before we consider each individual aspect of the fruit of the Spirit we need to examine some prerequi-

sites for spiritual fruitfulness.

A RADICAL TRANSFORMATION MUST OCCUR

1. By nature man is not a spiritual being, thus he is wholly incapable of bringing forth any of the spiritual qualities that make up the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23. Ever since the fall of Adam, every man has inherited a sinful nature that is **"dead in trespasses and sins"** (Eph. 2:1); **"alienated from the life of God"** (Eph. 4:18); and **"unprofitable"** (Rom. 3:12). Every faculty of the fleshly man has been corrupted and polluted by sin which renders him wholly unable of producing anything that is even remotely spiritual. Romans 8:8 declares: **"So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."** Jesus declared that the fleshly nature of man was incapable of bringing forth good fruit in Matthew 7:18 by stating: **"A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit."** Later Christ proclaimed: **". . . the flesh profiteth nothing"** (John 6:63).

2. Because the fleshly nature is the only one the natural man possesses then all of his attitudes, words, and actions must proceed from an impure source. The natural man cannot rise above his polluted nature and create or perform spiritual activities as Job 14:4 implies: **"Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one."** Rather, the opposite is found to be true. Everything that proceeds from the natural, fleshly man is sinful and abominable in the eyes of a holy God. **"That which is born of the flesh is flesh"** (John 3:6), meaning that the fleshly nature of man can only bring forth works of the flesh, as opposed to the fruit of the Spirit. This truth is set forth in Galatians 5:19-21: **"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."** Proverbs 10:16 declares: **"The labour of the righteous tendeth to life: the fruit of the wicked to sin."** What a deplorable and depraved condition the fleshly man is in! He is dead to the spiritual things of God unable to comprehend the truths of God, and only able to bring forth unholy affections and actions that are displeasing to God. No wonder Jesus declared: **"No man can come to me, except**

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Prerequisites to Spiritual

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the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day” (John 6:44).

3. In light of the depravity and inability of the natural man it is obvious that unless God miraculously intervenes in an act of sovereign grace there is no hope for the fleshly man. Praise God, He does intervene in the lives of His elect through the Holy Spirit's work of regeneration, commonly referred to as the new birth. Before any man can bring forth any spiritual fruit he must be born of the Spirit. In regeneration the power of the Holy Spirit quickens or makes alive the previously dead spirit of man. In great power the Holy Spirit translates the sinner from a state of darkness and deadness to a state of light and life in Christ. The Holy Spirit imparts spiritual life and implants a spiritual nature within the elect which enables them to respond to God's Word and understand spiritual instruction. This is why the new birth is referred to as a creative act: **“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new”** (II Cor. 5:17). Thus, the first prerequisite for man to bring forth spiritual fruit is for the Holy Spirit to make him a spiritual being. He must be brought into the realm of the Spirit in order to see and enter the kingdom of God as Jesus proclaimed: **“. . . Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. . . Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God”** (John 3:3, 5).

THE WORK OF GOD'S GARDENER

1. In order for spiritual fruit to be brought forth in the heart's of God's elect, a Divine Gardener must inhabit and indwell the premises. At the precise moment of regeneration the Holy Spirit takes up His abode within man to begin the fruitful work of sanctification. Philippians 2:13 declares: **“For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”** Because the Holy Spirit is a diligent and thorough Gardener, He remains in the saint of God until the work of sanctification is completed as Philippians 1:6 reveals: **“Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.”**

2. The first work of the indwelling Spirit is to plant the seed of the incorruptible Word of God in the heart which is absolutely essential if fruit is

to blossom. This truth is brought out in the Parable of the Sower: **“But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.”** It is impossible for good fruit to be brought forth apart from good seed which is why the Holy Spirit always uses the incorruptible seed of the Word of God in the production of spiritual fruit. Psalms 1:2-3 shows the vital relationship that exists between the implanted Word and spiritual fruitfulness by stating: **“But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he mediate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”**

3. The Holy Spirit, acting as God's Divine Gardener, not only implants the Word of God in the heart, but also creates a new nature within the elect that corresponds to God's spiritual nature. Ephesians 4:24 states: **“And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”** This new nature enables God's elect to fellowship with God and energizes them to bring forth fruits of righteousness. II Peter 1:3 declares: **“According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.”** After listing the various graces that are to be cultivated in the lives of God's elect Peter concludes by stating: **“For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ”** (II Pet. 1:8).

Thus, the source of all spiritual fruitfulness produced in the elect is found to be the powerful working of the Holy Spirit, regenerating, indwelling, empowering, and sanctifying them with the Word. Hence, the fruits of the Spirit are the qualities and actions of the renewed man, not produced without Him, but wrought through Him. Let us, then be ever mindful of our entire dependence upon the Spirit of God. We derived our new life from Him, and only He can maintain it in us. Without Him we can neither think good thoughts, speak good words, nor do good deeds. Any strength, of which we may be conscious is from Him alone.

(To be continued)



Perpetuity of the Church

By Billy Holbrook

Indore, West Virginia



“Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen” (Eph. 3:21).

Before we take a look at this verse, I would first of all like for us to consider the subject. What do I mean when I say “the perpetuity of the church?” First of all, the word perpetuity means “to have perpetual existence, duration, validity, etc.” Now, what does the word “church” mean? The Greek word “ekklesia” is what has been translated into the word “church” in our English Bible. Tom Ross says, “The word ‘ekklesia’ is translated ‘assembly’ three times in Acts 19:32; 39; and 41 where it is used in its non-Christian form” (*Teachings on the Local Church* p. 30). If we were to look at the usage of the word “church” in the Word of God, then we would very easily see that it is speaking about a local assembly that you can see.

One theory is that everyone is in the church that is saved and so there is just one big church that everybody that is saved is a member of. If that be true, then how do you explain when the Word of God uses the word “church” in a plural sense? In Galatians 1:2 reads: **“And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia.”** True that there is only one kind of church, but there are many churches of the Lord Jesus Christ. **“And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches”** (Acts 15:41). John the revelator was told in Revelation 1:11: **“I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.”** So by this we see that this was written unto seven different churches.

I have also heard the argument that because the church is likened unto a body and being that Christ is the head of the church, then you have a monstrosity. But the Word of God declares that Christ is to be the head of every man. If He can be the head of every man, why can't He be the head of different churches? Do each of us men just make up one great big man? what a foolish thing to assume. So then, based upon our definition of the

word “perpetuity” and of the word “church,” I must be saying that there has been a local, visible church in every age since our Lord Jesus Christ founded His church during His earthly ministry. If you believe that's what I'm saying, then you are exactly right.

Let's take a look back at our text. **“Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.”** So then, if the church is a local assembly, then God is going to get glory from that local assembly **“throughout all ages.”** If we are to be giving God glory in our lives, then we need to make sure that we are a member of the Lord's church. Are we the Lord's kind of church? If we are then we can be sure that He is getting glory from us. Psalms 79:13 says: **“So we thy people and sheep of thy pasture will give thee thanks for ever: we will shew forth thy praise to all generations.”** We are told here that His people were going to show forth His praise to all generations. What are we doing when we show forth His praise? We are giving Him glory! You may think that is a weak point, but I have more that I believe will be very convincing.

The Great Commission that was given in Matthew 28:19-20 says: **“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”** Who was it that Christ was speaking to here? Was He referring to just the disciples as individuals here? If He was, then He was promising them that they would live unto the end of the world. If He was just referring to them as individuals, then why didn't He just say that He would be with them until they died because they already knew that they would be with the Lord after they died. And how are they going to teach others to observe all things unto the end of the world, if they are dead?

Next I would like for us to take a look at Psalms 100:5: **“For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.”** I realize that we could apply this unto the Word of God which is called truth in John 17:17. And that

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is true. God has always had His Word in every generation. We didn't receive the Word of God in 1611. But I would take that even a step further. In I Timothy 3:15 it reads: **"But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."** If the church is referred to as the pillar and ground of the truth, and we are told that His truth endureth to all generations, then we could make a good judgment that the church would be to all generations. Isn't that what our text says: **"Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen?"**

If you already know that the Lord's Supper was committed unto the Lord's church, then I believe that you can see the perpetuity of the Lord's church by seeing the perpetuity of the Lord's Supper. Psalms 102:12 reads: **"But thou, O LORD, shalt endure for ever; and thy remembrance unto all generations."** At the time in which the psalmist wrote they remembered the Redeemer by the sacrifices that were made. Now let's look at when the Lord instituted the Supper in Luke 22:19: **"And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me."** So when Psalms says: **"Thy remembrance unto all generations,"** and we are told that the Lord's Supper is to be done in "remembrance" of Him, and the church is the one supposed to be the one partaking of the Supper, then we must come to the conclusion once again that the church is perpetual because the Lord's Supper is perpetual as well.

Let's look at some more verses dealing with the perpetuity of the Lord's Supper. Psalms 135:13 says: **"Thy name, O LORD, endureth for ever, and thy memorial, O LORD, throughout all generations."** What does the word "memorial" mean? Memorial Day is the time in which we think about those who have passed from this life to the next. Webster describes the word "memorial" as "anything, as a monument, intended to preserve the memory of a person or event." Let us now look at I Corinthians 11:26: **"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come."** The Lord's Supper is a memorial to our Savior's death. So when the Word of God tells us that

His memorial is unto all generations, and the Lord's Supper is the memorial of our Lord's death, and the Lord's church is the only one to take this Supper, then you must come up with the simple conclusion that the Lord's church, which is local and visible, will be and has been in every generation. Notice also that it says: **"Ye do shew the Lord's death till he come"** Once again promising that the Lord's Supper will be around **"till he come."**

Conclusion: I believe that these are some (but not all) strong arguments to prove the perpetuity of the Church. I believe with all of my heart that the Lord is receiving glory from His church and He will continue to receive that glory until He comes and takes her away.



Consider Christ

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THE PERSON TO CONSIDER

Let us study the designation of the persons called upon to consider Christ Jesus. First, they are called **"holy brethren."** Formerly, they were not brethren; they were aliens, outcasts, and enemies (Eph. 2:1-6, 19-22). By the grace of God they are now admitted to the covenant, brought near God by the blood of Jesus, and reconciled to God. Now they are Christ's brethren (Heb. 2:11, 17). They stand in that relationship to Christ, and that relationship with each other. They have the same Father and belong to the same family.

They are not only brethren, but they are also **"holy"** brethren. The description of brethren as **"holy"** does not imply they are holy in themselves, but they have been chosen and set apart by God from the secular and sinful to the sacred and spiritual (Heb. 2:11). They are holy in their relationship to God by Christ's atonement: **"By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all"** (Heb. 10:10). The Spirit applies the benefits of Christ's atonement and hence we read of **"the sanctification of the Spirit"** (II Thess. 2:13). Therefore, they are called **"saints"** and **"holy brethren."** They are holy in their position in Christ, and they are holy in principle and practice, in heart and life.

Second, they are **"partakers of the heavenly calling."** The call here is the effectual call of the Holy spirit to salvation in Christ. The Hebrews

naturally had an earthly calling from Egypt to Canaan. But these holy brethren had received a call from Heaven which would lead them to Heaven (Heb. 11:16; 12:22; Phil. 3:14). This heavenly calling belongs to those who are Christ's. This call brings the kingdom of Heaven to their souls and gives them heavenly enjoyments here on earth. They acquire heavenly privileges (they can come before the heavenly throne of grace in prayer) and hopes (Col. 1:5). One day soon Christ will come from Heaven and take them to Heaven (John 14:1-3).

THE DUTY OF CHRISTIANS

The Greek word translated **"consider"** (*katanoō*) means "to consider closely, to perceive clearly, and to understand fully" (See *Hebrews* by J. M. Flanigan, p. 63). Christians are to fix their minds on Christ, to study Him, to contemplate Him. Such a consideration of Christ will increase our acquaintance with Him, enlarge our love for Him, and improve our obedience to Him. Even **"holy brethren"** and **"partakers of the heavenly calling"** need to have Christ more on their mind.

Many of the Hebrews under Moses failed to keep their eyes upon a coming Christ and came short of their rest. The writer of the Book of Hebrews is fearful that these Christian Hebrews might repeat the sin of their fathers. Hence he tells them to keep their eyes on Christ and to hold fast to their profession of faith in Christ.

Christianity centers in Christ; in fact, Christianity is Christ. A Christian is a person who lives a life devoted to Christ. His thoughts are occupied with Christ. The measure of one's Christianity is the occupation of his mind and heart on Jesus. This occupation of one's mind must be the results of constant and conscious effort on his part: **"For I am DETERMINED not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified"** (I Cor. 2:2; cf. Phil. 3:8).

We must consider Christ at all times and in all places. In weakness consider Christ, and you will be strengthened in the inner man (Eph. 3:16) and become **"strong in the Lord and in the power of His might"** (Eph. 6:10). In sin consider Christ, and you will find forgiveness and cleansing from all unrighteousness (I John 1:9). In sorrow consider Christ, and you will find comfort for your troubled soul. In death consider Christ, and He will lead you through the dark valley to the glories and joys of Heaven. In Heaven consider Christ, and you will praise Him for the great salvation (Rev. 5).

CHRIST AS AN APOSTLE

In a broad sense we are to consider Christ in His pre-existence, His virgin birth, His sinless life, His death, His resurrection, His ascension, His intercession, and His return to earth. But in my text only two offices of Christ are presented for our consideration.

First, we are to consider Him as **"an Apostle."** This is the only verse in the New Testament that applies the word "apostle" to Christ. The Greek word (*apostolos*) which is synonymous with the Hebrew concept of the *shaliach* means "one sent forth." It is the same as a "missionary," from the Latin verb, *mitto*, "to send." When applied to Christ it surely means One sent forth from the Father with authority to fulfill His covenant engagements.

As Moses was sent by God (Ex. 3:14), even so God the Father sent Christ as the first and greatest Apostle of the New Testament Dispensation. Many Scriptures teach this. **"I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent"** (Luke 4:43). **". . . whosoever shall receive me receiveth him that sent me. . ."** (Luke 9:48). **"For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world. . ."** (John 3:17). **"For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God. . ."** (John 3:34). **". . . the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me"** (John 5:36). **"This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent"** (John 6:29). **"As the living Father hath sent me. . ."** (John 6:57). **"But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me"** (John 7:29). **". . . I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me"** (John 8:42). **"Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world. . ."** (John 10:36). **". . . that they may believe that thou hast sent me"** (John 11:42). **". . . Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent"** (John 17:3). **"As thou hast sent me into the world. . ."** (John 17:18). **". . . God sent his only begotten Son into the world. . ."** (I John 4:10).

The apostleship of Christ is hinted at in Old Testament prophecy when He is called **"the messenger of the covenant"** (Mal. 3:1). It is suggested in the opening words of the Hebrew Epistle: **"God, who at sundry times and in divers manner spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son. . ."** (Heb. 1:1-2). Consider also Hebrews 2:3: **"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by**

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Consider Christ

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the Lord. . ." An apostle was a preacher of the Word of God.

Christ Jesus was the first Apostle of the New Testament, and He appointed twelve other apostles (Matt. 10:1-5). Before His death He told the eleven apostles: **"As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you"** (John 20:21). His apostleship was prior to and the ground of theirs. The original twelve apostles were sent from Christ as Christ was sent from the Father. Can those who claim to be the successors of the apostles thus speak of their appointment and ordination?

The greatest Apostle of all time is Jesus Christ, and He is worthy of the greatest consideration. He is greater than Peter or Paul. With Him the Messenger was the message. Being the Messenger and Witness from the Father, we are to hear Him. Moses foretold His coming and admonished us to consider what he would say. **"The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken"** (Deut. 18:15; cf. 18:18-19). When Christ was come and stood with His disciples on the mount of transfiguration God the Father spoke: **"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him"** (Matt. 17:5). Men must hear this great Apostle.

In the fullness of time Christ came forth to preach the gospel. In the synagogue at Nazareth He declared: **"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised"** (Luke 4:18). The first text of this great Apostle was: **"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel"** (Mark 1:15). Paul tells us how Christ came and preached peace to Jew and Gentile (Eph. 2:17).

The apostolic office was the highest office in the New Testament church (I Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11). When it comes to apostles Christ is the first and greatest. He had the Spirit given Him without measure (John 3:34). He performed more miracles than any other apostle (II Cor. 12:12). The other apostles wrought miracles in the name of Christ, but He wrought miracles in His own name.

OUR HIGH PRIEST

The high priest among the Jews was considered an apostle or messenger. The elders of the Sanhedrin addressed

him on the great day of atonement, saying, "Lord, high priest, we are messengers of the Sanhedrin, and you are our apostle or messenger. . ." (See *Gill's Com.*). In later times the minister or ruler of the synagogue was called an apostle. So we do not marvel that the writer of the Hebrews continues: ". . .and the High Priest of our profession. . ." Christ is not only our Apostle, but He is also our High Priest. The high priest was the highest office in Israel under the Old Testament Dispensation.

Although Christ is called an apostle only once in the Bible in the Book of Hebrews. He is called our High Priest about 12 times. His priesthood is first seen in Hebrews 2:17: **"Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."**

The high priest in Israel was appointed by God, and so was Christ: **"And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec"** (Heb. 5:4-6).

The high priest in Israel offered an atoning sacrifice (Lev. 16). Acting as our great High Priest, Christ offered an eternal sacrifice: **"Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"** (Heb. 9:12-14). ". . .but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Heb. 9:26). Christ put away the sins of His people as far as the east is from the west (John 1:29).

The High Priest also made intercession for Israel, the same people for which he offered a sacrifice. The same is true of our great High Priest. ". . .he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors" (Isa. 53:12). **"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for**

us" (Rom. 8:34). **"For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us"** (Heb. 9:24).

One of the errors of Arminianism is that they are compelled to separate the atonement of Christ from the intercessory work of Christ. For if Christ died for the same people for whom He prays, then they would have Him dying for the world and then refusing to pray for the world for whom He allegedly died. Our great High Priest said in John 17:9: **"I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine."** Arminians would do well to see that Christ died for a particular people, and that He prays for this same people. The blood of Christ will never be fuel for the flames of Hell as we teach, but it will be according to what they teach.

THE TWO OFFICES COMBINED

The highest office in the Old Testament was high priest, and the highest in the New Testament is apostle. Moses was an apostle in Israel—one sent by God (Ex. 3:14). Aaron, his brother, was the high priest in Israel. These two offices are combined in Jesus Christ who is superior to both Moses and Aaron. There is but one Greek article to both nouns (apostle and high priest), showing both offices are combined in Christ Jesus. Our Lord was an Apostle from God to man, and a High Priest from man to God. As Apostle He pleads the cause of God with us, and as High Priest He pleads our cause with God. John 13:3 says of Christ: ". . .he was come from God, and went to God." In this age the ministry of Moses and Aaron is invested in one Person, Christ Jesus.

Consider the one who occupies these combined offices. **"Christ"**

means "anointed" or "Messiah." **"Jesus"** is the same as the Hebrew word "Joshua," which is a contraction of Jah Oshea—Jehovah saves. Christ Jesus is Jehovah who saves us. We might say that "Christ Jesus" means "the Anointed Divine Savior."

OUR CONFESSION

Christ Jesus is the Apostle and High Priest **"of our profession"** (*homologia* which would be better translated "confession"). "Profession" comes from the Greek verb (*homologeoo*) which means quite literally "to say the same thing," but in general usage, "to profess," or "to confess" (See *Studies in the Epistle to the Hebrews* by E. Schuyler English, p. 90). "Profession" is generally used for the Christian's avowal of his faith before men (Heb. 4:14; 10:23; II Cor. 9:13; I Tim. 6:12). The meaning in our text is that Christ Jesus, as Apostle and High Priest, is the object of our confession of faith.

Today the word "profession" has taken a bad sense. We are accustomed to hearing of "professed Christians" who are not "possessors of real salvation." This is scarcely the meaning it has in my text. We must not forget that a true Christian publicly confesses his faith in Christ. Romans 10:9-10 declares: **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."** Our Lord said: **"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven"** (Matt. 10:32).

Christ Jesus must be the subject matter of the faith we profess. We must hold fast to this profession and not waver in it (Heb. 4:14; 10:23).

Continued on page 49

IT TAKES COURAGE

- To refrain from gossip when others about you delight in it.
- To stand up for an absent person who is being abused.
- To live honestly within your means and not dishonestly on the means of others.
- To be a real man, a true woman, by holding fast to your Christian ideals when it causes you to be looked upon as strange and peculiar.
- To be talked about and yet remain silent when a word would justify you in the eyes of others, but which you would speak with injury to another.
- To refuse to do a thing which is wrong, though others do it.
- To dress according to your income, and to deny yourself that which you cannot afford.
- To live always according to your convictions.

Consider Christ

Continued from page 48

It is plain from this that the Hebrews addressed in this epistle professed to be believers in Christ Jesus. The Hebrew nation was not addressed. Hebrew Christians were addressed, many who were members of New Testament churches (Heb. 12:22-23; 13:7, 17, 24). However, "**holy brethren**" and "**partakers of the heavenly calling**" cannot be limited to mere Hebrew believers in the absolute sense. There is much truth for Gentile Christians in this epistle.

CONCLUSION

1. We must consider Jesus Christ as our Apostle and High Priest. We are to meditate upon Him as He is presented in the inspired Word. We must ponder Him as the chiefest Minister of the law and the greatest Preacher of the gospel. Aaron was a great high priest in Israel, but Christ is the greatest High Priest of all time. Paul was a great apostle, but Christ is the greatest Apostle of all time.

2. We are to look upon Christ as a painter looks upon a model, with the full intention and desire of imitating Him. We must keep our eyes constantly upon Him as our infallible Guide. We must gaze upon Him and ponder Him as "**the Apostle and High Priest of our profession.**" If we take our eyes off of Christ, we will end up like Peter did in the sea.

3. There is no longer a sacrificial temple on earth where a human high priest intercedes for a people. Now we can come boldly to the throne of grace in Heaven by the blood of Jesus. Our Lord is now seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high to hear our prayers and to plead our cause before the Father.

4. Christ deserves and desires to be thought of much more than He is. How little some professed Christians think about Him being our Apostle and High Priest!

5. Do you belong to the holy brotherhood? Are you a partaker of the heavenly calling? Have you publicly confessed Christ as your great Apostle and High Priest? Is considering Him your greatest and most cherished desire?

Pray Through to What?

By Buell H. Kazee
(now with the Lord)

If a lost sinner came to you seeking the way of salvation, would you tell him to do something which the

Bible does not tell him to do? Well, that is just what anybody is doing when they tell a sinner to PRAY THROUGH. I challenge anybody to find one place in the Bible where it asks a sinner to "pray through" to salvation. The Bible is plain about the way of salvation. It never tells a sinner to "pray through." And, if not, is it not wrong for us to tell him to do it?

"But," you say, "what harm can there be in PRAYING THROUGH? Doesn't it do them good, even though the Bible doesn't teach it?"

The first objection is that it misleads sinners. Because, there actually isn't anything for a sinner to pray through. Through what do you ask him to pray? Does God have bars up against him? Does He hold the sinner back until he (the sinner) breaks down God's resistance and gets in? Does a lost sinner have to break through something to get into the kingdom? Through what does he have to pray? Is God trying to keep sinners out of Heaven?

The Word of God is plain on salvation. First, the Word is preached and witnessed by those in whom the Spirit dwells. The Spirit takes the Word, and by it awakens the sinner to his lost condition, then offers him salvation on the terms of repentance and faith, not PRAYING THROUGH. God wants sinners saved; invites them to salvation; and His Spirit works in the sinner's heart, through the Word, to that end. Then why ask a sinner to PRAY THROUGH when there is nothing to PRAY THROUGH.

Another objection is that it makes the sinner feel that he is doing something to atone for his sins. This is salvation by works. It is the same as the Roman Catholic idea of doing penance for sins, or atoning for them. But the Bible says, "**By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast**" (Eph. 2:8-9).

Another objection is that much of the so-called "praying through" is a mere fleshly emotionalism, worked up by Satan's help. This same thing, in the heathen worshippers, goes to the extreme of tearing their clothes, cutting themselves with knives, going into spells of unconsciousness. The snake handlers are another example of such frenzied, fleshly indulgence. Satan finds those who want to feel the presence of God, and he deceives them by letting them have a feeling in the fleshly senses rather than through the Spirit. The sinner may be never so earnest, and still be deceived. He is misled by the people and Satan, not by the Bible, for the Bible does not tell him to do this.

But some will say, "Doesn't the sin-

ner have to repent? And isn't this repentance?" Surely he has to repent, but this is not repentance. The word in our Bible which means "repent" is translated from the word in the Greek (the language which Jesus used, and in which the New Testament was first written) which means "change the mind." The Prodigal Son "**arose and came to his father**"—this was repentance. A whole change of his course, turning away from his way to the father's way. He changed his mind about the whole thing. Sorrow for sin is not repentance. A godly sorrow worketh repentance, but it is not repentance. And a "godly" sorrow is that which the Holy Spirit produces in us when the Word tells us we are out of peace with God.

Crying is not repentance. Praying is not repentance. Confessing sin is not repentance. "Changing the mind" and turning to God and His way is repentance. So, "praying through" is not repentance.

God never said for lost sinners to cry and mourn and beg and be sorry until they get God in the notion of saving them. Yet, this is just what "praying through" is. God tells sinners to "Repent and believe the gospel." This summarizes all that God asks of a sinner in order to be saved. God invites sinners to salvation; He isn't holding them out of it, making them beg Him to let them in.

A sinner may call upon the name of the Lord for mercy. He may say, "**God be merciful to me a sinner.**" But he must take God's mercy by faith in Jesus, or he can not go one step further. What is the use for a man to pray when he won't receive what God offers him freely? Why not accept it and go on to eternal life, if a man wants it bad enough to pray? This is what God tells him to do.

Yes, a sinner may call on God for mercy, but he actually has no right to pray as the child of God does. He has no Father to pray to, so he can't say, "**Our Father who art in Heaven.**" Jesus says in John 8:44 that a lost man is the child of the devil. He would have to pray to the devil if he prayed to his father.

Furthermore, he can't ask for forgiveness of sins for God cannot forgive the sins of a man who has no Saviour. The only way God can take away our sins is to put them on our Saviour. The lost man has no Saviour, so, God cannot forgive his sins until he believes in Christ, and becomes a child of God by faith. Forgiveness is something God gives to His children, not to lost people. He cannot take away one single sin until we are children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

Then why tell a sinner to pray at all? Tell him to repent and believe the

Gospel. That is what the Bible tells him to do.

Who can pray through? The child of God! Long earnest prayers bring blessing. Jesus often prayed all night long. The disciples prayed ten days before Pentecost. Jesus and the Apostles urged us to pray often, and long, and earnestly, until the answer came. This is praying through. But this is not praying for salvation; it is praying for the blessings of God which are promised to His children, and only God's children, praying through the name of Jesus who has saved them, can rightly expect an answer. Salvation comes to a sinner through repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 20:21); but answers to prayer come to God's children, through the name of the Saviour whom they have trusted.

Let us quit telling the lost sinner to do something God never told him to do. Let us quit making him feel like he must atone for his sin by sorrowing and crying and praying. Take the obstacle out of his way, and give him a more hopeful Gospel; one in which he may find eternal life now.

Certainly, many people have been saved who have tried to PRAY THROUGH. But they were saved by repenting and believing the Gospel, not by PRAYING THROUGH. That is the way the Bible puts it, and if we can't find "praying through" in the Bible, let us quit telling sinners to do it.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor David W. Huckabee, 817 East Pine Lake Road, Salem, OH 44460 has a new book, *Studies On Church Truth*. It is over 700 pages perfect bound in soft cover. It sells for \$26 plus postage. Please order from Bro. Huckabee. His phone is (330) 337-3917.

The Beverly Manor Baptist Church, 209 Vohland Street, Washington, IL, and Pastor Michael McCoskey will host a Bible Conference April 5-7. For more information call (309) 745-8927.

The Heritage Landmark Baptist Church, Given, W. Va., and Pastor Dan Stepp organized the Grace Landmark Baptist Church of Orient Hill, W. Va., January 31, 1999. After organization Elder Don Epperly was called as pastor and ordained to the gospel ministry that same day. The address of the new church is Grace Landmark Baptist Church, PO Box 251, Charmco, WV 25958-0251, or e-mail depperly@inetone.net.

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit questions on any Bible topic

The Berea Baptist Banner

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Mantachie, Mississippi 38855

Could Christ have sinned in His human nature when tempted by the Devil in Matthew 4:1-10? Can God be tempted with evil? How could it be a real temptation if it was not possible for Christ to have sinned in His human nature? --- Kentucky



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The word "tempted" that is used in Matthew 4:1 can be used in two ways. It can be used of one being tempted to do evil or of one being tested. It is the same word that is used in Hebrews 2:18 and in Hebrews 4:15. According to W. E. Vine, it "signifies (1) to try, attempt, assay; (2) to test, try, prove, in a good sense, said of Christ and of believers, Heb, 2:18, where the context shows that the temptation was the cause of suffering to Him, and only suffering, not a drawing away to sin."

When one is tempted to do evil, this temptation comes from within. **"But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death"** (James 1:14-15). When one is tested, he is tested from without. There was nothing from within Christ that could respond to evil; therefore, our Lord was tested. Tested in reference to His human body. He experienced all the things that we do in the body. He knew what it was to be hungry, thirsty, tired, sleepy, and to weep at the grave of a loved one. He is man and was tested in the body as a man. For Christ to sin, He would have to lust in His heart. To have lust in one's heart is to be guilty of sin, but in Hebrews 4:15 it is said that He **"was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."**

It was impossible for Him to sin, for He had a sinless human nature. Deity took upon itself human nature. He is not two persons, but one with two natures. He became the God-man and will always be both the Son of God and the Son of man. It was human nature but not Adamic nature. He knew no sin (I John 3:5). All men are born with a depraved nature, and from birth each and every one is guilty of sin, but Christ is God and possesses

all the attributes of God. One of the greatest of God's attributes is holiness. Christ never lost His holiness. He came into this world as God clothed with flesh, but He retained His divinity.

He could not have sinned because of God's sovereignty. God's purpose would have been changed or destroyed. If Christ could have sinned, all mankind would be lost. It is through a sinless sacrifice that we are brought near to God. **"But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot"** (I Pet. 1:19). Our salvation was ordained before the foundation of the world. God said: **"Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure"** (Isa. 46:10). He is the **"Lamb slain from the foundation of the world"** (Rev. 13:8). He could not have sinned because He is God, and God can not change. **"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning"** (James 1:17). **"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever"** (Heb. 13:8).

In Matthew 4:1-10, Christ was tested to show us that He can be trusted. He knew that He was able to stand the test, but He was tested for our benefit. This has nothing to do with sin. Christ can never sin, for it is impossible for God to rebel against Himself. He is "the Impeccable Christ."

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My position on this question is that Christ could not sin in His human nature. Hebrews 4:15 informs us that Christ **"was in all points tempted like as we (the elect) are, yet with-**

out sin." It is apparent that Christ did not sin in His human nature, and I believe that the virgin birth of Christ assures us that He could not. Christ did not possess the sinful nature passed from Adam to all his posterity. In Matthew 4:1-10 Christ was tested, or tempted to use His deity to satisfy the weakness of human nature, but not having a sinful human nature He remained impeccable in His human nature.

James 1:13 tells us that God cannot be tempted with evil. The temptation James writes about is solicitation to do evil, not that God cannot be tested or proven. The temptations which came to Christ were designed to test Him and cause Him to use His deity to satisfy the sinful desires of Satan and depraved men.

The temptation (testing) that Christ underwent were real, and it would be absurd to think otherwise, however, Satan, demons and sinful men, or any other power could overcome His sinless nature.

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I do not believe that Jesus Christ could have sinned in His human nature because the Bible clearly states that He was **"God manifest in the flesh"** (I Tim. 3:16); **"the fulness of the Godhead bodily"** (Col. 2:9); and **"the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person"** (Heb. 1:3). I believe that the Bible teaches the impeccability of Jesus Christ, meaning that it was possible for Jesus to have sinned as the God-man, possessing **". . . the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth"** (John 1:14).

No, God cannot be tempted with evil according to James 1:13 which states: **". . . for God cannot be tempted with evil. . ."**

Matthew 4:1 states: **"Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil."** The devil tried with all his

might to induce the Son of God to sin, but to no avail. Jesus did not possess a carnal nature like the fallen sons of Adam do. He was the eternally begotten Son of God, possessing a human nature without sin united with the Divine nature. As such, the Lord Jesus Christ successfully resisted the temptations of the devil. The Devil had the opportunity to tempt the Lord Jesus Christ as he would any other man, but the Lord Jesus Christ did not possess the ability to sin as all other men do. Praise God that the impeccable Christ conquered the Devil on this occasion! The Second Adam succeeded in that which the first Adam had failed.

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The word tempt, temptation, etc. does not always carry the same connotation. It can mean to try or test as I believe is true in Matthew 4:1-10 and Hebrews 4:15. I believe Christ was tried as was Abraham (Gen. 22:1; Heb. 11:17). God did not tempt Abraham as to entice him to do evil, but tried or tested him to prove him to be true to his faith. James 1:13 says that God tempts no man, neither can God be tempted.

Certainly, Christ was made flesh, He was as much man as man can be, a perfect man, but He was the God-man with no evil tendencies in Him.

There was never any possibility for Christ to sin because he could never be tempted, enticed to lust after evil. To be tempted to do evil one must have a sinful nature within (James 1:14). Christ never had a sinful nature, or the nature of Satan, as sinful man does. In John 14:30 Christ said: Satan **"hath nothing in me."** We human beings as sinful creatures have a nature of Satan, lusting against God and for sin, but Christ never had such a nature.

I believe in absolute predestination. If God predestinates all things, and I believe He did, then He must have predestinated for Christ to either sin or not sin. The Scriptures show that Christ never sinned. Therefore God must have predestinated for Christ to not sin. That being the case it was impossible for Christ to sin.

GARNER SMITH



The Berea Baptist Banner Forum


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Did Divinity suffer on the cross? Or, did Christ in three hours bear away all sins of all the elect merely in His human nature? --- Ohio



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The body, soul, and spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ, the God's man were offered on the cross of Calvary to put away the sin of God's elect. The divine and human natures of Christ indivisibly united together is what made His spotless life and sacrificial death effectual for the elect. The Divine nature of Christ is what made His sacrifice to be of eternal and infinite worth. I believe the whole Christ offered Himself as the spotless Lamb in order to satisfy the justice of God and pay the full penalty of the elect's sin.

The following Scriptures may be helpful in understanding that the Lord Jesus Christ as the God-man died for His people:

"Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin. . . He shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall hear their iniquities" (Isa. 53:10-11).

"And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight. . . For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality" (Col. 1:21-22; 2:9-10).

"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God. . . For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Heb. 9:14, 26).

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (I Pet. 2:24).

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. . . As Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Acts 20:28 cf. Eph. 5:25).

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I believe II Corinthians 5:19 makes it plain that the divine nature of God suffered in the redemption of Christ on the cross for His elect.

Only as a divine man could He be a sufficient savior for His people. Hebrews 9:14 says: **"How much more shall the blood of Christ who through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God."** This verse makes it clear that it was divinity being offered on the cross.

The sins of His people placed upon Him certainly caused great suffering on a sinless divine being (Isa. 53:1-11). No man in the flesh could have endured the suffering for all of God's elect. The Lord Jesus could not have suffered such agony in His own fleshly body had not His deity given Him an infinite capacity to do so. His body showed its inability to have borne such suffering without deity in Luke 22:44. I believe the prayer of our Lord to the Father for the cup to pass from Him was not the sacrifice He was to make on the cross, but that His earthly body withstand the agony He was suffering without expiring before the sacrifice was made for the elect (Luke 22:42; Heb. 5:7).

I believe that the divine nature of Christ was certainly involved in His suffering on the cross for His elect

(Matt. 1:21, 23).

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In order for Him to be the Sanctifier of those given to Him by the Father and deliver them from the one who had the power of death, it was necessary for the Son of God to become the Son of man. He must take on a nature that was capable of suffering and death. It had to be flesh and blood just like those for whom He was to die (Heb. 2:14-15). In I Peter 4:1 He is said to have suffered for us in the flesh. In Romans 8:3 Paul said: **"... God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."** And again in Colossians 1:22 we are told that He reconciled us, **"In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight."**

During the three hours of darkness our Lord as the God-man bore away all the sins of His people. He is not two persons, but one person with two natures. He has a divine nature which He has always had, for He is the eternal Son of God. He took upon Himself a human body and soul; therefore, He assumed human nature. I do not know if anyone can understand just what took place when God became man. Paul said in I Timothy 3:16, **"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."** Neither do I know if anyone can understand just what happened during the three hours of darkness, but we are told that He bare our sins in His own body on the tree (I Pet. 2:24). His suffering involves far more than I can ever understand. He was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God (II Cor. 5:21). Divinity can never be

made sin nor could His Divine nature die. It was the Son of man that He suffered and died, and it was as the Son of man that He cried out to God in Matthew 27:46, for He addressed him as God and not as Father. As to what part His divine nature played in His suffering I do not know, but He suffered and died as the God-man having both a divine and a human nature.

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The Hebrew writer, in chapter 2, tells us why Christ was made a little lower than the angels. Verse 9 gives the answer: **"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."** It was in human flesh that He tasted death for every man, or for every son that would be brought unto glory. Verse 14 tells us why Christ assumed human nature.

Christ's sufferings were in the flesh (I Pet. 4:1). **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit"** (I Pet. 3:18).

The Son, equal in deity with the Father, could not remain in Heaven and bring redemption to His people. He has always been the Son of God, but He became what He had never been—the Son of man. This He did that He, in assuming human nature, could suffer and die for the elect. In His human nature He could suffer in three hours all that was necessary to bear away the sin debt of His people.

JIMMIE B. DAVIS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Northside Baptist Church, Oakdale, LA, and Pastor Larry Wilson will host a Bible Conference March 19-21. Speakers are as follows: Elders G. L. Burr, Jack Green, Walter Herin, Jerry Dodson, Bill Lee, David O'Neal, Arthur Blevins, Doyal Thomas, Leroy Pack, and Milburn Cockrell. For more information call (318) 335-1265 or 335-4967.

A "Paganization of Our Society"

By Dan Wooding

Garden Grove, California

Ted Baehr, founder and publisher of MOVIEGUIDE (r), the authoritative family guide to movies and entertainment, believes that America could now be fast heading toward a pagan society, with dire consequences for all its citizens.

In an interview, Baehr said, "Right now, if we continue along our present path, we are probably headed for a paganization of our society in America. As a result of this, we will get even more negative programs catering to our vulnerable teenagers. This will bring a breakdown of all moral inhibitions."

Baehr says that this breakdown is already taking place because of the influence of the movie industry. "One of the tools the movie industry uses to capture an audience is to violate a tradition or a taboo," he stated. "Most of those things that we as believers thought of as taboos 30 or 40 years ago are now gone, and they are searching for more taboos to violate, leading to more violent and perverse film content."

He then pointed to two recent film criticisms. "John Carpenter's *Vampires* is the most obscene of all the vampire films," Baehr stated, "and *There's Something About Mary* is the most vulgar and offensive of all dumb and dumber humor films."

"It's going to get even worse unless there is a turn-around. We have an older generation that needs to be reached with the tools to turn the society around, or our culture is doomed to degradation."

CHRISTIANS BEING SINGLED OUT FOR ABUSE

Baehr then spoke about the fact that more and more Christians in America are now being singled out for abuse in the media. "If you look at some recent actions within the press, Christians are getting hit very hard," he said. "Now in the news you no longer see just 'conservative' or 'right wing' as descriptions. Now you see the word Christian as a target phrase. You don't hear about the 'religious right,' but the 'Christian right!' The word Christian is being defamed as a term within our society."

"We live in a nation where Christians are a significant portion of the population, and even if you measure small percentage who are Bible readers and the few who actually study the Bible, that's still a significantly larger proportion than any other group within our society."

"If you take the 40% to 60% who

go to church every month, then you've got a tremendous number of people. . . And, if they are really as convicted by their values as the other side alleges that they are, then the cultural wars would be OVER! I'm also worried that there could be a reaction to the paganization of society which might be a new form of Victorianism."

Baehr was recently a featured speaker during the annual conference of the Association of Moral Education at Dartmouth College. The AME was founded in 1976 to provide an interdisciplinary forum for professionals interested in the moral dimensions of educational theory and practice.

In a panel debate, which Baehr organized, some leading authorities helped to provide answers to the topic, "Do the Entertainment Media Set the Moral Agenda for our Country?"

Among the participants on the panel were:

Ken Wales, a veteran film-maker, actor, and television producer who was the Executive Producer of the critically acclaimed CBS Television series, *Christy*; Linda Seger, who is the author of highly-acclaimed books on screenwriting and filmmaking; and Judith A. Reisman, a best-selling author, researcher and behavioral expert.

Said Baehr, "What was startling to us was that at one point during the conference, a leader came to me and asked, 'Can we move this away from this direction?' I think some of these professors had seldom heard anything so against the misleading and fraudulent information that has steered the whole country into sexual libertinism, which is really destructive."

"Our presentation, and our facts, brought home several key points, and we had the audience startled and shocked, as we explained how the media impacts people, why the media impacts people and why we have the moral problems we have today. We ended with an analogy that comes from the Bible, that people need to know the Son of the Designer of the universe. We gave them a clarity, a vision and a hope."

"EDUCATED BARBARIANS"

Baehr says he believes that these leaders and professors were so interested because many of them claimed to be men and women of faith, but they were facing the hard reality of their students who were brought up without a moral compass. He then paraphrased Teddy Roosevelt by saying, "If you educate a man's mind and not his heart, you've got an educated

barbarian."

Baehr went on, "These top educators are faced with young people coming into their schools who don't have pure moral absolutes, don't recognize any moral perspectives, and are willing to lie, cheat and steal. They understand that there is a problem that has to be solved and we're offering the solution. Although they are still grasping for a solution, we are trying to help them understand what the solution is."

Baehr also recently spoke at a gathering of the World Association of Communicators. "This is a group you would expect to be extremely liberal," he said "and yet there was a great interest and zeal, with many of them coming back to faith! I think we are seeing a long-term reaction in the baby boomers that make up these organizations, a reaction to the license

and the cultural and moral decay in our society. At last, they are looking for answers."

"Ten or twenty years ago, they wouldn't be looking for answers, they would have thought they had all the answers. But they are now looking for truth, and this is a prime time to get the word out, to reach them with truth that will set them free from the confusions of our age."

"However, I don't think the young teenagers now growing up and coming into school are looking for the answers. Teenagers, by nature, always think they have all the answers. They are going to present more challenges and problems for our society than we've ever seen before. Our families and churches are one answer. The media elite could also be a powerful blessing if only they would recognize their own responsibility."

The Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures

By Robert Haldane

Part 4

(1764 - 1842)

The object, therefore, of the historical records in the Scriptures, is essentially different from that of all other histories. They are not given to preserve the memory of certain occurrences, in order to promote the knowledge of what may be useful in regard to the affairs of this world, and to extend the sphere of human intelligence and experience; but exclusively to teach the knowledge of God and salvation. Scripture history is conducted in such a manner, that, like the doctrinal parts of the Bible, it is foolishness to the men of the world. It not only disappoints them in the nature of the facts which it relates, but also in the manner in which they are exhibited. Owing to the truth and impartiality of its narrations, the character of the people of Israel appears to them greatly worse than that of the grossest idolaters, and the accounts given in Scripture of men whose conduct on the whole stands approved by God, seems to them to sink below that standard of moral rectitude, to which they imagine that they themselves, and many who make no pretensions to religion, have attained. It not only records truth, without the smallest mixture of error, but also invariably keeps in view the agency of God in every occurrence, —in events the most minute, as well as the most considerable; and thus it furnishes a perpetual comment on the sublime description of the Apostle, when, penetrated with admiration of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, he exclaims, "Of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all

things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

When the typical import of so many of the sacred narrations, concerning persons, places, institutions, and events, with their necessary bearings, in subserviency to the ushering in of the Messiah, are duly attended to, all may be convinced, that for selecting and relating these histories, in which nothing was to be deficient, and nothing redundant, and for placing before us these mystic pictures for our instruction, the most plenary inspiration, the most accurate divine dictation, was indispensable. The prophets, and even the angels, had but a partial understanding of the things that were afterwards to take place. Moses, it is evident, was not aware, that, as being a type of Christ, it was necessary that his death should intervene before the people of Israel should be led into the promised land. We have no reason to believe that he understood the import of all he wrote; —for instance, that when he recorded the history of Sarah and Hagar, he knew the design for which it was recorded, and the use that was afterwards to be made of it. We cannot doubt that the prayer of David, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may see wondrous things out of thy law," was equally suitable for Moses, who wrote that law. It was the Lord who made the statutes, and judgments, and laws, between him and the children of Israel, *by the hand of Moses*; (Lev. 26:46).

Had the wisest and best informed

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Inspiration of the Holy

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of the Scripture historians not been inspired of God, but simply superintended, so as to prevent them from falling into error, the histories recorded by them would have been very unlike those which they have actually transmitted. Many of their narrations that exist would never have appeared, and others of them would have been very differently modified. We might have discovered in them the self-approving wisdom of man but not the seeming **"foolishness of God."** Would the united sagacity of all the wise men in the world have led them to relate the history of the creation of the universe in one chapter of a book, as Moses has done, and of the erection of the tabernacle in thirteen? Would the fond prejudices of the Jewish nation, or the general desire fostered by so many of the learned, to support what is called the dignity of human nature, in both of which Moses no doubt participated, have permitted him to record so base an action as the selling of their brother Joseph as a slave by the Jewish Patriarchs, —the incest of Judah, whose tribe was to be always pre-eminent, —and the treachery and revenge of Levi, from whom was to descend the whole priesthood of Israel?

That there was a higher hand which directed the pens of Moses, and of the other writers of sacred history, may be sufficiently manifest to all who have seen in what that history has issued. There is besides, a combination and a harmony in the historical parts, both of the Old and New Testaments, which we have sufficient ground to believe in a great measure escaped the notice of the writers, as has also been the case with thousands of those who have read them—a variety and a unity which irresistibly prove that *One* only—He who knows the end from the beginning—is the author of the whole, who employed various individuals to produce a uniform work, of which none of them either comprehended all that he contributed to it, or knew for what reason he was directed to record one thing, and to omit another.

Considering the purpose which the historical parts of the Scriptures were intended to serve, in exhibiting the character and power of God, and His uninterrupted agency in the government of the world, and in pointing to Him who is the end of the law, we have sufficient reason to be convinced, that neither Moses, nor the other sacred historians, nor all the angels in Heaven, though acquainted with all the facts, and under the direction, and with the aid both of

superintendence and elevation, were competent to write the historical parts of the Word of God. They possessed neither foresight nor wisdom sufficient for the work. In both respects, every creature is limited. Into these things the angels, so far from being qualified to select and incite them, **"desire to look,"** and, from the contemplation of them, derive more knowledge of God than they before possessed, and have their joy even in heaven increased. In those histories, the thoughts and secret motives of men are often unfolded and referred to. Was any one but the Searcher of Hearts competent to this? Could angels have revealed them, unless distinctly made known to them? If it be replied, that in such places the sacred writers enjoyed the inspiration of suggestion, that is, of verbal dictation, we ask, where is the distinction to be found? It is a distinction unknown to the Scriptures. And so far from a plenary inspiration not being necessary in its historical parts, there is not any portion of the sacred volume in which it is more indispensable. But even admitting that verbal inspiration was not in our view essential in those parts of the book of God, is this a reason why we should not receive the testimony of the sacred writers, who nowhere give the most distant hint that they are written under a different kind or degree of inspiration from the rest of it; but who, in the most unqualified manner, assert that full inspiration belongs to the whole of the Scriptures?

The *words* that are used in the prophetic parts of Scripture, must *necessarily* have been communicated to the prophets. They did not always comprehend the meaning of their own predictions, into which they **"searched diligently."** And in this case, it was impossible that, unless the words had been dictated to them, they could have written intelligibly. Although they had indited the Scriptures, it was necessary to show them **"that which is noted in the Scripture of truth"** (Dan. 10:21). The writings of the prophets constitute a great portion of the Old Testament Scriptures, and God claims it as his sole

prerogative, to know the things that are to come. We are therefore certain that *they* enjoyed *verbal* inspiration: and, as we have not any where a hint of different kinds of inspiration by which the Scriptures are written, does it not discover the most presumptuous arrogance to assert that there are different kinds?

The nature of the mission of the prophets required the full inspiration which they affirm that they possessed. God never intrusted to any man such a work as they had to perform, nor any part of such a work. It was God himself, **"who, at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers, by the prophets."** That work, through which was to be made known **"to principalities and powers in heavenly places, the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he proposed in Christ Jesus,"** was not a work to be entrusted to any creature. The prophet Micah 3:8, says, **"But truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the LORD, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin."** It was not the prophets then who spoke, but the Spirit of God who spoke by them.

Of the complete direction necessary for such a service as was committed to him, both of lawgiver and prophet, Moses was aware, when the Lord commanded him to go to Pharaoh, and to lead forth the children of Israel from Egypt. In that work he intreated that he might not be employed. This proved the proper sense he entertained of his own unfitness for it. But it was highly sinful, and evinced great weakness of faith, thus to hesitate, after the Lord had informed him that he would be **"with him."** Moses was accordingly reproved for this, but the ground of his plea was admitted; and full inspiration, not only as to the subject of his mission, but as to the very words he was to employ, was promised. In answer to his objection, the Lord said unto him; Exodus 4:11,12, **"Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the Lord? Now therefore go, and**

I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say." Moses still urged his objection, and the same reply was in substance repeated, both in regard to himself and to Aaron. The full inspiration, then, which was at first promised to Moses in general terms, was, for his encouragement, made known in this particular manner, and the promise was distinctly fulfilled. Accordingly, when, as the lawgiver of Israel, he afterwards addressed the people, he was warranted to preface what he enjoined upon them with, **"Thus saith the Lord,"** or, **"These are the words which the Lord hath commanded, that ye should do them."** In observing all the commandments that Moses commanded them, and in remembering the way by which the Lord had led them, Israel was to learn, that **"man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord."** Signs were shown to Moses, and God came unto him in a thick cloud, in order as he said, **"that the people may hear thee when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever"** (Ex. 19:9).

If the words of Moses had not been the words of God, —had he not been conscious of the full verbal inspiration by which he wrote, would the following language have been suitable to him, or would he have ventured to use it? Deuteronomy 4:2: **"Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep these commandments of the Lord your God which I command you."** Deuteronomy 6:6: **"And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children."** Deuteronomy 11:18: **"Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. And ye shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt write them upon the doorposts of thine house, and upon thy gates."** From these passages we learn that Moses was conscious that all the words which he spoke to the people were the words of God. He knew that it was with him as with Balaam, to whom the Lord said, Numbers 22:35, 38, **"Only the word that I shall speak unto thee, that thou shalt speak;"** and in the language of Balaam, Moses could answer, **"The word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak."**

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Berea Baptist Broadcast

STATION	TIME	DIAL	WATTS
WFTA, Tupelo, MS	Sunday 9:30 - 10:00 a.m.	101.9	3,000 FM
WJOR, Saint Joseph, TN	Sunday 1:00 - 1:30 p.m.	101.5	1,000 FM
WLZA, Starkville, MS	Sunday 1:00 - 1:30 p.m.	710	2,500 AM
WCNA, Myrtle, MS	Sunday 9:30 - 10:00 a.m.	95.9	3,000 FM
WYWY, Barbourville, KY ..	Sunday 7:30 - 8:00 a.m.	950	1,000 AM
KARI, Blaine, WA	Saturday 10:30 - 11:00 a.m. ..	550	5,000 AM
DXRA, Davao City, Philippines	Sunday 8:15 - 8:45 a.m.	783 Khz ...	10,000 AM
DWSS, Manila, Philippines .	Sunday 5:30 - 6:00 p.m.	1494	16,000 AM

Inspiration of the Holy

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As **"the word of the Lord"** was communicated to Moses, so it also came to Gad, to Hathan, and to the other prophets, who were men of God, and in whose mouths was the Word of God. **"Now by this I know thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth"** (I Kings 17:24). The manner in which the prophets delivered their messages, proves that they considered the words which they wrote, not as their own words, but dictated to them by God himself. Elijah said to Ahab, **"Behold I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity."** On this Mr. Scott, in his Commentary, observes, "Elijah was the voice, the Lord was the speaker, whose words these evidently are." This is a just account of all the messages of the prophets. They introduce them with, **"Thus saith the Lord,"** and declare them to be **"the word of the Lord;"** and is it possible that the prophets could have more explicitly affirmed, that the words which they uttered were communicated to them, and that they were only the instruments of this communication to those whom they addressed? In the place where we read, **"Now these be the last words of David, the sweet psalmist of Israel,"** David says, **"The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue"** (II Sam. 23:2). In like manner it is said, **"And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord his God, and humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet speaking from the mouth of the Lord,"** **"To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah,"** **"That the word of the Lord spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished"** (II Chron. 36:12, 21, 22). **"Yet many years didst thou forbear them, and testifiedst against them by thy Spirit in thy prophets"** (Neh. 9:30). Isaiah commences his prophecies by summoning the heavens and the earth to hear, **"for the LORD hath spoken"** (Isa. 1:2). In the same manner, Jeremiah writes, **"The words of Jeremiah. . . to whom the word of the Lord came."** **"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."** **"I will make my words in thy mouth fire"** (Jer. 1:1, 2, 9, 14). **"Thus speaketh the Lord God of Israel, saying, Write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book"** (Jer. 30:2). Again, in the prophecies of Ezekiel, **"Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Is-**

rael, and speak my words unto them." **"Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, all my words that I shall speak unto thee receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears and go, get thee to them of the captivity, unto the children of thy people, and speak unto them, and tell them, Thus saith the Lord God"** (Ezek. 3:4, 10, 11). Hosea says, **"The word of the Lord that came unto Hosea;"** **"The beginning of the word of the Lord by Hosea"** (1:1, 2). It is in similar language that the other prophets generally introduce their predictions, which are every where interspersed with **"thus saith the Lord."**

All, then, that was spoken by the prophets in these several recorded passages, was spoken *in the name of the Lord.* When false prophets appeared, it was necessary for them to profess to speak in the name of the Lord, and to steal his *words* from their neighbor. **"I have heard what the prophets said, that prophecy lies in my name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed. The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the LORD. Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces? Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that steal my words every one from his neighbor. Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the LORD, that use their tongues, and say, He saith"** (Jer. 23:25-31). They were the *words* of God, therefore, which the false prophets stole from the true prophets of Jehovah.

The uniform language of Jesus Christ, and His Apostles, respecting the whole of the Old Testament Scriptures, proves that, without exception, they are **"the Word of God."** On what principle but that of the verbal inspiration of Scripture, can we explain our Lord's words, John 10:35, **"The Scripture cannot be broken?"** Here the argument is founded on one word, "gods," which without verbal inspiration might not have been used; and if used improperly, might have led to idolatry. In proof of the folly of their charge of blasphemy, he refers the Jews to where it is written in their law, "I said ye are gods." The reply to this argument was obvious: -The Psalmist, they might answer, uses the word in a sense that is not proper. But Jesus precluded this observation, by affirming, that **"the Scripture cannot be broken,"** that is, not a word of it can be altered, because it is the Word of Him with whom there is no variableness. Could this be said if the

choice of words had been left to men? Here, then, we find our Lord laying down a principle, which for ever sets the question at rest. The Apostles, in like manner, reason from the use of a particular word. Of this we have examples, I Corinthians 15:27-28, and Hebrews 2:8, where the interpretation of the passages referred to depends on the word **"all."** Again, Galatians 3:16, a most important conclusion is drawn from the use of the word, **"seed,"** in the singular, and not in the plural number. A similar instance occurs, Hebrews 12:27, in the expression **"once more,"** quoted from the prophet Haggai.

When the Pharisees came to Jesus, and desired an answer respecting divorce, he replied, **"Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning, made them a male and female; and said, for this cause,"** etc. Thus, what is said in the history by Moses, at the formation of Eve, is appealed to as spoken by God, and as having the authority of a law. But nothing that Moses could say, unless dictated by God, could have the force of a law, to be quoted by our Lord. What, therefore, was then uttered by man, was the Word of God himself.

The Lord Jesus Christ constantly refers to the whole of the Old Testament, as being, in the most minute particulars, of infallible authority. He speaks of the necessity of every word of the Law and the Prophets being fulfilled. **"Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."** - **"It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the Law to fail."** - But how then shall the Scriptures be *fulfilled*? - That all things which are written may be *fulfilled*. - That the word might be *fulfilled* that is written in their Law. - That the Scripture might be *fulfilled*. - **"The Scriptures,"** he says, **"must be fulfilled."** In numerous passages the Lord refers to what is **"written"** in the Scriptures, as of equal authority with his own declarations; and, therefore, the words which they contain *must* be the "words of God."

(To be continued)



The Eternity of God

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1:4), yet it was created by God. It may be truly said that God is the only absolute and eternal Being in all the universe. He has an attribute of eter-

nity which is not shared by any of His creatures.

ETERNITY DEFINED

What do we mean when we say that God is eternal? We mean that the infinitude of God relative to duration is eternal. The Creator is exalted above all the limitations of time. With Him there is no distinction between the present, past, and future; but all things are equally and always present to Him. God's nature is free from all succession of time and contains in itself the cause of time. The eternal Being is conscious, not in time, but of time. God is not in time, but time is in God. Although there is logical succession in God's thoughts, there is no chronological succession.

Men mark time and write histories, but God does not. To Him the past, the present, and the future are one eternal now. There is no succession in the Divine mind; therefore, no new operation takes place. All the Divine acts are from eternity. The effects of the Divine acts do indeed take place in time and by succession, but these have no bearing on the nature of God, for He is the originator of time. He is free to act in relation to time, and He is equally free to act outside of its limitations.

ETERNITY DECLARED

The eternity of God belongs to His infinity. It is many times declared in the Word of God. Abraham called the Lord **"the everlasting God"** (Gen. 21:33). The Prophet Isaiah made reference to **"the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth"** (Isa. 40:28). The Prophet Jeremiah speaks of Him as **"the living God"** and **"an everlasting King"** (Jer. 10:10). The Apostle Paul called attention to **"the commandment of the everlasting God"** (Rom. 16:26). To Timothy Paul wrote of **"the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God"** (I Tim. 1:17).

One of the titles of God is **"Eternity."** The correct rendering of I Samuel 15:29 says: **"The Eternity of Israel shall not lie."**

In the Bible God is said to inhabit eternity: **"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabited eternity, whose name is Holy. . ."** (Isa. 57:15). The eternal God dwelt where time was unknown in a sphere where succession was not marked. There He abode before the seemingless endless interminable duration was broken in upon by the revolutions of years and days. He says: **"Yea, before the day was I am he"** (Isa. 43:13). God is not up in years, but He is more ancient than all the days of time (Dan. 7:13).

God is from eternity to eternity. He inhabits one undivided, uninterrupted

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The Eternity of God

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eternity to which all time is but a brief moment. The Prophet Isaiah believed Christ to be **"the Father of eternity"** (Isa. 9:6 improved translation). The everlasting God has been active from **"the days of eternity"** (Micah 5:2 margin).

ETERNITY DISTRIBUTED

Eternity is an attribute of the Godhead. When I say God has this perfection, I mean all three of the Divine Persons. God the Father has the attribute of eternity. He is called **"the eternal God"** (Deut. 33:27). The Son has this quality. Proverbs 8:23 tells us that Christ as the Wisdom of God was **"set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was."** The same is true of the Holy Spirit. Hebrews 9:14 mentions **"the eternal Spirit."**

ETERNITY DEMANDED

The very nature of God demands the eternity of the Supreme Being. There was never a time when God did not exist. It cannot be said that God passed from non-existence into existence. He declares: **"I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me"** (Isa. 43:10). This can read: "Before me, God was not formed." Hence the God of the Bible had a being from eternity. He is self-existent and self-sufficient. Men form idol gods, but no man formed Jehovah. The gods which men form are false gods unworthy of worship and service.

God is the first cause of all things, and therefore, must be eternal. If God is the first cause, then He is without cause. The Bible speaks of Him as **"the first and the last,"** a phrase expressive of eternity (Isa. 41:4; 44:6; 48:12). This phrase is applied to Christ in Revelation 1:17 and 22:13. God existed before any other beings. He is the infinite, eternal, and unchangeable Governor of the world from of old. His kingdom is from everlasting to everlasting.

In Deuteronomy 32:40 God says: **"For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever."** To lift up the hand to the Jewish mind meant to swear a solemn oath. Angels are said to swear by the eternal God (Rev. 10:6). Men are said to swear by saying as **"the Lord liveth"** (Jer. 4:2). But when the Lord swears, He swears by His own life because He can swear by no greater. His form of swearing is **"as truly as I live, saith the Lord"** (Num. 14:21, 28). God is said to swear by His own life which is for ever.

Creatures die because of their age. Plants die due to the passing of time. Even the mountains and plains

change with the course of nature. But time has no effect upon our eternal God. **"Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end"** (Ps. 102:25-27; Heb. 1:10-12).

Time impairs all things which God made. The fashion of the world becomes obsolete and passes away like the morning dew. The visible creation as the garment of the invisible God is waxing old and wearing out. Yet our God lives on in eternal youth; no decay happens to Him; no destruction overtakes our Eternity. All the perfections of God's nature are without any variation from eternity to eternity.

In Exodus 3:14 it is written: **"And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM."** Here God declares Himself to be the Being of beings. The sense is not only I am what I am at present, but I am what I have been, and I am what I shall be, and shall be what I am. This expression could only come from an eternal and invariable Being. The best any man can do is to say, **"By the grace of God I am what I am"** (I Cor. 15:10). But God can say more than any creature. He can say, **"I AM THAT I AM."** He can say such because He is an absolute eternal Being.

ETERNITY DESCRIBED

Several of the Divine attributes are said to be from everlasting. All of these attest the eternity of our God. Romans 1:20 informs us that God has **"eternal power."** The creation of the universe displayed this attribute of power, but it did not mark its beginning in God. God's almighty power existed from eternity. If God's power is eternal, then he must be an eternal Being.

The mercy of God is said to be **"from everlasting to everlasting"** (Ps. 103:17). From old eternity God viewed His people as objects of mercy by eternal election. The vessels of mercy will be the objects of it unto the new eternity. Thus God's mercy is without beginning or end. If His mercy is such, then God has the attribute of eternity.

The love of God extends back beyond the creation of the universe. To Israel the Lord said: **"Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love"** (Jer. 31:3). The Bible says that **"God is love"** (I John 4:8) in His very essence. Therefore if God's love is of old, then God has existed from everlasting.

The psalmist said that God **"keepeth truth for ever"** (Ps. 146:6).

God is truth and is always true to His own nature. He is true to His covenant, to His Word, and to His Son. If God keeps truth for ever, then He must exist for ever.

God is said to possess **"everlasting kindness"** (Isa. 54:8). His kindness continues in and through all states and conditions that the elect pass through. Each one of God's own are the objects of the unchanging affection and everlasting favor. If God's kindness is eternal, then God is eternal.

ETERNITY DISPLAYED

The eternity of God can be seen in the purposes, plans, promises, counsels, and decrees of God. All of these are traceable to eternity past and will last unto eternity future. The psalmist wrote: **"The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations"** (Ps. 33:11). God's plan is carried out from age to age, His design runs on from century to century. He never changes His purpose. His decree is not frustrated. His program to fulfill His purpose is not diminished by the lapse of years.

Isaiah tells us: **"O Lord, thou art my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful things; thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth"** (Isa. 25:1). The decrees of God are from eternity, and they are all faithfully performed. Being fixed in the eternal mind, they are punctually and exactly brought about in time. When these are done in time they display to man what God planned from eternity past.

The Lord does not form new plans in time which was not in His mind before the world was. The undisturbed mind of God exists in unbroken serenity, producing ordained results with unerring certainty. His operations in providence are according to **"the eternal purpose"** (Eph. 3:11). All such purposes and plans were in His mind from the counsel halls of eternity.

The choice of some men to grace and glory was made **"before the foundation of the world"** (Eph. 1:4). Christ **"was foreordained before the foundation of the world"** (I Pet. 1:20) to be their Redeemer. The elect were loved in Christ their covenant Head **"before the foundation of the world"** (John 17:23-24). God's people were given grace in Christ **"before the world began"** (II Tim. 1:9). These selected ones were promised eternal life **"before the world began"** (Tit. 1:2). The whole scheme of their salvation was **"the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world"** (I Cor. 2:7). These eternal acts of the sovereign Being display

His eternity.

ETERNITY DISCLOSED

There are some hints of God's eternity to be discovered in a number of things. It may be inferred from His **"everlasting covenant"** (II Sam. 23:5; Heb. 13:20). The Covenant of Grace was made by the Trinity from everlasting and it will last to everlasting. This covenant will endure immovable and unalterable because its source is the eternal God. This covenant is the eternal plan of the Divine Mind. This covenant assures the elect of eternal happiness.

The eternal God can be seen in the fact that He is blessed for ever. Paul addressed Him as **"the Creator, who is blessed for ever"** (Rom. 1:25). Writing to Timothy, he says the **"only wise God"** is to have **"honor and glory for ever and ever"** (I Tim. 1:17). God is glorified and will be glorified to eternity. Since God is an everlasting Being He alone is worthy to be eternally served and adorned.

The attribute of eternity can be gleaned from the statements **"the Lord is King for ever"** (Ps. 10:16) and **"the Lord sitteth King for ever"** (Ps. 29:10). Daniel wrote: **"His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation"** (Dan. 4:3). There can be no everlasting kingdom unless it is ruled by an everlasting God Who is the Supreme King.

God cannot be measured by space or time. Psalm 90:4 declares: **"For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night."** II Peter 3:8 says: **"One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."**

To the eternal God a thousand years is like one day or even three hours of a night. A millennium is a long period to man who is a creature of time. In this period nations can rise and fall, dynasties can come and go, elaborate systems of philosophy can begin and end, generations of men can be born and die. But all such things and events are nothing to the eternal God. To our God a thousand years of human history, whether past or to come, are as present to Him as that done in the last hour.

ETERNITY DEDUCED

The practical lessons which we can gather from a discussion of this subject are worthy of consideration. First, the doctrine of God's attribute of eternity causes us to realize we serve **"an incorruptible God"** (Rom. 1:23). His infinity, His eternity, His spirituality, His immateriality, and His majesty distinguish Him from all creatures. He is **"immortal"** (I Tim. 1:17) and has **"immortality"** (I Tim. 6:16). All the

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lowers of Christ" to respect the dignity of life, even for those guilty of "great evil."

"I renew the appeal I made most recently at Christmas for a consensus to end the death penalty, which is both cruel and unnecessary," the Pope told more than 100,000 people who gathered in the Trans World Dome to hear him.

"A sign of hope is the increasing recognition that the dignity of human life must never be taken away, even in the case of someone who has done great evil," the Pope continued. "Modern society has the means of protecting itself, without definitively denying criminals the chance to reform."

An execution had been scheduled in Missouri Jan. 26, but it was postponed in deference to the Pope's visit. On Jan. 28 Missouri Gov. Mel Carnahan commuted the death sentence of convicted triple murderer Darrell Mease to life without parole, in response to the Pope's plea.

"I continue to support capital punishment, but after careful consideration of his direct and personal appeal and because of a deep and abiding respect for the pontiff and all he represents, I decided last night to grant his request," Carnahan explained.

Mease was convicted in the 1988 triple murder of a former drug partner, the man's wife, and their handicapped teenage grandson. Mease ambushed the trio with a shotgun after laying in wait for three days. He was only tried for the murder of the grandson.

The U.S. is the only western democracy, which practices capital punishment. ". . .the false prophet. . ." (Rev. 20:10).

ATHEIST, SATANIST BELONGINGS FOR SALE

AUSTIN, Tex. (EP)—For decades, Madalyn Murray O'Hair and Anton LaVey were leading opponents of Christianity in America. In January, the tattered remnants of their once great anti-Christian empires were offered to the highest bidder.

O'Hair was known as an articulate spokeswoman for atheism whose successful 1963 Supreme Court case led to a ban of official prayer at public schools. Less successful was her campaign to remove the words "In God We Trust" from U.S. currency.

O'Hair and two family members vanished in 1995, reportedly taking with them hundreds of thousands of dollars from the non-profit atheist organizations she founded. Various possessions were auctioned Jan. 23 to pay back taxes and other debts totaling \$250,000. The auction was conducted by the Internal Revenue Service.

Items sold at the auction included a penny with the words "In God We Trust" crossed out (sold for \$10) and a Bible given to O'Hair by Oklahoma schoolgirls in 1968 (sold for \$2,000).

The IRS also seized O'Hair's diaries, and plans to sell them separately. In her

diaries, O'Hair wrote about financial problems and of her desire for money and power. In one entry she wrote, "I want money and power and I am going to get it. By age 50, I want a \$60,000 home, a Cadillac car, a mink coat, a cook, a housekeeper. In 1974, I will run for the governor of Texas and in 1976, the president of the United States."

But in 1977, she was losing hope. She wrote, "I think atheism is done for this time. I have failed in marriage, motherhood, as a politician. . . .At age 58, I have never had a bedroom of my own."

At least a half-dozen times, sometimes set off in a box, she wrote, "Somebody, somewhere, love me."

"The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God" (Ps. 14:1).

DESPITE OBJECTIONS, 100 METHODIST PASTORS CONDUCT LESBIAN WEDDING

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (EP)—Nearly 100 Methodist ministers participated in a "union" ceremony for two lesbians Jan. 16, in direct defiance of United Methodist teaching.

The two women, both in their 60s, were united by their United Methodist pastor, Don Fado, and 96 "co-officiating" ministers. The ceremony was a protest against a 1996 Methodist church law banning "homosexual unions."

The union has no legal weight, as none of the 50 U.S. states have laws permitting same-sex marriage. Voters in Hawaii and Alaska turned back efforts to legalize homosexual marriage last November.

Members of the Evangelical Renewal Fellowship, a reform movement within the United Methodist Church, held a press conference the day before the ceremony to condemn it as a violation of both Scripture and Methodist tradition. A statement read by group leaders said, "By conducting such a ceremony, our friends are violating the teaching of Scripture, the polity of our denomination and more than 2,000 years of Christian moral tradition."

The group also noted that the United Methodist Church's Book of Discipline states, "Ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions shall not be conducted by our ministers and shall not be conducted in our churches."

"This is not about sexuality. This is about the authority of Scripture," said John Sheppard II of the First United Methodist Church of Yuba City.

". . .Abusers of themselves with mankind. . ." (I Cor. 6:9).

GLEANINGS HERE AND THERE

VATICAN CITY (EP)—New guidelines for exorcism issued by the Vatican urge exorcists not to mistake mental illness for possession, and to consider the effect of psychiatric medicines. The Catholic exorcism ritual includes making the sign of the cross, laying on of hands, sprinkling holy water and ordering the devil to depart. Signs of possession include speaking in unknown languages and demonstrating physical strength beyond one's natural capacity, according to

the church. These are the first new guidelines for exorcism issued by the Roman Catholic Church since 1614.

MEXICO CITY, Mexico (EP)—Two suspects in the November kidnapping of a priest reportedly committed the crime to stop the priest's anti-drug efforts. Mexico City police said the two suspects, arrested in late January, admitted that they kidnapped, drugged and threatened to kill Pedro Lascurain unless he stopped preaching an anti-drug message. The suspects are members of a gang that sells drugs in the inner-city neighborhood where Lascurain worked.

ACCRA, Ghana (EP)—A well-known witch doctor in Ghana recently became a Christian, according to James Owusu of Africa Village Missions. "As a witch doctor, John Darku was accustomed not only to using fetishes and pouring kerosene over his voodoo idols, but also to performing human sacrifices to the spirits," Owusu reported. Darku, 60, left his life of voodoo and African juju witchcraft after 39 years, openly proclaiming his Christianity and burning his voodoo possessions and shrines. "You can hardly imagine what a strong witness that was for many villagers who had known the witch doctor for many years. As a result, many of the area's inhabitants also decided to become Christians," said Owusu.

HAMBURG, Germany (EP)—Germans believe the First Commandment, **"Thou shalt have no other gods beside Me,"** is the least important of the Ten Commandments, according to a survey conducted by the Emnid-Institute (Bielefeld) for the magazine *Spiegel Spezial*. Among those surveyed, 39 percent said the First Commandment was dispensable and only 33 percent called it important. The Second and Third Commandments (**"Thou shalt not take the Lord's name in vain"** and **"Remember the Sabbath to keep it holy"**) were considered important by only 57 and 54 percent respectively. "Only four of Christianity's Ten Commandments are viewed as significant by almost all German men and women," the magazine noted. The commandment accepted by most Germans (97 percent) is **"Thou shalt not kill."** Other well-accepted commandments included **"Honor thy father and mother,"** and **"Thou shalt not steal."**

A study issued Jan. 21 by the Alan Guttmacher Institute found that 38 percent of all pregnancies worldwide are unplanned, and that 22 percent of the world's 210 million annual pregnancies end in abortion. The institute, which was formerly the research affiliate of Planned Parenthood, said that in a typical year, 35 of every 1,000 women of childbearing age have an abortion.

ST. PAUL, Minn. (EP)—Lawmakers in the Republican-controlled Minnesota House of Representatives have kicked Jesus out of the State Capitol.

Not Jesus Himself, of course. Even the concurrence of the Senate and Governor

couldn't accomplish that. But in a 72-60 Minnesota House rules vote Jan. 11, lawmakers ordered chaplains to perform only "non-denominational" prayers that respect "the religious diversity of the House." In practical terms, that means the daily invocations will be only generic prayers to "God" with no specific references to Jesus.

ST. PAUL, Minn. (EP)—A new rule that required opening prayers in the Minnesota House of Representatives to be "non-denominational"—with no specific mention of Jesus—has been rendered moot by the actions of a single legislator. Rep. Doug Reuter, a Republican, said he nearly resigned over the rule change, but instead decided to stay and fight. On Jan. 19 he mounted a challenge to the new prayer rule by trying to enforce it. In a series of seven parliamentary moves, Reuter demonstrated that because the prayer takes place before the official business of the House begins, the rules of the house make it impossible to compel other legislators to listen to the opening prayer, and also make it impossible to challenge the opening prayer. After demonstrating that it was impossible to challenge a prayer under the new House rule, Reuter challenged the "nondenominational prayer" rule, telling his colleagues, "In an attempt to force a politically correct diversity on all members of the House, we have an unworkable rule, one that is impossible to accomplish." He added that the rule change would have shocked the founders of the Minnesota Legislature. "They never envisioned that anyone could remove Jesus Christ, or any other god for that matter, from anywhere in America," he said. "This body—politically—crucified Jesus Christ and threw Him out in the hall."

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP)—The U.S. armed forces discharged more homosexuals in 1998 than in any year since 1987, according to figures released Jan. 22. The Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps discharged 1,145 homosexuals in the past fiscal year, up 13 percent from the previous year. Total discharges were nearly double those in 1993, the year before the Clinton Administration's "don't ask, don't tell" policy took effect. A spokesperson for the Pentagon noted that 87 percent of the discharges involved voluntary statements from members of the armed services, often made to get out of the military during basic training. Total discharges represented less than one-tenth of one percent of the 1.4 million people in uniform.

ST. LOUIS, Mo. (EP)—A web site which features both information about Pope John Paul and pornography was ordered removed from the Internet. A lawsuit by the Archdiocese of St. Louis said the web site was confusing to Internet users seeking information on the Pope's Jan. 26-27 visit to St. Louis, and also infringing on an Archdiocese trademark. "It's inappropriate. It's degrading. It's deceptive. And it's wrong," said Archdio-

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case spokesman Steve Mananella. A judge ordered the Seattle-based company behind the site to dismantle it immediately.

NEW DELHI, India (EP)—An Australian missionary and his two sons were burned to death Jan. 23 when the vehicle in which they were sleeping was doused with gasoline and set on fire, reportedly by dozens of members of the Hindu extremist group Bajrang Dal.

Graham Staines, 58, and his sons, Philip, 10, and Timothy, 8, were parked in an old station wagon outside a makeshift church in the village of Manoharpur, about 600 miles southeast of New Delhi. The murders are the most vicious of a recent series of attacks on Christians in India.

CHICAGO, Ill. (EP)—Doctors should encourage sexual abstinence among U.S. teens to fight a teen pregnancy rate that is the highest in the developed world, the American Academy of Pediatrics said Feb. 1. The group reviewed 50 studies on the subject before urging physicians in a policy statement to "encourage adolescents to postpone early coital activity and promote abstinence." The statement was published in the group's journal, *Pediatrics*. According to surveys, 56 percent of girls and 73 percent of boys have engaged in sexual intercourse before age 18. The teen birth rate for girls between 15 and 19 years declined slightly between 1992 and 1996, but the 1996 rate of 54.7 births per 1,000 girls was still above the 1980 rate.

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (EP)—The National Network of Presbyterian College Women (NNPCW) will be recommended for continued funding, despite continuing criticism from its foes within the Presbyterian Church (USA). Parker Williamson, editor of *The Presbyterian Layman*, has condemned the group, saying "the last vestige of Marxism. . . will be found clinging to the skirts of this Network." Conservative critics say the group's publications and activities violate the biblical and constitutional boundaries of the church on a variety of issues, including feminism and sexuality. A task force established to review the group acknowledged that "some materials violated policies. . . were inconsistent with our confessions and were lacking in biblical and theological foundation." Nevertheless, the task force voted to continue the group and commend its leadership.

Hillary Rodham Clinton announced Jan. 22 that her husband plans to seek \$4.5 million for security systems to protect abortion clinics. The money would go for alarm systems, closed-circuit cameras, motion detectors, bulletproof windows and improved lighting, she said. David O'Steen of the National Right to Life Committee dismissed the proposal as a "political ploy intended to draw attention away from the 1.3 million children who

die from abortion every year." He added, "The abortion industry is a \$400 million-a-year industry that can afford to buy its own security cameras and hardware. The American taxpayer should not be forced to contribute to a for-profit industry that many find abhorrent."

WHITE PLAINS, N.Y. (EP)—A Presbyterian church group representing 20,000 parishioners in seven New York counties voted Jan. 30 to permit ministers to perform same-sex "unions." Steve Geckeler, minister of the Presbyterian Church in White Plains, said the "union" ceremonies stop short of marriage, and affirmed, "a marriage is still understood as being between a man and a woman." The national Presbyterian Church (USA) doesn't have an official policy on same-sex unions, but denominational leaders have recommended that clergy not perform ceremonies for homosexuals that are the "same as a marriage ceremony."

ST. LOUIS, Mo. (EP)—Nine Protestant denominations voted Jan. 24 to move ahead with plans to affiliate their churches. The 18th Plenary of the Consultation on Christian Union was held in St. Louis Jan. 20-24. Participating denominations include: the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the United Church of Christ, the Presbyterian Church (USA), the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, the International Council of Community Churches, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the United Methodist Church, the Episcopal Church and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. The recommendations are aimed at a public declaration of unity in January of 2002. This would include "mutual recognition of each other as authentic expressions of the one church of Jesus Christ," including recognition of baptism, ordination, and communion performed in other denominations. It also includes an "intentional commitment to promote unity with wholeness and to oppose all marginalization and exclusion in church and society based on such things as race, age, gender, forms of disability, sexual orientation and class."

LONDON, England (EP)—A British poster designed to promote church attendance at Easter is drawing controversy because it shows Jesus Christ looking like Latin American Marxist revolutionary Che Guevara. The poster uses a familiar image of Guevara, but wearing a crown of thorns rather than a beret. The text reads, "Meek, mild. As if. Discover the real Jesus. Church. April 4." Tom Ambrose, secretary of the Churches Advertising Network, said the goal of the campaign is to convey the idea that Jesus was "not a wimp in a white nightie or someone who is a bit of a walkover, but a strong, revolutionary figure." Nigel McCulloch, the Church of England's spokesman for broadcasting and the media, said the poster was "well intentioned" but is also "trivializing and misleading."

BROOKVILLE, Ala. (EP)—Residents in Brookville, Alabama, an unincorporated

community with about 150 residents, say they want to form a town based on the Bible. They hope to approve the King James Bible as the town charter and adopt the Ten Commandments as ordinances. Street evangelist James Henderson, 56, told the *New York Times*, "When I was a child in the 1940s and 1950s we had a sense of community, built around the church, on people helping each other. Over the years, that's gotten frayed around the edges. I've watched the issue of the separation of church and state get out of control." Henderson and his supporters are gathering signatures calling for a vote on the establishment of a Bible-based town.

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah (EP)—An attempt to raise Utah's legal age for marriage to 16 has stalled, and lawmakers say the bill needs more work. It is intended to reduce abuses in polygamous marriages, which still exist in this heavily Mormon state. A similar proposal fell short last year, but the idea gained new support in the wake of a case involving a 15-year-old girl who claimed she was beaten and belt-whipped by her father after she fled a marriage to her uncle, who already had 14 wives. Utah is one of just three states that allows marriage under the age of 16.

PORTLAND, Ore. (EP)—Abortion foes who created "wanted" posters and were linked to a web site listing the names and addresses of abortionists were ordered Feb. 2 to pay \$107 million in damages. A federal jury said that the tactics of the abortion foes constituted illegal threats.

Abortion advocates, including Planned Parenthood, sued under a 1994 federal law which makes it a crime to incite violence against abortionists or their clients. The law has been enforced before, but this is the first successful prosecution in which there were no physical confrontations or explicit threats.

The defendants argued that their actions were protected speech. "This is a moral and constitutional outrage," said defendant Catherine Ramey. "There is no threat and they knew it. We use picket signs; they use the courts."

Many university professors now proclaim that the rejection of religion is the most hopeful sign of a man's future. Incidentally, (or is it?) there are now more than 12,000 Marxist professors in our universities. Our real problem in education is not too few classrooms—but too many atheist teachers (*Straight Talk*, 2-4-99).

Here is an amazing statistic: The average household spends less on electricity, telephone service, repairs or insurance than credit-card debt service. The average person filing for bankruptcy has \$19,800 in after-tax income, with credit-card balance of \$17,544 (Howard Ruff in *The Ruff Times*).

America is the greatest nation in the world—the richest, most powerful, and most envied. Yet we lead the industrial-

ized world in rates of murder, violent crime, imprisonment, divorce, abortion, sexually transmitted diseases, single-parent households, teen suicides, cocaine consumption, and pornography production. We have become the kind of place to which civilized countries used to send missionaries (*Imprimis*, 12-98).

Robert Schuller has shared pulpits with New Agers, Mormons, and Catholics. Some of his teachings and actions are liberal, postmodern and heretical (1-1, CC). He writes: "I don't think that anything has been done in the name of Christ and under the banner of Christianity that has proven more destructive to human personality, and hence counterproductive to the evangelistic enterprise, than the unChristian, uncouth strategy of attempting to make people aware of their lost and sinful condition" (CN, 1-4). Be warned, be wise, beware! (*Calvary Contender*, 2-1-99).

Larry Flynt has been offering up to \$1 million for sexual dirt on Republican congressmen. It was policeman Flynt who helped Bib Livingston (R.-La.) on his way out of political life. But let us not forget what Flynt's own daughter, Tonya, said about her dad at the National Organization for Women press conference Jan. 7, 1997: "My father is a pornographer, a pimp, and a molester of children. . . My father got involved with my mother when she was only 14. He tried many times to pimp her out, but she refused. Althea, another of my father's wives, was a 16-year-old prostitute when he started a relationship with her. . . I worshipped my father. Part of that worship grew out of the fact that he lived in unimaginable luxury while my mother, my sister, and I lived in dire poverty. He didn't feel any obligation to support us. . . My father used his power against me in another way too. He sexually abused me" (*Human Events*, 1-15-99).

Despite reports that a New York City theater group funded by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) will produce a play that depicts Jesus Christ as a homosexual, the House Appropriations Committee voted 31 to 27 on June 25 to approve \$98 million in new funding for the scandal-ridden agency (*Straight Talk*, 1-14-99).

The 1997 American Society of Newspaper survey of 1,037 editors, reporters, photographers, copy editors and editorial writers found 61% were liberal, 24% independent, 15% conservative (*Ibid.*).

An eight-year-old Bossier City, Louisiana girl was raped after her mother traded her for crack cocaine (*Straight Talk*, 1-28-99).



GLEANINGS



Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) was an Austrian composer and pianist. In his brief life of 35 years he made a place for himself



among the great geniuses in the history of music. Mozart was a master of both melody and technique, and was equally at home in many different fields of composition. He composed over 600 works. They include symphonies, operas, concertos, sonatas, and choral and chamber work.

Historians often fail to relate his last moments. They follow as they are found in *Golden Gems of Religious Thought* (pp. 538-539) in the 1888 edition of this book:

LAST MOMENTS OF MOZART

A few months before the death of the celebrated Mozart, a mysterious stranger brought him an anonymous letter, in which his terms for a requiem were required. Mozart gave them. Soon after the messenger returned, and paid a portion of the price in advance. To the composition of this requiem he gave the full strength of his powers. Failing to learn the name of him who had ordered it, his fancy soon began to connect something supernatural with the affair. The conviction seized him that he was composing a requiem for his own obsequies. While engaged in this work, and under this strange inspiration, he threw himself back, says his biographer, on his couch, faint and exhausted. His countenance was pale and emaciated; yet there was a strange fire in his eye, and the light of gratified joy on his brow that told of success.

His task was finished, and the melody, even to his exquisite sensibility, was perfect. It had occupied him for weeks; and, though his form was wasted by disease, yet the spirit seemed to acquire more vigor, and already claim kindred to immortality; for oft, as the sound of his own composition stole on his ear, it bore an

unearthly sweetness that was to him too truly a warning of his future and fast coming doom.

Now it was finished, and, for the first time in many weeks, he sank into a quiet and refreshing slumber. A slight noise in the apartment awoke him, when, turning toward a fair young girl who entered—"Emilie, my daughter," said he, "come near to me—my task is over—the requiem is finished. My requiem," he added, and a sigh escaped him.

"Oh, say not so, my father," said the girl, interrupting him, as tears stood in her eyes, "you must be better, you look better, for even now your cheek has a glow upon it; do let me bring you something refreshing, and I am sure we will nurse you well again."

"Do not deceive yourself, my love," said he; "this wasted form can never be restored by human aid. From Heaven's mercy alone can I hope for succor; and it will be granted, Emilie, in the time of my utmost need; yea, in the hour of death, I will claim His help who is always ready to aid those who trust in Him; and soon, very soon, must this mortal frame be laid in its quiet sleeping place, and this restless soul return to Him who gave it."

The dying father then raised himself on his couch:—"You spoke of refreshment, my daughter; it can still be afforded my fainting soul. Take these notes, the last I shall ever pen, and sit down to the instrument. Sing with them the hymn so beloved by your mother, and let me once more hear those tones which have been my delight since my earliest remembrance."

Emilie did as she was desired: and it seemed as if she sought a relief from her own thoughts; for, after running over a few chords of the piano, she commenced, in the sweetest voice, the following lines:

Spirit! thy labor is o'er.
Thy term of probation is run,
Thy steps are now bound for the untrodden shore,
And the race of immortals begun.

Spirit! look not on the strife
Or the pleasures of earth with regret—
Pause not on the threshold of limitless life,
To mourn for the day that is set.

Spirit! no fetters can bind,
No wicked have power to molest;
There the weary like thee—the wretched shall find,
A heaven—a mansion of rest.

Spirit! how bright is the road,
For which thou art now on the wing!
Thy home it will be with thy Saviour and

God,
Their loud hallelujahs to sing!

As she concluded the last stanza, she dwelt for a few moments on the low, melancholy notes of the piece, and then waited in silence for the mild voice of her father's praise. He spoke not—and, with something like surprise, she turned toward him. He was laid back on the sofa, his face shaded in part by his hand, and his form reposing as if in slumber. Starting with fear, Emilie sprang toward him and seized his hand; but the touch paralyzed her, for she sank senseless by his side. He was *gone!* With the sound of the sweetest melody ever composed by human thought, his soul had winged its flight to regions of eternal bliss.

MODERN MANAGEMENT THEORY ON JESUS' 12 DISCIPLES

MEMORANDUM
TO: Jesus, Son of Joseph, Woodcrafters Shop, Nazareth
FROM: Jordan Management Consultants, Jerusalem
SUBJECT: Staff Aptitude Evaluation

Thank you for submitting the resumes of the 12 men you have picked for management positions in your new organization. All of them have taken our battery of tests, and our psychologist and vocational aptitude consultant have analyzed the findings.

It is our staff's opinion that most of your nominees are lacking in background, education and vocational aptitude for the type of enterprise you are undertaking. They lack a team concept. We would recommend that you continue your search for persons of experience in managerial ability and proven capability.

Simon Peter is emotionally unstable and given to fits of temper. Andrew has absolutely no qualities of leadership. The brothers, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, place personal interest above company loyalty. Thomas demonstrates a questioning attitude that would tend to undermine morale. We feel that it is our duty to tell you that Matthew has been blacklisted by the Greater Jerusalem Better Business Bureau. James, the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddeus have radical leanings and registered high on the manic depressive scale.

One candidate, however, shows great potential. He is a man of ability and resourcefulness, meets people well, has a keen business mind, and has contacts in high places. He is highly motivated, ambitious, and innovative.

We recommend Judas Iscariot as your controller and right-hand man.
From: Rstacy2229@aol.com

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Elder Todd Bryant was ordained to the full gospel ministry December 27, 1998, by the Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, Northport, Ala., at 2:00 p.m. Bro. Bryant is presently the pastor of this church.



The Philadelphia Baptist Church, Decatur, AL, and Pastor Doyal Thomas are now proclaiming the gospel on the Internet at <http://www2.tnweb.com/pbc> or e-mail at pbc@tnweb.com.

Elder Jerry Asberry has resigned as pastor of the Grace Baptist Church, Matthews, NC, to accept the pastorate of the Faith Missionary Baptist Church, Lone Oak, KY. His new address is 2750 Hines Rd., Paducah, KY 42001.

All persons who ordered the 1997-1998 edition of the bound volumes of *The Berea Baptist Banner* should have them by now. If for any reason you did not receive yours, please contact us.

The editor's church has just had the covers on *The Berea Baptist Hymnal* (No. 2) repaired by B & C Bindery, 140 Rutledge Drive, Bluff City, TN 37618. They do a good job at a reasonable price. If others would be interested in this, you should call and talk with them about this. Their number is (615) 878-6230.

O.K. we goofed again. In last months Berea Baptist Banner financial report we listed the ending balance as a ending deficit.





World Scene

By G. Russell Evans - Norfolk, Virginia

Honor---The Missing Link



In the dozens and dozens of rationalizations for the increase in popularity of a president long ago convicted of disgraceful and criminal conduct in the people's minds, one ingredient has been missing: *honor!*

Honor is the missing link between Bill Clinton and the voters who put him in office--voters who now accept dishonor as the price for prosperity and fat pocketbooks.

WHAT IS HONOR?

Our dictionary tells about honor: highest regard, greatest respect, keen sense of right and wrong and adherence to the right; unblemished dignity, reliability and truth--probably the ultimate tribute that can be paid to anyone.

Our future military officers at West Point immortalize "honor" with their hallowed slogan: "Duty, honor, country"--and live by their Code of Honor "not to lie, cheat or steal or tolerate those who do." Our other military academies live by a similar slogan and code. Indeed, in battle or other *extremitas*, nothing is revered more than "honor."

NO HONOR, NO TRUST

Without honor, we have no trust. Without trust, no confidence. Without confidence, no victory. Without victory, we have defeat, degradation and dissolution.

Our Founding Fathers understood "honor" to the core of their souls when 57 of them signed the magnificent Declaration of Independence, boldly pledging "our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor." Most lost their lives or fortunes--but none their "sacred honor."

The young men on Omaha Beach on June 6, 1944 understood honor. There, in World War II, a single rifle company of 205 men lost 197, every officer and sergeant. Their cause was noble: to liberate Europe from tyranny. The price was very high. The reward was honor.

HONOR NEXT TO GODLINESS

The place of "honor" in the Bible is next to Godliness. Its first mention, out of 157 times, is in Genesis 49:6 when Jacob demoted his firstborn son Reuben by defiling his rank and honor by sleeping with one of Jacob's wives. Soon after, in Exodus 20:12, is the Fifth Commandment: "**Honorable father and thy mother. . .**"

The great Athenian statesman Pericles revered "honor." His lofty

ideals became a permanent part of civilization. In 431 B.C., in his famous *Funeral Oration* in honor of the heroes who fell in the Peloponnesian War, he spoke for the ages: "For it is only love of honor that never grows old--and honor it is, not gain as some would have it, that rejoices age and helplessness."

WHAT ABOUT HONOR TODAY?

Clinton apologists are lowering the bar on honor, trust and morality. Said Mary McGrory of *The Washington Post*: "He's strictly one of a kind, our first President to be strengthened by immorality."

Critics are accused of "casting stones." Does this mean we must not call to account the President of the United States for lying under oath and obstructing justice--offenses seen by all of us?

We are accused of "judging" and expecting decency and honesty and above all--*honor!* It is our duty to judge things that matter--sound judgments based on principles that made America great.

It is neither fair nor honorable for Majority Leader Trent Lott to plan on a "four day trial in the Senate," thereby skirting our Constitution--nor for TV star Cokie Roberts to say, "Conseratives in the Senate want to torture the president"--nor for former senators Dale Bumpers and Bennett Johnson to call the Senate trial a "foregone conclusion."

These people are also irresponsible. They need to restudy the honor code and the Constitution--and renew their own credentials--before making judg-

ments they have deplored in others.

Bill Bennett, the highly respected author and educator, has spoken with deep feelings about honor. Once he said: "Honor never grows old, and honor gives the greatest joy, because honor is, finally, about defending noble and worthy things that deserve to be defended, even at high cost. In our time, the cost may be social disapproval, public scorn, hardship, persecution, or even death."

Honor has a price. It is not cheap, but it is enduring and ever so uplifting. Who among us, then, is willing to step forward to defend honor and risk scorn, ridicule and rejection--or remain silent, the temptation of the informed person who finds himself in the minority?

(Captain Evans's columns are distributed by the Americanism Educational League of Buena Park, Cal. He lives in Norfolk, Va.)

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Coming in the next issue . . .

- The Fruit of the Spirit is Love* by Tom Ross
- Court Not 'Hypocritical' about Death Penalty* by G. Russell Evans
- Differences Between Baptists and Campbellites* by J. W. Porter

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BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 12-31-98 to 1-31-99

Beginning Balance	\$1,525.26
RECEIPTS:	
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	60.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne WV	300.00
Central Avenue B. C., Tampa, FL	25.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Silsbee, TX	30.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Fulton, MS	50.00
Berea B. C., Westpoint, TN	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Raleigh, NC	100.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN	50.00
B. C. of Brimfield, Brimfield, IL	26.25
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	125.00
Grace B. Mis., Marion, IL	25.00
Portland B. C., Plumerville, AR	50.00
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	50.00
Hillcrest B. C., Winston-Salem, NC	25.00
The Lord's C. at Bev. Hills, Goose Creek, SC	50.00
Berea B. C., Indore, WV	300.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL	60.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Columbus, MS	50.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL	50.00
Morris St B. C., Hobbs, NM	50.00
Ocoonita B. C., Keekee, VA	20.00
Mt Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH	100.00
Temple B. C., Bristol, TN	30.00
Indore B. C., Indore, WV	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL	100.00
Grace B. C., Georgetown, KY	35.00
South Park M. B. C., Seattle, WA	25.00
Wayne Huffman, McNeil, AR	150.00
New Testament, Bristol, TN	20.00
Leroy Bullard, Albuquerque, NM	50.00
Jack Farmer, Mobile, AL	25.00
Mrs. Jean Ruley, Sebring, FL	25.00
Bible B. C., Sullivan, IL	20.00
Jimmie Panos, Birmingham, AL	30.00
Faith B. C., Seffner, FL	50.00
South Youngs B. C., Ok City, OK	75.00
Philadelphia B. C., Birmingham, AL	200.00
Joseph Jurzec, Lake-in-the-Hills, IL	40.00
Janet Stevens, Marion, KY	38.00
Esther Hall, Knob Noster, MO	400.00
Northland B. C., Delaware, OH	100.00
James Swindell, Russell, KY	22.00
Bethesda B. C., Odessa, FL	25.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Warren, OH	25.00
Anonymous	178.00
Subscriptions	284.00
Dividing Checks	\$170.00
Sub Total	\$3,963.25
TOTAL	\$5,488.51

EXPENDITURES:	
Wages	1,875.00
Postage	704.70
Printing	502.00
FICA taxes	143.42
Dividing checks	170.00
Supplies	113.68
Total Expenditure	3,508.80
	1,979.71
Bank charge	-10.81
	1,968.90
mistake on check #1554	-3.20
ENDING BALANCE	\$1,965.70

BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 12-31-98 to 1-31-99

Beginning Balance	\$2,989.13
RECEIPTS	
Calvary I. B. C., Everson, WA	100.00
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	200.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
Berea B. C., Westpoint, TN	165.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL	25.00
Livingstone B. C., Barboursville, WV	282.61
	872.61
TOTAL RECEIPTS	3,861.74

EXPENDITURES:	
Radio Time	935.00
Postage	15.20
Total Expenditures	950.20
Sub Total	2,911.54
Bank Charge	3.14
	2,908.40
Check#1068 never cleared	+75.00
ENDING BALANCE	\$2,983.40

CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT

Beginning Balance	\$1,568.32
RECEIPTS	
Total	1,568.32
EXPENDITURES:	
WYWY	175.00
Total Expenditures	175.00
ENDING BALANCE	\$1,393.32