

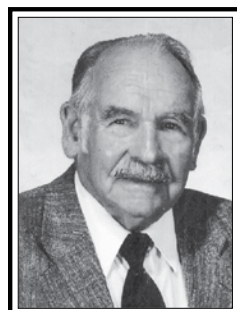
The Perpetuity of Baptist Churches

By Ernest W. Parks
(1922 – 2013)

John 1:35-51

"And it came to pass in those days that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles" (Luke 6:12-13).

"Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick" (Luke 9:1-2).



"And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18).

"And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican" (Matt. 18:17).

"Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord

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For What Saith the Scriptures?

By Timothy B. Hille
of Clio, Michigan



"What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the

blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin" (Rom. 4:1-3).

Certainly we find that Paul, in writing to the saints of God, spoke of two very familiar Bible Characters. The first being Abraham and the next being David. They were very

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A Black Horse of Famine

By Milburn R. Cockrell
(1941 – 2002)

"And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine" (Rev. 6:5-6).

This is our third message on the general theme of the four horsemen of the Apocalypse. These four



horsemen correspond to the four seals opened by the Lamb in Heaven. The four horsemen are introduced by the four living creatures around the throne of God. The four horsemen

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The Church Is A Rock

By Paul Stepp
of Indore, West Virginia



"And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18).

I thought it would be good for us to study the grand subject of the church a bit further this morning. Today, I want to present the church of the Lord Jesus Christ unto you, as an institution that must endure, and an institution that will never fail, and an institution that will always be effective in working out the will and

purpose of Jesus Christ. In other words, "The church is a rock."

OLD IN YEARS, BUT STILL IS HERE

By nearly any standards, the church of the Lord Jesus Christ is of ancient origins. Just like an ancient rock that appears on a hillside; weathered and worn, but still strong and enduring. This is the church of Jesus Christ. In reality, unless you believe in a church or denomination

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Grow angry slowly, there's plenty of time.

If you must let anger rise sooner than later, prefer later, and the later the better.

"He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty;
and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city" (Proverbs 16:32).

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

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A Black Horse of

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kill the fourth part of the earth (Rev. 6:8).

The white horse pictures the Antichrist and False Prophet; the red horse the wars of the tribulation under the kingdom of the Man of Sin. The black horse denotes a third stage in the kingdom of Antichrist. The black horse rides north when Christ opens the third seal.

When the third seal is opened the man-like living creature says, "come" (R.V.). The King James Version has "**Come and see.**" This makes it appear like John is being invited to come nearer. But John is already there looking at these events. There would be no need to repeat these words to John four times. It seems the cherubim speaks to the horsemen, not John. When the cherubim says "**Come,**" it is a command for the horsemen to ride across the stage of human history.

THE BLACK HORSE IS FAMINE

What does the black horse symbolize? It is black in color, a color which is opposite the first horse. The black horse is the one which John says kills "**with hunger**" in Revelation 6:8. Black denotes mourning and famine. Lamentations 5:10 reads: "**Our skin was black like an oven because of the terrible famine.**" (See also Jer. 14:1-2; Joel 2:6; Nah. 2:10). The rest of the verses in Revelation 6:5-6 confirm this interpretation. Since famine usually follows war and since the red horse is war, we would naturally expect famine to follow.

The unarmed rider is the conserver and distributor of food. John says he has a pair of balances in his hands. The original word rendered "**a pair of balances**" properly means a yoke. But in our text it seems to denote the beam of a balance, or a pair of scales. The idea is that something is weighed to ascertain its value.

The scarcity of food is seen in the price of the necessities of life. A voice from the midst of the four beasts utters: "**A measure of wheat for a penny.**" What is called here "**a measure**" (choenix) is about one English quart. The "**penny**" is the Roman denarius, worth about fifteen

cents in our money. A penny was the amount of money paid for a day's work in the time of Christ. In the parable of the laborers in the vineyard the owner secured "**laborers for a penny a day**" (Matt. 20:2,9). A quart of wheat was considered in John's day the ordinary daily allowance for one man. The picture is a time when it takes a day's wages for the working man to buy enough food for himself. This leaves his family to starve.

The black horse indicates runaway inflation. In the time of Cicero a denarius would purchase 16 quarts of wheat, and in the reign of Trajan 20 quarts. Under the reign of Antichrist money will purchase 16 to 20 times less than it did in the time of the Apostle John. To illustrate: It takes about \$1.80 to buy a gallon of milk in the grocery store today. Under the reign of Antichrist it will cost \$36 a gallon.

The voice from Heaven goes on to say, "**Three measures of barley for a penny.**" Barley was a less valuable grain and usually produced in greater abundance. This grain was generally eaten by slaves and the extremely poor people. The well-to-do considered this "horse food." In the time of the tribulation 3 quarts of horse food can be purchased with a day's wages. This indicates hard times, distress, and want beyond the power of imagination.

Lastly, the voice in Heaven adds: "**See thou hurt not the oil and the wine.**" The meaning of this is not easy to ascertain. Since grapevines and olive trees grow without much attention, unlike wheat and barley, it may be these were not ruined by the wars under the red horse. Grapes and olives bear after wheat and barley, hence while the grain may have been greatly destroyed by the invaders, the vines and the olive trees survived to a large degree. This is a possible meaning, but somewhat doubtful to my mind.

Oil and wine in the Bible was used for medicinal purposes. When the good Samaritan found the injured man he "**bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine**" (Luke 10:34). Thus the meaning could be that medical supplies are greatly diminished. Or it could mean the Antichrist did not want anything done to diminish the

productive power of olive yards and vineyards, for these will be greatly needed to care for the wounded in the wars under the red horse.

Isaiah 24 gives a description of conditions on earth under the black horse of Revelation 6:5-6. Isaiah mentions a scarcity of wine: "**The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth, all the merry-hearted do sigh. . . They shall not drink wine with a song. . . There is crying for wine in the streets; all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone. In the city is left desolation, and the gate is smitten with destruction**" (Isa. 24:7-12). These awful times are followed by the glorious kingdom of Christ on earth (Isa. 24:21-23).

ANTICHRIST CONTROLS THE FOOD

The proclamation heard from Heaven indicates the rule of action which its rider announces to the inhabitants of earth. The grain supply is under the complete control of the one-world government. The supply is extremely low due to the numerous wars and civil commotions which destroyed the crops. The government will offer grain at a high and oppressive price only to those who worship the Beast of Revelation 13:1-10. Here is Satan's imitation of Joseph's control of the storehouses of Egypt during the 7-year famine of old.

The Antichrist and the False Prophet will use food to secure obedience to their godless rule through the one-world government. Of the False Prophet it is said: "**And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name**" (Rev. 13:16-17). This dictatorial tyrant is to use the ration card as a terrible instrument of persecution. A person will be compelled to take the brand of Hell, the number 666, or be left to starve to death.

The producer and consumer are to be powerless against the iron rule of the Beasts. Trade and commerce are to be under the control of the world dictator. The necessities of life are denied to non-beast worshipers. Men

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WATERING THE TULIPS



By Todd Bryant
of
Northport, Alabama



Are You Forgiving?

"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors" (Matt. 6:12).

I have been attending church since I was a child. I have never once in my life heard a man pray these words in the assembly. I have, on occasion, heard somebody repeat these words out of mere repetition (Jesus spoke against this in verse 7 just before giving this example prayer). But, I have never heard anybody willingly offer these words up to God in prayer. Why? If I/we are honest, most of us will freely admit that we do not want God to forgive us the way we forgive others.

Forgiveness is one of the most difficult traits to grow as a child of God. In contrast, unforgiveness is one of the easiest (and certainly most common) sins that children of God commit. Our flesh constantly wars against our spiritual man. The old man is, by nature, unforgiving.

Peter once asked Jesus, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" (Matt. 18:21). Jesus answered this by saying, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven" (Matt. 18:22). If we are honest, Peter actually gave more leeway than most of us would. I mean, seven times is a lot to forgive somebody for wronging you, right? This was not one of Peter's dark moments. By human standards, he was actually going further than most. However, Jesus' answer was shocking to both Peter and us.

There is no time in this short article to go into the parable that followed. But, suffice it to say, there was a servant who was forgiven a debt that was more than he ever

could repay. Then, that servant went out and demanded a very reasonable debt from one of his servants. When his servant begged for mercy and time, he refused and threw him in prison. Simply, this parable represents the children of God when we are unforgiving.

The Holy Spirit inspired Paul to tell the church at Ephesus, **"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you"** (Eph. 4:32). Clearly, we are to forgive as God has forgiven us. When somebody wrongs us, we should quickly remember how we have wronged God. In contrast to the wicked servant in the parable, the memory of the forgiveness of our great debt of sins should enable us to forgive others in a similar manner.

Children of God, can you not remember the effects of God forgiving you of your sins? Do you not remember the gratitude and joy that flowed from your heart? Most certainly, you do remember that. In fact, you most likely thank God for this regularly. Our mission in this world is to show people the love of Jesus Christ in our lives. What better way to show the love of God than to forgive others when they least deserve it? Lord, help us to forgive as You have forgiven us!!



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will yield absolute submission to the Antichrist, or be deprived of the right to live. The number 666 on the hand denotes that a person is an active slave of the kingdom of Antichrist, and the brand on the forehead indicates a public acknowledgment of slavery to Satan.

FAMINES IN THE SCRIPTURES

The black horse of famine is not easy for our American society to understand. Famine to most of us is something which occurs in India, Bangladesh and Africa. We enjoy three meals a day, and rarely do we go to bed hungry. We live in the main totally ignorant of the rest of the world where famine is common. Our America of plenty and prosperity

blinds our eyes to the millions of the Third World who go to bed hungry each night.

But those who read their Bibles know famines occupy a conspicuous place in the Old Testament. Eleven famines are mentioned in the Old Testament and one in the New Testament. A famine is mentioned in the days of Abraham (Gen. 12:10), of Isaac (Gen. 26:1), of Joseph (Gen. 41:53-56), of the Judges (Ruth 1:1), of David (II Sam. 21:1), of Ahab (I Kings 17:1; 18:2), of Elisha (II Kings 4:38), during the siege of Samaria (II Kings 6:25), in the time of Jeremiah (Jer. 14:1), during the siege of Jerusalem (II Kings 25:3), after the captivity (Neh. 5:3), and in the reign of Claudius Caesar (Acts 11:28).

One of the fourfold sore judgments of God is famine (Ezek. 14:21). God sends them to chastise men for their sins. In II Kings 8:1 it is written: **"Then spake Elisha unto the woman, whose son he had restored to life, saying, Arise, and go thou and thine household, and sojourn wheresoever thou canst sojourn: for the LORD hath called for the famine; and it shall also come upon the land seven years."** God sent this famine because of Israel's idolatry. It lasted twice as long as in the days of Elijah.

In the Old Testament famines were caused by God withholding the blessings (Hos. 2:8-9; Hag. 1:6) such as seasonable rains (I Kings 17:1; Jer. 14:1-4; Amos 4:7). At other times God would send too much rain which caused the seed to rot in the ground (Joel 1:17). Then famine sometimes came because of blasting and mildew (Amos 4:9; Hag. 2:17). Still at other times famine was caused by invading armies (Deut. 28:33-51). Evidently, the famine under the black horse is a combination of all of these things, especially invading armies.

In a time of famine people did strange things. They ate wild herbs in the old dispensation (II Kings 4:39-40). II Kings 6:25 discloses: **"And there was a great famine in Samaria: and, behold, they besieged it, until an ass's head was sold for four score pieces of silver, and the fourth part of a cab of dove's dung for five pieces of silver."** Times were hard in those days for a donkey's head

cost \$50 and a pigeon's dung cost \$3.

During the famine in Jerusalem's day **"they that were brought up in scarlet embraced dunghills"** (Lam. 4:5). Even cannibalism was practiced in extreme cases (Lev. 26:29; II Kings 6:28-29). Provisions were sold in famine by weight, and water by measure: **"Moreover he said unto me, Son of Man, behold, I will break the staff of bread in Jerusalem: and they shall eat bread by weight, and with care; and they shall drink water by measure, and with astonishment: That they may want bread and water, and be astonished one with another, and consume away for their iniquity"** (Ezek. 4:16-17). Ezekiel's historical account of the past reminds us of the scarcity of food under the black horse mentioned by John in Revelation 6:5-6.

HISTORY OF FAMINE

Famines in the world since the time of Christ are poorly documented. There was one in England in A.D. 1235 in which 20,000 died in London and people ate the bark of trees and grass. In A.D. 1333-37 there was one in China when 40,000,000 died in one region alone. In 1876-78 one occurred in India which afflicted 36,000,000 and killed 5,000,000. In 1876-79 China suffered a loss of 13,000,000 lives due to famine. It was so bad cannibalism was practiced and children were sold. In 1921-22 a famine in Russia slaughtered 5,000,000 people. Another came in Russia taking about the same number in 1932-34.

Most of the famines in olden times were caused by crop failure and natural disturbances. In more modern times famines are often the direct consequence of war. In our generation the primary cause of famine is overpopulation. The famine of Revelation 6:5-6 is to be a combination of all these things.

At this very moment 500 million people suffer from some form of hunger or starvation. One out of 4 of their children will die from the lack of adequate nutrition before they reach the age of 5. About 10 to 20 million of their numbers annually succumb to hunger or starvation-related disease. One half of the population of the Third World suffers from some form

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of malnutrition, and 300 million of these are children.

The present population of earth is about 4 billion. At the present growth rate the population will double in about 35 years, giving us about 8 billion souls on earth. If the doubling rate continues at its present rate of 35 years, this means by the year 2500 earth may have 130 trillion people, or about 3,000 people per acre. There is no way the Amazon Basin or sea farming can possibly feed this host of people. Unless the population explosion is checked, world-wide famine is a shocking certainty.

THE TRIBULATION FAMINE

The famine foreordained by God under the black horse is predicted to occur by Christ Himself: **"For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines. . ."** (Matt. 24:7). Other verses of Scripture reveal how other things will contribute to this awful famine of the end-time.

The two witnesses, who prophesy during the first part of the 7-year tribulation, have power to cause it not to rain and to send plagues upon earth (Rev. 11:7). Under the first trumpet a tremendous electrical storm will destroy the third part of the trees and all the green grass (Rev. 8:7). The destruction of the trees and grass will make deserts and unbelievable soil erosion in harvest fields. Can you imagine what will happen to beef cattle, sheep, and hogs when **"all green grass" is "burnt up?"** It will bring famine!

Under the second trumpet a third part of the marine life in the sea dies either from an atomic bomb or a meteor from outer space (Rev. 8:8-9). This will have devastating results on the supply of seafood and ocean fishing. Finally, under the third vial of God's wrath all sea life perishes (Rev. 16:3). This brings famine!

During the third trumpet a third part of the fresh water supply of the world is polluted (Rev. 8:9-11). Then under the third vial of wrath all fresh water is polluted (Rev. 16:4). This means instant death for millions and the termination of irrigated crop production. Add to this a loss of a

third part of the light of the sun and the moon and you have slow growth in whatever crops are left on earth (Rev. 8:12). All of this is to bring world-wide famine like the world has never seen before.

Call me a doomsday ecologist. Call me a prophet of gloom and doom. Call me what you will! Almighty God's sure Word of prophecy will be fulfilled. World-wide famine is one of those things which must shortly come to pass. We are on the verge of famine, resulting in growing panic and human misery. Hundreds of millions of people are to suffer hunger and malnutrition. This will be earth's supreme disaster, the **"great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be"** (Matt. 24:21). The world will become a vast graveyard of putrefying flesh!

A BRIGHT SIDE

Is this gloomy picture the end of the world? Is there no hope for mankind on earth? Yes, there is a better day coming on earth at the end of the 7-year tribulation. That day is the second coming of Jesus Christ to abolish famine on earth forever. The Lord promised Israel: **"I will also save you from all your uncleanness; and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you. And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen"** (Ezek. 36:29-30).

When Christ sets up the kingdom of Heaven on earth there is to be great progress in agriculture. In Zechariah 8:11-12 it is written: **"But now I will not be unto the residue of this people as in the former days, saith the LORD of hosts. For the seed shall be prosperous; the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things."**

CONCLUSION

Dark days are ahead for this lower universe. Human government is destined to degenerate into beastly brutality under the white horse. Total anarchy and world revolution are to come under the red horse. World-wide famine will come under the

black horse. Of those who remain on earth after the rapture of the saints very few will survive the tribulation. This planet in its present state of existence is a doomsday machine.

The only hope of mankind is the return of Jesus Christ. If He does not return **"there should no flesh be saved"** (Matt. 24:22). Thank God Jesus Christ will return to end this nightmare on earth. With Him will come Utopia to the whole world.

Unless a man is born again he cannot inherit this future kingdom of Christ on earth. I Corinthians 6:9-10 says: **"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God"** Those who inherit the kingdom prepared for them before the foundation of the world **"are washed"** in the blood of Christ, **"are sanctified"** by the Word of God, and **"are justified"** by the spirit of God (I Cor. 6:11).



A Dose of Reality

"Common Sense Comments"

by Joseph Harris

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Mormonism and Christianity

Forgetfulness is a part of human nature. The older I get, the more human I become. This tendency to forget is one reason why we as Christians must read our Bibles regularly. We usually know truth when we see it, but tend to "forget" when not constantly reminded.

For instance, amid the glimmering and positive image that is used to portray Mormonism, let us not forget that it is still a cult which denies fundamental Bible doctrines. After Mitt Romney's constant front page

exposure throughout 2012, some well known leaders representing Christianity began to soften up on Mormonism as a cult. Suddenly, some are proclaiming it is no longer a cult. Well, what has changed? Mormon doctrine remains the same. Looks like, once again, the infallible leaders of modern Christianity have changed a previously held, unmovable position.

Franklin Graham used to believe Mormonism was a cult, but it has been claimed he has now removed Mormonism from the cult status on the Billy Graham web site. I can find no statement about Mormonism on the site. Cults in general are mentioned, but no single group is named. His statement was that you cannot win people by calling them names. However, name calling and truth in labeling are two different things. Calling Mormonism a cult is not name calling- it is categorizing a false religion. Franklin has at times in the past taken a stand on some issues, but now it looks like he may begin to emulate his father more and become squeamish on issues requiring a backbone. And even IF he still believes it is a cult, by refusing to call it one, he is heading to the slippery slope of compromise. Should we stop referring to the lost as sinners?

The "Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints" was established by Joseph Smith around the mid 1800's. He was disgruntled with the divided religious denominations of his day. Smith claims that when he asked God to show him which of the current churches was the true church, God told him none of them . . . they were all wrong. God then stated he wanted Joseph to be his true prophet and "restore" the true gospel back into the world, since it had been lost through the corrupt churches.

Smith didn't restore the lost truth anymore than the reformers recovered true doctrine that had been "lost" through the Romanism of the Dark Ages. The true Gospel has never ceased to exist. From the time Christ started His church, to the present, true churches have perpetually existed preaching true doctrine, and were consistently persecuted by Rome and her reformed daughters.

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A Dose of Reality

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True Bible doctrine has been “messed with” throughout church history, but was never lost. Joseph Smith, using a buffet line mentality, picked and chose what he wanted from Christianity, combined it with Freemasonry, added a dash of mysticism and created the smorgasbord of Mormonism. The problem is, God never hired him as the chef.

Mormonism claims Joseph Smith is the last prophet for mankind, but Hebrews 1:1 plainly states Jesus is God’s final prophet, and that excludes Mohammed also. Mormonism teaches Jesus is a god, while the Scriptures teach Jesus is the God, and not just divinity, but deity. Mormonism teaches salvation by righteous works and accountability before the judgment seat of the trinity of God, Jesus and Joseph Smith. All this and more was supposedly revealed to Joseph Smith by an angel from Heaven.

Again, lest we forget, Mormonism is not true Biblical Christianity, but a mutated corruption, sprinkled with a fairy tale element (man may become God), which corrupts the simplicity of the Gospel (II Corinthians 11:3). **“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that we have preached unto you, let him be accursed”** (Gal. 1:8).



The Purpetuity

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added to the church daily such as should be saved” (Acts 2:47).

I shall speak to you briefly this afternoon on a subject that is very precious to me and one I trust shall be of utmost importance to every child of God. However, salvation is so precious, and God’s love so great, that first of all I shall thank God for justification through the blood of God’s Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

I shall now proceed to show my eternal appreciation to God for placing me in the Lord’s Church, **“purchased with his own blood”**

(Acts 20:28).

As a direct approach to my subject I would like to inform you that I was not born a Baptist; my people were not Baptists at my conversion, and still are not, and until searching God’s Word, I personally had a dislike for Baptists because of what I considered their bigoted views. I was, however, converted under the ministry of a Godly man and through influences derived while a member of a Protestant group; but I soon discovered that our teachings regarding baptism and many other church truths were not true to God’s Word. This was a cause of great grief.

Remembering the words of the Apostle Paul to young Timothy (II Tim. 4:1-2) in which he reminded him that he was on “oath before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ” to preach His Word without compromise, I shall brand as a lie the teaching that the “Baptist Churches” are a product of the Protestant Reformation, and constitute a minority of the great “Universal Invisible Church.” In reality, as proved by all true historians, the people now called Baptists, or by whatever name they have been identified through the ages, have never kissed the Pope’s ring or bowed the knee in his presence. Centuries before the Reformation, beginning with the first church, and continuing to the present day, those with Baptist teachings have incited the greatest wrath of the “Great Whore” (Roman Catholic Hierarchy) and furnished the greater portion of martyrdom’s blood.

I especially count it a great privilege to cry out against the popular, but heretical teachings regarding the “Universal Invisible Church,” and emphatically declare unto you that Luther, Calvin, and all the reformers are not justified before God in adopting the unscriptural teachings of the harlot Roman Catholic Church in opposition to the true church as founded by our Lord. This theory (Universal Invisible Church) was adopted by the Reformers so that “Sprinkling” could be retained; discipline by the Lord’s Church could be disregarded; and the teachings of Christ and the Apostles be abandoned in general. Even recently, we read an article in which a supposedly good

man said, “it is not impossible that even Paul was wrong, or mistakenly translated, regarding justification and the Lord’s Supper.”

As all our arguments are in vain without a **“thus saith the Lord,”** I shall attempt in this short space of time to briefly outline the founding of the Lord’s Church and a part of its witness to the world; the perpetuity of the Church (composed of the individual bodies of true assemblies) of all ages, and how a believer can discern a true body of Christ.

1. The Founding of The Lord’s Church.

We have discovered from the Scriptures (John 1:35-51) that one by one the disciples of our Lord were called from secular work into the ministry of “Fishers of men.” The twelve disciples were chosen (Luke 6:12-13) and constituted the first church. This first church was endued with power (before Pentecost) and sent out to preach God’s Word, definitely through the aid of the Holy Spirit (Luke 9:1-2); that the Lord’s Church would be perpetuated despite **“the gates of hell”** (Matt. 16:18); that Church action was taken by the Church (Matt. 18:17); and that the people whom the Lord added to the Church on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:47b) was the same Church founded by the Saviour Himself during His earthly ministry.

2. What is the Meaning of Perpetuity?

Perpetuity means a “perpetual existence” since the days of our Lord. This simply means that since Christ founded His church, there has never ceased to be true, local, New Testament churches on earth.

These New Testament Baptist Churches have never been able to boast that their coffers are full of silver and gold; they have never proclaimed the “State Church” or even a part thereof; they have never been highly esteemed by the world; they have, however, worn the Saviour’s crown of thorns, suffered His humiliations, partaken of His crucifixion, and died by the millions. Driven to mountains and sea, their tongues pulled out, their eyes gouged, hung on the racks, mutilated and tortured in every manner known to man, the Church of Jesus Christ still victoriously marches

on.

3. How Can I Know the Lord’s True Church?

Jesus spoke to the unbelieving Jews (John 8:32) in these words, **“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”** Although the primary interpretation has reference to salvation, I believe it also to represent a great truth in regards to the Lord’s Church. By eliminating all groups who practice “sprinkling” for baptism, deny the existence of eternal damnation, churches founded by excommunicated Priests and followers of unscriptural teachings such as “Prayers for the dead,” worshipers of images and bones and all other abominable practices of false cults, we can discover the Church founded by our Lord. The Reformation, regardless of any or all its merits, nevertheless, failed to produce the evidences of true Scriptural churches, and even today is headed for Rome at an amazing speed. The shocking truth also exists that many so-called organizations with the great Baptist name are hanging on their coattails.

In closing, I thank God for the privilege to speak to this great number of God’s people and for the space to be allotted in the most Scriptural paper on earth (*The Baptist Examiner*) for its publication.

O God! what honor doth thou bestow upon such a worm of the dust. May God bless each of you is my prayer.

(*The Baptist Examiner*, 1-12-63).



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- A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS -

By Timothy J. Hille
of Ashland, Illinois

Chapter Twenty-Five Holy Appointments: the Sabbatical Year and the Year of Jubilee

God here appoints some laws relating to the children of Israel's use of the land of Canaan which they had not as yet entered. These laws designated special years of rest which the children of Israel were to observe in a most significant way. The observance of these special times signified that they were the people of the true and living God. The observance of these special times required them to have faith in God. The laws which governed their worship and service to Jehovah also regulated their personal, social, and national life. One the truths which we need to recognize and to which we need to submit in this very hour is that the more we learn of and obey the commands of God as His children, the more we will enjoy His presence and the more we will grow in Christian usefulness and Christ-likeness. Our peace and joy as God's people is utterly dependent upon God's favor and presence, and our being in fellowship with Him, which we can only be so long as we walk in the truth and light of His Word (1 John 1:5-7).

Chapter Outline

- i. The Sabbatical Year: vs. 1-7
- ii. The Year of Jubilee: vs. 8-17
- iii. God's Special Provisions for the Sabbath Years: vs. 18-22
- iv. The Law of Selling and Redeeming the Land: vs. 23-34
- v. The Law of Lending to and Treatment of the Poor: vs. 35-46
- vi. The Law of the Kinsman-Redeemer: vs. 47-55

I. VERSES ONE THROUGH SEVEN.

"And the LORD spake unto Moses in mount Sinai, saying . . ." Israel is still encamped around Mount Sinai, receiving the instructions and commandments of the Lord. They are here receiving instructions particular to their inheritance in the land of Canaan, to which God was going to lead them. That which God



gives is to be used according to His commands, and the life to which He calls us is to be lived according to His revealed will (Deut. 8:3; Matt.

4:4).

"When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto the LORD." The sabbatical year is here introduced. There was to be a season of rest for one whole year in which no planting, tilling, or harvesting was done. God had previously described sacred seasons and feasts which were to be observed in the land; and now He appoints sacred years which were to be observed on a recurring basis according to the laws here laid down. The children of Israel had no reason to observe these things other than God commanded them to do so and they were trusting in Him.

"Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; but in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the LORD." When once the children of Israel were come into possession of the promised land, every seventh year was to be a sabbath year, during which no planting or harvesting was to be done. Every week of days they observed the seventh-day sabbath; every week of years they were to observe the sabbatical year; and, as we shall see, every week of week-years, they were to observe the year of jubilee. This served to point in type to that rest which awaits the people of God (Heb. 4:9-10). This sabbath was to be kept in reverence and honor for the Lord as the true possessor of heaven and earth (Gen. 14:18-20). "It has been well said that by the weekly sabbath they owned that they themselves belonged to Jehovah; and by this seventh-year sabbath they professed that their land was His and they His tenants."¹ "It commenced immediately after the feast of ingathering, and it was calculated to teach the people, in a

remarkable manner, the reality of the presence and providential power of God."²

The seventh year was one **"of rest unto the land,"** as no tilling, sowing, or reaping was done. That which grew of itself was not to be harvested, but served as free food for all people: as God said to Israel, **"for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for thy stranger that sojourneth with thee, And for thy cattle, and for the beast that are in thy land, shall all the increase thereof be meat [food]."** Every seventh year was a year of rest for servants and a year of providing for the poor. At this time there was also a releasing of all debts (Deut. 15:1-15). This speaks spiritually of the rest that is found in the Lord Jesus Christ by every believer (Matt. 11:28-30).

Israel was to obey God's command by faith, and so enjoy the blessings of divinely provided peace, security, prosperity, and rest. They were not to use this year for the pursuit of their own personal desires or for advancement in their temporal situation. Many people want to use time that God has given for worshipping and serving Him to advance their worldly situation and obtain their fleshly desires. In doing so they are not acknowledging God as their all, and not identifying themselves as His servants. If we truly long for the rest of God, then we will seek to improve the use of our time in serving Him and be freed in our minds from the attractions of the world. They were to use this time, not merely for leisure, but for drawing closer to God through His Word (Deut. 31:10-13).

II. VERSES EIGHT THROUGH SEVENTEEN.

God next introduces the year of jubilee. This year was to occur every fiftieth year, immediately after seven weeks of seven years. **"And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years . . . And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year . . ."** After seven sabbatical years had passed, which would in all the passage of forty-nine years, then the fiftieth year was

to be set apart as the year of jubilee. During this year, many outstanding things were to take place. The year was to begin with the sounding of **"the trumpet of jubilee . . . on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement."** On the day which signified the annual cleansing of sin for the entire nation, when the high priest would enter the holiest of all and sprinkle the blood of the sin offering before the mercy seat in the tabernacle, and then release the scapegoat into the wilderness, bearing away the sins of the people: even on that very day the trumpet sound would **"proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof."** Their sins were put away through the forbearance of God, the sacrifice being made on that day pointing to the once and for all sacrifice which Jesus Christ would make of Himself upon the cross for sins; and so there is liberty and rest for every believer from the bondage of sin.

In this year of jubilee, every Israelite was to return to the land of his inheritance which belonged to his family from the day when the land of Canaan was divided among the children of Israel. **"And ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family."** When the children of Israel went in and possessed the promised land, God divided the land to all the tribes and to all the families within Israel. Over time, the land may have been sold by one person or family in order to pay debts or for some other reason. Some families may have been removed from the original place of their possession and caused to live in other parts of the nation. Yet, every fiftieth year, the land returned to the original owner and his family. God did this to protect the children of Israel and preserve them in their tribes so that His own will and purpose in using Israel to bring forth the Saviour into the world might be accomplished. In this holy year, the land was to lie fallow, as it had done in the sabbatical year. **"A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes**

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A Study in Leviticus

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in it of thy vine undressed." The children of Israel were to rest from the affairs of life and turn their hearts toward God.

The time between the years of jubilee as they recurred according to the calendar God appointed for Israel was to be used in determining the value of things bought and sold, especially land. **"And if thou sell ought to thy neighbour, or buyest ought of thy neighbour's hand, ye shall not oppress one another: according to the number of years after the jubilee thou shalt buy of thy neighbour, and according unto the number of years of the fruits he shall sell unto thee."** They were not to overcharge one another, but were to sell land to one another based on the number of years in which it might be used profitably: **"for according to the number of the years of the fruits doth he sell unto thee."** The national economy of Israel was to be based upon the rules God gave; and God's rules established fair market value and guarded against the rich oppressing the poor.

During this year of jubilee, all Hebrew slaves were released from bondage (Lev. 25:47-48, 54-55). This year speaks spiritually of the blessings of the gospel which Jesus Christ bestows upon all who believe in Him for salvation. He secures to them a sure inheritance, and frees them from bondage to sin, and proclaims the forgiveness of sins, and delivers their souls from the oppression of the devil and false religion (Isa. 61:1-3). This was not the way of the heathen nations. The things which God commands us to do are oftentimes contrary to the world's ways: and yet we are no longer of the world, but we belong to God who loved us and bought us for Himself. **"Ye shall not therefore oppress one another; but thou shalt fear thy God: for I am the LORD your God."**

III. VERSES EIGHTEEN THROUGH TWENTY-TWO.

"Wherefore ye shall do my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; and ye shall dwell in the land in safety. And the land shall yield her fruit, and ye shall eat your



fill, and dwell therein in safety." The children of Israel were to recognize that the blessings of the Lord, and not their own industry, skill, or foresight, were the source of all their safety and plenty. The commandments and laws which God gave them, if observed out of a sincere and trusting heart, would secure them in their fellowship with God, and thereby they would prosper. If Christians today will draw nigh to God through willing obedience to His Word and belief of the truths of God, then God will draw nigh to them and cause their lives to be spiritually fruitful. You must recognize and acknowledge the true and living God as your first need and your first priority in order for your Christian life to be the kind of life it ought to be (Matt. 6:31-33).

God promised to provide for the children of Israel so that they could follow His commands. The children of Israel would go without sowing or reaping every seventh year, and two

years in a row every forty-ninth and fiftieth years. God said, **"Then I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years."** The sixth year's harvest would be plentiful enough to supply their needs until the ninth year. God will meet the needs of those who trust Him today and who serve Him faithfully. If we will separate ourselves and our time unto the Lord, He will supply our needs and enable us to do His will. **"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus"** (Phil. 4:19). **Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you"** (James 4:8).

IV. VERSES TWENTY-THREE THROUGH THIRTY-FOUR.

God now appoints the law of redemption, or buying back, of the land. **"The land shall not be sold for ever."** One principle teaching is that the children of Israel were not to live for the accumulation of

earthly riches, one aspect of which is the accumulation of land. Each man and each family had their respective inheritance, or portion. Of necessity the land might be sold; but they had a law which required that the land might be bought back, and so remain in the possession of that family to whom God gave it. The basis of this was the ownership of God and the spiritual character of the people as pilgrims upon the earth. **"For the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me."** This is the character of the people of God: they are God's strangers. Our use of the things of this life is to be governed by the holy purpose of God for us and the holy nature God has placed within us (I Pet. 2:11-12; I Cor. 7:31).

Through poverty a man might sell **"some of his possession"** of the land given to him by God's allotment. The law of redemption allowed that his kin could redeem the land, or buy it back. The man who sold the land might also, if he was able, buy back the land. The price for which the land might be redeemed was to take into account the original selling price and the amount of time to the next jubilee. If the land was not redeemed, in the year of jubilee it returned to the possession of the original owner. City dwellings could be redeemed up to one year after being sold, but did not revert to the original owner in the jubilee year. Country dwellings were considered to be part of the land, and so could be redeemed and did **"go out in the jubilee."**

The exceptional case of the Levites is here given. The Levites were not given a special inheritance as the other tribes because they were given to Aaron and his sons to serve about the things of the tabernacle. Their portion was the things of Israel's worship; and so they were to be given suburbs in the cities and lands of the other tribes (Gen. 49:5-7; Num. 1:47-53; 35:1-3). The city dwellings of the Levites returned to them in the jubilee; and **"the field of the suburbs of their cities,"** which were for the cattle and livestock of the Levites, could not be sold, God having made it **"their perpetual possession."** Because they ministered about the things of God, their portion was not

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to be utterly taken away, and so lead to the neglect of the things of God on Israel's part.

V. VERSES THIRTY-FIVE THROUGH FORTY-SIX.

God here gives commandment concerning the treatment of poor brethren. If an Israelite fell into poverty, then his brethren were to have compassion on him and relieve him. They were not to lend him anything at a charge, or in hopes of any gain other than to be recompensed at the resurrection of the just (Luke 14:12-14; 6:36). The children of Israel were to remember how the Lord had brought them out of Egypt to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, and to be their God.

In cases where some Israelite was reduced into such great debt that he was forced to sell himself unto another Israelite, he that sold himself was to be treated, not as a slave, but as an hired servant. In the year of jubilee he and his family were to be released from servitude, to return to their possession in the land God gave them. **"For they are my servants, which I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: they shall not be sold as bondmen."** Those whom God has saved are His possession, and their being owned by God is to be evident in their lives (I Cor. 6:19-20; 7:20-24). The children of Israel were to only have slaves of the heathen nations round about them; and these were protected from harsh and cruel treatment by the law (Ex. 21:20-21, 26-27).

VI. VERSES FORTY-SEVEN THROUGH FIFTY-FIVE.

In close connection with what has passed we now have the law of the kinsman redeemer. If any Israelite was sold into bondage to a foreigner through debt, then that Israelite might be redeemed by any of his near kindred and so freed from servitude. The redemption price was fixed in relation to the year of jubilee. The foreigner was prohibited from harsh or cruel treatment toward the Israelite servant. If the Israelite who sold himself into slavery was not redeemed, then he was released

in the jubilee year. "For unto me the children of Israel are servants; they are my servants whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God" (Neh. 5:1-13).

Jesus became **"nigh of kin"** to us so that He might redeem us who were **"carnal, sold under sin"** (Rom. 7:14), and in bondage to Satan and the world (Heb. 2:14-17). Our redemption price was His own precious blood (I Pet. 1:18-19). His life was offered for our ransom (Matt. 20:28). Let us not therefore serve man, or the lusts of the flesh; but let us serve God who has bought us for Himself and brought us out of the darkness of sin.

NOTES

1. Hille, Harry J. "Outlines on Leviticus," 1979.
2. Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown. *Commentary on the Whole Bible* ("The Online Bible," 1995-1997).



The Church Is A

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that is begun by some man or woman in recent centuries, you must agree that the church of the Lord is an old and ancient assembly. Well, our text verse indicates that Jesus Christ built His church while He was here on this earth, and that was nearly 2000 years ago. The Lord Jesus says, **"...upon this rock I will build my church..."** This indicates to me, that He was in the process of building up and setting up His church – even as He spoke to Peter! In fact, I believe that when the Lord Jesus Christ spoke to His disciples in this 16th chapter of Matthew, that He was actually speaking to His church. You can see this borne out by the teachings that Jesus delivered to His church in the 18th chapter of Matthew. In the 18th chapter of Matthew, the Lord is clearly giving instructions to His church – which was currently in existence, and which He was addressing personally.

Remember that David prophesied of the Lord and His church this way: **"The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes"** (Ps. 118:22-23). The church **"is the LORD'S doing,"** and Jesus Christ **"is become the head stone of the cor-**

ner." I believe that the establishment and the building up of the church **"is the LORD'S doing."**

Now, some might disagree with me, and they might insist that the church was established on the day of Pentecost, after the Lord had ascended into Heaven. But, even if that is your position, still, the church is old. The church of Jesus Christ is nearly 2000 years old. And, really, I do not think that my disagreement with those that believe that the church was established on Pentecost, is based on the 2-3 years that separate the church's actual beginning from the supposed beginning at Pentecost; rather, my disagreement with them is based on the fact that I believe Jesus Christ was personally involved in the building and beginning of the church while He was here on the earth, and not after He was ascended into Heaven.

So, the church of Jesus Christ was built by Him, and it is very old. And yet, the church is still functioning in the world. The second half of our text verse reminds us why the church is still here: **"...the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."** The church is very old, but it is still here because Jesus Christ is its Champion! The church is still here because Jesus Christ will not allow Satan, or the powers of Hell, or the powers of men to utterly defeat or remove His church from the face of the earth.

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph. 2:19-22). The Lord is still "framing up" His churches, and building them and growing them. Those that are saved and added unto the churches of Jesus Christ, **"are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone."** It is no wonder that the church is still here! What a magnificent foundation and chief corner stone!

In reality, the church still contin-

ues to exist, because it is the body of Jesus Christ. While Jesus Christ has left this earth to ascend into Heaven to sit on the right hand of the Father, He has left the church here on the earth to function as His Body. **"And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence"** (Col. 1:18). I believe that the churches of Jesus Christ – as the bodies of Christ on the Earth – ought to say, do, act, and behave just as Jesus Christ would if He were personally here on the earth. In the end, Jesus Christ must **"have the preeminence"** in the church, and all glory should be His. If a church will function in this manner, then we will know that that church is truly descended from the church that Jesus Christ established while He was here on the earth.

TIMES CHANGE, BUT TRUTH REMAINS

One thing is certain – our God does not change. I hope you will see, that despite the fact that many years have transpired since the Lord God created the heavens and the earth; and many years have passed since the Lord brought a great flood to destroy the sinful men of the earth; and many years have gone by since the Lord Jesus Christ came to this earth; despite all of these years, and all of these events (and many more monumental events) that have transpired, still, our God has not and will not ever change. The same God that created all that is; the same God that brought the Great Flood; the same God that called out Israel; the same God that came to the earth and took upon Him flesh; the same God that is presented to us in the Scriptures, is still the same God that we serve today. This is good to know is it not!

Well, as a part of this knowledge, I want you to understand that the "truth" that God has always stood for, is still the "truth" today. And, more directly to the point, the "truth" that Jesus Christ stood for and the "truth" that He instilled in His first church, is still the "truth" that is found in the churches of Jesus Christ today. Paul prophesied of this when he told Timothy, **"But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to**

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CELLBLOCK TO CELLBLOCK

By David G. Hoffman

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

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



If The Majority Participates Does That Automatically Make It The Right Thing To Do?

Greetings, grace, and peace to you, dear reader. It has been a little while since I have consistently written this column, so I would like to remind you that my subject matter often comes from conversations I have had with fellow prisoners. I figure that if something comes up in my daily walk, then likely it has, or will, come up in yours as well.

This column is an example of such an occurrence.

In December of last year I was asked to go to the annual Christmas program in the unit chapel and I refused. I told my dorm-mate I did not participate in any pagan/Catholic rituals including Christmas, Easter, and Valentine's Day. I explained to him the pagan origins and unbiblical trappings of each.

My dorm-mate's astonished reply was, "But the majority of the churches in the 'free-world' celebrate these holidays, they can not all be wrong!"

Oh, but they can. . .

Throughout Biblical history the majority has not been on the Lord's side. From the murmuring Israelites in the wilderness to the homosexuals in Sodom and Gomorrah to the pagans in the city of Jericho right down to the Pharisees and Sadducees of Jesus' time the majority of society has been dead wrong. Majority does not a right make.

Closer to home and in this era we have the corrupt and paganistic teachings of the daughters of the Great Whore teaching our society that it does not matter where these pagan traditions began, they are now "Christian" ---why? Because the Antichrist has said so, and that is that! Whoa unto you who back talks the Mother Harlot.

Make no mistake, the majority of

so-called Christian denominations trace their roots back to the corrupt and pagan-loving Catholic Church from which these paganistic "holidays" sprang. Is it any wonder they all teach what their mother instilled in them? Sure, they say they have broken away and have no ties---but have they really?

It does not take much research to find the origins of these pagan rituals and how they were adopted by the Catholic Church and passed down to the various denominations.

I have done the research and could never, in good faith, participate in this paganism no-matter what you call it.

So, to answer my dorm-mate, yes, they can all be wrong.

You can take a pig and wash off all the muck and dress it in a pretty pink dress and it is still a pig. A cute pig, but a pig nonetheless.

Until next time, dear reader, may the grace of our Lord uphold and sustain you.



The Church Is A

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behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (I Tim. 3:15). God is a God of truth. The truth that He taught and expounded while He was here on earth, is the same truth that should be taught and expounded in the churches of Jesus Christ. By and large, we can determine the true churches from the imposters, by simply examining the doctrine and teachings and practices of the churches that exist today.

Sadly, we find that the truth of God is not held or observed in many places in this world. Sadly, we find that even in our society and our nation and our schools and our religions the "truth" is hardly ever seen -- and never is it exalted. **"Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice over-**

take us: we wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness. We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes: we stumble at noonday as in the night; we are in desolate places as dead men. We roar all like bears, and mourn sore like doves: we look for judgment, but there is none; for salvation, but it is far off from us. For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us: for our transgressions are with us; and as for our iniquities, we know them; In transgressing and lying against the LORD, and departing away from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood. And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey: and the LORD saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgment" (Isa. 59:9-15). Sometimes when I look at the world around us, and the terrible events that surround us, I am greatly discouraged; because, I know that many of the evils of our society could be remedied, if only the "truth" had not been forsaken. We look at the violence in our society -- for example the shootings that take place in the schools. And I am sure that the very God that they have cast out of the schools is the very remedy for our situation. If only our children were taught to fear God! If only our children were taught to have a respect for God's Word! If only our children were taught to know the difference between right and wrong! And yet, these very teachings are withheld from them, so our children grow up watching the depravity and violence spewed forth from Hollywood, and they take these depraved lives to be their role models and examples. It is no wonder that our children grow up into young men and women who propagate lies, promiscuousness, and violence! I think that if you would know the horrible facts of the matter -- truth is there lying in the street beside the dead bodies of our children! Truth is there lying in the dumpster with the withered bodies of the

aborted babies! Truth is there lying in the jail cells beside the convicted drug users and purveyors of violence!

I do not believe you will find "truth" extolled or lifted up anywhere in our society, except in the churches of Jesus Christ. And yet, sometimes it is hard to find even in the churches! **"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty"** (II Cor. 6:14-18). The Apostle Paul exhorts us (the churches of Jesus Christ) to stand forth from the world. The cry goes forth, "Who is on the Lord's side?" And our answer should be, "Me. I am ready to come out from among them. I am ready to be separate. I am ready to stand for the truth and proclaim the judgment of God against the workers of unrighteousness!"

Do not forget, the church is the messenger and ambassador of God. The time is now that we must proclaim the truth of man's wickedness, and salvation for men, only through Jesus Christ. **"And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of**

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. Since the Jews mixed their Passover wine with water, should Baptists do the same at the Lord's Supper? - Arkansas

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After examining the four passages in the New Testament that deal directly with the observance of the Lord's Supper (Matt. 26:26-30; Mark 14:22-26; Luke 22:19-20; I Cor. 11:23-26) I found no positive command or implied instruction to mix water with the wine. Unleavened bread and wine are the elements Baptists have used since the Lord Jesus instituted the sacred ordinance as the Head of the church. If the Lord wanted us to incorporate Jewish Passover traditions as specific as adding water to the wine He would have told us to do so. I think we should be very careful about incorporating customs or traditions into our worship with no positive command from our Lord and His Word. This is how unnecessary controversies arise in our churches. Just keep it simple, scriptural, and spiritual. Worship the Lord in Spirit and in truth. Keep the ordinances intact and observe them faithfully until Jesus comes again.

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The Lord's Supper is not the Passover; they are not the same. The Jews did many things differently, that does not mean the New Testament churches should do what they did.

MIKE DEWITT

"Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying, Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition" (Matt. 15:1-3). "This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith; Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth" (Titus 1:13-14).

I start off my answer with some very critical verses where the "traditions" of the Jews are called into serious question by the Bible itself. As one arrives at the time of Christ, the Pharisees had built up a great many "traditions" and "ordinances" that carried as much weight with the Jews as the Word of God did! Christ rebuked them sharply and frequently for being **"...blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel"** (Matt. 23:24). Many of these Pharisaic works were collected in the Jewish Talmud. The following two-paragraph definition is given from Wikipedia:

"The Talmud is a central text of Rabbinic Judaism, considered second to the Torah. The Talmud has two components: the Mishnah, c. 200 AD, the first written compendium of Judaism's Oral Law, and the Gemara, c. 500 AD, an elucidation of the Mishnah and related Tannaitic writings that often ventures onto other subjects and expounds broadly on the Hebrew Bible. The terms

Talmud and Gemara are often used interchangeably.

"The whole Talmud consists of 63 tractates, and in standard print is over 6,200 pages long. It is written in Tannaitic Hebrew and Aramaic. The Talmud contains the opinions of thousands of rabbis on a variety of subjects, including law, ethics, philosophy, customs, history, theology, lore and many other topics. The Talmud is the basis for all codes of rabbinic law and is much quoted in other rabbinic literature." (Emphasis-TMS)

Many folk give too much credence to these collections of rabbi's opinions, in my humble opinion. The earliest part of the Talmud, the Mishnah was written 200 years after the Lord's birth! That's as long a period of time as we are from Colonial America! If things were bad in reference to Jewish habits in the Lord's day, how much worse do you reckon it would be 5-6 generations later? How many daily habits of the Puritans could we collate today, even with advances in historical data collection? And how many arguments would we have about whose data was correct? Selah! Think about it!

Beloved reader, to answer your question concerning the Lord's Supper, I think we should just stick to the Word of God! The Bible says that it is wine, and that is good enough for me! It was strong enough that the Corinthian church was rebuked for the abuse of becoming drunken! (I Cor. 11:21). The Bible says that it is to be a picture of Christ's blood—would you dilute His blood, beloved? NEVER, in two thousand years!

If we would seriously want to know the Truth about how the Lord's Supper should be observed, then after a complete study of the Biblical Texts, the second place I would look, would NOT be back at the defrocked Jews, but FORWARD to the Lord's Precious Church! **"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"** (I Tim. 3:15). That is where the LORD has promised perpetuity of the truth! Not in the Jewish Mishnah... God forbid that we would ask the

Sanhedrin and Saul of Tarsus how the church should function and observe her ordinances! **"For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers"** (Gal. 1:13-14). Selah! Think about it!

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No, we should not mix water with the wine that we use for the Lord's Supper.

First, I could not recall reading where the Jews mixed water with their wine for the Passover. So I looked it up and they did mix it with water. The wine for the Passover was very strong. The Jews were required to drink three to four large glasses of wine, while none were to be intoxicated.

Second, I guess my question would be why would we add water since we use such a small amount in the Lord's Supper; why would it be necessary?

Third, Jesus was offered vinegar mixed with gall but He would not drink it, **"They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink"** (Matt. 27:34). Gall, is a bitter poisonous herb, wormwood and gall are often associated with one another. According to W. E. Vine, metaphorically in Acts 8:23, where **"gall of bitterness"** stands for extreme wickedness, productive of evil fruit.

Our Lord's blood was pure, meaning it had NO contaminants or impurities like ours, and the only thing that can truly represent His Blood and be used is wine (not fermented wine, for there is no such thing in my opinion). Wine is the fermented juice of the grape (grape juice). So wine is the result of grape juice going

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. Is it wrong to gamble just for entertainment's sake? - Ohio

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I've been asked many times if gambling is wrong. Gambling is defined by Webster's: to play or game for money or some other stake. You can see by the root of the word, that gambling is gaming or playing. So the quick answer to the forum question is: What other kind of gambling is there, other than entertainment's sake? Professional gaming? Selah! Think about it!

As I have studied the subject, I've come to another, deeper definition of gambling. Perhaps we could use a couple of examples. If you choose to ride in a car with an unlicensed driver, are you not gambling with your life? Or if you choose to walk across the swinging bridge with its half-rotted wooden planks instead of the sturdy new concrete bridge, are you not again gambling on your safe arrival to the other side? As you come to just about every crossroad in your life, I believe one could say that we are gambling that we will make the correct choices... By its modern usage, gambling means to "take a chance"...! **"Behold, to morrow about this time I will cause it to rain a very grievous hail, such as hath not been in Egypt since the foundation thereof even until now. Send therefore now, and gather thy cattle, and all that thou hast in the field; for upon every man and beast which shall be found in the field, and shall not be brought home, the hail shall come down upon them, and they shall die. He that feared the word of the LORD among the servants of Pharaoh made his servants and his cattle flee into the houses: And he that regarded not the word of the LORD left his servants and his cattle in the field"**

(Ex. 9:18-21). Should have gone with the "sure thing," should they not! And SO SHOULD WE! Selah! Think about it!

I use these examples to get an insight into the opposite of gambling. The opposite of gambling is responsible and judicious actions with the blessings that God has given us. So, this gives us the first Biblical basis for an objection to gambling, per se. Inherent within gambling is irresponsibility! We are NOT making responsible and judicious actions if we are "taking chances" with our 1) possessions; 2) stewardship; 3) service.

We must make responsible decisions concerning our money, family, church, worship, talents, time, etc... To be irresponsible, or "play/game" with our time, in unacceptable! I understand that we can set aside a portion of our time and money for vacations, but it is unwarranted to take the blessings that God has given us and fritter away our funds and times with continuous carousing and fleshly entertainments.

The second Biblical basis for rejecting recreational gambling is that it is addictive to the flesh. Just because there is nothing wrong with wine as a beverage, we must still be aware of its addictive nature. It is dangerous for minors to grow up thinking that alcohol is a "good time" beverage and that it is natural for one to desire it! That is why even our secular government outlaws it to everyone under the age of 18! Something that will not hurt us in moderation, can dull our senses and damage our bodies if taken to an excess. Gluttony is an example of the same thing. Selah! Think about it!

Now, I understand that not all folk are as susceptible to these addictions as others are. God has given some folk the ability to be rich, while others cannot ever responsibly handle carnal riches. Some have never been tempted to go beyond the occasional glass of wine, while others would go crashing back into the gutter at the

drop of a hat (or glass). Fornication is an addiction for some, while many folk remain monogamous their entire life (Christian or non-Christian). So, too, is gambling an addiction that many find a vulnerability in their life. The adrenaline rush, the temptation of riches, etc, all have led many poor souls down the road to destruction and poverty. To deny this is naïve and sophistry in itself... It is counter-productive to test ourselves to see if we could be addicted to smoking, drinking, or gambling, and then after we find out our flesh is weak try to retreat to higher moral ground! Foolishness! Avoid it in the first place! Selah! Think about it! **"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows"** (I Tim. 6:9-10).

The third Biblical basis for standing against gambling is our Christian witness. To even play the lottery is a stain on the Christian testimony. The Lord has enjoined us to labor for our meat and has promised to reward faithful diligence. To play/game with our hard-earned wages is a violation of the Christian work ethic. Those round about us, should be able to see by our responsible actions that we are trusting in nothing but the Lord our God and His commandments! If they want to know what the "sure thing" in our life is: they ought to be able to see that God is in control! Beloved reader, the only two sure things in life are (NOT death and taxes, but) 1- God and 2- His Word! Selah! Think about it!

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"Entertainment purposes," I have heard that one before, for a lot different illicit practices that

eventually ruin a man and his family, not to mention his witness before others of Jesus Christ. **"But godliness with contentment is great gain"** (I Tim. 6:6).

I reckon that if you have left over money to waste on gambling then you are rich. **"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy"** (I Tim. 6:17). If gambling with the money that God has given you to use wisely, to waste on uncertain riches, then Satan has certainly lain a beautiful lie before you that you have taken up to enjoy such wicked practices.

"While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage" (II Peter 2:19). A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. I will not go into the fact that what starts as innocent fun ends up as a tragedy. **"For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows"** (I Tim. 6:10).

"He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this [is] also vanity" (Eccl. 5:10).

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In my opinion and what I believe to be Scriptural, yes, gambling for entertainment is wrong! Whenever I think of gambling the first Scripture that comes to mind is, **"In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return"** (Gen. 3:19). We are to work, and work hard, for our wages!

The actual word gambling is not

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Forum #1

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through the fermentation process to remove the leavening properties in the natural grape, in other words, it is removing all the sugar that is the leaven. Once that happens, you have wine (no leaven). Drink four large glasses of grape juice and see what happens. I never could understand how you can ferment wine when it has already been fermented. The reader should understand the play on words here!

Also, water has impurities in it; why taint the wine with it? It has always been my understanding that in certain regions the water was not good to drink. Paul told Timothy not to drink the water where he was, **"Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities"** (I Tim. 5:23).

I am a teetotaler (completely abstaining from alcoholic beverages). But alcohol is the most pure substance there is, what better to represent our Lord's Blood!

In his book *Sketches of Jewish Social Life* by Alfred Edersheim he states; "The wine for use in the temple was brought exclusively from Judea, not only because it was better, but because the transport through Samaria would have rendered it defiled" (pg. 69). Sounds like to me they were very particular about the wine that was

used in the temple!

The Berea Baptist Church Bookstore has a very good book written by the late Milburn Cockrell titled, *Wine, Worship, & The Word*. I would highly recommend it.

Again, I ask the question, why would we want to mix water with the wine we use for the Lord's Supper, what would be the benefit? God Bless!

ROGER REED



Forum #2

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mentioned in the Bible, but neither are the words pornography and illegal drugs! But there are (I believe) verses that would be more than enough to discourage the practice of gambling, for entertainment or otherwise. Here are a few that I would encourage the reader to study.

"He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity" (Eccl. 5:10).

"No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Luke 16:13). Mammon of course being money!

"For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (I Tim. 6:10).

"He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich" (Pro. 10:4). I kind of like the NIV on this one; "Lazy hands make a man poor; but diligent hands bring wealth" (Pro. 10:4 NIV). (Selah)!

That should suffice for the questioner and you, dear reader. Now take this and study it with other Scripture. I have sat for hours and watched men where I worked gamble their whole paychecks away. Before I worked there, when I was younger, my Dad would come home (he was a payroll auditor, the superintendent at one point) and tell us how someone's wife would come into the plant or call on the phone to ask why their

husband did not receive a check that week. Here to find out they lost it playing poker at break time or when their work was all done. I have seen hundreds of dollars lost in a couple of hands, in the manner of minutes.

To me, gambling, for any reason is a way to bypass work, but I believe the Bible instructs us to persevere and work hard. I believe gambling also is the same as covetousness or definitely a form of it.

One of the key principles in the Bible is that people should be wise stewards of everything God gives them, including their time, talent and treasure. Gamblers may believe they earn their money with their own labor and may spend it as they please, yet God gives people the talent and health to carry out their jobs and their very life is a gift from Him as well. Wise stewardship of extra money calls believers to invest it in the Lord's work or to save it for an emergency, rather than lose it in games in which the odds are stacked against the player.

Let's put it this way, when I see families in the church that are struggling, and our secular families that are in need, I find it a little appalling. Now, I grant you, if you are a gambler for entertainment or just to have a little fun, and you say that you only spend five to ten or more dollars a week, just think how much money you could accumulate in a month. I really like this next verse of Scripture, **"I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive"** (Acts 20:35). Have you ever experienced, dear reader, how rewarding it is to take someone (family in the church) a bunch of groceries? I have. It is the most wonderful feeling that you could ever ask for!

I knew of a Baptist preacher who was a professional gambler (poker player), and he was very good at it and could do many card tricks as well, but when the Lord saved him he gave it up because he knew that it was sin. It can really put a husband and wife at odds and I have seen it wreck whole families.

One last thought, there are those

who can come up with a multitude of excuses about what they would do with their winnings (like give it to the church) but all they are doing is justifying something that they really know to be sin. I have no reservations in saying this, the questioner, in my opinion, knew that gambling for entertainment was wrong before they even submitted this question! God Bless!

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It is never right to do wrong under any circumstances. In my way of thinking there is absolutely nothing right about gambling, so yes it would be wrong to gamble for entertainment's sake. My reasons for opposing gambling are as follows:

1) Gambling does not meet the ultimate test and the overriding principle that should govern our lives as expressed in I Corinthians 10:31: **"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God"** (cf. Col. 3:16-17). We are to love the Lord with every fiber of our being (Matt. 22:37-39). I find it hard to believe that gamblers are saying "I am doing this for your honor and glory because I love you supremely" as they are rolling the dice, pulling the slot lever, or playing blackjack.

2) Gambling is poor stewardship of the wealth that God has enabled you to obtain. Deuteronomy 8:18 declares: **"But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth..."** The entire gaming industry is built on the underlying supposition that you are going to lose money an overwhelming majority of the time. I wonder how many gamblers steal from God in order to gamble? All men are required to pay a tithe (10%) of their earnings to God (Lev. 27:30-32). Failure to pay tithes would mean that gamblers are actually stealing money that rightfully belongs to God

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Forum #2

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in order to engage in a habit that does not glorify Him. Malachi 3:8-9 declares: **"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation."** Robbing God in order to squander His money in an unprofitable habit is a terrible combination of sin.

3) Every dollar a gambler spends contributes to the overall gaming industry that has long been linked to organized crime and the practice of political bribery. This compounds the sin of gambling. Not only are you stealing from God, you are actively contributing to an unholy industry. I Timothy 5:22 states: **"...neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure."**

4) Gambling is a worldly activity that is usually carried on in a sinful environment that is often associated with booze, drunkenness, gluttony, prostitution, cursing the holy name of God, and other forms of immoral behavior. Exodus 23:2 commands: **"Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil..."** (cf. II Cor. 6:14-18; Eph. 5:3-12). I Thessalonians 5:22 declares: **"Abstain from all appearance of evil."** I John 2:15-16 states: **"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."**

5. Gambling traps many of its victims in the snare of addiction. All sin has a way of taking a person farther than they want to go and gambling is no exception. I have read so many accounts of people losing their money, family, house, and literally everything because they were addicted to gambling. If there were even the slightest possibility of addiction it is not worth the risk. Even if I were not addicted to gambling it would trouble my conscience that I am participating and contributing to an industry that feeds on the addiction of others.

6. Gambling provides a poor example to our children,

grandchildren, and others within our sphere of influence. Gambling is nowhere mentioned in Scripture as part of a godly testimony that promotes a legacy of virtue and integrity. Proverbs 22:6 declares: **"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it"** (cf. Deut. 6:4-9). Could a gambler honestly say with a good conscience: **"My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways"** (Prov. 23:26)?

7. Gambling is a terrible waster of time and money. Ephesians 5:15-17 commands: **"See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is."**

8. If a person is so bored they have to throw money away on gambling under the guise of entertainment, then why not find a better way to entertain yourself? Why not give the money you would use on gambling to missionaries? Why not buy some good books that will feed your soul and spiritual intellect? Why not use the money to invest in your family? There are several different ways in which your money could be better used in a profitable manner.

TOM ROSS



The Church Is A

(Continued from page 49) ♦

God in him" (II Cor. 5:18-21). How can the world know the "truth" about salvation, except the churches of Jesus Christ would proclaim to men their sinfulness, and the righteousness and salvation that are found in Jesus Christ? They will not hear these things from the world; but they can and they must hear these things from the "storehouse of truth," that is the churches of Jesus Christ.

SIN ABOUNDS, BUT STRENGTH IS FOUND

I suppose that this point that I want to make next, is very similar to the point that I have just made. That is, I know that the church is old; and I know that the church is the storehouse of the "truth." And, while all the world will deny the importance of the church, and while all the world will

disallow the "truth" that the church contends for; the result is that sin does everywhere abound, and the best and most holy strength is only found in the church of Jesus Christ.

I want you to know that though men might seem strong, and their power to do wickedness may seem great; still, God is stronger and greater still. We must be able to withstand, because Jesus Christ is with His church and His people. **"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah. There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early. The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted. The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah. Come, behold the works of the LORD, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah"** (Ps. 46:1-11). I think that this Old Testament psalm of David, ought to give heart and hope to the churches of Jesus Christ. Just as God was with His people Israel, even so He is with His people in the New Testament churches of Christ. He is our refuge. He is our strength. He is our **"very present help in trouble."** Why should we fear? We have the strength of God at our disposal! **"The LORD also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble. And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek thee"** (Ps. 9:9-10).

Though sin and sinners may wax greater and greater; still, Jesus Christ

is the strength of His church. And, if you and I want to find that abundance of strength; and if we need that strength to succor us in our time of need; I suppose that there is no better place to find that strength than in the church of Jesus Christ. **"And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all"** (Eph. 1:19-23).

MEN'S HOPES FAIL, BUT GOD DOES WELL

So, given the discouraging facts about the state of affairs in humanity; and given the terrible evidence of the sinful condition of the world around us; what should one do? Or, I might say, where could one find any hope? Well, I want you to know that the only hope of mankind – the only hope of any individual that knows he is a sinner – is Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ once said, **"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish"** (Luke 13:5). And then, the Lord Jesus said, **"And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day"** (John 6:40). This is the blessed hope that the churches of God take comfort in; and this is the blessed hope that we proclaim to the world.

I tell you today, that if you put your hope in yourself or your works, then you are utterly damned. I tell you today, that if you put your hope in men or the works of men, then you are utterly damned. I tell you today, that if you put your hope in some religion of manmade origin or some baptism or confession that is engineered by man, then you are utterly damned. What hope do you have? Your only hope is in Jesus Christ!

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The Church Is A

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Let me point out further, that the only place where that hope is properly proclaimed and the “truth” is properly set forth, is in the churches of Jesus Christ. If we would do any good in this world, then I believe it ought to be performed in the churches of Jesus Christ. It is there, in the church, that we can best glorify Jesus Christ. And, it is there, in the church, that we can best help our brothers and sisters. And, it is there, in the church, that we can best offer hope and the good promises of God to the world of lost men.



For What Saith

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familiar to these to whom he wrote and they were very famous as well. I admit, Abraham is a very famous person, is he not? David is a famous person. And we are thankful, we who are saved by God's grace, that they are familiar to us. Paul did write to the Roman saints being led of the Holy Spirit of God proclaiming that both Abraham and David were saved the same way that folks are saved today. In a very brief synopsis of this passage I believe that we can say that Abraham was saved by faith, not by works; because he did not earn it. David was saved the same way! For the Bible does tell us, blessed is the man **“unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works”** (Rom. 4:6). We know what that is like. We experience that blessedness because of the imputed righteousness of Christ.

In this fourth chapter, Paul shows that neither of these men, to whom so many Jews Paul had contact with (in which Paul was a Jew himself), that these two: David and Abraham; who were looked at with such respect, did not rest in their own righteousness. And so Paul concludes, nobody can rest in their own righteousness and be saved. Now there is a righteousness that people do have. The Pharisees have a righteousness, but Jesus said, “except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and

Pharisees” (Matt. 5:20). He did not deny their righteousness, but He said it has to be an exceeding righteousness in order to be saved. Saving righteousness is that which comes from Him; for their righteousness came from within themselves.

I want to call your attention to verse 3 and I want to note here how that Paul does so state in verse 3, **“For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.”** We know that this is a reference back to Genesis 15. The Bible tells us this because the Scriptures do say this. In Genesis 15:6, **“And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.”**

My subject tonight is that expression which is in the form of a question in Romans 4:3, **“For what saith the Scriptures?”** Now we know that Paul, in the context, is writing concerning how there is a belief that men, women, boys, and girls exercise, that is accepted of God, because it is given by Him. And it is a faith that is not tied in with sight in any form or fashion. It is a faith that is not worked for. It is a faith that DOES work, but one does NOT work to obtain it. David was justified by grace, not merit. Abraham was justified the same way. And all they who have come after them, or prior to them, who are saved by grace—God saved the same way. The expression—“For what saith the Scriptures?” is an expression that Paul used. You know there are not a whole lot of folks, as I am sure you are well aware of—that are interested in that expression—“for what saith the Scriptures.” They want to tell you what they think. They want to tell you what their church believes. And, it is good if every church believes what the Scripture saith, but a lot of times folks do not want to know what the Scripture saith.

I. The Scriptures do have something to “Saith”—“Saith” is an English term meaning that the Scriptures speak! They speak! It is Christ Himself and He speaks to hearts. Paul said that the Scriptures say that Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness. You go somewhere today, not far from home, maybe even in your home, and you will find folks who do not care what the Scriptures

saith, or perhaps even deny what the Scriptures saith, or believe contrary to what the Scriptures saith.

Now the Scriptures speak! This was an expression of Paul who was a convicted, regenerated, child of God. And I believe that every convicted, regenerated, child of God is interested in what the Scriptures saith. The world is NOT. They are interested in what a whole lot of others “saith.” The world is interested in what they have to say too, but they are not interested in what the Scriptures saith. I believe that what the Scripture saith is most important because it is of value. It is of value as far as God is concerned. It is of value because it has to do with eternal destiny and the eternal condition of one's soul. Paul here writes of how one's sins are covered, not punished, but forgiven. Christ was punished in our stead. Our sins are covered under the blood. Our sins are forgiven.

And so I would like to note a few things this evening, concerning what the Scriptures saith. And you have evidenced that this is important to you, or else you would not be here tonight (in church assembly). And how blessed it is, when what the Scriptures say becomes important to you. A lot of times, folks will give audience, to what someone else says. May we always be attentive to what God has to say.

I believe that this, being an expression of Paul—a convicted, regenerated, child of God—and I believe that a person who is convicted of their sins, are then brought to a place where they are converted. You will never be converted, except first you are convicted of your sins. And so Paul was a convicted, converted child of God. Paul had a different way of speaking. And we have a different way of speaking. Does not the Bible tell us that our speech is to always be seasoned with salt? (Col. 4:6). Does not the Bible tell us in Philippians 3:21 that our conversation, or citizenship, is in Heaven? It is the same thing! You are familiar with the expression, “Well, you all talk alike.” That is good! You go some places and they do not want to talk about what the Scriptures saith—do they? Some churches who are not interested in what the Scriptures

saith. Perhaps God brought you out of one; perhaps you are in one now and the Lord is going to bring you out of it. Many churches are interested in what some other group has to say. Perhaps a hierarchy tells them how things like the government of the church, the ordinances, etc. are to be done. They are letting someone else dictate to them what they should do instead of the Scriptures.

I want to note that the Scriptures do speak... **“for what saith the Scriptures.”** I have heard God speak to me using His Word!

II. For what saith the Scriptures concerning salvation—what do the Scriptures say concerning salvation? Do they say someone can get to Heaven, by all the different means that folks believe to day? Do the Scriptures say that, Well, all you have to do is have faith, but there is no clear defining of it? My Bible tells me that faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not yet seen (Heb. 11:1). My Bible tells me in Romans 8:24, **“for we are saved by hope, but hope that is seen is not hope, for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?”** It is the same thing, “for the Scripture saith, we are saved by faith, we are saved by faith, we are saved by hope.” I have heard it expressed by so many people that there are “different faiths.” Well, there are, but only one will get you to glory...and that is the gift of God.

What saith the Scriptures concerning salvation? Is it dependent upon our obedience to certain works or deeds? Or going through a catechism? Or joining a church? Is that what the Scripture saith? Then Jesus died in vain! It is sad today, that so many, have so little interest in what the Scripture saith.

Now again, this is an expression of a convicted, converted, regenerated, child of God. God's people speak a different language. We have a subject matter that is entirely different from the world. The world wants you to be interested in what it has to say. We want the world to be interested in what we have to say that is based upon the Scriptures. God gives us the right and the authority to say what we say, which is from and based upon the Scriptures.

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III. For what saith the Scriptures concerning the sanctuary of the Lord—there are multitudes of “churches” in the world today. There are many denominations. When I went for a pretest concerning surgery I was asked “what faith are you?” Sometimes they will ask you “what denomination are you?” Well, I was raised, and then I was convicted of it that we are NOT a denomination. The world expresses being a member of the Lord’s kind of church a denomination, but the Bible does not express it that way. The Bible does not call the Lord’s kind of church “A Denomination.” I learned denominators in math.

What saith the Scriptures concerning the Lord’s kind of church? Is it an institution, a sanctuary, an organization? Yes. It is an organism as well because it is living. We will not go into depth, but you think about it, in preparation, in coming to the sanctuary of the Lord, in being in the sanctuary of the Lord, in being in His house, in our behavior, in our manner, in our souls, in our singing, in our praying, in our preaching of the Word, in our business, in all things, for what saith the Scriptures concerning the sanctuary of the Lord. We are in His presence! No wonder Paul wrote **“take heed... that thou behavest thy self in the house of God, which is the pillar and ground of the truth”** (I Tim. 3:15). We express we have something different to say, because this is what the Scriptures say concerning the sanctuary of the Lord—that it is His house. It is His house. Do you let anyone come into your house? Do you let anyone tell you what to do in your house? We do not have any right to come into God’s house and tell Him what to do, do we? The Bible tells us it is His Church. “My church” (Matt. 16:18). He did not say it is yours. And I do not read in the Bible where He leaves it to anyone either. He owns it! He purchased it with His blood (Acts 20:28). The Lord separated and sanctified it. It is His body. The psalmist said in Psalms 95:2, “come—He invited us—God did—into His presence with

thanksgiving.” Sometimes when we come into His sanctuary we come into His sanctuary in a whole lot of other ways than that of thanksgiving.

For what saith the Scriptures concerning His sanctuary? I know back home, they used to call the auditorium, where the pews are, the pulpit, the piano, we had an organ; and folks would call that the sanctuary. There was the auditorium, the Sunday School wing, and the fellowship hall...well really and truly it all was God’s house—it was all His sanctuary...none of it was mine. I understand what people meant, but you know sometimes the auditorium is all they think of concerning the sanctuary of the Lord. The Bible tells us it is a living temple. When I lived in Ohio, my father pastored in Greentown and in Hartville. We tried to help him in the work of the Lord there at both locations. There were a lot of places that were called “temples.” So you know folks get used to certain terms. Well, my point in it all is this: that the Lord’s house is His. And we have to be careful. There are those who think that it does not matter how the Lord’s house is treated, but it does because it is His. As you treat His house, that is how you are treating Him.

IV. For what saith the Scriptures, concerning the spiritual leadership that He gives? I am so thankful for Holy Spirit leadership because the Bible says it is not in man to direct his steps (Jer. 10:23). Now, that is what the Scriptures say. Folks say, “well, I have a mind of my own.” Yes, and God gave you that mind to follow Him. There are those who think that they can cut out a new path, and that they do not have to pay any attention to the Old Paths (Jer. 6:20). Some folks have quit asking for the Old Paths, have they not? The prophet stated, under the leadership of God, and the Scripture saith...“ask for the old ways!” I know a whole lot of things, that folks sometimes ask for... and one of them is not asked for very often and it is the Old Paths. They want a new way to do things. I like new ways concerning a whole lot, but you know, you cannot improve upon the spiritual leadership that God has given. Because God the Holy Spirit will never lead you contrary to God’s

Word. We may disagree upon certain things, but it is not because God is wrong. I might be wrong, you might be wrong, we both might be wrong, but God is never wrong.

The Spiritual leadership of God—for what saith the Scriptures. Well in John 6: the Bible tells us this—we know it is a fact, as far as the Word of God is concerned... the Scriptures tell us that the Holy Spirit will teach us the things of Christ. How many folks today really want to know about Christ? “It is the spirit that quickeneth (an English term that means giveth life)—and the Bible says, the flesh profiteth nothing, the words that I speak they are spirit and they are life” (John 6:63). So the Holy Spirit, I believe, does have an office work. Some folks have a hard time taking that, or they will find offence with the fact that the Holy Spirit does have an office work. It means there is work that He does, that is distinct—that no other does. You will find a whole lot of people, a whole lot of churches saying someone else does the quickening, but the Scriptures say that the Holy Spirit does the quickening—that He gives life.

And then the Scriptures say, that the Holy Spirit is the one that leads us. He leads us in paths of righteousness (Ps. 23:3). Our text speaks of Abraham and David. Abraham is known as the father of the faithful—David is known as being the sweet psalmist of old, the songster of old. And these were led and guided by the same spiritual leadership that we have the privilege of being led and guided by. Folks today, are seeking to be led and guided by a whole lot of other means and by other people; because I believe the Holy Spirit is a person; He is God.

There are a lot of folks that are displeased with what the Scriptures saith concerning spiritual leadership. They are just flat out displeased. It does not make them happy. In fact, some will blatantly go against what the Scripture saith concerning spiritual leadership. And I have had folks to speak to me saying, “It does not matter what the Bible says, I am going to do what I want.” Ever have any one say that to you? I have had a few. I would love to see God break them down. He can if He is so pleased

to do so. And if it pleases Him to leave them alone...He will still be glorified.

The spiritual leadership that God does give is always that which will bring glory to Him and it will not heap praise on us. No wonder folks are dissatisfied with what the Scriptures saith about spiritual leadership. Folks all the time are breaking their arms patting their selves upon the back saying “Oh I’m doing such a good job.” Folks want acknowledgement, when spiritual leadership will tell us that we have nothing to boast of except in God and in Christ.

I tell you we ought to be the biggest braggarts that there are about Jesus. Baptist ought to be the biggest braggarts about Jesus. As the Lord leads you to speak to others, they get tired of you speaking about Christ and some who grow tired are those who are members of some kind of church and even profess to be saved by the grace of God...there is something drastically wrong.

IV. Last of all, “For what saith the Scriptures concerning your souls destiny?” The Bible tells us there are only two places: Heaven or Hell. The Bible does not talk about purgatory, limbo, it does not talk about an intermediate state in any way or fashion. No, Jesus lead captivity captive. But there are so many today, that think if they are not right with God in this life, that God is going to give them another opportunity when this life is over. That is not going to happen. There are a lot of folks that are unconcerned concerning their souls destiny. Unconcerned about what shall take place.

The Bible tells us that this life shall end, but that does not mean that is all there is. No where in the Bible is there even an implication that when one dies that there is anything even resembling soul sleeping, or annihilation, or vaporization, or anything else, except Heaven or Hell.

We are interested in seeing folks saved because we who are saved know what it means. We have a living hope. We have eternal life. We have what others stand in need of. And no, we did not get these because we earned them...we received them the same as Abraham did...it was not reckoned of debt...NO! It was not reckoned of

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debt...it was not because we worked for them nor because we earned them.

Are you going to Heaven tonight? If this were the night that God called you from this earthly life...would you go to be with Him? I think it is a serious matter. I think it is the most serious matter that folks need to consider. I believe that how they should consider it is in this way: **"for what saith the Scriptures?"** Now, I believe that was what Paul was interested in. Some folks think that "if I could have only sat under the ministry of Paul." Well, I read that some who did wanted to kill him. My point is this..."what did Paul preach?" He was interested in what every God called minister is interested in, what every God called convicted regenerated Baptist ought to be in... **"For what saith the Scripture!"**

Now we know that the Scripture is of value. The world is watching to see what we think of the Scriptures. Well, let us show them and keep showing them what we think of what God says, because the subject matter of the convicted, regenerated children of God is entirely different of the subject matter of what it used to be. I know we still do some things; we are in this world, but not of this world, we have tasks at work, callings, and vocations, families, friends, and we have enemies, but the fact of the matter is this...that when God saves people He makes them different. You cannot look back on Abraham and David and say there was no difference in them after He saved them, because God used His Word and God's Word meant something to them. Even when we sin... **"for what saith the Scripture?"**..well David repented, did he not? Abraham had his sins, too. Every one backslides, we have to repent of our sins. Because the Scriptures tell us God loves a backslider...married to the back slider the Bible tells us. I am glad He does and I am glad He is. How about you? **"For what saith the Scriptures"**...may the Lord bless this message.



THE BIBLE AND THE NEWSPAPER

Readers of the BBB are urged to submit religious news items which they may read in their local paper or some other publication. In sending these please give the name of the publication as well as the date it was printed. We will not be able to print all which are submitted, but we welcome any item you may feel we should read.

Send them to The Berea Baptist Banner, PO Box 39, Mantachie, MS 38855-0039.

BOY SCOUTS UNDER FIRE

(WNS)--The Boy Scouts of America are under assault from the political left in this country. The group's decisions to affirm "duty to God" in its oath and to keep homosexuals out of leadership positions have made the Scouts a target. Now, Scouts policy of banning "open or avowed homosexuals" is costing it financial backers. According to an article in the liberal magazine "Mother Jones," "UPS, United Way, the Merck Company Foundation and the Intel Foundation have announced they will drop or postpone funding for the Boy Scouts. Verizon Communications could be next: Over 70,000 people have signed a petition asking the corporation to stop funding the Scouts."

HEAD START FAILS KIDS AND TAXPAYERS

(WNS)--Head Start, the federally funded education program for low-income children, doesn't give participants the developmental boost it's supposed to offer. According to a study released last month by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Head Start students aren't any farther along than students in the same demographic who didn't attend the program. Head Start offers traditional classroom education and in-home learning opportunities for children from birth to five years old. The program's apparent failure comes at a high cost. Taxpayers give Head Start \$8 billion a year, roughly \$7,000 for each of the 900,000 low-income children it serves. "There is little to no academic benefit," said Lindsey Burke, a fellow at The Heritage Foundation. "As far as a preschool, [Head Start] fails. The kids are no better off than those who didn't go."

DIVORCE BREEDS SPIRITUAL DISCONNECT

(WNS)--A recent study concludes children whose parents divorce when

they are young are less likely to be religious later in life. According to the study, two-thirds of young adults who grew up in a home with married parents are more religious than young adults who grew up in families with divorced parents. In an op-ed in *The Washington Post*, study authors Elizabeth Marquardt and two fellows from the Center for Faith and Marriage say churches should work harder to address divorce and childbearing outside of wedlock. "Churches have not done enough to confront the impact of family breakdown on the spiritual lives of young people," the researchers wrote. "We urge faith leaders to renew family ministries with an eye to all that we are learning about the religious lives of children of divorce." Drawing a connection between high numbers of divorce and the future of the church, they warned: "How these younger generations approach questions of spiritual meaning and religious involvement will influence broader trends in the churches for years to come."

HHS MAKES MINOR MODIFICATIONS TO CONTRACEPTIVE MANDATE

(WNS)--After almost a year of delays, the Department of Health and Human Services released proposed changes to the contraceptive mandate on Feb. 1 -- changes that turned out to be more tweak than transformation. The agency mostly adopted the regulations it proposed last March, which provide no real accommodation to religious nonprofits. The regulations still require insurance policies for religious nonprofits to cover contraceptives, sterilization, and abortion-inducing drugs. HHS said it would accommodate religious organizations by requiring insurers to provide the mandated coverage to employees separately, for free, without charging the nonprofits for it. Religious organizations dismissed this proposal last year as an accounting shell game that

didn't solve their objections. Alliance Defending Freedom's Matt Bowman, a lawyer handling a number of the cases against the mandate, described the proposed "accommodation" as an "accounting gimmick." He said it was "insulting to the intelligence—and the freedom that religious employers receive under the law."

OBAMA APPOINTS GAY JUDGE

(WNS)--The normalization of homosexuality continued this week with President Obama's appointment of Todd Hughes to the U.S. Court of Appeals. If approved by the Senate Judiciary Committee, he would be the first openly gay federal appeals court judge. The Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund website says the Obama administration "has appointed more than 250 openly LGBT professionals to full-time and advisory positions in the executive branch, more than all known LGBT appointments of other presidential administrations combined."

SCOUTS DELAY DECISION

(WNS)--The Boy Scouts of America's Executive Board has delayed action on a proposed change to its policies that would allow homosexuals into its leadership ranks. This means the current policy banning homosexuals from leadership remains in effect until at least May, when the organization holds its nationwide annual meeting. In a statement released Feb. 6, the Scouts said, "After careful consideration and extensive dialogue within the Scouting family, along with comments from those outside the organization, the volunteer officers of the Boy Scouts of America's National Executive Board concluded that due to the complexity of this issue, the organization needs time for a more deliberate review of its membership policy. The statement went on to say the executive board would spend the next three months listening to members' "perspectives and concerns" before crafting a resolution the 1,400 voting members of the national council will consider during the May meeting."

NAACP THREATENS BLACK, PRO-LIFE ADVOCATE

(WNS)--The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People has threatened to sue a black man for, in

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his words, “trying to save black babies.” But Ryan Bomberger, a child conceived in rape and now the chief creative officer of The Radiance Foundation, isn’t bowing to the pressure. In fact, just the opposite. In Virginia, with the help of attorney Charles M. Allen of Alliance Defending Freedom, Bomberger filed his own lawsuit against the historic civil rights organization. “It is ironic that a black man is being sued by the nation’s oldest civil rights group for exercising his most basic civil right—the freedom of speech,” Bomberger, who often refers to the organization as the “National Association for the Abortion of Colored People,” said on his website.

MURDER FOR HIRE

(WNS)--Connecticut, New Jersey, and Vermont are all considering legislation that would allow physician-assisted suicide. Connecticut banned the practice in 1969, but the Boston Globe reports lawmakers have introduced at least two bills designed to overturn that ban. The Globe also says that if Connecticut’s legislature legalizes assisted suicide, it will be the first state legislature to do so. Oregon and Washington passed “right-to-die” laws through voter referendums. Montana’s Supreme Court said assisted suicide could be a part of medical treatments. Thirty-four states prohibit assisted suicide outright, and seven others, including Massachusetts, ban it through legal precedent.

TWITTER MUTES PRO-LIFE GROUP AHEAD OF RALLY

(WNS)--It wasn’t all praise and applause at the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People’s Image Awards, held earlier this month. Black pro-life groups, including the National Black ProLife Coalition, picketed the ceremony to protest the NAACP’s close relationship with Planned Parenthood and its support for gay “marriage,” LifeSiteNews reported -- and they did so despite Twitter’s temporary suspension of their account, which was supposed to help rally supporters.

“Twitter shut us down,” Stephen Broden, a spokesman for the National Black ProLife Coalition and a Dallas-area pastor, said in an interview with

Fox News. “I had to acknowledge I had been reported and I needed to change my behavior.”

The suspension was lifted as soon as Broden complied—but not for long.

He posted another tweet accusing the NAACP of betraying the black community and Twitter again shut down the account.

“By that evening we were completely suspended and we remained suspended for several days,” he told LifeSiteNews.

The suspension was finally lifted but only after the day of their planned protest had passed.

INTERNATIONAL BRIEFS FRENCH LAWMAKERS APPROVE GAY “MARRIAGE”

(WNS)--The French National Assembly approved a bill in February that legalizes gay marriage and allows same-sex couples to adopt children, following months of protests and debates in the once heavily Roman Catholic nation.

The bill passed 329 to 229 with 10 abstaining, and will be sent for a Senate vote in April, where the Socialist majority likely will confirm the vote. While polls last August showed same-sex marriage had two-thirds support among the French, that number has now dropped to a narrow majority. The bill is widely opposed by people in traditional small towns in the countryside, along with religious communities. The country’s Roman Catholic, Protestant, Muslim, Jewish, and Buddhist leaders also joined together to testify against the proposed law before a parliamentary commission in late November.

But some, especially in small towns and the countryside, oppose the bill not for mainly religious or political reasons, but to protect the traditional definition of marriage between only a man and a woman. According to the *Washington Post*, thousands of mayors, deputy mayors, and small-town officials across France hold on to their Christian roots and voiced their opposition.

If the measure is approved, France will join seven European countries, including Spain and England, in recognizing same-sex “marriage.”

MEXICAN SEX CULT BUSTED

(WNS)--Mexico’s National Immigration Institute says it broke up a religious cult that used the threat of

eternal damnation if members failed to provide forced labor or sex. Mexican authorities arrested 14 people in the raid on a house near Nuevo Laredo, across the border from Laredo, Texas. Six Spaniards were among those detained. The cult called itself “The Defenders of Christ.” The cult’s leader Gonzalez de Arriba “mixed bio-programming, Christian and New Age doctrines, and fears about the end of the world...to control followers,” according to Myrna Garcia of the Support Network for Cult Victims. “He made them believe he was Christ,” Garcia, whose group filed a complaint with Mexican authorities about the cult’s abuses about one year ago. “Like Christ, they have to adore him, if not they will lose their souls ... they have to give their lives for him.” Garcia said the women “were forced into prostitution. It was a form of human trafficking that was extraordinarily effective from the criminal point of view.”

CONVICTED FOR HIS CONVICTIONS

(WNS)--The Iranian Revolutionary Court in January sentenced Iranian-American pastor Saeed Abedini to eight years in prison for supporting the Iran’s Christian house-church movement. Iranian officials arrested Abedini, 32, who lives in Idaho with his wife and two young children, in September. He was then handed over last month to Judge Abbas Pirabbasi, known internationally as the “hanging judge.” His trial, denounced by his supporters as a sham proceeding, began Jan. 21. Officials allowed Abedini and his lawyer to attend and present evidence during just one day of the weeklong trial.

RUSSIA TO OUTLAW “HOMOSEXUAL PROPAGANDA”

(WNS)--Last month, the Russian parliament approved by a vote of 388-1-1 a draft law outlawing the dissemination of “homosexual propaganda” to minors, prompting the Obama administration to pull out of “civil society” dialogue. The legislation, backed by the combined efforts of the Kremlin and the Russian Orthodox Church, also would ban public events promoting homosexual rights, charge fines of up to \$16,000 for any public displays of “homosexual propaganda,” and block web content inappropriate for younger audiences. After two more readings, it goes to Russian President

Vladimir Putin for his signature. The bill, designed to protect minors from the influence of “sodomy, lesbianism, bisexuality and transgenderism,” is part of a growing national trend towards promoting traditional Russian values over Western liberalism.

CANADIAN CHARITY RISKS LOSING MONEY OVER HOMOSEXUALITY STAND

(WNS)--An evangelical group that digs wells and provides clean water to 11,000 people in Uganda risks losing Canadian government money because it also teaches that homosexuality is a sin. Thomas Mulcair, a leader in Canada’s liberal New Democratic Party said Crossroads Relief and Development, which received \$389,000 from the Canadian government to help fund its relief work, was “completely against” Canadian values and law because of its stand on homosexuality. Crossroads’ water project partner group in Africa, Victory Outreach Ministries, states on its website that while homosexuality is sinful, gays are “created in God’s image, and we condemn the activities of those who are violent towards gays.” Canada has frozen \$156,000 in Crossroads funding until it can review the organization’s work.

ENGLAND ENDORSES MARRIAGE “EQUALITY”

(WNS)--British lawmakers voted in favor of a bill to legalize same-sex “marriage” on Feb. 5. Supporters celebrate the bill as a step towards “equality,” but church leaders and conservatives warn, if implemented, the measure will bring serious social and cultural ramifications. Spearheaded by Prime Minister David Cameron, the bill still has to endure parliamentary debates and earn approval of the House of Lords before becoming law. If approved, it would allow same-sex couples to get “married” in both civil and religious ceremonies, provided the religious institution consents, starting in 2015. Opponents have expressed concern about how the measure will threaten religious freedom. In response, Culture Secretary Maria Miller stressed all religious organizations can decide for themselves whether they want to “opt in.” But the bill wouldn’t protect business-owning church members from having to recognize gay marriage in any context outside the church.



Let's Study Baptism

By Nathaniel Hille
of Caldwell, Kansas

Part One

"One Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Eph. 4:5).

The Bible has a lot to say concerning baptism. People and churches have a lot to say about baptism. Sadly, people, churches, and the Bible are not always saying the same thing. Who are we to believe? We know that the Word of God is infallible (perfect & flawless) because its author is God who cannot lie (Titus 1:2). We know that men and churches are NOT infallible. So when inquiring about a subject, we must believe what the Bible has to say about it, including, but not limited to baptism. We cannot look to Webster to find the definition of "baptism." We must look to the Scriptures. I beseech and implore the reader to "search the scriptures daily whether these things are so" (Acts 17:11).

What is baptism? In this lesson we shall note what is the mode of "baptism" OR how is "baptism" to be performed? Baptism is an immersion and an emersion of a person in "much water" for the purpose of showing what Jesus Christ has already done for that individual. Every instance of "baptism" in the Bible supports that it was done by immersion and emersion. History proves that "baptism" was originally administered by immersion. "Baptism" by immersion and emersion is clearly shown in the Bible as the only way baptism is to be administered. The following examples will clearly establish that "baptism" is to be administered in this fashion.

1) The Baptism of Jesus Christ: **"And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway (immediately) out of the water"** (Matt. 3:16); **"And straightway coming up out of the water"** (Mark 1:10). In these two passages of Scripture, we read that Jesus **"went up"** or **"coming up out of the water"** when He was baptized. How can an individual **"come up out of the water"** when the water is poured or sprinkled upon them? Clearly Jesus was immersed,



plunged down into the water, and then brought up out of the water. Matthew 3:16-17 shows that the triune God (Father, Son, & Spirit) approved of baptism by

immersion.

2) The Baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch: (Acts 8:35-39). In the baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch we find that he, too, was plunged or immersed into the water and then emersion from the water or coming out of the water took place. Please take notice that in Acts 8:36 the eunuch asks of Philip why he cannot be baptized when there is water: **"See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?"** In Acts 8:38, **"and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him."** They BOTH went down into the water and Philip baptized the Eunuch. In Acts 8:39, **"And when they were come up out of the water."** Evidently there was enough water for Philip and the Eunuch to both go down into the water; there was enough water for the eunuch to be immersed into the water.

3) The Scriptural Mode of Baptism Displays a Picture: **"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism (immersion) into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life"** (Rom. 6:4). The Scriptural mode of 'baptism' is a picture of the burial and resurrection of our Lord. Only by immersion and emersion can the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ be pictured. When one is plunged (immersed) into the water it depicts the death of Christ and our being dead unto sin. When one is raised up out of the water (emersion) it is a picture of the resurrection of Christ and our being alive unto the Lord. This CANNOT be demonstrated or pictured any other way. To change how baptism is administered is to

ruin the glorious picture of what the Savior, Jesus Christ, has done for the believer.

The three passages taken from the Scriptures clearly show that Baptism is done by immersing an individual in water and then that individual coming up out of the water. There is much symbolism in the proper mode of baptism, of which we have already discussed and will discuss more in another lesson.

Now, let us examine the actual word **"baptism."** Much has been lost by the word 'baptism.' "Baptism" and "baptize" are English words that did not exist prior to the Bible being translated into English. As you may or may not know the Bible was originally written in Hebrew (Old Testament) and Greek (New Testament). Baptism is a New Testament doctrine and ordinance. It was not a part of the Old Testament economy.

The Greek for baptism is transliterated (converted from one text to another) *baptizo*. Any Greek scholar will tell you that the meaning of *baptizo* is "to dip, plunge, or immerse." This is evidenced by the examples earlier in this article of how Baptism was administered in the Bible. Those who translated the Bible into the English language were not able to translate *baptizo* into "dip, plunge, or immerse" because if they had, they would have condemned their own practices. In 1611, the translators were NOT immersing their converts. Thus, the decision was made to "Anglicanize," or make an English word out of the Greek word *baptizo*. Henceforth we now have "baptism" instead of "dip, plunge, or immerse." Therefore, any time one reads "baptize" or "baptism" in the Bible, one may properly translate it "to dip, to plunge, to immerse."

Let us insert the meaning of the Greek *baptizo* (immersed) into the text of Matthew 3:16, **"And Jesus, when he was immersed, went up straightway (immediately) out of the water."** We see what transpired there in the waters of the river Jordan as John was immersing. History declares that "baptism" was always done by immersion in the early churches. It was not until the purpose of baptizing was perverted and corrupted by man that the mode

of baptism was changed (of which we will discuss in a future lesson). Please do not take my word for it. We beseech each one to give an honest search of the Scriptures to see whether these things are so. Maranatha. AMEN



ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Victory Baptist Church of Chehalis, Washington is in need of a pastor. Any interested brother may call Gerry Greisen at (360) 985-7975, or Mark Fenison at (360) 751-2929.

The Liverpool Independent Baptist Church of Liverpool, New York (north of Syracuse) is searching for a sovereign grace pastor. The church believes in the doctrines of grace, the local church, and is pre-trib and pre-mil. Interested brethren should contact Bro. Greg Sigworth at (315) 677-3819.

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Galena, OH is in need of a pastor. Any interested candidates possessing the qualifications and traits concerning the office as found in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 are asked to contact either of the following: Bro. Randy Coffey at (614) 871-2406 or email recoffeypot@aol.com, or Bro. Joe Vass at (614) 846-8699 or email jamijoe@wowway.com.

The Glade Creek Baptist Church, Summersville, WV, is in need of a pastor. This church believes and preaches the doctrines of grace and church truth. Any interested Elder should call Bro. Rodney Perkins at (304) 742-3050 or Bro. Allen Frame at (304) 742-5775.

The Grace Missionary Baptist Church of Marion, IL is in need of a replacement pastor. Elder Raymond T. Ellis is the current pastor, but due to his age, is needing to resign. The church believes and preaches the doctrines of grace and the local church. Any interested Elder may contact Elder Ellis at (618) 983-8697 or Bro. Gary Ratley at (618) 841-0228.

The Twinbrook Hills Baptist Church of Hamilton, OH is prayerfully seeking a pastor. Organized in 1938, the church holds to historic Baptist truths, including the Doctrines of Grace. Please visit the church's website at <http://twinbrook.net> to view the Church Constitution and other items that describe our beliefs and show what the church is doing today. Please contact Bro. Chris Willis at Elohimfirst@gmail.com or more information.



The Character of God

By Chad Johnson
of Auburn, Kentucky

"Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill the heaven and the earth? saith the LORD" (Jer. 23:24).

In the days of the prophet Jeremiah, false prophets abounded (they also abound today) who promised peace and safety. They spoke as if God knew nothing of the national sins of Judah. God challenges them by asking them the question in our text verse. In verse 25 God says **"I have heard what the prophets said, that prophesy lies in my name."** There are two basic ways that God has revealed Himself and His character to mankind. They are creation and the written Word. Those who deny the authority of God's Word as the foundation of Christianity can not be helped. They will say it was written long ago in languages that have different meanings to the words and the Bible is not relevant today. The truth is that the Bible was inspired by God and the Old Testament was written in Hebrew, the New Testament in Greek and these are dead languages and the meanings of these words do not change. I will agree that words in our English language do change in meaning over time. I praise the God of Heaven that we have concordances and Hebrew and Greek dictionaries to help us know the origin of words that have maybe changed in meaning. It has been said of late in *The New Democrat Leader* that God is a God of love. I agree totally to this. Romans 5:8 tells us that God showed us His love in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.

The love of God was shown when

Christ established His true church and has preserved it for over 2000 years. The love of God has been shown in the preserving of His Word (Psa. 12:6-8). However, to say that God does not also have the character of wrath and judgment is to be untruthful. I have been accused of promoting a cruel God. The truth is I promote God as He is in the Bible. My critics promote a God of their own vain imaginations. God judges His people as well as those who are not His people. We are all the creation of God but only the elect of God are His redeemed people.

I will close with Scripture showing that God judges His people and also the reprobate. When God's elect sin and drift from Him He will bring us back through correction. Charles Spurgeon said we do not have to defend the Bible, it is like a chained lion, just turn it loose and it will defend itself.

"For whom the Lord loveth, he

chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons" (Heb. 12:6, 8).

"For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them and ensample unto those that after should live ungodly; . . . The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished" (II Pet. 2:4-6, 9).



Saved By Grace

Ernest W. Parks

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Titus 3:5).

Not by toiling with my hands,
Not through works of sinful man.
Not because I chose Him first,
Not through majestic kingly birth.
Not because I cared for Him,
Not because I hated sin.
Not because I could win the race,
BUT WHOLLY THROUGH HIS WONDROUS GRACE.

Not because of my own way,
"All we like sheep have gone astray."
Not because I drank death's cup,
"And I, if I be lifted up."
Not because of self subdued,
"Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"
Not because I bridged the space,
BUT ALL BECAUSE OF GOD'S OWN GRACE.

Not because of great deeds done,
"Without my Spirit, none can come."
Not through raging bitter strife,
Our Saviour bought us with His life.
Not because I paid the fee,
"T'was He who died upon the tree.
And when I stand in God's Holy Place,
T'will be a sinner, **"SAVED BY GRACE."**
(*The Baptist Examiner*, 9-5-1959).

BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 1-1-2013 to 1-31-2013

Beginning Balance\$6,356.56

RECEIPTS:

Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS325.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY 100.00
Calvary B. C., Everson, WA..... 100.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY 100.00

TOTAL.....6,981.56

EXPENDITURES:

Radio Time 450.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES\$450.00

.....\$6,531.56
Less Corbin, KY des.-1,323.72

.....5,207.84
Interest + .05
ENDING BALANCE\$5,207.89

CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT

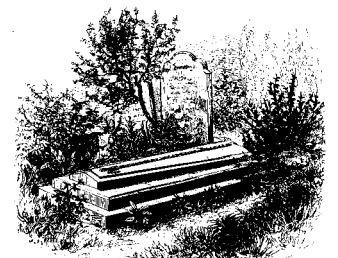
Beginning Balance.....\$1,523.72

RECEIPTS:

TOTAL.....1,523.72

EXPENDITURES:

WCTT200.00
ENDING BALANCE\$1,323.72



BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 1-1-2013 to 1-31-2013

Beginning Balance\$2,400.73

RECEIPTS:

Amazing Grace B. C., Stockdale, TX 50.00
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS300.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL..... 60.00
Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX 50.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV313.45
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY 150.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL..... 25.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY 100.00
Grace B. C., Winston-Salem, NC 50.00
Grace M. B. C., Marion, IL..... 50.00
Grace M. B. C., Tulsa, OK..... 35.00
Indore B. C., Indore, WV 100.00
Leroy Bullard, Albuquerque, NM.....100.00
The Lord's Church, Goose Creek, SC 50.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH.....100.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN 50.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL100.00
Portland B. C., Plumerville, AR..... 50.00
Southside B. C., Fulton, MS 25.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL.....100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Silsbee, TX 30.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA 25.00
Subscriptions28.00
Anonymous 2,225.00
Dividing checks 150.00
Sub Total\$4,316.45
TOTAL.....\$6,717.18

EXPENDITURES:

Printing..... 535.00
Postage 896.53
Wages 2,300.00
FICA 175.90
Dividing checks 150.00
Total Expenditures \$4,057.43
ENDING BALANCE\$2,659.75

Oneness of God

By E. G. Cook
(1898 - 1986)

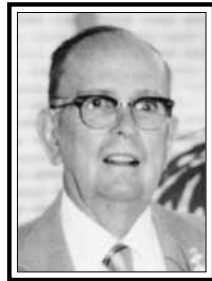
In this day of loose thinking and loose talking, it would be well for us to stop and take stock of some of the great Bible subjects which are being handled as loosely.

In Deuteronomy 6:4 God tells us that the Lord our God is one Lord. This does not by any means justify the Unitarians in their warped conception of God. It does not mean that there is only one person in the Godhead. In Genesis 1:26 God said let us make man in our image. Even a grammar school pupil knows that "us" and "our" are plural pronouns. But it does mean that the Lord our God is one Lord in thought (mind), word (will), and deed (purpose). We never hear the Father advocating one thing, the Son another, and the Holy Spirit still another.

They delight in that oneness to the extent that they desire and command that we, the other members of the family, bear this resemblance of them. Even human parents delight in seeing a resemblance of themselves in their children. Therefore we are not surprised when we hear our Father saying in I Peter 3:8 for us to be of the same mind. Certainly everyone will admit that this means for us to believe the same thing.

We are living in a time, however, when it is commonly believed that we are supposed to believe differently. But let us remember that God is not the author of this unscriptural way of thinking. He will no doubt finish it in due time, but He certainly had nothing to do with its beginning.

In I Corinthians 1:10 our Father goes more fully into His instructions for us concerning this oneness which is so dear to Him. Here, He tells us to speak the same thing, to have no divisions among us, but to be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. But instead of our doing that, we can hear one group preaching eternal salvation by grace, through faith in our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ; we can go around the corner and hear another group preaching that eternal salvation



by grace through faith is a damnable and dangerous doctrine; we can then go around another corner and hear still another doctrine preached until we run out of

corners and doctrines, and everyone of them will be claiming God's blessing upon what is being preached. Of course, they all claim to be perfectly joined together by some imaginary invisible, intangible, and shall we say unheard of and undreamed of (Biblically speaking) "church."

But even if we should grant that all this conglomeration of groups is perfectly joined together by this figment of someone's imagination called the invisible church, there are still other commands in this Scripture which the so-called invisible church cannot touch. Even though Methodists, Presbyterians, Campbellites and even some Baptists claim to be joined together by this imaginary something, none of them has ever yet claimed that this imaginary something has caused

them to believe and speak the same thing. As it is written, he who offends in one point is guilty of all. So when they fail to believe and speak the same thing they are also guilty of not being perfectly joined together, even if there were such a thing as an imaginary, invisible church.

In John 17 we have our Lord's prayer which was certainly not prayed just to be heard of men. He was pouring out His very heart to the Father, and the Father was hearing every word of it. In verse 21 we hear Him as He prays that we may be one even as He and the Father are one. Was He really sincere when He prayed that great prayer? If He were sincere would He do anything at all to hinder the answer to that prayer? Can it be denied that His calling preachers to preach all these different doctrines, or blessing all this division and confusion in any way would be an open and outright hindrance to the answer to His great prayer for us to be one as He and the Father are one? He has never had anything to do with all these divisions in the religious world, and He never will until that day when He shall judge all things.

(The Baptist Examiner, Feb. 21, 1959).



ANNOUNCEMENTS

On February 10, 2013, Elder Ernest William Parks went home to be with the Lord.

Bro. Parks founded Goldfloss Baptist Church in Winston-Salem, North Carolina in 1954, and pastored her until 1957. He also pastored Little Sewell Baptist Church in Rainelle, West Virginia (1957-66) and Hillcrest Baptist Church in Winston-Salem from 1966 until his retirement in 2008. After his retirement he ministered to Morris Fork Baptist Church in Dawson, West Virginia.

Bro. Parks was a veteran of World War II and was wounded in the Battle of the Bulge in Bastogne, Belgium, January 5, 1945 while a member of 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division.

Please remember Sister Parks and the family in your prayers.

"...and thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty" (I Sam. 20:18).

The Philadelphia Baptist Church of Decatur, AL and Pastor Ted Tweet would like to announce their Revival/Quarterly fellowship for May 15th thru 19th. Elder Jim Tweet will be guest speaker for the revival and Elder Larry Lafferty will also speak on Saturday for the fellowship meeting. Service times for Wednesday, Thursday, & Friday are at 7 p.m. and Saturday at 10:00 a.m. with meal after the service. Sunday service times are 10:00 a.m. Sunday school; 11:00 a.m. and 2 p.m. All are invited to attend.

The Berea Baptist Church of Mantachie, MS would like to announce their Quarterly Fellowship meeting Saturday April 6th. Lord willing, Elder Kelly Hinson pastor of Landmark Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Fort Worth, TX will be speaking.

Service time is 10:00 a.m. with lunch following. All are welcome to attend.

The Faith Missionary Baptist Church of Cobbitty, South Wales, Australia is in need of a pastor. For more information please contact David Jackson at 4 Station Street, Thirlmere, NSW 2572, Australia or Email: shellie45@bigpond.com.au.

The Amazing Grace Baptist Church of Stockdale, Texas is in need of a pastor. The church believes in preaching and teaching the doctrines of grace and the Lord's church. Any interested brother my contact Bro. Charles Reddin at (830) 401-0310, if there is no answer please leave a message.

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

Tune in to the Berea Baptist Broadcast

STATION	TIME	DIAL	WATTS
WCNA, Myrtle, MS.....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.....	95.9.....	3,000 FM
WCTT, Corbin, KY	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.....	680.....	5,000 AM
WFTA, Tupelo, MS.....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.....	101.9	3,000 FM
KARI, Blaine, WA	Saturday 10:30 - 11:00 a.m....	550.....	5,000 AM
KPRV, Heavener, OK	Sunday 8:30 - 9:00 a.m.....	92.5	6,000 FM

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