

"THOU HAST GIVEN A BANNER TO THEM THAT FEAR THEE, THAT IT MAY BE DISPLAYED BECAUSE OF THE TRUTH"

May 5th, 2006

Volume XXVI, Number V

The Berea Baptist Banner

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

Paul The Great Man

By George C. Baldwin
(1817 - 189?)

"Should anyone ask me to name the man who of all others has been the greatest benefactor of our race, I should say without hesitation, the Apostle Paul. His name is the type of activity the most endless, and at the same time the most useful that history has cared to preserve."



"Over the vast extent of the Roman empire, Paul everywhere projects his shadow. What are we, preachers or missionaries of a day, before such a man?"---Monod.

"He might have filled hundreds of martyrologies with his sufferings, all of which he generously underwent with a soul as calm and serene as the morning sun."---Cave.

"It surely is of no slight importance that the history of the first age of Christianity should present us with one undoubted instance of a character which unites all the freedom and vigor of a great reformer with all the humbleness and holiness and self-denial of a great apostle."---Stanley.

"Behold, the apostle of the cross sublime,
The warned of Heaven, the eloquent, the bold!
Who spoke to Athens in her hour of prime,
Braving the thunders of Olympus old,
And spreading forth the gospel's snowy fold
Where heathen altars poured a crimson tide,
And stern tribunals their decrees unrolled,---
How does his zeal our ingrate coldness chide!"

Earnestly do I beg you to credit me, when I affirm that I approach the discussion of the life and character of the apostle Paul, with a diffidence which I did not feel, in regard to any of those

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What Has Happened To Baptists?

By E. G. Cook
(1898 - 1986)

In my younger days the name "Baptist" had a meaning. If someone said to you "I am a Baptist," you had a pretty good idea as to what he believed, and what he practiced. It was in those days that H. Boyce Taylor, Sr., could say, "If it isn't in the Bible, it isn't Baptist doctrine; if it is Baptist doctrine, you can find it in the Bible." There was a lot of truth in that statement in those days. And for real Baptists it is still true. But something has happened today that causes the world to be confused as to what Baptists are, and what they believe and practice.

In 1780 when Benjamin Randall, who had been excluded from a Baptist

church, started his own church, he was at least honest enough to put an adjective before the name "Baptist" that would designate it from the Baptists. He called it the Freewill Baptist Church. Randall's church had no bearing on Baptist churches. Then, as now, if someone said I am a Freewill Baptist you knew he had a God who was so small he could probably carry Him around in his



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Independent Baptists... "Judge Yourselves"

By Dan Stepp
of Given, West Virginia

I look around today and see many Baptist brethren preaching and teaching the wonderful truths concerning the church, the sovereignty of God and the doctrines of grace. I rejoice in these great truths of the Word of God, and I believe they are essential to make good Baptists. Brethren, I believe that too many of the Baptist messages today are being made of none effect because of the lack of a godly life and testimony on the part of the preachers and the brethren in our Baptist churches.

In Matthew 7:20 Christ said that by their fruits you can know and recognize the false prophets. I believe that He intended that the saints should be recognized by their fruits. We find

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Sacrificial Service A Product of Faith

By Jimmie B. Davis
of Fulton, Mississippi

The Author and Finisher of our faith knows the basis of the most sacrificial service, and the only foundation of all true worship. **"If a man loves me, he will keep my words"** ---not if a man love his church, though he ought to do this. Not if a man love his wife, though this he ought to do. But, if a man love Me. Not devotion to a thing, but love of a Person who once **"trode the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with me."**

The obedience of the child of God must be the product of the love of God, or it avails nothing. Hear Paul: **"In Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love"** (Gal. 5:6).

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How the Path of God's Own Grows Brighter Every Day

By Milburn Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)

"But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day" (Prov. 4:18).

We all know what a path is. It is a track or way worn by the footsteps of people on foot. The Bible makes known that there is a path in which the wicked walk as well as a trail where the righteous are found. All paths do not lead to the



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"Will the United States Become Another Sodom?"

By John R. Gilpin
(1905 - 1974)

"Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" (Jude 1:7).

Sometimes in order to give a proper

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*It is a thing most wonderful, Almost too wonderful to be,
That God's own Son should come from Heaven, And die to save a child like me.
And yet I know that it is true: He chose a poor and humble lot,
And wept, and toiled, and mourned, and died, For love of those who loved Him not.*

William Walsham How

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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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office charges us \$.75
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address.

How the Path of

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same place, nor are all travelers of the same character.

My text reveals four truths: First, there is a way of righteousness---"**the path of the just.**" Second, the way of the righteous is a shining way---"**is as the shining light.**" Third, it is a growing light---"**that shineth more and more.**" Fourth, at the end it will arrive at "**the perfect day.**"

THE PATH

The path of the just is a path of righteousness. The psalmist said: "**He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake**" (Psa. 23:3). The believer has "**the righteousness which is of God by faith**" (Phil. 3:9). There is in him a hunger and thirst for righteousness. He seeks God's Kingdom and His righteousness first. He serves God in holiness and righteousness all the days of his life. He is a servant of righteousness and bears the fruit of righteousness. "**If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him**" (I John 2:29).

Instriving to fulfill all righteousness, the just is often persecuted for righteousness's sake. In spite of this, he continues to work righteousness, knowing he shall be rewarded according to his righteousness. "**The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness,**" said the psalmist (Psa. 18:20). Again he cried: "**Verily there is a reward for the righteous**" (Psa. 58:11).

The path of the just is a path of life. Psalm 16:11 says: "**Thou wilt shew me the path of life.**" He who walks in this path has been given spiritual life by the Holy Spirit. He has been made alive unto God. To him has been granted repentance unto life. He has come to see that his name was in the Book of Life before the foundation of the world. "**He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life**" (I John 5:12).

Through faith God has brought him to see he has eternal life. "**He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life**" (John 3:36). Because he has eternal life he walks in newness of life. He daily feeds upon the bread of life and drinks from the fountain of life and holds forth the Word of Life to unbelievers. There is in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

The path of the just is a path of peace. "**Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace**" (Prov. 3:17). The just man has peace and joy through believing on Christ. Jesus told the woman: "**Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace**" (Luke 7:50). The Lord blesses His people with peace. He bestows upon them peace like a river, a peace which is incomprehensible to the human mind.

This peace from God rules in the heart of the regenerate man. In the path of the just, righteousness and peace kiss each other.

The justified man does good and seeks peace. He is a peace-maker, not a peace-breaker. He follows after the things which make for peace, and he strives to live peaceably with all men. He witnesses about the gospel of peace and of the covenant of peace.

The path of the just is the path of God's commandments. "**Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight**" (Ps. 119:35). The unjust man has a natural aversion to God's commandments. But free grace causes a justified man to keep God's law. God promises in Ezekiel 36:27: "**And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.**"

The just man delights greatly in the commandments of God. He loves them above fine gold. He knows the whole duty of man is to fear God and keep the commandments. "**For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous**" (I John 5:3). Revelation 14:12 says that the saints "**keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.**"

The path of the just is an old path. "**Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls**" (Jer. 6:16). It is the path of the old patriarchs and prophets, John the Baptist, Jesus Christ, the inspired Apostles, and our Baptist forefathers. It is well-beaten by those who have gone on before.

This old path is the good way. It brings rest like you have never enjoyed before. This rest comes not from wealth, health, or earthly things. It flows from the gospel and faith in Jesus Christ. In this path there is rest for the soul in all its faculties. This old trail gives present rest, and it guarantees the future beyond all fears.

THE SHINING WAY

The text says the path of the just is a shining way. Those who walk in this path are "**the children of light.**" They are "**lights in the Lord**" and walk in the light as God is light. They let their lights shine before men which are their good works. The just is the only source of light which this dark world has. "**That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world**" (Phil. 2:15).

The light of a Christian cannot be hid; it is like a city set on a hill. He influences the world for God and good. The Apostle Paul said: "**We are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men**" (I Cor. 4:9). We are living epistles known and read of all men (II Cor. 3:2).

The poet has said: "Christ has no hands, but our hands. . .To do His work today. . .He has no feet but our feet. . .To lead men in His way. . .He has no tongue but our tongues. . .to tell men how He died. . .He has no help but our help. . .To bring them to His side. . .We are the only Bible. . .The careless world will read. . .We are the sinner's gospel. . .We are the scoffer's creed. . .We are the Lord's last message. . .Given in deed and word. . .What if the type is crooked. . .What if the print is blurred. . .What if our hands are busy. . .With other work than His. . .What if our feet are walking. . .Where sin's allurements is. . .What if our tongues are speaking. . .Of things His lips would spurn. . .How can we hope to help Him. . .And hasten His return?"

Still another has written: "You are writing a Gospel, a chapter a day. . .By deeds that you do, by words that you say. . .Men read what you write, whether faithless or true. . .Say, what is the Gospel according to you?"

The Lord is the light of the just. "**The LORD is my light and my salvation**" (Psa. 27:1). The children of light follow the One Who said: "**I am the light of the world**" (John 8:12). They have come to see the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, having passed from darkness to light. They are lights to those who sit in darkness when they reflect the Father of lights and the Sun of Righteousness.

The righteous walk in the morning light, which shines out of obscurity and puts an end to the works of darkness. We go on our way with a holy security and serenity of mind as we walk in the light. God has given to us a light which shines in a dark place. "**For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life**" (Prov. 6:23). Our light is the Holy Scriptures.

Heaven be praised for the light of God's Word! The blessed Book reveals much about God and ourselves. It shows what is false and what is true. It is not a light in our eyes to fill our heads with speculation, but a light to our feet to direct us in an orderly walk. "**Thy word is a lamp, unto my feet, and a light unto my path**" (Psa. 119:105).

A GROWING LIGHT

The light of the righteous shines more and more. It is not like a meteor which soon burns out. It is not like a candle which burns dim. The light of the justified is like the sun rising and going forth shining brighter and brighter.

Job 17:9 says: "**The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger.**" Notwithstanding opposition from Satan and men, the just will hold on his way with strength never to let go. He may slip, slide, stumble and even fall, yet he gets up again and pursues the way of righteousness. The just not only

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holds on his way, but he grows stronger and stronger. Trials, experience, and age make him more vigorous and lively in his duty. He will not go from bad to worse, but he will continually grow better and wiser.

The true believer grows in grace. **“But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ”** (II Pet. 3:18). We are to grow **“unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ”** (Eph. 4:13). The little lambs are to grow into sheep. The little children are to become men. We are to **“go on unto perfection”** (Heb. 6:1), to **“press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus”** (Phil. 3:14). We are to **“run with patience the race that is set before us”** (Heb. 12:1). We must fight a good fight and finish our course (II Tim. 4:7).

Someone may be saying: “I know a person who professed to be justified by faith, and he is living a life of sin. He is certainly not growing in grace. What about him?”

The answer is simple. Dead men do not grow. A man who has never been saved by God’s grace will never grow in grace. **“He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him”** (I John 2:4). **“He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now”** (I John 2:9). The man who professes to know God and lives a life of rebellion against Him has not apostatized. John said, **“is in darkness even until now.”** He makes no mention of this one ever having the light at all. He was a mere pretender, a hypocrite, a stage player in religion, a man who seemed to be religious, a Judas goat.

THE PERFECT DAY

Solomon said that the just man will in the end arrive at the perfect day. The enlightened soul will never know perfection till he comes to the perfect world. Of this time Jesus Christ said: **“Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father”** (Matt. 13:43). The Prophet Daniel declared: **“And they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever”** (Dan. 12:3). In the glory world our graces and joys shall all be consummated.

Now we see through a glass darkly; we only know in part. None of those justified by faith have obtained perfection yet. We have not apprehended even though we reach forth unto the things which are before. In many things we all stumble, even though we are to consider one another to provoke unto love and good works. When we have done our best we are still only unprofitable servants.

There is a better day coming for the children of God. We will not always be tempted, tortured, and tossed by Satan. These mortal eyes will not for ever flow with tears of sorrow. These sinful bodies of flesh are not the permanent dwelling place of these renewed spirits of ours. This persecuting world will not always be at our side persecuting us. There is a glory to be revealed in us at the perfect day, at the coming of the Ancient of Days when we shall live in eternal day. Oh, the wisdom of walking in the path of the just!

THE BROAD WAY

I have only shown one side of the coin so far. There is an entirely different state to the wicked who walk in darkness. **“The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble”** (Prov. 4:19). The unsaved walk in the broad road to eternal night where they shall be wandering stars to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.

The lost stumble and fall into sin, and their nature prevents their avoiding it. **“. . . the wicked. . . They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness”** (Psa. 82:4-5). Job said: **“Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his fire shall not shine. The light shall be dark in his tabernacle, and his candle shall be put out with him”** (Job 18:5-6). Though the unsaved shines like the sun for a moment, he shall be put out like a candle. His prosperity like a candle shall consume itself.

Someone who reads this may be saying by now: “I am not just. I am not walking in the path of the just. I am a mass of wickedness. Hell is my certain home at death.”

If the Spirit has shown you that you are a wicked man, then by God’s grace forsake your wicked way. Repent of your sins against God. Trust in the blood of the Son of God for salvation from sins. The Lord has said: **“I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?”** (Ezek. 33:11).

Sacrificial Service

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Fifteen hundred years before the coming of Christ, Moses set forth the order of truth exactly as it is revealed in the New Testament as to the subject we are writing about. **“The LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart. . . to love the LORD thy God”** (Deut. 30:6). The circumcised heart precedes, and is in order to love, for the Lord. Thus, if one’s heart has been circumcised to love the Lord, you will not have to beg or plead with him in order to get him to serve the Lord.

Nothing is more distasteful or inconsistent than a person who speaks of

his love for God who has to be pleaded with before any service can be “squeezed” out. The person who truly loves the Lord will be ready to offer sacrificial service, which is a product of his faith in God. He will be constrained by the love of Christ and will demonstrate his love for Christ in what he does. Let us again hear the words of our Saviour, **“If a man loves me, he will keep my words.”** You don’t have to advertise your love for Christ, if you love Him it will be seen in service.

(The Baptist Examiner Sept 6, 1975)



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pocket. So I repeat, these churches had no bearing upon the Baptist churches.

Then when some Baptists became so stingy in 1832 that they preferred to keep their money, or maybe I should say, the Lord’s money, in their pockets rather than use it to send the gospel to a needy world, they, too, were honest enough to put an adjective in the title of their new church. They called it the Primitive Baptist Church. And even though the name “Primitive” is a misnomer, still it designates those churches from the Baptist churches. So when someone says I am a Primitive Baptist you can know that though David said in Psalm 119:50, **“Thy Word hath quickened me,”** Paul says in I Corinthians 4:15, **“For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel,”** and Peter says in I Peter 1:23 that we are born again of incorruptible seed by the Word of God they, by their teaching, say we do not believe stuff like that. As in the case of the Freewill Baptist Churches, these churches had no bearing upon the Baptist churches. The Baptist churches just went right on carrying out the commission our Lord had given them before He ascended back to the Father.

But now, my O my, it doesn’t mean any more for a person to say I am a Baptist than it does for him to say I am a Democrat. If he says I am a Democrat he may be just anything from a Jim Allen to a Ted Kennedy, or a Jimmy Carter. And if a person says I am a Baptist he may be just anything from a Hardshell to a Holy Roller. This fact makes it hard on a church and a pastor when they try to select a preacher for a meeting. We have so many half Baptists today, and not a few who are Baptist in name only.

When my wife and I came out of the convention we visited a Baptist church some five miles from us several times. We really enjoyed what the pastor preached very much. It was just exactly what we believed concerning our Lord’s church. After we had attended the church several times, two young men from the church came to visit us one night. They were anxious to know why we did not join them. I told them that we really enjoyed

what the pastor preached very much, but what he did not preach had us puzzled. They wanted to know what it was that he did not preach. When I told them what he was not preaching they tried ever so hard to convince me that the doctrines of sovereign grace were not in the Bible. That church was so good on the church that I would have to class them as half Baptists.

I am quite familiar with another church that is just the opposite of the one mentioned above. This pastor is a prince among preachers on the doctrines of grace. Very few can do a better job on those doctrines than he can. But I got a look at the back of one of his church bulletins, and there I read, “Baptism at any time by any mode recognized. Communion open to all Christians.” Still he is so good on the doctrines of grace that I would be forced to admit that he is a pretty good half Baptist. There seems to be quite a few of his kind all over the country. And I believe they call themselves Sovereign Grace Baptists. Maybe we should refrain from using that term as much as possible lest we find ourselves in undesirable company.

Some of our brethren like the term “Landmark Baptists.” And certainly that should be an acceptable term. But at a Bible Conference in Seattle, Washington a few years ago a dear Brother got all over me because we had named our correspondence Bible School the Landmark Baptist Correspondence Bible School. He said, “Bro. Cook, there is a Landmark Baptist Church near me that is just as Arminian as they can be.” So to him, Landmark Baptists are Arminians. And I fear there are many others who think the same thing about Landmark Baptists. And there is just no way that we can force them to leave the name Landmark off their church.

So I am convinced that we should go back to our beginning and pick up the title the Lord gave us. After all, we just cannot improve on what He has done. In Matthew 3:1 we see the first mention of Baptist. And there it is just **“John the Baptist.”** If we try to use some descriptive adjective in an effort to make people know just what kind of Baptists we are, we may find that some off-brand of Baptists has already contaminated our adjective. Just as the a-millennialist loves to quote Romans 9:6 where we read, **“For they are not all Israel which, are of Israel”** we must come to see, and to know that all are not Baptists who claim to be Baptists.

While looking for a church that we could fellowship with after leaving the convention, I visited a group one night that had a good sounding name. And the first half of the preacher’s message did sound fairly well. But the last half of it was the universal church pure and simple. There are at least a half dozen of that

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kind of independent Baptist churches, so-called, within six miles of me. They hate the doctrines of grace, and they hate the doctrine of the Lord's church. They have nothing that pertains to Baptists except the name. The old devil, no doubt, led them to use the name Baptist in an effort to dilute Baptist teaching in the world. And what a marvelous job he has done.

Some fifty or sixty years ago, the people of the world had a good idea as to what Baptists believed and practiced, but not any more. In the ears of the world today Baptist teaching is utter confusion. One group's teaching is just the opposite of another's teaching. And still they both have the name Baptist over their door. So when we ask what has happened to the Baptists, the answer seems to be, the devil got in among them.

Just a few short years ago the fellowship was so sweet among Baptists who believe all of the Word of God. Great numbers of them could get together at great Bible Conferences from Ashland, Kentucky to Hayward, California, and all seemed to have the same mind, to speak the same thing, and to have no divisions among them. But during the last seven years, new doctrines have crept in among us, and have disrupted that sweet fellowship we all enjoyed so much. Now, if a church invites a beloved brother for a week's meeting she may find when the week is over that the saints are confused, and the fellowship of the church disrupted. And these dear brethren who have imbibed these new doctrines most certainly would not want someone to come into their pulpit and preach what we all preached ten years ago. Surely, the coming of the Lord draweth nigh, even at the door. And when He comes what will happen to all this disrupted fellowship among us?



Will the United

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presentation of Jesus, it is necessary for us to take a look at our own depravity and see just how far removed each of us are from God. It is thus that today I talk to you concerning the city of Sodom. My text offers a good description of the city. Yet, if you would see the city in all of its vileness and impurity, go back and read the 19th chapter of Genesis.

It has always been rather interesting to me to notice the characteristics of this city of Sodom as revealed in the Scriptures. First of all, it was materialistically inclined. It was a great city of commerce. Lots of buying and selling took place in this city. It was because of this that Lot went there to live. When he separated from Abraham, we read that immediately

he **“pitched his tent toward Sodom,”** and little by little entered into the city and began his trading and trafficking with the people of the city.

A second characteristic of the city of Sodom is that it was a city of unusual vice and exceeding sin. Listen to God's description of it: **"But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly"** (Gen. 13:13).

Just before God destroyed the city of Sodom, He revealed to Abraham His purpose relative to the city, which resulted in Abraham's interceding with God in behalf of the city. In connection with the conversation that passed between Abraham and God, you find God saying, **"Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrha is great, and because their sin is very grievous"** (Gen. 18:20).

All this is but a revelation of the exceeding sinfulness of the city of Sodom. You find it likewise described in Ezekiel 16:49-50. Listen: **“Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me: therefore I took them away as I saw good.”**

Then too, my text offers an exceedingly characteristic picture of the sinfulness of the city. **“Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire”** (Jude 1:7).

Finally, if you would see the moral putrefaction of this city, read the entire 19th chapter of Genesis.

Our country is often shocked today when we read of that which the newspapers may describe as a sex killing. Sexual maniacs are always held up by the newspapers as perversions at which the public stands in horror. You have it all described in this 19th chapter of Genesis. Their sin was unnatural, violent, obdurate and even universal, for both young and old, and all the people from that section, gathered round Lot's house on this memorable night of sin.

That you might see how sinful this city really was, remember that Abraham took it upon himself to talk with God in prayer concerning the city, asking God

to spare the city, which God promised to do if ten righteous people could be found in it. Yet, not even ten were found. Only Lot, a back-slidden preacher, his wife, who was turned to a pillar of salt, and his two daughters, who later fell into vile sin, escaped from the city. So vile was the city that these were all that escaped therefrom.

Still another picture of the sin of the city of Sodom is to be seen in the latter part of Genesis 19. After Lot and his two daughters had escaped from the city, they each produced a child by their own father, so that Lot was at one and the same time, both father and grandfather to the off-spring of his daughters. All this is but a picture of the sin, the immorality, and the impurity of the city of Sodom.

In spite of all this portrayal of their depravity, yet this city would have believed if they had heard Jesus' message. For this, we have Jesus' own words: **"And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day"** (Matt. 11:23).

Thus the city of Sodom was characterized. It was materialistically inclined; it was sinful, immoral, and ungodly; and there would have been a willingness on the part of the people to have received the message of God if they had heard it.

II

Having noticed the characteristics of the city of Sodom, in order that we might answer the question, "Is the United States to Become Another Sodom," I would have you see what God says will characterize the closing days of this age.

Listen: “Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened” (Matt. 13:33).

This is Jesus' parable of the leaven. In the Bible, leaven is always mentioned in an evil sense. Just as leaven or yeast spoils the bread dough, so we are warned in the realm of religious truth the entirety shall be leavened. This surely does not present a very pleasant picture so far as our future is concerned.

In the city of Sodom, apparently there was no truth preached. This, the Word of God tells us, will ultimately be true. In the parable of the leaven, the meal

represents gospel truth. Eventually, the whole of it shall be corrupted.

What a terrible “jolt” this Scripture brings to the post-millennialists, who insist that the world is getting better, and that eventually, the world will be so good that Jesus will come to it that He might make it His home. Instead, the Word of God tells us that just before He comes back to take possession of this sin-cursed world, that it will be so iniquitous that the entire gospel truth which He came to bring 1900 years ago, shall be corrupted and leavened with false doctrines and heresies. Instead of the dream of the post-millennialist being true, the world is to get farther and farther from God and His Word.

If you would see whether the United States is to become another Sodom, then note these words of Jesus: **“For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together”** (Matt. 24:28). The word for “eagle” is the word for “buzzard.” You know that when you look up into the skies and see an old buzzard floating about, that he is looking for something dead. Well, the Word of God declares that when Jesus comes back, that society will be just as a rotting, putrifying, decaying carcase.

Jesus, in the same chapter discussing the second coming says: **“But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark”** (Matt. 24:37-38). That which will thus characterize the days when Jesus comes back to this world, will be eating, drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage, just worldly living, no thought as to God.

Slowly but surely we are drifting into those conditions described in the words of Jesus. During the World War I, a commission was sent from this country to France to study social conditions then existing. They visited all places of amusement, and observed the nation politically, socially, and in the home. When they made their report in Washington, they said, "We are supposed to be in a war to save civilization, but it is questionable if such a civilization is worth saving." Certainly, the morals of Paris then are practically the morals of this nation today.

I cite as a proof of this fact that at San Francisco, Sally Rand's nude ranch was the biggest attraction, while at New York at the World's Fair, Billy Rose's nearly nude bathing girls were headliners.

Thus, Jesus declared that society would be just a rotting carcass morally when He returned. In movies, magazines, and dances, morals and ethics today have practically putrified. The theme in it all is sex, and the sinfulness of Sodom is thus characteristic of this twentieth century.

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Tune in to the **Berea Baptist Broadcast**

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DXRA, Davao City, Philippines	Sunday 8:15 - 8:45 a.m.	783 Khz	10,000 AM

Will the United

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But let's notice another Scripture in which Jesus gives us a pen picture as to what shall characterize the closing days of this age. Listen: **"Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed"** (Luke 17:28-30).

In Lot's day, the city of Sodom, as I have said, was materialistically inclined. Jesus said that it would be the same when He comes back to this world.

Having noticed that which did characterizethecityofSodom,letmeshow you still further what shall characterize the closing days of this age. When Paul wrote to young Timothy, by inspiration, he made such a revelation: **"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. . . Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived"** (II Tim. 3:1-5, 12-13).

This is what Paul said would characterize the United States, and England, and Germany, and all the balance of the world when Jesus comes again.

That you might see that this world is getting farther from God, and shall continue, look at the image which Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream. You remember in the second chapter of Daniel this mighty image with the head of gold, chest and arms of silver, belly and thighs of brass, and legs of iron. Daniel interpreted this as a dream of history. He said that Nebuchadnezzar represented the head of gold; whereas the arms and chest of silver represented Media-Persia; and that the belly and thighs of brass was typical of Greece; and the legs of iron represented Rome. You will notice the metals that made up this image---gold, silver, brass, iron, and ultimately iron and miry clay. This meant that there was an increase in strength, but a decrease in finer qualities. We have it in the world today. The world is much stronger educationally, materialistically, and even religiously than it used to be; and yet, there has been a terrible deterioration and depreciation of the finer qualities.

There are sentimental post-millennialists who talk about the world getting better. Surely, no one can read these Scriptures without being definitely convinced that post-millennialism is an idle dream, and that instead of the world getting better, it shall get worse and worse until Jesus comes, so that the characteristics of the city of Sodom shall ultimately become the characteristics of the world, and the United States will thus become another Sodom.

III

In view of this, what should be our proper attitude today?

Every Christian ought to be out and out for the Lord. Since by prophecy we have seen that the United States is to become another Sodom, then as long as each of us are here in the world, we certainly should be busy witnessing to the truth which has been given us, remembering that Jesus has said, **"Ye are the salt of the earth,"** and **"Ye are the light of the world"** (Matt. 5:13-14).

If this should be the proper attitude of the Christian, then surely, it should be the part of prudence and wisdom for the unsaved man, in view of that which is coming to pass, that he should turn to the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. When the city of Sodom was about to be destroyed, the angel said to Lot and those who came forth from the city, **"Escape for thy life."** Today, I would take the position of this angel, and would say to you in the light of existing conditions of today, and prophesied conditions of tomorrow, **"Escape for thy life."** And if you would escape and find a refuge, a haven of rest, a shelter in a weary land, then receive Jesus Christ by faith and be saved, remembering His promise, **"He that believeth on me hath everlasting life"** (John 6:47). (Saturday, January 31, 1942).

(The Baptist Examiner, Oct. 26, 1974)



Recognizing the Cults

By Richard L. Eckstein
of Bloomfield, New Mexico

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I John 4:1).

Those of us who spend our time wholly consumed with our secular work, our family affairs and working in our Lord's churches may not realize the great truth contained in our text. But, once you leave the comfort of your near brethren and journey into the world you will become aware of the fact "it is the last hour." Go into the world and testify of the grace of Almighty God, witness of the salvation available through the shed blood of Jesus Christ and your eyes will be opened. You

will stand amazed before a host of anti-Christians!

Religion is alive and well today. As you look down the streets in your subdivision, you'll be deceived by what you see. You'll soon possibly conclude that almost nobody in your neighborhood attends any kind of a church on a regular basis. Do not assume there is not religion in their home. The spiritual vacuum nurtured in the lives of young people by lazy and irresponsible parents has made their college-aged sons and daughters open prey for the reception and belief of the lies of the serpent with the forked tongue.

Our work has brought us into contact with college-aged young people both off and on the campus. How often we have been excited and thrilled at meeting someone who carried their Bible with them. How thrilling it is to meet a clean cut, modestly dressed young person who talks the "Christian Language." Now, I simply find myself unable to convey to you the utter terror and grief in my heart when after our initial conversations I discover that the Jesus Christ they worship is NOT the Jesus Christ of the Scriptures. There are two distinct groups with which we come in contact. There are those identified as a "sect" and those identified as a "cult." We must be able to distinguish one from the other. While a sect may teach many errors which we reject as un-Biblical, a sect differs from a cult. All cults have the same end. All cults will lead their followers to an eternity of torment in the lake of fire.

A sect is any dissenting or schismatic religious body, which may or may not have parted company with a longer established communion. In the days of John the Baptist, the Pharisees and Sadducees were called sects even though they did not break away from Judaism. Christianity was even referred to by some in its early years as a sect of Judaism. We know that the Christian faith is a gift of Almighty God to His people, and that Jesus Christ established and founded His church. The Christian faith and Christ's churches are genuine and any and all who have departed from the faith once delivered unto the saints are truly sects. Protestant churches are all properly identified as a sect of the Roman Catholic Church. In turn the Roman Catholic Church can, I truly believe, be identified as a genuine cult.

In contrast to a sect, a cult is identified as unorthodox or spurious. It is usually, but not always a minority religious group holding beliefs regarded as non-Biblical, illegitimate or not genuine. A cult is always seen to hold to doctrine that is an abrupt break with historic Christianity and its historical confessions and creeds.

There are five distinctive traits for a cult:

1. An extra Scriptural source of authority.

MISSING SOMETHING?

Look at your mailing label on the front page of this month's paper. If you see above your name "Expires 5/2006" then you will be missing something, so don't miss an issue! Renew now so you won't miss next month's *Banner*.

2. The denial of justification by grace, through faith.

3. The devaluation of Christ (His Person---His Work).

4. The group claims to be the exclusive community to the saved.

5. The group has always a central role in eschatology.

As one finds himself the object of evangelism from a dedicated cultist you will discover the almost incomprehensible ability of Satan to blind and motivate those whom he enslaves. The cultist is usually well indoctrinated. He knows what he believes. He has "proof" texts (out of context) for everything he expounds. He has a zeal to ensnare others. He passes out attractively printed brochures and tracts. And he always conveys to his hearers the urgency of immediately joining up with him and his group.

There are five lessons that we can learn from the cultist:

1. Be positive, have definite convictions about matters of faith and doctrine. Never compromise.

2. Know the Scriptures. Not just a verse or two, but the entire Word of God.

3. We must have a zeal (ardor, enthusiasm, eagerness, fervor, willingness, devotion), yes, a passion to witness of our faith and the Lord Jesus Christ.

4. Effective use of the printed page. Yes, I say shame on any tight-wad, Sovereign Grace Missionary Baptist who is too tight fisted to buy a dozen subscriptions to The Baptist Examiner for his heathen friends! Shame on you!

5. Strong sense of urgency. Yes, I'm a Biblical predestinarian. I am not a fatalist. Our command is to "go." Redeem the time, beloved, tomorrow you must stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ! We are responsible to preach the gospel to every creature. There is no exception to our Lord's command.

Let me give you five suggestions for dealing with a cultist.

1. Give a positive testimony to the truth of God's Word. Be kind, but cut them deep with Scriptures. Rebuke them.

2. Make them face squarely the source of authority.

3. Present them the Scriptural evidence for the major doctrines of the

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Christian faith.

4. Don't give up. Follow up!

5. Pray for them. Yes, without ceasing.

Christianity has a message. **"Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures."** The cultist has a mission. The cultist is dedicated to his master, to promote the desires of Satan by semantic cheating and to lead souls to a fiery eternity in the bottomless pit prepared especially for him and his followers by Him that they deny!

Be careful what you read. Be careful what your sons and daughters are reading. Let me list some names that should be avoided like a cobra with a head at both ends: John A. T. Robertson, Feuerbach, Wm. Hamilton, Bonhoeffer, Nietzsche, Bultmann, Heidegger, Van Buren, Fosdick, Tillich, Dewart, Altizer, Kierkegaard, Barth, Sartre, Buber, Macquarrie, Schleiermacher, Reinhold, Neibuhr, Weiss, C. H. Dodd, Schweitzer, Ritchel, Kant, Troeltsch, Ferre, Hegel, Cullman and Wierwille. These men all have had much to say regarding the Christian Faith and The Word of God, they speak not the truth, because there is no truth in them.

The cults thrive on money. They all teach tithing, and the materials they offer are never free. Let us freely proclaim the gospel of free grace.

I recently visited a gigantic three-story book store. In the religious department of that store were hundreds of volumes on the cults and Eastern religions. The section on Christianity was most discouraging. It included the works of many of the men mentioned above. I found only one solitary volume that I would freely recommend to a friend. There is nothing for edification to be found for the Christian in the Modern Thinkers. A new gospel is no gospel at all. What is true is not new, and what is new in theology is NOT TRUE. Contend for the faith.

Let's ever tell the old, old story of Jesus, His love, His eternal pre-existence, His blood. With out the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. **"But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God"** (Heb. 10:12).

(The Baptist Examiner, Oct 9, 1976)

Independent Baptists...

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that our Savior Himself expected to be recognized by His fruits. When John sent from prison to inquire as to the identity of Jesus, He replied: **"Go and shew John**

again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind, the lame, the sick, the deaf, are healed, the dead raised and the poor have the gospel preached to them" (Matt. 11:2-5).

Brethren, it is time that Baptists awake to the fact that we are ambassadors for Christ (II Cor. 5:20). I Peter 2:9 tells us we are to be peculiar people, and that we should show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

I realize that there are too many preachers today that either by their teaching, or lack of teaching, indicate that it doesn't matter how short the women wear their dresses, how long the men wear their hair, how much time the family sits in front of the TV set, how little time is spent in Bible study and prayer. But I would like to point out to you that we are exhorted to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. We are going to be judged for the manner in which we have fulfilled our responsibilities as Christ's ambassadors. I Corinthians 11:31 tells us that if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

I would like to propose three questions by which we as Baptists can judge all that we do and say. First, does it glorify God? If it does not, repent! Second, does it exalt Christ? If it does not, stop doing it! Third, is it the edification of yourself and others? If it is not, then it is not worth your while.

Beloved Baptist friends, we are living in the latter times that Paul speaks of, and we can daily see the world waxing worse and worse. I believe it is past time that we as Baptists awake out of sleep and work while it is day. I believe it is time that we examine and judge ourselves as to whether we are living the holy faith as it was once delivered to the saints.

(The Baptist Examiner, Dec 13, 1975)



The Illusiveness of Life

By Wendell P. Furlong
of Glasgow, Kentucky

"By faith, Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance; obeyed, and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith

he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker

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Outlines for Country Preachers by a Country Preacher

Sermon Outlines by Milburn Cockrell

A Character Study of Ezra

Ezra 7:10

Ezra was a lineal descendant of Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron (7:5). He is described in 7:6, 11-12. He was both a priest and a scribe---a minister of the sanctuary and an exponent of the law of Moses (7:11).

Ezra led the second expedition of Jews back from Babylonian exile into Palestine about 459 B.C. King Artaxerxes invited all Israelites throughout his empire to return with Ezra, if they desired to do so. Some 1,754 did return (8). He was given a large freewill offering and empowered to draw upon the king's treasury for further supplies.

Ezra was---

I. A LOVER OF THE WORD OF GOD (7:6, 10, 11-12).

1. He chose for his study the Word of God. He made it his business to inquire into it and to search its pages. He sought the knowledge of God's revealed will (Matt. 13:52; II Cor. 3:6; II Tim. 3:16-17).
2. Knowledge was not enough. He made a conscience of doing it (Jas. 1:22-25; Matt. 7:24).
3. He taught others the Word (Matt. 28:19-20; II Tim. 2:2). Like Jesus Christ, he began first to do and then to teach (Acts 1:1).
4. He persevered in this work (8:1-3).

II. A MAN OF GREAT FAITH (8:22-23).

1. He had told the king that those who seek God are safe under the greatest dangers, and that those who forsake Him are in danger when they are most secure.
2. Those who trust in God will triumph in Him. They will be ashamed to ask the world for help. If our faith is in God, and we know that the cause is His, why should we beg for the patronage of men? Our life must be consistent with our testimony. To preach faith, and be found catering for the favors of the ungodly, is to make religion stink to reasonable men! (See II Cor. 5:7; Heb. 11:1).
3. Every step he took was marked by some devout acknowledgment of Divine help (7:6,9,27,28; 8:22, 31).

III. A TRUSTWORTHY PERSON AND WISE.

1. The king could trust him not to convert the money to his own use (7:15-16) and to use it in the best possible manner (7:17-18).
2. He had an excellent judgment---horse sense (7:25; Dan. 1:20; Acts 6:10). The counsel of this heathen king puts us to shame.
3. Christians should be such persons. Are we?

IV. A SOCIAL REFORMER.

1. Sin was a great grief to him (9:1-5; 10:10-12). The depth of sorrow over the sins of others will be according to the depth and reality of our sympathy with the cause of God.
2. He prayed earnestly for his country (9:5-10:1). He felt as long as they lived in sin they would not be accepted before God (Prov. 28:13).
3. He knew no compromise with his enemies (4:1-3). Nehemiah followed his example (Neh. 2:19-20).

V. A MAN WHO ENJOYED SOME SUCCESS (10:12, 19).

1. The earnest prayer and faithful testimony of this consecrated scribe prevailed. A great victory was won for God in the spiritual uplifting of the people.
2. Ezra's success is within the reach of every servant---true, whole-hearted loyalty to God's Word and work.

CONCLUSION.

He probably remained as governor until Nehemiah. He worked with Nehemiah as a priest. As everything fell into confusion when Nehemiah went to Babylon, I assume that Ezra had either earlier gone to Babylon or died by this time.

The Illusiveness of

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is God” (Heb. 11:8-10).

I am touching upon a thought which I want further development. God promised Canaan to Abraham, and yet Abraham never inherited Canaan: to the last he was a wanderer there; he had no possession of his own in its territory; if he wanted a tomb to bury his dead, he could only obtain it by purchase. This difficulty is expressly admitted in the text, “In the land of promise he sojourned as in a strange country;” he dwelt there in tents--in changeful, movable tabernacles--not permanent habitations; he had no home there.

It is stated in all its startling force, in terms still more explicit, in the 7th Chapter of Acts, 5th verse, **“And He gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child.”**

Now, the surprising point is that Abraham, deceived, as you might almost say, did not complain of it as a deception; he was grateful for the non-fulfillment of the promise: he does not seem to have expected its fulfillment; he did not look for Canaan, but for **“a city which hath foundations.”** His faith appears to have consisted in disbelieving the letter, almost as much as believing the spirit of the promise.

And herein lies a principle, which, rightly expounded, can help us interpret this life of ours. God’s promises never are fulfilled in the sense in which they are given. Life is a deception; its anticipations, which are God’s promises, never are fulfilled in the sense in which they are given. Its anticipations, which are God’s promises to the imagination, are never realized, they who know life best, and have trusted God most to fill it with blessings, are ever the first to say that life is a series of disappointments. And in the spirit of this text we have to say that it is a wise and merciful arrangement which ordains it thus.

The wise and holy do not expect it otherwise--would not wish it otherwise; their wisdom consists in disbelieving its promises. To develop this idea would be a glorious task; for to justify God’s ways to man, to expound the mysteriousness of our present being, to interpret God--is not this the very essence of the ministerial office? All that I can hope, today, is not to exhaust the subject but to furnish hints for thought. Other statements may be made, illustrations may be adequate, the new ground of an almost untrodden subject may be torn up too rudely; but remember, we are here to live and die; in a few years it will all be over; meanwhile, what we have to do is to try to understand, and to help one another to understand,

what it all means--what this strange and contradictory thing, which we call life, contains within it. Do not stop to ask, therefore, whether the subject was satisfactorily worked out; let each man be satisfied to receive a germ of thought which he may better develop for himself.

I. The deception of life’s promises.

II. The meaning of that deception.

Let it be cheerfully, understood, in the first place, the promise was never fulfilled. I do not say the fulfillment was delayed. Abraham had a few feet of earth, obtained by purchase--beyond that nothing; he died a stranger and pilgrim in the land. Isaac had a little. So small was Jacob’s hold upon his country that the last years of his life were spent in Egypt, and he died a foreigner in a strange land. His descendants came into the land of Canaan, expecting to find it flowing with milk and honey; they found hard work to do--war and unrest--instead of rest and peace.

During one brief period in the history of Israel, the promise may have seemed to be fulfilled. It was during the later years of David and the earlier years of Solomon; but we have the warrant of Scriptures itself for affirming, that even David speaks of a hope of entering into a future rest. The writer of the epistle of Hebrews, quoting this passage, infers from it that God’s promise had not been exhausted, not fulfilled by the entrance into Canaan. For he says, “If Joshua had given them rest, then would he not have spoken of another day.” Again, in the very chapter, after a long list of Hebrew saints--**“These all died in faith, not having received the promises.”** To none therefore had the promise been fulfilled. Accordingly, writers on prophecy, in order to get over this difficulty, take for granted that there must be a future fulfillment, because the first was inadequate.

They, who believe that the Jews will be restored to their native land, expect it on the express ground that Canaan has never been actually and permanently theirs. A certain tract of country--three hundred miles in length, by two hundred in breadth--must be given, or else they think the promise has been broken. To quote the expression of their writers, “If there be nothing yet further for Israel, then the magnificence of the promise has been lost in the poverty of its accomplishment.”

I do not quote this to prove the correctness of the interpretation of the prophecy, but as an acknowledgment which may be taken so far as a proof that the promise made to Abraham has never been accomplished.

And such are life’s disappointments. Its promise is, you shall have a Canaan; it turns out to be a baseless airy dream--toil and warfare--nothing that we can call our own; not the land of rest by any means. But we will examine this in particulars.

1. Our senses deceive us; we begin life with delusion. Our senses deceive us with respect to distance, shape, and color. That which afar off seems oval turns out to be circular, magnified by the perspective of distance; that which appears a speck, upon nearer approach becomes a vast body. To the earlier ages the stars presented the delusion of small lamps hanging in space. The beautiful berry promises to be bitter and poisonous: that which apparently moves is really at rest. That which seems to be stationary is in perpetual motion; the earth moves; the sun is still. All experience is a correction of life’s delusions--a modification, a reversal of the judgment of the senses: and all life is a lesson on the falsehood of appearances.

2. The principle is, that the reward we get is not the reward for which we worked, but a deeper one; deeper and more permanent. The merchant labors all his life and the hope which leads him on is perhaps wealth: well, at sixty five years of age he attains wealth; is that the reward of sixty five years of toil? Ten years of enjoyment, when the senses can enjoy no longer--a country--seat, splendid plate, a noble establishment? OH NO! A reward deeper than he dreamed of--habits of perseverance: a character trained by industry: that is his reward. He was carried on from year to year by, if he were wise, illusion; if he were unwise delusion; but he reaped a more enduring substance in himself.

Take another instance; the public man, warrior, or statesman, who has served his country, and complains at last, in expectations in rewarding him--that is it has not give him titles, honor, or wealth. But titles, honors, wealth--are those the rewards of well doing? Can this reward him? Would it be well-doing if they could? To be such a man, what could be added to that reward by having? This same apparent contradiction, which was found in Judaism, subsists too in Christianity; we will state it in words of an apostle. **“Godliness is profitable unto all things; having the promise of the life that now is, as and of that which is to come.”** Now for the fulfillment: **“If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.”**

Godliness is profitable; but its profit, it appears, consists in finding that all is loss: yet in this way you teach your son. You tell him that if he will be good all men will love him. You say that “Honesty is the best policy,” yet in your heart of hearts you know that you are leading him on by a delusion.

Christ was good. Was He loved by all? In proportion as he, your son, is like Christ, he will be loved, not by the many, but by the few. Honesty is not the best policy; the commonplace honesty of the marketplace may be--the vulgar honesty which goes no farther than paying debts accurately; but that transparent

Christian honesty of a life which in every act is bearing witness to the truth that is not the way to get on in life--the reward of such a life is the cross. Yet you were right in teaching your son this: You told him what is true; truer than he could comprehend. It is better to be honest and good; better even in this life; better by so much as being good is better than having good. But, in a rude coarse way, you express the blessedness on a level with his capacity; you must state the truth in a way which he may inevitably interpret falsely. The true interpretation nothing but experience can teach.

And this is what God does. His promises are true, though illusive; far truer than we at first take them to be. We work for a mean, low sensual happiness; all the while He is leading us on to a spiritual blessedness, unfathomably deep. This is the life of faith. We live by faith, and not by sight. We do not preach that all is disappointment--the dreary creed of sentimentalism; but we preach that nothing here is disappointment, if rightly understood. We do not comfort the poor man, by saying that the riches which he has not now he will have hereafter--the difference between himself and the man of wealth being only this, that the one has for time what the other will have for eternity; but what we say, is, that which you have failed in reaping here you never will reap, if you expected the harvest of Canaan. God has no Canaan for His own; no milk and honey for the luxury of the senses: for the city which hath foundations is built in the soul of man. He in whom Godlike character dwells has all the universe for his own--**“all things,”** saith the apostle, “all yours; whether life or death, as things present, or things to come; if you be Christ’s, then are you Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”



Paul- The Great Man

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who have already considered. Do you ask why? Do you ask, ‘Is not his one of the most exalted characters, whether considered intellectually, religiously, or positionally, the pen of history has recorded?’ I answer, Yes. “Does not his life abound in incidents, tragic, romantic, sublime?” Yes. “Does not an enduring interest encircle the memory of the man, who preached the first gospel sermon on the continent of Europe, and was the successful gatherer of Christian churches in proud pagan cities and remote Gentile realms?” Yes. “Was he not the first man of eminently great intellect and high scholarly culture, whom Christianity numbered among her converts?” and I answer, Yes. “Why then feel such diffidence with such a theme before you?”

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Mini-Edition

by Joseph Harris

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www.miniedition.net**ILLEGAL ALIEN
Invasion**

Notice the emphasis on two words in the title of this commentary: ILLEGAL ALIEN. I emphasize these words as I speak about this current real problem and threat to America's financial well being and cultural stability. This invasion from Mexico has reached epidemic proportions and no one in power seems to even notice that there is a problem.

Don't be fooled by all the media hype. Border crashers are ILLEGAL and they are ALIENS to this country. A few years back, political correctness tried to tone down the harshness and began calling them illegal immigrants. Now they even resent this label. Well, either they are illegal or they are not. The next step is to call them unauthorized immigrants which eventually will be followed by the title unauthorized Americans or Americans without citizenship. They are already referred to as undocumented workers.

I for one am sick and tired of Mexico sending troops in to take over. Notice, I did not say I was sick of Mexicans. I am tired of the ILLEGAL (there's that word again) ones. I am tired of them breaking the law and bypassing the legal steps to become citizens. I am tired of them demanding amnesty or immediate citizenship, as if it is their right by virtue of their presence in this country. It is a slap in the face to those who obey the law and earn legitimate citizenship. People who become Americans are supposed to learn the language, pass tests, and have a knowledge of our history and political system so they can appreciate and respect this country and be assimilated into the American culture. In years past, during the time of real immigration at Ellis Island, America was known as the melting pot. If immigrants do not melt into the pot, then the pot ceases to be one pot of unity, creating many pots of individual cultures of division. Then America ceases to be unique and loses her identity. But I digress. The real issue is not that of melting but of what is legal.

I am tired of real, genuine, bona fide Americans being called racist when they speak the truth on this issue. More and more ILLEGALS are attending the Jackson/Sharpton race card playing school and learning the lingo. I wish they would spend as much time learning English.....and abiding by the law.

I am tired of the law not being enforced. Call me crazy, but shouldn't

illegals be arrested and deported?

I am tired of George Bush, Republicans and Democrats selling us down the river as they flip and flop around with spines of jelly. It has always amazed me how politicians can stand erect on two legs without falling. It takes a spine, so how do these guys even walk upright?

I'm tired of the accusation of not being Christian about the situation. Being Christian means following the law. Why is it Christians are always supposed to do the right thing, but lawbreakers are exempt?

I am tired of being told by computers, when making a phone call, to press "one" to continue in English. EVERYTHING should automatically be in English, with an option to press "one" if Spanish is needed.

I am tired of illegals having access to government services.

Basically, I am tired of being told I am the bad guy and America is the problem. As I read somewhere recently, America is a private country with borders (supposedly) and laws, not a public park with open access.

Don't Touch Mohammed!

I know very little about Comedy Central, a network found on cable and satellite TV. I know even less about South Park, a cartoon aired on Comedy Central. What little I do know about the two keeps me from wanting to learn more. Both spew vulgar language and that is enough for me to know to steer clear of them.

Last week, Comedy Central refused to air an offensive scene from South Park. Normally, that would probably be a good thing. However, the censored scene was a depiction of the most holy, loving, tolerant, fair and balanced prophet Mohammed. You know, that head guy of Islam that everyone is just "dying" to show pictures of in newspapers and magazines. I'm sure Comedy Central is not this caring and sensitive when it comes to Jesus and Christianity.

At least their reason for censoring was a real eye opener. Their stated reason was: "This decision was based solely on concern for public safety in light of recent world events." In other words, they did not want irate Muslims bombing and burning down Comedy Central headquarters. Imagine if Christians acted this way every time Christianity was mocked. Every major news media outlet and Hollywood would be a pile of ashes, 100 times over. War is not a feature of Christianity, except in a Baptist business meeting.

TRUE Christianity has always demonstrated long suffering and forgiveness when persecuted. Retaliation is not an option for true Christians. The Bible does, however give a recourse of action for believers. It's called love and prayer.

Jesus said, "**But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;**" (Matt. 5:44). And when dying on the cross, Jesus prayed for the forgiveness of his murderers.

Compare the philosophy of Jesus with the wisdom of Mohammed as found in actual quotes from Mohammed himself:

Qur'an:9:123 "Fight the unbelievers around you, and let them find harshness in you."

Tabari IX:69 "We fight people until they believe in Allah. He who believes in Allah and His Messenger has protected his life and possessions from us. As for one who disbelieves, we will fight him forever in the Cause of Allah. Killing him is a small matter to us."

Qur'an:9:5 "Fight and kill the disbelievers wherever you find them, take them captive, harass them, lie in wait and ambush them using every stratagem of war."

Ishaq:587 "We have mutilated every opponent. We have driven them violently before us at the command of Allah and Islam. We will fight until our religion is established. And we will plunder them, for they must suffer disgrace."

Qur'an:8:65 "O Prophet, urge the faithful to fight. If there are twenty among you with determination they will vanquish two hundred; if there are a hundred then they will slaughter a thousand unbelievers, for the infidels are a people devoid of understanding."

Anyone with only an ounce of objectivity can see these are not the words of a man of peace and compassion. Muslims and their apologists cannot explain away these quotes. Is it any wonder that violence and death are expected when "blasphemy" against Mohammed is committed? Don't expect anything else. 1500 years of religious tradition cannot be wiped away. But what do you expect? The apple never falls far from the tree. You can crucify Jesus, but don't touch Mohammed.

**Paul- The Great Man**

(Continued from page 327) ♦

Ah, friend! I feel as I do, just because my theme is what it is---so grand, so rich, so vast. Volumes could not exhaust it; the highest genius finds within it amplest scope for its sublimest efforts. And if it be true, as it doubtless is, that greatness is requisite in order to comprehend true greatness; that lofty spiritual attainments are requisite in order to appreciate fully the character of one who possessed them in an eminent degree, then you will obviously see additional reasons for humble diffidence in the present effort.

Deeply conscious of these myself, I beg you to bear them in mind, and then I shall be sure of your kind and appreciative sympathy in an effort, which must of necessity fall far short of full justice to a character enshrined, in such a history as that of "the chief of the apostles." You will bear in mind that, as the title of this lecture indicates, my main object is to *develop the evidences of Paul's greatness*.

Preliminarily, let us briefly survey the state of the Christian cause, at the historic point from which our investigations must start.

In its work twelve apostles were engaged, eleven of whom had been chosen directly by our Lord, and one by the church at Jerusalem. This number corresponded with the twelve tribes of Israel, and all their correlative symbols; such as the twelve pillars of the altar, the twelve precious stones of the high Priest's breastplate, the twelve loaves of shew bread, and the twelve gates and twelve foundations of the apocalyptic New Jerusalem. Besides these, there were seventy preachers, who had been subsequently appointed. All of these were good men and true, adapted to the work unto which they were called, but not one of them was a liberally educated man; and therefore, not one of them was qualified to carry the gospel into the highly cultured regions of the West, where it was sure to be challenged at every step by the acutest minds, the keenest debaters, the shrewdest logicians, the profoundest philosophers of the world. Among her six thousand converts, Christianity had not one man who, without miraculous aid, was prepared to grapple in her defense and for her propagation with her mightiest earthly foe, that scientific and philosophic western learning, whose prodigious energies were all subordinated to the support of paganism. Here then was a necessity, a real, pressing necessity, for the command of the ascended Lord to his church was: "**Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature;**" and adaptation, in respect to qualification, ever has been, and will be, the law of successful operation.

Let us now, in imagination, go back some twenty years before the martyrdom of Stephen, which must have transpired within about three months after the crucifixion of our adorable Lord, and we shall see how Providence was preparing a man to meet the exigency to which we have referred---a man who should be qualified to preach Christ, and Him crucified, in the focal points of worldly civilization.

Where shall he be found? Not in Jerusalem, not beside the lake of Galilee, not in any portion of the Holy Land, but far up north-west, in Asia Minor, on the northern coast of the Mediterranean, in a country called Cilicia. There is a large city, Tarsus by name, located on the river

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Paul- The Great Man

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Cydnas. It is a famous city. It is the seat of one of the three great universities of the world. Sardanapulas, Cyrus, Alexander the Great, and Caesar have lived here. Cicero, at one time, was governor of Tarsus. Here Mark Antony first saw the splendid, but corrupt Cleopatra. Here the imperial Augustus lavished royal honors and treasures. Here art, science, philosophy, eloquence and literature flourish. Strabo says, "the city of Tarsus attained, in very early times, great eminence in philosophy and all kinds of learning, so that, in science and art, it surpassed the fame even of Athens and Alexandria, and its citizens themselves were distinguished for individual excellence in these elevated pursuits." Within it is an object, to us, of surpassing interest. It is not its great university, not the grand products of art which decorate its streets and buildings, not the magnificent mementos left by monarchs, warriors and orators. Nay, it is a little boy, whose young soul is just beginning to expand amid these culturing influences. Ah! No one but God has the faintest conception of the magnificent destiny which awaits that black-eyed Hebrew boy, as he plays on the river's verdant banks, over the surrounding storied hills, and through these streets!

Let us pause here. The youthful Saul is before you. Thoughts of others, only a little older than this one, rush upon my mind. South-easterly from Tarsus lies, embosomed in hills, the lake of Gennesaret. On its shores, at this very time, are boys, rough rude, stalwart youths, of whom the world is to hear. Their names are Simon, Andrew, James, Philip, and Bartholomew. At Hebron there is a remarkable boy, whose name is John, and who is the joy of aged parents. At Nazareth, too, there is a wondrous boy, such an one as earth never saw before, and shall never see again; His name is Jesus. Combine now, in thought, that brotherhood of boys, who, in the purpose of the Eternal, are to spiritually revolutionize the entire race of mankind, and what transcendent interest encircles them! But the men of that day knew it not, any more than we know the future of the youth by whom we are surrounded. How high the privilege, how solemn the duty of doing what we can to prepare them for the responsibilities, far greater, perhaps, than we dream of, which may await them!

The following facts are recorded concerning the youth of Saul. He was early and strictly taught in the doctrines of Judaism; and inasmuch as the Jewish Rabbins taught that "he who does not teach his son a trade, trains him to steal," we are not surprised to learn that Saul was taught the then popular and useful

trade of tent-making. How useful a knowledge of this business became to him in after years, his history plainly shows. Having obtained what education he could at Tarsus, without entering the great pagan university, he was sent to Jerusalem, where, amidst purely Judaistic influences, his faith might be confirmed and his general education prosecuted. At this period he is supposed to have been eighteen or twenty years of age. There he entered a celebrated school, which had been founded sixty years previously by Hillel, the father of Simeon, and was then conducted by the learned Gamaliel. Such was the professional eminence enjoyed by this great teacher, that he was called, "The beauty of the law;" and Luke informs us that "he was had in reputation of all the people."

Saul, as a student, is now before us. Easily we can conceive the ambition which fired his zealous, fresh manhood, inducing severe application and unremitting toil, in order to qualify him for the loftiest positional altitude, for nothing less than this could have satisfied such a mind as his. As a student he possessed rare qualifications. He combined in himself the elements both of Tarsus and Jerusalem; Gentile energy and Jewish zeal.

Between this point and the next that we read of him years intervened, into which had been crowded events of amazing magnitude. The older boys, whom we saw on the lake shore, at Hebron and Nazareth, have all grown up to manhood. The boy of Nazareth has proved to be the long-expected Messiah. The boy of Hebron has proved to be the Heaven-appointed herald of the world's Deliverer. The fisher-boys of Galilee have become His apostles. He has been crucified, and arisen from the dead, and ascended to Heaven. The day of Pentecost, with its miracles, has passed, and the cause, which both Jews and Romans believed to have died with its originator, still lives, and hath its thousands of living convert-witnesses. Saul has long since graduated from Gamaliel's school, but is still living at Jerusalem, a vigorous, active, scholarly man, of about thirty years of age. He is a leading member of the sect of the Pharisees, and you can imagine the utter contempt with which he, the educated, ambitious, conscientious, haughty Pharisee would regard the new religion, which had been founded by a despised Nazarene, who had been apprehended, tried and executed as a malefactor upon a cross; had, therefore, suffered the most ignominious of all forms of capital punishment; whose propagators were unlearned, uncultured men, chosen from the ranks of humble toil. In all the circles of his acquaintance opposition to this supposed heresy has been unanimous, and among his fellow-religionists is the settled determination to put it down, to quench its increasing flame, if need be, in

blood.

The sacred record, at this juncture, brings him to our view, as holding the clothes of those who were stoning Stephen to death.

Did the question ever rise in your mind, as to *why these executioners laid their clothes at Saul's feet?* Why, amidst that crowd, he was selected for this purpose? It has in mine, and I have looked in our books for an answer, in vain. Allow me to suggest one. You will remember that the synagogue, which caused Stephen to be apprehended, and which persecuted him before the Sanhedrin, and suborned witnesses to establish their charge of blasphemy against him, the record says, was composed of Jews from five foreign countries. It says, too, that one of these was Cilicia. Now this was Saul's native land; he was a Cilician, and doubtless belonged to this synagogue. If so, from what we know of him, we are sure that he was a leading member, and took an active part in these proceedings. The Jewish law made it imperative on the witnesses, through whose testimony a prisoner was condemned to be stoned to death, to be the executioners, do the stoning. How natural it was, therefore, that when these men stripped themselves for their horrid work, they should commit their clothes for safe-keeping into the care of one, who had been the leading man in summoning and employing them?

This view, which I submit, carries with it the force of a moral demonstration, throws light upon the position of our representative man, whom we find immediately after exceeding every other persecutor in the fiery zeal of his hatred toward the followers of Jesus. He **"entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison."** He himself said, **"Beyond measure I persecuted the church of God."** So terrific were his persecutions, that the very name of "Saul" became as fearful to the saints in Jerusalem, as ever that of Nero, or Domitian, or Severus was to those of Rome. At last he could find no more victims in the Holy City, for the disciples who had escaped death and imprisonment, had fled into other parts. Now, surely, we would think, if ignorant of the facts, that this mighty man of blood, whose fury has spared neither men nor defenseless women, would have ceased, from his dreadful work. But he did not. Others ceased, he would not. The great elements of his nature were aroused by his superior zeal for Judaism, perhaps by ambition to acquire for himself a name and fame as its chief defender, and perhaps---indeed, I feel quite sure---that the fact incidentally alluded to in Acts 23:16-22, and referred to in Romans 16:7, and 16:21, that his own sister and her son, his nephew, and other relatives had become converts to Christianity, inflamed his conscientious zeal into absolute fury.

He hears that in the far north-east, at Damascus, the capital of Syria, three hundred miles distant, a few Christians have found an asylum. He determines to apprehend them, and having obtained letters of authority from the High Priest and gathering about him a band of kindred spirits, he commences that memorable journey. It is the last of the kind he shall ever take, but he knows it not. Riding proudly at the head of his gorgeous retinue, the record says "he breathed out threatenings and slaughters." Let us follow him on the road we know he took. The first place of note which he passes is Gibeah, the birth-place of Saul, Israel's first king, whose name he bears. The next is Bethel, where Jacob slept and dreamed, and who can tell but that the same angels who guarded the sleeping patriarch seventeen hundred years ago, are now gathering around this persecutor, the news of whose conversion they shall soon bear to Heaven! Onward he proudly rides. Shiloh is passed. The vale of Ephraim is passed between Ebal and Berizim, **"the place of cursing and of blessing."** Entering Galilee, he passes along the western shore of its beautiful lake, and after coursing over a sterile country for many a weary mile, in the far distance he sees the white domes of Damascus glittering in the rays of the sun. Nearer and nearer he approaches those gates, within which are the victims he seeks. O how little he dreams of what he shall experience, of what a change awaits him before he shall center them, or of the circumstances in which his feet shall press the pavements of that proud city!

And now the predestined hour has come, the predestined place is reached, where the smiter is to be smitten, not by the red hand of vengeance, but by the power of sovereign grace. Jehovah Jesus hath better work for this great, but guilty soul. Behold! What transpires. A great light suddenly shines upon them. It is not the concentrated rays of an oriental sun, for by its miraculous brilliancy and power, while all are struck speechless, Saul falls to the earth like a dead man. But he is not dead, for he hears thrilling words, saying, in tones of unearthly tenderness, **"Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"** Tremblingly he asks, **"Who art thou, Lord?"** and his whole soul is overwhelmed with the answer, **"I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest!"**

Conceive now, if you can, the depth of the emotions which agitate this strong, profound spirit at this unlooked-for, overwhelming intelligence! Imagine the momentous conclusions to which, as with electric rapidity, that vigorous intellect must have rushed! The crucified Christ lives. He is divine! Christianity is true! Ah! How the madness, the criminality of his persecuting career stares him in the

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

Did Jesus become a son or grow into Sonship with God as some TV preachers say or was He always a son? – Louisiana

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Jesus has always been, is, and always will be the eternal Son of God. He is the only begotten Son of God (I John 4:9). He is Emmanuel, or, "God with us" (Matt. 1:23). He is God in the flesh (John 1:14).

God does not change (Mal. 3:6). He is immutable. God has always been a Trinity. To say that Jesus "grew" into Sonship would imply that there hasn't always been a second person in the Trinity. This is contradictory with the truth that God doesn't change.

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The Lord Jesus Christ is the eternally begotten Son of God. He did not grow into Sonship, but has always been and ever will be the Son of God. Hebrews 13:8 declares: **"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever."** Before the world began He existed in the bosom of the Father in Divine Union as the Son of God (Read Proverbs 8:22-36 which describes this eternal union with the Father). Proverbs 8:22-23 & 30 declare: **"The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was...Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him."**

Isaiah the prophet also speaks of the eternal Sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ. He existed as a Son in eternity before He ever was born a child which is why it is written: **"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace"** (Isa. 9:6). You will notice that a Son is given, not born, because as the eternally and only begotten Son of God

He existed in His office as a Son before He ever was manifest in the flesh.

My advice would be to turn off a large majority of the TV preachers (so-called) and read the Holy Scriptures instead.

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Again, forgive my rather cross and short response to this question, but TV and radio preachers are not a good source of theology, even though there are some exceptions! There are two prerequisites to keeping a syndicated TV or radio program going. The first is money. To keep these 'listener supported' programs on the air requires a lot of contributions from the listeners and of course lots of listeners.

So the second prerequisite is that, in order to keep these listeners, they must not offend their listeners, but rather make them feel good. I have never known a broadcast that taught the biblical doctrines of grace, New Testament church, and biblical separation to stay on the air long if they depended on listener support. Also, it seems that these kinds of broadcasts need to come up with something 'new and exciting' to keep and/or gain listeners.

There are 6 New Testament references directly referring to Jesus as **"my (God's) beloved Son,"** Matt 3:17; 17:5; Mark 1:11; 9:7; Luke 3:22; 9:35. We quote only one of them, Mark 1:11, **"And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."** (Italics mine.)

The 'state of being' verb ('is' or 'art') in every one of these verses is present tense; which is defined as 'continuous action in present time.' Read, "Thou art being, continually existing as my beloved Son." Genesis 1:1 begins with, **"In the beginning God."** God is Elohim, a 'uniplural' word, meaning it can be used as a singular or plural. The Hebrew plural begins with 3, which is further evidence of the Trinity. Christ is the *eternal Son of God!* Cf. Ps. 110:4; Heb. 5:6; 6:20; 7:17, 21, **"Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."**

The question probably stems from Hebrews 5:8, **"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered"** (italics mine) but notice the italicized portion. This verse

must be seen in the light of Hebrews 4:15, **"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin,"** referring to the necessity of God taking on the form of a man, growing up as a man, and living as a man, so that the statement of this verse could be fulfilled.

Any other background for this question would seem to be cultic, not Christian doctrine.

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Jesus is the eternal Son of God (John 1:1-14). I've never heard the view that Jesus grew into sonship, but it sounds like the incarnational sonship doctrine, which states that Christ was always God, but became the Son of God at His incarnation. This view is contrasted with the eternal sonship doctrine, which states that Christ was always the Son of God and simply became human at His incarnation, so He was fully man and fully God at the same time. This is the view I hold.

As far as I know, the incarnational sonship view is based on Scriptures like Psalm 2:7, where it is written, **"Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee."** This is frequently quoted in the New Testament as speaking of Christ, and it seems to imply His sonship began with His incarnation. However, according to Paul in Acts 13:33, it has to do with His resurrection rather than His incarnation, **"God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee."** Since Christ was calling Himself the Son of God long before the resurrection (John 3:16), we know He did not become the Son at that point, but simply that God declared Him to be the Son by raising Him from the dead; **"And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead"** (Rom. 1:4).

Those who believe in the incarnational sonship doctrine tend to associate Christ's humility and submission to the Father as marks of sonship, whereas I believe sonship is associated with Christ's deity

and His being equal with God (John 5:18). For Christ to be the only begotten of the Father is to say He is of the same essence of the Father, and therefore we are able to conclude His sonship is eternal and unchanging. **"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth... No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him"** (John 1:14, 18).

MATT JAMES



Paul- The Great Man

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face! How his inbred and life-cherished views fade away into vain illusions, his boasted self-righteousness into loathsome filthiness, his intellectual pride into sheer folly, his heart-bitterness melts into tenderness! But the love-tones are again sounding in his ears, saying, **"It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks,"** i.e., "it is hard for such a soul as yours to go on in the course you are pursuing, to resist my truth and its high claims on you."

Now the work is complete. Sovereign grace hath conquered and won that mighty heart, which neither the preaching of apostles, nor the martyr death of Stephen, arguments or miracles, had touched. That heart is changed, that will subdued, for he cries in earnest and submissive simplicity, **"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"** He recognizes Jesus, whom he hated, as Lord, owns Him conqueror, bows to His authority, and dedicates himself to His service. He is told what to do, and perfectly obedient, he is led like a blind child into the house of Judas, where he remains three days; and then one of the very Christians whom he came three hundred miles to apprehend and take bound back to Jerusalem, comes to him with the fraternal words, which fell like music on his listening ears, **"Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost."** His blindness departs, and he stands forth a converted man---a Christian. Soon after, he was baptized, and immediately entered upon the ministry to which he was called.

The following is the briefest possible outline of his life, as a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ.

For a season he remained and preached in Damascus to the amazement of both Christians and Jews, and then departed into Arabia, whence he returned to the scene of his profession of Christianity and labored three years. A terrible persecution having broken out against him and the disciples there, he escaped death by being let down out of a window

♦ (Continued on page 331)

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Did God raise Jesus up or did Jesus raise Himself up? - Louisiana

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Of the passages in Scripture that reference who raised Christ from the dead, there are some apparent contradictions at first glance. According to Christ's prophecy of His resurrection, He claimed He would raise Himself up from the dead. This can be seen in John 2:19-21, **"Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body."** Christ also indicated that He alone had the power or authority to take up His life again. He indicated His authority came from the Father. **"No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father"** (John 10:18).

On the other hand, according to Paul, God the Father raised Christ from the dead. **"And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power"** (I Corinthians 6:14). **"Paul, (an apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead)"** (Galatians 1:1). Luke also indicates the same, **"Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it"** (Acts 2:24), and again, **"Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly"** (Acts 10:40).

The point is not that the Bible contradicts itself or that the authors were confused, but that the above Scriptures are in essence stating the same thing. When we distinguish the Father from the Son from the Spirit, we must be careful not to separate them as if they exist and operate independently or contradictory to one another. Consider Christ's own words, **"I and my Father are one"** (John 10:30). While He recognized the distinction between Himself and the Father, He clearly considered Himself to be one with the Father as well.

Philip was confused about this same issue with his question to Jesus in John 14:8, **"Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us."**

Christ corrected him by saying, **"Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."** (John 14:9-10). Philip wanted to see God, not realizing that he was looking at Him in Christ. Christ answered that not only has the man who has seen Him seen God, but the works He does are done by the Father dwelling in Him. Perhaps if we were to ask Christ this question, "Did God raise Jesus up or did Jesus raise himself up?" His answer might very well be, "Do you not yet know me? The works that I do are of the Father that dwells in me."

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"Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly" (Acts 10:40).

"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (John 10:17-18).

This is a difficult question in one way. We could show you many verses which teach that God the Father raised Jesus from the dead. However, there are verses (such as the one before us) which teach that Jesus raised Himself from the dead. How do these things harmonize?

First of all, Jesus is God. This is enough to explain it. We can't completely understand the relationship of the Father and the Son in our flesh. I'm not sure we will ever be able to comprehend it, though, we will know more than we know now in eternity.

Secondly, God raised Him because He approved of His sacrifice for sins. Muhammad and Buddha are still in the grave, but, Jesus is alive forevermore because His sacrifice for our sins was, and is, sufficient.

Thirdly, Jesus had the power to raise Himself because He was without sin. Though He paid for the sins of His people

on the cross at Calvary, His sacrifice was acceptable because He wasn't guilty. The innocent died for the guilty on the cross at Calvary. Because of Christ's deity, He was sinless and powerful in raising Himself from the dead.

Again, this is difficult. I am not prepared to act like I completely understand all of this any more than I understand the Trinity. Thankfully, we don't have to completely understand something to believe it.

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I give you the following verses, all of which speak well for themselves and all say that God raised Jesus from the dead. In no way does this detract from the deity of Christ!

Acts 2:24, 32; 3:26; 5:30; 10:40; 13:33; Rom. 4:24; 8:11; 1 Cor. 6:14; 15:15; 2 Cor. 4:14; 1 Pet. 3:18.

Coming from Romania, I suspect there may be a language difficulty that prompted this question, so I would recommend our brother, Curtis Pugh for further clarification.

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It appears from Scripture that all the members of the Godhead had a part in the glorious resurrection of the literal, physical body of the Lord Jesus.

The power of the resurrection is attributed to God the Father in Acts 2:24 & 32 which states: **"Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it...This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses"** (cf. Eph. 1:19-20; I Pet. 1:21).

Jesus declared that He would raise Himself up at the very beginning of His ministry in John 2:19 & 21: **"Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up...But he spake of the temple of his body"** (cf. John 10:18).

The Holy Spirit is also said to have been involved in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus according to I Peter 3:18-19: **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison."**

Thus the eternal harmony of the sacred Trinity is revealed in their cooperative work concerning the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. **"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one"** (I John 5:7).

TOM ROSS

Paul- The Great Man

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in a basket, and went to Jerusalem. The first Christian he met there was Peter, who welcomed him most heartily, but the mass of believers were at first afraid of him, even after his nearly four years' service in the good cause. He remained in Jerusalem only fifteen days, and then, after solemn public services, he was sent upon *his first great mission to the Gentiles*. Immediately he started for Tarsus, his native home, and subsequently, with Barnabas, labored at Antioch; and wherever they preached only a brief period, churches were organized. Having heard of the great sufferings of the disciples at Jerusalem, because of a famine that prevailed, he took up contributions on their behalf in the churches, and bore them, in company with Barnabas, to the Holy City. After a brief season, *these two were set apart by the church at Jerusalem, as missionaries to the heathen world*.

At first they went to Cyprus, where, having wrought his first miracle, his name was changed to Paul. Thence they departed to different points in Asia Minor, and after wonderful success, and equally wonderful escapes, they returned to Antioch, and joyfully rehearsed what the Lord had done through them. There Paul lived several years; and the next we hear of him is as a delegate in attendance at the council held at Jerusalem. After its adjournment, he made *his second missionary tour alone*, and preached in Lystra, Iconium, Ephesus, and Galatia, where he suffered immensely. Thence, in company with Silas and Timothy, he passed over into Europe, preached, was imprisoned and scourged at Philippi, whence he departed for Thessalonica and Berea, where great success attended him. Then we read of him at Athens proclaiming "The unknown God" to the learned Areopagites, next at Corinth, a second time at Ephesus, and again returning to Greece, where he abode three months, and wrote his "Epistle to the Romans." This work completed, we see

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Paul- The Great Man

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him a third time visiting Ephesus, where he was apprehended and brought before Felix. You remember how Felix trembled before the words of his prisoner; how his successor, Festus, upon Agrippa's advice and Paul's own appeal, sent him to Rome, and how he suffered shipwreck on his way thither. There he wrote his Epistles to the Ephesians, Philippians, Philemon, and others. At this period he was an aged man, and yet, when strangely liberated from prison, we find him still fired with missionary zeal. He at once visited many of the churches he had founded in Asia; and then passing again over into Europe, he carried the gospel into Spain, and perhaps into Britain.

From this perilous journey he returned a fourth time to Ephesus, where he wrote his Epistles to Timothy and Titus. Thence he went to the island of Crete; and finally, after this most eventful life, we find him once more at Rome, immured in a dungeon, whence he came forth only to suffer martyrdom by being beheaded, which terrible fate he met heroically, with the victor shout on his lips, **“. . . I am now ready to be offered. . . I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”**

One important object of this lecture is now accomplished. You have compressed in this short space, an outline view of an eventful life, which stretched over sixty-eight years. This, however, was all we needed to give a distinct view of those labors, which throw light upon the character and capabilities of the man himself. What else I have to say shall be gathered under the following points:

1. With reference to his *personal appearance*, we have the following hints. History records that he was derisively called by his enemies, “the high-nosed bald-pated Galilean.” Nicephorus thus describes him: “Paul was a man of low stature; his complexion was fair, his countenance grave, his head small, his eyes strangely beautiful and expressive, his nose long, and his beard thick.” The “golden-mouthed” Chrysostom said: “Although Paul was not very tall in body, perhaps less than five feet, he was tall enough to reach to Heaven.”

2. With reference to his *mental qualities, education, spiritual gifts, and ecclesiastical offices*, suffice it to say, at this point, that you behold in him an intellect of the highest order, combining the genius of the East with the acuteness and consecutiveness of the West. You behold that intellect enjoying the choicest educational advantages. You behold in

him, moreover, the superadded gifts of the Holy Ghost; and all these qualifying him for the eminent position of “Apostle to the Gentiles.” How grand the scope of that providence which found a Jew, born among the Gentiles at Tarsus, and “born again” among them at Damascus, who by his rare combination of natural elements and miraculous conversion, was so admirably adapted to the mighty work of making known Christ to the teeming multitude of that, to the Jew, “outside world.” Paul devoutly and gratefully felt that such was the case. Hence he says, in glowing words, that **“it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen.”** What a display of the sovereignty of grace is here made!

3. The *aggregate* of his labors and sufferings in the prosecution of this great work was immense. During more than thirty years he toiled chiefly in great Gentile cities, shaking the very foundations of Paganism, successfully encountering the cunning of Judaism, the opposition of philosophy, the craft of idolatry, and all the combined elements of universal depravity. He planted Christian churches in most of the central points of western civilization, from the plains of Damascus to the olive groves of Spain, in spite of prodigious antagonisms, before which an inferior man would have been disheartened. He gave to doctrinal Christianity its first systematic development and form. In its elucidation, he blended the learning and logic of the schools with the light and love, which streamed into his capacious soul from the heart of his ever present and adored Lord. As to sufferings, what man in ecclesiastical history has left such a record as this? **“In labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews, five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by my own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.”**

4. But he had other experiences than these--*exaltations* as they are termed--which few if any of earth have ever been favored with. Although, as he himself says, **“born out of due time,”** Jesus appeared to him in glory, not only at Damascus, where He personally and vocally gave him his high commission,

but again and again, at other times, He appeared and made special revelations, which “exalted” him above conscious suffering, and made him victorious over all his foes. Moreover, **“whether in the body or out of the body”** he **“could not tell,”** but sure he was, that he heard things he might never communicate to mortals!

5. And of *his influence, past, present, and prospective*, who shall tell its sum? I can not. In the effort to compute it my brain grows dizzy, my imagination reels, my tongue falters! Why, look over the world at this very hour, and you see “historians with their Pauline events; chronologists with their Pauline dates; geographers with their Pauline places; architects with their Pauline buildings; painters with their Pauline pictures; kings, heroes, and orators with their Pauline names; logicians with their Pauline logic and thinking; sculptors with their Pauline statues; poets with their Pauline verses; theologians with their Pauline theology and literature; churches, states, and nations with their Pauline memorials.” The eloquent French preacher, Monod, said, “Paul rejected his shadow over the vast extent of the Roman empire,” but today that shadow is over the entire Christian world.

6. Friend, am I not justified in styling Paul *the representative of true human greatness*? Let us reflect somewhat more closely on this single point. *What are the elements of true greatness?* Is the highest order of mere intellect one of them? Assuredly he possessed it. Is the possession of a heart, full of tender sympathies and strong affections, another? This he had. His heart was loving and tender. “What mean ye to weep and break my heart?” was his tearful exclamation to the Ephesian elders. Is a wide range of profound learning, high scholarly attainment, still another? He possessed

it. Are a sanctified moral nature, and a harmonious development of the spiritual and intellectual powers, fruiting out in spotless integrity, pure and beautiful character, such elements? You find them in his life. Is strength of will, directed and controlled by high principles of truth, another? Such was his. Is true humility still another? See it beaming forth in utterances like these, **“Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints,” “of sinners of whom I am chief.”** Are renunciations of worldly honors, worldly aggrandizements, scholarly fame, and a devotement of one's entire nature and acquisitions during a lifetime, amid poverty and persecutions, to the welfare of humanity and the glory of God, crowning features of real greatness? His record shows that all of these were true of him. Is a noble external deportment, polished yet natural, refined yet unobtrusive, dignified yet not haughty, the outward badge of such greatness? Such was Paul's. An English skeptic was so struck with this that he exclaimed, “I will believe any thing that Paul states on his own knowledge, for he was a true gentleman.” What dignity, approaching high sublimity, mingled with manly tenderness, you behold manifested when he stood a prisoner, with a chain claspings both of his arms, before Agrippa, after that masterly defense which has scarcely a parallel in the annals of the world's literature, when the convicted king said, **“Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian,”** and the immediate response of the apostle was, **“I would to God, that not only thou, but also all who hear me this day were both almost, and altogether such as I am,”** and then, lifting his arms, while the clank of his chain rang through the hall, he added, with subdued voice, **“except these bonds.”**

(Continued in the next issue)

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.

MEDIA A STRONG INFLUENCE ON TEENS' SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

(EP)--A study published in the March edition of the Journal of Adolescent Health found that kids who regularly view sexualized media are more likely to engage in sexual activity than those who are not exposed.

In addition, such exposure can have just as much influence in a teen's life as parental relationships and religious beliefs. If family relationships are weak, media becomes a “sexual super peer.”

Researchers interviewed more than 1,000 children between 12 and 15 years old, asking them to identify specific media -- such as magazines, movies, television and music -- they commonly viewed. Then they were asked to answer questions about their personal level of sexual activity.

When researchers compared the level of sexual activity to the media the young people normally sought, a direct correlation was identified: The more exposure to sexual

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behavior, the more likely kids were to act on it in real life.

“The strong relationship between media and adolescents’ sexual expression may be due to the media’s role as an important source of sexual socialization for teenagers,” the study said. “Adolescence is a developmental period that is characterized by intense information seeking, especially about adult roles. Adolescents may turn to the media for information about sexual norms.”

Other studies have proven the same to be true. One comprehensive project by psychologist Rebecca Collins published in September 2004 in the online journal Pediatrics found that the more sex-oriented scenes kids viewed, the more likely they were to become sexually active.

“It’s social learning. ‘Monkey see, monkey do,’” she said. “If everyone’s talking about sex or having it, and something bad hardly ever comes out of it, because it doesn’t on TV, then they think, ‘Hey, the whole world’s doing it, and I need to.’”-CitizenLink

BANK OF AMERICA AND OLIVIA TO OFFER CARDS TO LESBIAN MARKET

(EP)--In one of MBNA’s first marketing blitzes as part of Bank of America Corp., the company said March 21 it will start offering credit cards tied to Olivia, a San Francisco travel company that caters primarily to the lesbian community. The Olivia-branded cards, which will allow holders to earn points for items such as airline tickets and hotel reservations, join the legion of so-called affinity cards offered by MBNA. The credit card company also offers cards tied to everything from National Football League teams to retailers such as L.L. Bean and Bass Pro Shops. Founded in 1973, Olivia advertises on its Web site that it markets to more than 50 million customers around the world. More than 75,000 people have traveled with Olivia in the last 10 years on cruises or to resorts designed for lesbians, gays and their family and friends, the company said, adding that the new cards appear to be the first aimed specifically at lesbians.

RHODE ISLAND KIDS WON’T HEAR ABSTINENCE MESSAGE

(EP)--The Rhode Island Department of Education said ‘No’ to an abstinence-only sex education program because it was “not consistent with Rhode Island health education standards,” The Advocate reported.

Heritage of Rhode Island (HRI) developed a program called, “Right Time, Right Place,” designed to teach kids the benefit of abstinence until marriage. A three-year federal grant provided the funding for the program, which, according to Feminist Daily News, reached more than 600 students in two school districts last year.

The Rhode Island American Civil Liberties

Union filed a complaint against HRI claiming the program contained religious material and did not meet the state’s sex education standards.

The Rhode Island Department of Education reviewed the complaint and the material, ultimately concluding the curriculum did not meet standards which require instruction on condom use and the prevention of sexually transmitted disease.

Chris Plante, executive director of HRI, was disappointed with the decision. Plante said the abstinence-only instruction was not meant to replace current sex-education programs in the state, only to compliment them.

SEX-ED PROGRAMS UNDER SCRUTINY

(EP)--Twenty-one members of Congress are asking the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to determine if tax dollars should be spent on school programs that encourage sexual activity. There are at least 24 “comprehensive” sex-education programs sanctioned by the government and funded by taxpayers. Libby Macke, director of Project Reality, said, “The programs being investigated are “Becoming a Responsible Teen,” that teaches kids how to do condom skills in the classroom. ‘Be Proud, Be Responsible’ encourages kids to go shopping for condoms together.” More than \$400 million annually is spent on these programs. U.S. Rep. Don Manzullo, R-Ill., is one of the lawmakers asking the GAO to evaluate whether the classes are appropriate. To date, the agency has not responded to the request.

PRO-LIFE LEGISLATION REDUCES NUMBER OF ABORTIONS

(EP)--The number of abortions is on the decline, and according to LifeSite News, that’s due, in part, to recent laws that restrict access to abortion as well as the prevalence of pregnancy-resource centers. Michael New, a political science professor and statistician at the University of Alabama, conducted an in-depth analysis of recent abortion statistics, concluding that the hundreds of pro-life state laws -- such as those that require parental consent and informed decision-making -- have contributed to the 17.4 percent decline that began in the 1990s. In addition to legislation aimed at lowering the number of abortions, services such as those offered by pregnancy-resource centers provide support for those facing an unplanned pregnancy -- support that often leads to a choice for life instead of abortion. And more and more teens are making a pledge to remain sexually pure until marriage, therefore avoiding sexually transmitted disease and unplanned pregnancy. Though New reported a nationwide drop of 17.4 percent, some states have seen even more dramatic changes. South Carolina has seen a 58 percent drop in the rate of abortions since 1988; Mississippi reported 8,814 abortions in 1991 compared to just 3,000 in 2004.

MASSACHUSETTS SAME-SEX LAW NOT BINDING IN OTHER STATES

(EP)--The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court upheld a law prohibiting out-of-state couples from marrying in the commonwealth if their marriage would be prohibited in their home states. The lawsuit was filed by out-of-state same-sex couples seeking to have the 1913 law thrown out. Had the law been declared unconstitutional, gay couples from across the nation may have been allowed to marry in Massachusetts, with many then returning home to demand their home states recognize their marriages. The Alliance Defense Fund (ADF), which filed a friend-of-the-court brief in the case in defense of the law, applauded the court’s decision. “This case has important implications for the rest of the country with regard to defending marriage against activists who are attempting to destroy it,” said Glen Lavy, senior vice president of ADF’s Marriage Litigation Center. “Legally, marriage is designed to protect children. The state’s primary interest in licensing marriage is to encourage parents to get married and raise their children together. Massachusetts’ recognition of same-sex marriage already undermines this essential principle; allowing couples prohibited from marrying in their own states to marry in the commonwealth would only have exacerbated the problem.”

CHURCH SPENDING ON CATHOLIC SEX ABUSE SCANDAL TOPS \$1 BILLION

(EP)--U.S. Catholic leaders received 783 allegations of clergy sexual abuse last year, which pushed the price tag of the scandal past \$1 billion since 1950, church officials said March 30. In addition, researchers analyzed data from previous years to try to craft a profile of abusive priests. They found no clear warning signs about which priests might be prone to abuse. The new figures show credible charges were lodged against 532 priests by some 777 victims in 2005. Most of the cases are decades old, and only nine cases involved abuse against a minor committed last year. Combined with totals released in the past two years, there have been an estimated 4,983 accused priests and 12,537 victims since 1950. Researchers said disclosures of past abuse have remained high, but new cases of abuse remain low. Church spending on abuse-related lawsuits and therapy jumped by 173 percent last year to \$466 million. The new figures put the total cost to the church since 1950 at \$1.19 billion.

BOY SCOUTS BACK IN COURT

(EP)--The 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals heard arguments April 6 concerning whether the Boy Scouts of America could continue to use Fort A.P. Hill in Virginia for its national Jamborees. Last summer, more than 40,000 Scouts attended the Jamboree. A lower court had ruled against the Scouts, but the Department of Defense appealed the decision. The case was brought by the American Civil Liberties Union. The district judge decided that since the Scout oath includes a “duty to God,” it is a religious

organization and therefore not allowed to use military facilities.

AMERICANS MORE RELIGIOUS?

New data from the annual tracking survey of religious behavior and beliefs conducted by The Barna Group reveals that there has been a significant increase in religious activity related to five of the seven core religious behaviors studied by the company. The most prolific jump in activity relates to Bible reading. Bible readership plummeted to a 20-year low of just 31 percent in 1995, and began to slowly climb back to higher levels, finally returning to the 40 percent mark in 2000. After several years of stalled growth, increases began again in 2004, continuing through 2006, when Bible readership hit 47% of adults during a typical week, other than when they are at church. That is the highest readership level achieved since the 1980s, according to the Barna tracking data. Church attendance has increased slowly in recent years. There has been a significant rebound from the 37 percent recorded in 1996, climbing to 47 percent in 2006.

LOUISIANA PROPOSES ABORTION BAN

Following the lead of South Dakota, a Louisiana lawmaker hopes his state will also ban abortion. State Sen. Ben Nevers has introduced a bill which would ban virtually all abortions in Louisiana. The bill would allow an exception if the mother’s life is in danger, but not for rape or incest. More than 11,000 abortions are performed in Louisiana every year.

BILL WOULD FORCE SCHOOLS TO SUPPORT HOMOSEXUALITY

(EP)--Ron Prentice, who heads the California Family Council, a pro-family group based in Riverside, said California lawmakers are being pressured to adopt the bill, which would transform public schools into politically correct bastions.

SB 1437 would prevent textbooks, instructional materials or teaching content that would “adversely affect persons because of their gender -- either real or perceived -- or sexual orientation.”

“What this specifically does is reflect negatively upon historic faith perspectives in public education,” Prentice said.

Bob Knight, director of the Culture and Family Institute, said the main threat this bill poses is that it deals with gender “in such a way as to deny that there are really naturally born boys and girls.”

“What it does is adopt a definition of ‘gender’ that says it can’t be ‘stereotypically associated with a person’s assigned sex at birth,’” he said. “That means that if you think you’re a girl, even if you’re a boy, you’re to be encouraged in that fantasy.”

“It opens the door for the entire homosexual/trangendered agenda -- which is to confuse people into believing that you can be anything you want to be, that sex itself is arbitrary and that marriage shouldn’t

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be limited to a man and a woman,” Knight added. And the legislation would ban any opinions to the contrary.

“When the bill forces teachers to talk only positively about homosexuality, what it’s saying is you have to lie about it,” he said. “You can’t bring in the negative health data, all the emotional consequences, and the effects on families. They’re basically setting educators up to mislead kids directly on this topic. I don’t know of any other topics in schools that are treated like this. You have to teach something a certain way, even though it violates millions of people’s deeply held beliefs.”

Prentice added: “This is all the incremental activity of the homosexual agenda, and it certainly appears that the next step in the public-school education code in California would be hate-speech codes for anything that might adversely affect gender, whether real or perceived.”

Knight said the bill is touted as being part of education reform -- but it’s really about “corrupting education and making it a fully owned subsidiary of the homosexual activist movement.”

The bill is being pushed through the Legislature by Sen. Sheila Keuhl, a self-identified lesbian who has been promoting the entire gay educational agenda.

Keuhl worked under the name Sheila James as an actress best known for portraying the character Zelda Gilroy on the popular ‘60s TV sitcom, “Dobie Gillis.” Her appealing personality coupled with her law-professor’s knowledge of the law, has gone far to advance the gay agenda in California, Knight said.

“Zelda is definitely doing some incredibly negative things in this state,” Prentice said.

Pro-family activists hope this bill never gets near Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, but there is real possibility it might. It has already passed the Senate Judiciary Committee.--
CitizenLink

TV NETWORKS SUE TO USE PROFANE LANGUAGE

(EP)--The ABC, NBC, CBS and Fox television networks have filed notices of appeal challenging an FCC’s determination that profane language should be banned from the broadcast airwaves. Joining the appeal are their affiliate stations plus the Hearst-Argyle Television group.

The networks are challenging the FCC’s determination that language used on *The Early Show* on CBS in 2004, plus the *Billboard Music Awards* shows broadcast by Fox in 2002 and 2003 and episodes of ABC’s *NYPD Blue* in 2003, were inappropriate.

The FCC did not issue fines in those cases because the incidents occurred before a 2004 ruling that virtually any use of certain expletives would be considered profane and indecent. While none of the cases involved NBC, the network filed a petition to intervene on behalf of the other networks and stations.

The networks and affiliate groups issued a rare joint statement calling the FCC ruling “unconstitutional” and inconsistent with two decades of previous FCC decisions. They also claimed the FCC “overstepped its authority” and acted arbitrarily.

Brent Bozell, president of the Parents Television Council, called the networks’ action “utterly shameless” and pointed out that the broadcast airwaves do not belong to the broadcasters, but to the American people.

“The broadcast networks are spitting in the faces of millions of Americans by saying they should be allowed to air the F-word and S-word on television,” he said. “It’s beyond preposterous that the networks would even propose that airing the F-word and S-word on television is not indecent. The networks’ principles have now been unmasked for everyone to see. Their actions today are indecent in and of themselves.”

Daniel Weiss, senior analyst, media and sexuality, at Focus on the Family Action, said the move makes clear that, short of crucial updates to federal law, the broadcast industry will continue to pollute the nation’s airwaves.

“This suit proves that the TV industry is more concerned with expanding its lawless broadcasting practices than serving the viewing public,” he said. “There isn’t a national clamor for more F-words on network TV, but there is a growing outcry about the increasingly coarse, profane and indecent programming pumped into American living rooms.

COMEDY CENTRAL CENSORS MUHAMMAD, ALLOWS DEFECATING JESUS

(EP)--An image of the Prophet Muhammad scheduled to be shown on the controversial cartoon show “South Park” April 12 was censored by Comedy Central, reportedly out of fear of retribution by Islamists.

However, the network did show an animated Jesus defecating on an American flag.

Comedy Central issued a single-sentence statement regarding the Muhammad episode: “In light of recent world events we feel we made the right decision.”

Some Islamists believe that any image of Muhammad is prohibited. A Danish editorial cartoon that featured an unflattering depiction of Muhammad generated massive protests and violence worldwide.

In the censored episode, Kyle Broflovski, the 8-year-old hero of “South Park,” convinced the president of Fox to show Muhammad on an episode of another animated show, “The Family Guy.” According to the original program, when the Muhammad image aired, terrorists retaliated with a cartoon depicting Jesus Christ defecating uncontrollably on the American flag.

But when it came time for the Muhammad image to air, Comedy Central showed a black screen and these words: “Comedy Central has refused to air an image of Muhammad

on their network.” The image of a defecating Jesus, however, was uncensored.

Christian groups, including the Family Research Council and the American Family Association, criticized the show – not so much for refusing to air the image of Muhammad, but for what it called the “double standard” and “hypocrisy” of airing the image of Jesus.

EDUCATED WORKERS, CORPORATE INTERESTS, COMPLICATE IMMIGRATION ISSUE

(EP)--You probably didn’t see many H-1B visa holders among the thousands of immigrant protesters who flooded the streets of U.S. cities this month. They were more likely to be in libraries hitting the books or in laboratories doing research.

H-1B is the designation the government gives to highly skilled temporary migrants (such as scientists, information technology specialists, and engineers) who come to the United States to work, and part of the immigration debate in Washington concerns how many to allow into the country and what their effect is on the economy.

Current law lets 65,000 H-1B workers, usually from China or India, into the United States per year. The Senate Judiciary Committee endorsed a plan to increase that to 115,000, but so far the House has opposed any expansion. President Bush has called on Congress to “be realistic and reasonable and raise that cap.”

Few doubt that the H-1B program is good for American companies—many of which are lobbying vigorously for an expansion—and for the American consumers who buy their products. The concern opponents have is the effect on skilled American workers who have to compete with the visa holders for jobs.

David Huber, who calls himself “an American citizen and an engineer whose life has been devastated by that program,” gave moving testimony against H-1B visas on March 30 to a House subcommittee on immigration. He said that despite strong credentials he lost two jobs to foreigners who were willing to work for much less than he had earned. “Between the summer of 2002 and January 2006, I had only worked for a total of about 6.5 months,” Huber said. “I fully depleted my savings, and was nearly homeless on two or three occasions.”

Huber’s case may be an isolated one; whether and how much the program hurts other Americans depends on whom you ask. Harvard economist George Borjas found that when foreign workers increase the doctorate supply by 10 percent, they lower wages of Americans with doctorates by 3 percent to 4 percent. A Federal Reserve study in 2003, however, concluded that the H-1B program did not depress wages for information technology workers, though it did find that the program may add to the short-term unemployment rate. Allegations of fraud have also plagued the program.

Still, marquee companies like Apple, Cisco, IBM, and Hewlett Packard insist that they need educated foreign workers to be competitive. The implication is uncomfortable

but difficult to deny: American colleges and universities are not exactly churning out large numbers of scientists and engineers. InformationWeek reports that only about 5 percent of U.S. undergraduate students pursue degrees in science or engineering, and the National Science Foundation says about one-third of the Ph.D.s awarded in those fields go to foreign students.

American companies say this leaves them in a bind, with some positions simply being left unfilled because of a lack of qualified applicants. “I have many executives saying they would love to hire for those positions from here,” Chris Merida of the American Engineering Association told the San Jose Mercury News. “But . . . the talent is not here.”

Others question the wisdom of not utilizing the skills of more foreign students trained at American universities. “Do we want to educate those students and send them out of the country to compete against U.S. firms?” asked Stuart Anderson, executive director of the National Foundation for American Policy. “Wouldn’t it be better to assimilate this talent and allow them to create jobs and innovations here in America?”

The H-1B program will be one of many facets of immigration reform that Congress must deal with when its spring recess ends on April 24. Tech companies say they’ll be watching, and that without more H-1B visas, they may have no choice but to outsource skilled jobs overseas.

NATIONAL BRIEFS

(EP)--With studies indicating as many as four in 10 women are pressured into abortions by a boyfriend or parent, Michigan is working to become the first state to address the problem legislatively. The Coercive Abortion Prevention Act (CAPA), which is being opposed by Planned Parenthood, would allow a 24-hour waiting period for a woman if it is determined she was pressured to end her pregnancy. Sen. Michelle McManus, the sponsor of the bill, said she wants abortion clinics to find out why women show up at their door. Barbara Listing, president of Right to Life of Michigan, said McManus’ legislation is pro-woman. “It does give that woman an avenue, a networking, a way she can talk to someone,” she said. “And if she is in an abusive situation, (she can) get help to get out of that abusive situation. So that extra 24-hour waiting period will be helpful.” It’s the second pro-life bill winding its way through Michigan’s legislature. A bill that will give abortion-minded women a chance to see an ultrasound of their pre-born baby has already passed both houses, and is expected to be signed into law by Gov. Jennifer Granholm —*CitizenLink*

(EP)--A survey published by Zogby International found the majority of Americans believe abortion ends a human life, LifeNews.com reported. The poll, commissioned by the Associated Television News, contacted more than 30,000 people

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in 48 states between March 10-14. Fifty-nine percent said abortion ends a life and 50 percent said life begins at conception. Only 19 percent believe life begins at the moment of birth. When asked about pending pro-life legislation, Americans said they are in favor of more restrictions on abortion. Sixty-nine percent said taxpayers should not fund abortions and 56 percent want a 24-hour waiting period for abortion. Almost 70 percent support parental notification for girls under age 16, while 55 percent support the same for those under age 18. When a crime against a pregnant woman results in injury or death to her preborn child, 64 percent said the criminal should be charged for two separate crimes.-*CitizenLink*

(EP)--Two more women have died after taking the abortion drug RU-486, raising to seven the number of deaths that have been linked to the pills. Besides the fatalities related to the drug, more than 800 reports have indicated other complications directly associated with RU-486. In an advisory to the public, the FDA said it is looking into the two latest deaths. "At this time we are investigating all circumstances associated with these cases," the advisory stated, "and are not able to confirm the causes of death." At least four other deaths associated with RU-486 are known to have been caused by a rare, but lethal, bacterial infection that thrives on the decaying tissue of the dead preborn baby. A warning on the drug's label warns women of the possibility of serious or even fatal infections.

(EP)--Gov. Jon Huntsman signed into a law a bill that requires any minor seeking an abortion in Utah to get written permission from parents. Previously, the state required parents to be notified, but did not mandate they give permission. Girls can seek an exception in juvenile court for cases of abuse, incest or if the minor is estranged from her parents. The state Health Department reported that Utah has one of the lowest abortion rates in the country.-*CitizenLink*

(EP)—An Idaho Christian group is urging pastors and their congregations to support a petition drive to protect churches and church members' private property from eminent domain abuses. The petition drive is in response to a U.S. Supreme Court decision last year that says the U.S. Constitution does not prevent government officials from condemning churches and private homes under eminent domain and seizing the property for commercial development projects. Bryan Fischer, executive director of the Idaho Values Alliance, says he must gather 70,000 signatures by April 30 in order to get a referendum on the fall ballot.

(EP)—An analysis by the Gallup Organization finds that Church of Christ

members and Mormons are most likely to attend worship services at least once a week. Pollsters found that 68 percent of Church of Christ members said they attend services at least once a week or almost every week, followed by 67 percent of Mormons who said they followed the same practice. Gallup analyzed worship attendance by looking at more than 11,000 Gallup Poll interviews conducted between 2002 and 2005. It found that denominations known for conservative or evangelical theology have higher reported attendance than those that are traditionally considered mainline denominations. Among the lowest percentage of service attenders between 2002 and 2005 were Episcopalians, with about a third reporting regular attendance.

(EP)--In the past year, Yale University enrolled a former Taliban official with a 4th grade education into a non-degree program. The reason? To promote diversity. The University of California allegedly attempts to discriminate against students educated at Christian high schools. DePaul University "makes war" on the free speech rights of conservative students and faculty. These schools are among the recipients of this year's 9th annual Campus Outrage Awards, handed out by the Collegiate Network (CN), a part of the conservative Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI). The awards are an attempt by the Collegiate Network to shine a light on "diversity run amok, suppression of free speech, and discrimination against Christians, conservatives, and patriots continue to be the norm in American higher education."

(EP)--The Securities and Exchange Commission has ruled that the Ford Motor Co. must hear a resolution calling for a sexual-orientation clause to be removed from the automaker's non-discrimination policy at its upcoming shareholders meeting. The company is afraid that ending the benefit will bring a boycott from angry homosexuals. Written by one of the company's stockholders in Illinois, the motion forbids the company from promoting homosexual marriage. Despite Ford's efforts to get rid of the resolution, the SEC said stockholders will be able to vote on it. The proposal, along with comments from the company, was included in the proxy statements mailed to shareholders last week. Results will be announced at the annual stockholders meeting in Wilmington, Del., on May 11.

INTERNATIONAL BRIEFS

(EP)—A member of the Dutch Parliament said she wants to introduce a bill that if passed would fine college-educated women for being stay-at-home moms. Member of Parliament Sharon Dijksma says that since education is state-financed, the decision to stay at home is a "destruction of capital." According to the Dutch Expatica news service, "If you receive the benefit of an expensive education at the cost of society, you should not be allowed to throw away that knowledge unpunished." Christian groups have responded with a vigorous defense of stay-at-home moms.



Bush's Biggest Mistake: Runaway Immigration

By G. Russell Evans
of Norfolk, Virginia

President Bush has made the biggest mistake in his life. Instead of being a great president he will be known as the president who did not stop illegal immigration.

One of the greatest threats to America and one of the least attended to is the wild cascading and runaway flood of immigrants, both legal and illegal---that conceivably can make a New America---third world style even.

Who is to blame? Greedy politicians in Washington who care more about potential immigrant votes than a strong, stable America and who, for the most part, are afraid to speak out for fear of being called "racists."

THEY ARE GREEDY

They are greedy for short-term gains, but are courting long-term disaster because, at the present rate within 50 years, the original settlers, Europeans, will be in the minority and English will not be the predominant language.

Much has been said and written about this. Alarms have been sounding---but, who cares? Not politicians. They want more votes. Not big business. They want cheap labor. Not union bosses. They want more members, more dues, and more clout. Not universities. They want more students, more grants, and more diversity.

NOT PRESIDENT BUSH

Not President Bush. He wants more Republican voters and high marks from his buddy Vincente Fox, President of Mexico. Not most voters. They want prosperity and fat pocket books and are willing to "let George do it."

It is depressing and very disappointing for our President to push for amnesty for some 10 million Mexican illegals now in the United States. He calls it "regularization" for guest workers. This is phony. Some of these illegals may well be terrorists plotting to murder more innocents and keep us of balance.

MOREOVER, HE IS PANDERING

Moreover, he is pandering. He is not honoring his oath of office to "preserve the constitution," and enforce the laws. Immigration laws on the books could virtually solve the immigration problem---if properly enforced with an adequate immigration and naturalization service.

His budget should provide adequate funds and manpower for the INS. Unfortunately, our immigration laws have been skirted for the past 50 years. And no-one skirted better than Bill Clinton who flat out told his INS commissioner, Doris Meissenger, to get

him a million immigrant voters.

She did, after lowering the bar and naturalizing many criminals and other undesirables.

This creeping immigration disaster began in 1965 when President Lyndon Johnson, seeking glory for his legacy, signed the Immigration Reform Act---thereby scrapping America's traditional policy that limited immigrants to the number that could be assimilated in American culture and language.

CRITICS CAN SAY

Critics can say "don't be greedy; let them all in." Controlled immigration is not greedy. Before Johnson, our leaders were dedicated to preserving the American nation.

The great Supreme Court Justice Robert H. Jackson (1941-1954) once wrote "our constitution is not a suicide pact."

Let us add: "Neither should our immigration laws be suicide pacts."

HERE IS A LITANY

Here is a litany of their documented findings, which could be shortened, of course, but is given rather completely to emphasize shocking and unbelievable developments.

* The congress has quietly approved the most open-door policy in history, allowing up to 10,000 immigrants per day.

* 12 million illegals are now in the United States and the INS is unable to deport them.

* U.S. services and benefits given to legal and illegal immigrants cost American tax-payers \$68 billion per year---and growing.

* Bilingual education doubles the cost of schooling aliens. In the southwest, a new school per day would have to be built to keep up.

* 400,000 foreigners now collect Social Security benefits without ever working a single day in America. Immigrants get Medicaid twice as often as native citizens.

* Immigration costs U.S. born workers \$133 billion per year in job losses.

* On September 11, legal and illegal Muslim immigrant terrorists killed 3,000 innocent Americans and destroyed 10s of billions of dollars in property.

* Over 25 percent of federal prisoners are immigrants. Illegals commit 12 percent of felonies, 25 percent of burglaries and 34 percent of car thefts.

* Non-citizens collect \$7 billion per year in welfare, including medical, food stamps and housing---courtesy of U.S. taxpayers, whose representatives in the Congress allow this to happen.

MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

Members of Congress know most of this. They look the other way. They want votes, donations, and above all, reelection. Much of our immigration policy was

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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).

Itching Ears

"For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ" (Jude 4).

It grieves my heart when I turn on so-called Christian radio and hear the diluted and erroneous things expounded in the Name of my Lord. The Arminians, Charismatics, this cult, and that cult have taken over the airwaves in this age of anything goes "Christianity."

This preacher over here says, "God really wants you to have that new Cadillac, all you have to do is pray for it and He'll give it to you. . .and send a check here to the ministry and we'll pray extra hard for you as well!" Then that one over there smiling at you from the cover of his magazine wearing a \$5,000.00 Armani suit and \$15-20,000.00 Rolex watch says, "God wants you to send a check for those poor starving children in Africa." I wonder how many starving children could be fed with the money spent on that suit and watch. And that preacher with the trembling, grave voice who is almost in tears, "Now friend, God has done His part, now it's up to you to do your part. Put your hand right there on the radio and pray this prayer, and if you truly mean it God will save you." Hello?! Is any of this in your Bible? I sure can't find it in mine!

But woe unto the brother who speaks out against the status quo and expounds on the true Gospel! The main-streamers will gnash their teeth and verbally stone you, if not physically. I've seen chaplains red in the face and steaming mad when their erroneous doctrines were challenged and refuted by Scripture. The full-time prison chaplain here where I am told another prisoner, Kevin, a dear brother strong in the Lord, that he was going to "burn in hell" for speaking out against paganistic Catholic doctrines. The main-streamer's will scream that the majority backs them up and holler about their seminary degrees to prove they're right, then they'll denounce you as a crazy, a heretic, a cultist, all the while they walk arm-in-arm, lockstep through the gates of hell.

I don't have a seminary degree, so I can't point to a diploma on the wall and tell you because of that piece of paper I must know what I'm talking about. But

I can point you to a well worn Bible with the gilded edges rubbed off and the myriad verses underlined in various colors and pages ready to fall out and tell you that everything I know about the Gospel I've learned between its black leather covers. The Lord is my Teacher, the world my classroom, the Bible my textbook and First Thessalonians 5:21 my motto: **"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."**

I've spent countless hours searching and studying between the covers of my Bible and in all my searching I've failed to find one instance where the majority was in the right. What I did find is disturbing, but enlightening, as I compare Holy Writ with the landscape of modern Christendom.

I found a degenerate majority content in gratifying themselves and a despised and ridiculed remnant standing true to the Lord and His Holy Word. A remnant who lived and breathed the admonition to **"preach the word [not tell jokes]; be instant in season, out of season [not just when it felt good or feel good messages]; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine [not candy coat, water down, or skip over because you might step on some toes]"** (II Tim. 4:2).

The majority wished they'd died in Egypt by their flesh-pots instead of trusting the Lord to provide in the wilderness (Ex. 15-17).

The majority didn't trust the Lord and begged Aaron to make them a false god, the golden calf (Ex. 32).

The majority again distrusted the Lord and cried out against Him when the spies came back with the report about the Promised Land (Num. 13:26-14:10). They even wanted to make themselves a captain and return to Egypt!

The majority beat and murdered the prophets sent to warn them about their sin (Neh. 9:26).

The majority denied the Lord of Glory, their only Savior, when He came in the flesh; and conspired to murder Him (The Gospels).

The majority murdered Stephen, who was **"full of faith and power"** and **"did great wonders and miracles among the people"** (Acts 6:8-7:60).

The majority did many grievous things to the apostle Paul, tried to kill him more than once, beat him, and imprisoned him (II Cor. 11:23-33).

The majority tried to stamp out the Truth (Acts 5:40).

"The time will come when they

will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (II Tim. 4:3-4).

Dear reader, the time is here! The majority is well entrenched. Who are you going to believe? Who are you going to serve? The majority's itchy ear teachers or the Lord of lords and King of kings who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life?

"As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD" (Josh. 24:15).



Runaway Immigration

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developed behind closed doors, under severe political pressure and without informing voters of the proposals and their consequences.

So, we complain to the President and to our Senators and Congressman---and get an aide-dispatched form letter, thanking us profusely for our interest, promising to take it all into consideration and assuring us of their desire to serve us in any way possible---and not answering our concerns at all.

THEN THEY DO NOTHING

Then, they do nothing---even after follow-up letters. If enough people would flood the White House and Congress with data and demands, the wild, irresponsible immigration policies could be corrected---unless, already in America, we have enough immigrant-boosting voters to seal the deal for a New America.

Critics may call this column "racist." This column is an "American First" column, defending the America envisioned by our founding fathers---and contending that no American policy must ever be a "suicide pact." Civilization is strong and freer with a strong and free America.



GLEANINGS



PSYCHOLOGY And The Evangelical Church

By T. A. McMahon

Nothing in the history of the modern church has induced believers to abandon their faith in the *sufficiency* of God's Word like the pseudo-science of psychological counseling. Consider the following: the evangelical church is a primary referral service for counseling psychologists and psychiatrists. Many large churches have

licensed psychotherapists on staff. Mission agencies are requiring their missionary candidates to be evaluated and approved by licensed psychological professionals prior to being considered for service. Christian psychologists and counselors are often better known and more respected by evangelicals than preachers and teachers. Who has not heard of psychologist Dr. James Dobson?

Most evangelicals are convinced that psychotherapy is scientific and is necessary to supply what is lacking in the Bible regarding man's mental, emotional, and behavioral needs. When I use the term, "psychotherapy," what I am referring to is psychological counseling, clinical psychology, and (non-biological) psychiatry. I may also use the general term "psychology." I recognize that there are some areas of psychology that are clearly distinct from psychotherapy and may have scientific merit and value, e.g., those fields that study perception, man-machine interface, ergonomics, some educational psychology, and so forth. They are, however, a very small percentage of the entire industry of psychology, which claims to have scientific insights into the mind of man.

So what's the problem with psychotherapy? According to numerous scientific studies, it rarely works (and then only superficially) and is known to be harmful. From a biblical perspective, it is an antichristian, religious counterfeit. Both conclusions will become quite apparent as we proceed.

Given the significant influence it has had on the church, the psychological way compared to the biblical way should be an issue of critical concern for all those who believe that the Word of God is their authority and that it is completely sufficient for **"all things that pertain to life and godliness"** (II Pet. 1:3). How do these two ways compare?

They couldn't be more at odds. The basic theories of psychological counseling are contradictory to what the Bible teaches about the nature of man and God's solution for his mental, emotional, and behavioral problems. Psychotherapeutic concepts regard humanity as intrinsically good. The Bible says that other than Jesus Christ, man is *not* good but was born with a sinful nature, **"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"** (Rom. 3:23).

Psychological counseling often promotes the belief that problems adversely affecting a person's mental and emotional welfare are determined by circumstances external to the person, such as parental abuse and environment. The Bible tells us that a man's evil heart and his sinful choices cause his mental, emotional, and behavioral problems. **"For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things**

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Gleanings

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come from within, and defile the man" (Mark 7:21-23).

Psychotherapy attempts to improve the self through concepts such as self-love, self-esteem, self-worth, self-image, self-actualization, etc. The Bible teaches that self is humanity's main problem, not the solution to the ills that plague mankind. And it prophetically identifies the chief solution of psychological counseling, self-love, as the catalyst to a life of depravity. **"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves. . ."** (II Tim. 3:1).

The Bible teaches that reconciliation to God through Jesus Christ is the only way for man to truly remedy his sin-related mental, emotional, and behavioral troubles. **"And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he [Jesus Christ] reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his [God's] sight"** (Col. 1:21, 22).

Psychotherapy has shipwrecked the faith of many regarding the sufficiency of the Bible. Because psychologists claim to have insights into the nature of man and also methods for change not found in the Bible, it follows that the Bible cannot be sufficient for counseling or addressing believers' mental, emotional, and behavioral needs.

Psychotherapy has sold the church the lie that psychology can be integrated with the Bible. That ought to be scandalous to any thoughtful believer. Since psychology and the Bible are fundamentally in opposition to one another, it should be obvious that there can be no real integration of their teachings. Moreover, if the Bible, the Manufacturer's handbook, isn't sufficient to cover all things that pertain to life and godliness, then His created beings must look elsewhere for their mental, emotional, and behavioral welfare. And if they must look elsewhere, then the Bible's claim to be authoritative, inerrant, and sufficient is also false.

How influential is psychotherapy in the church? It would be rare indeed to find a topical sermon with no supposed insights from psychology. Typical would be Willow Creek church near Chicago, whose influence is national and international through its 10,000-member association of churches. One researcher of church-growth methods who spent a year at Willow Creek observed, "[Pastor Bill] Hybels not only teaches psychological principles but often uses the psychological principles as interpretive guides for his exegesis of Scripture. . . . King David had an identity crisis, the apostle Paul encouraged Timothy to do self-analysis, and Peter had a problem with boundary issues. The point is, psychological principles are regularly

built into Hybels' teaching." Rick Warren's record-breaking *The Purpose-Driven Life* furthers the acceptance of psychology in the church by including such psychobabble as "Samson was co-dependent" and Gideon's weakness was low self-esteem and deep insecurities."

Why this psychologizing of Christianity? Well, primarily because the church has been sold three erroneous ideas:

- 1) Psychotherapy is a scientific endeavor;
- 2) Counseling is for professionals only;
- 3) Christian psychology reconciles science and faith.

Let's look at each of these. *First*, psychotherapy is not a scientific endeavor. Martin and Deidre Bobgan report in their book, *The End of "Christian Psychology"*; "Attempting to evaluate the status of psychology, the American Psychological Association appointed Dr. Sigmund Koch to plan and direct a study which was subsidized by the National Science Foundation. This study involved eighty eminent scholars assessing the facts, theories, and methods of psychology. The results of this extensive endeavor were published in a seven-volume series entitled *Psychology: A Study of a Science*." Dr. Koch sums up the panel's findings in these words: "I think it is by this time utterly and finally clear that psychology cannot be a coherent science."

Dr. Karl Popper, regarded as one of the greatest philosophers of science, after a thorough study of psychotherapy, declared: "though posing as sciences [psychotherapy] had in fact more in common with primitive myths than with science [and] resembled astrology rather than astronomy."

Secondly, counseling is *not* for professionals only. Psychotherapy, thanks to Freud and some others with medical backgrounds, has terms and concepts that falsely give the impression that they have to do with medical science. An understanding of the term "illness" is key to seeing through this mirage.

Can one's mental process---that is, his thinking or behavior---literally be ill? Our brains, which are physical, can certainly be, but our *minds*, which are nonphysical, can't be ill. So the term "mental illness" is a misnomer---a myth. Furthermore, with exceptions in the area of psychiatry, psychotherapists do not address the organic or physical problems of their clients.

So, what do psychotherapists do? Well, mostly they talk and listen. Research psychiatrist Dr. Thomas Szasz spells it out for us: "In plain language, what do patient and psychotherapist actually do? They speak and listen to each other. What do they speak about? Narrowly put, the patient speaks about himself, and the therapist speaks about the patient. . . . Each tries to move the other to see or do things in a certain way."

I assume that most evangelicals, whether in the pulpit or pew, can certainly handle the medium of counseling---

which is simply talking and listening! But, few of us are trained professionals. We don't have an advanced degree in talking and listening, nor have we studied theories about human behavior, which are nothing more than the opinions and speculations of godless men. Furthermore, there are more than 500 different (often contradictory and sometimes utterly bizarre) psychotherapeutic systems and thousands of methods and techniques.

So, as nonprofessionals, we missed out on all of that knowledge-so-called. But still, aren't professionals more effective than nonprofessionals in helping people with their problems? No!

After reviewing the research comparing trained and untrained psychological counselors, researchers Truax and Mitchell report: "There is no evidence that the usual traditional graduate training program has any positive value in producing therapists who are more helpful than nonprofessionals."

Consider the conclusion of a lengthy research project conducted by Dr. Joseph Durlak:

"Overall, outcome results in comparative studies have favored nonprofessionals. . . . There were no significant differences among helpers in 28 investigations, but nonprofessionals were significantly more effective than professionals in 12 studies.

The provocative conclusion from these comparative investigations is that professionals do not possess demonstrably superior therapeutic skills, compared with nonprofessionals. Moreover, professional mental health education, training, and experience are not necessary prerequisites for an effective helping person."

Best-selling author, psychologist Dr. Bernie Zilbergeld, writes in his book, *The Shrinking of America: Myths of Psychological Change*: ". . . most problems faced by people would be better solved by talking to friends, spouses, relatives or anyone else who appears to be doing well what you believe you're doing poorly. . . . If I personally had a relationship problem and I couldn't work it out with my partner, I wouldn't go and see a shrink. I would look around me for the kind of relationship I admire. . . . That's who I would go to. I want somebody who's showing by his life that he can do it."

Now that's just good commonsense advice from a man who understands the field of psychotherapy. Yet, in this **"perilous time"** for the church, many (and the numbers continue to grow) have abandoned not only "common sense," but worse yet, they have discarded their biblical mandate, which is to minister to one another through the Word of God and in the power of the Holy Spirit. They've been intimidated by myths and have turned from the truth.

Finally, Christian psychology cannot reconcile science and faith. Why not? Because psychology is not a science, nor can it be Christianized. Of course, there are Christians who are licensed professional

psychotherapists, but there is no recognized branch or stream of psychology identified as Christian.

Consider this statement representing the view of the Christian Association for Psychological Studies:

"We are often asked if we are 'Christian psychologists'. We are Christians who are psychologists but at the present time there is no acceptable Christian psychology that is markedly different from non-Christian psychology. It is difficult to imply that we function in a manner that is fundamentally distinct from our non-Christian colleagues. . . . as yet there is not an acceptable theory, mode of research or treatment methodology that is distinctly Christian."

How then do licensed psychotherapists who are Christians function? They selectively draw from the concepts learned during their secular education and training and attempt to integrate them into their Christian belief system. Yet, the concepts are all antithetical to the biblical way of ministering to a believer's problems related to overcoming sin and living a life that is fruitful, productive, and pleasing to the Lord.

You have to wonder why a Christian would turn to any of these wisdom-of-men approaches that were conceived by people who were so obviously anti-Christian. Freud considered religion an illusion and was known to have a hatred for Christianity because of what he believed to be its anti-Semitic teachings. Others, such as Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers, were blatant New Agers and occultists. Yet, psychologist: "Under the influence of humanistic psychologist like Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow, many of us Christians have begun to see our need for self-love and self-esteem. This is a great and necessary focus." Not according to the Scriptures!

The Book of Nehemiah gives us a picture of what's happening in the church. Nehemiah (his name means "Jehovah is our comforter") is a type of the Holy Spirit. God sends him to rebuild and strengthen Jerusalem. Under the guise of helping Nehemiah, enemies of Israel attempt to subvert the restoration. Incredibly, the priest gives one such adversary, Tobiah, a room within the Temple. So it is with so-called Christian psychology today.

How serious is this psychologizing of the church? Although devastating even now, Scripture tells us it will far exceed what we can imagine. The Apostle Paul is emphatic in his warning (II Timothy 3:1-5) that **"in the last days"** man's condition will be **"perilous."** That warning begins with a characteristic that is the cornerstone of humanistic psychology and which Paul indicates (verses 2-5) is the source of a host of evils: self-love.

(*The Berea Call*, Vol. XXI, No. 3, March 2006, pp. 3-4).



Women Veils Spring 2006

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by T. P. Simmons

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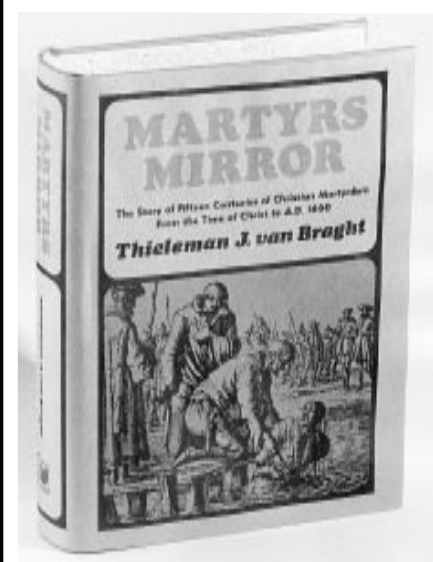
Trail of Blood

(video lectures)

by Milburn Cockrell

\$15.00

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



\$45.00

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



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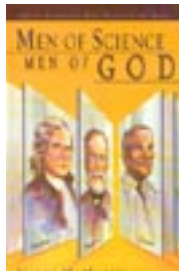
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Closed Communion and Baptist ...	\$2.50
History of Alien Immersion	\$2.50
Recollections of A Long Life	\$3.00
Rightly Dividing the Word	\$2.00
Observance of the Religious Days	\$1.25

Men of Science Men of God

by

Henry M. Morris
\$7.99

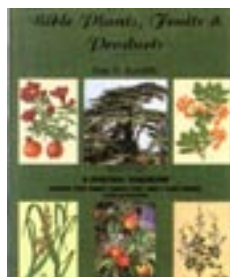
Because of the evolutionary dogma that dominates America's teaching institutions, most people are unaware that many of the world's greatest scientists were Christians and ardent creationists who believed the Book of Genesis. This book presents the facts.



Bible Plants, Fruits & Products

by Tom Ratcliffe

\$28.99



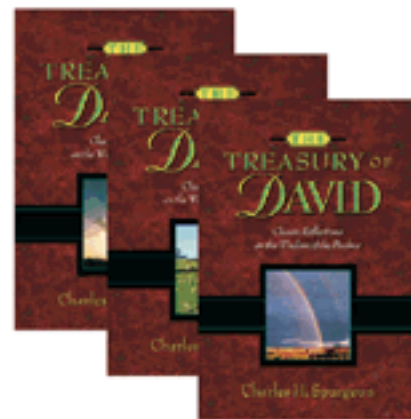
Here is a truly unique reference book listing every plant mentioned in the Bible with beautiful, full color photos and watercolor illustrations plus each plant's description, botanical name, references and warmly devotional exposition that will enhance your Bible study.

The Beginning of the World

by

Henry M. Morris
\$8.99

A handy study of Genesis 1-11, this book gives insightful commentary into the stories most often labeled as "myth" by those who want to chip away at the Bible. Morris details amazing evidence that the first 11 chapters of Genesis are literal history that shapes us today.



The Treasury of David by C. H. Spurgeon Price \$39.97

This is Spurgeon's own commentary on every verse of the Psalms with quotes from hundreds of other old writers. A Christian Classic. We ship it free at this price to you.

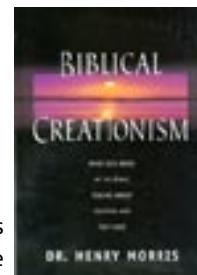
Biblical Creationism

by

Henry M. Morris
\$12.99

Many Christians consider the doctrine of creationism to be a marginal issue — perhaps not important to our faith. But do you know that the Bible speaks on the subject . . . in each of its 66 books?

Henry Morris, has meticulously researched the subject and his classic Biblical Creationism stands as a powerful witness that creation is anything but a trivial issue. From the fall of creation in Genesis, to creation restored in Revelation, we are given insightful clues about God's mighty work. Be amazed at the dialogue Job and his friends have concerning Noah's flood, or Peter's assertion that future generations would scoff at the idea of special creation.



BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 3-1-2006 to 3-31-2006

Beginning Balance\$6,483.89

RECEIPTS:

Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	125.00
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	225.00
Berea M. B. C., West Point, TN	50.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
.....	500.00
TOTAL	6,983.89

EXPENDITURES:

Radio Time	400.00
Postage	15.25
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	415.25
.....	\$6,568.64
Interest	+1.36
.....	\$6,570.00
Less Corbin, KY des.	-1,291.52
ENDING BALANCE	\$5,278.48

CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT

Beginning Balance\$1,491.52

RECEIPTS:

TOTAL	1,491.52
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EXPENDITURES:

WCTT	200.00
ENDING BALANCE	\$1,291.52

BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 3-1-2006 to 3-31-2006

Beginning Balance\$7,299.87

RECEIPTS:

B. C. of Brimfield, Brimfield, IL	51.21
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	200.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL	60.00
Berea M. B. C., Mansfield, OH	50.00
Berea M. B. C., Westpoint, TN	150.00
Bethel M. B. C., Pasadena, TX	100.00
Bible Believers B. C., Naples, ID	100.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne WV	300.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	125.00
Cedar Grove B. C., Millport, AL	50.00
Central Ave B. C., Tampa, FL	100.00
Charles Smith, Louisville, KY	12.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL	25.00
Eve Knowles, Scarborough, ME	200.00
Faith M. B. C., Lynn, AR	25.00
Gail Knowles, Scarborough, ME	20.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
Grace B. C., Winston-Salem, NC	50.00
Grace M. B. C., Marion, IL	25.00
Grace M. B. C., Tulsa, OK	35.00
Hillcrest B. C., Winston-Salem, NC	50.00
Indore B. C., Indore WV	200.00
Joe Jurzec, Richmond, IL	25.00
Lenos Slusher, Williamsburg, KY	20.00
Leroy Bullard, Albuquerque, NM	100.00
Leston Farrell, Des Allemands, LA	100.00
Morris St. B. C., Hobbs, NM	500.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH	100.00
New Testament B. C., Bristol, TN	20.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN	50.00
New Testament B. C., Levasy, WV	100.00
Ocoonita M. B. C., Keokee, VA	40.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL	100.00
South Park M. B. C., Seattle, WA	25.00
Southside B. C., Fulton, MS	25.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Columbus, MS	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Silsbee, TX	120.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Wake Forest, NC	100.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA	25.00
Subscriptions	566.00
Dividing Checks	125.00
Anon	250.00
Sub Total	\$4,569.21
TOTAL	\$11,869.08

EXPENDITURES:

Postage	1,030.05
Wages	2,000.00
Supplies	156.95
FICA	351.92
Dividing checks	125.00
Total Expenditures	3,663.92
.....	8,205.16
Bank Charges	-15.94
ENDING BALANCE	\$8,189.22

ANNOUNCEMENTS

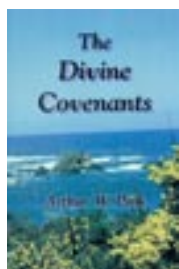
The Grace Missionary Baptist Church of Ontario, CA will be hosting a Bible Conference May 26-28. Services begin Friday evening at 7:00 p.m., Saturday at 10:00 a.m. and Sunday at 9:45 a.m.

The conference theme is "Pillar and Ground of the Truth."

For more information contact Pastor Geo. T. Kelley Sr. at 909-460-0437 or Email eldgtk@adelphia.net.

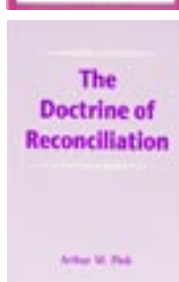
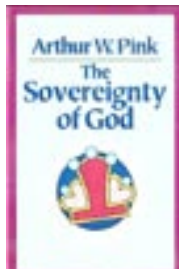
Elder Ray Sexton is currently not pastoring and would like to let any interested churches know that he is available for preaching or other pastoral work as the Lord leads.

To contact Elder Sexton call 620-845-6863 after 4:00 p.m. or write him at 302 West Ave E, Caldwell, KS 67022.



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The Satisfaction of Christ	\$14.00
The Antichrist	\$14.99
The Attributes of God	\$8.99
Comfort for Christians	\$14.00
The Divine Inspiration of the Bible	\$14.00
The Beatitudes and the Lord's Prayer	\$11.99
Seven Sayings of the Saviour on the Cross	\$9.99
The Nature of God	\$21.99
The Accountability of God	\$21.99
The Ability of God	\$21.99





WORLD SCENE

By G. Russell Evans - Norfolk, Virginia

Corruption and Scandal Follow Hillary As Candidate for U.S. President



Barbara Olson---the author of *The Final Day* had this to say! "Hillary shamelessly politicked gifts---a shakedown artist in a pink dress. . ." and how the Clinton White House followed the principal of "if it ain't nailed down, take it."

Hillary Rodham Clinton, the democratic senator of New York really believes she has a chance to be president of the United States.

Eight years, the Clintons have presided over the most corrupt administration in U.S. history. In all, we have seen 38 separate major scandals engulf the Clinton's White House.

These are some of the worst scandals:

THOSE BILLING RECORDS

In January of 1996, a White House staffer wandering through the White House residence discovered Hillary Rodham Clinton's long-lost law firm billing records. They were sitting on a table in plain view.

Mrs. Clinton claims she has no idea how the subpoenaed billing records wound up on a table in plain view in the residence. But lab tests show her finger prints on the documents. The billing records prove that Mrs. Clinton lied about her work on the failed Madison Guarantee S&L which cost taxpayers \$69 million as part of the Whitewater Development Fraud.

CASTLE GRANDE

Castle Grande was an intricate financial fraud disguised as a real estate development and designed to loot Madison Guaranty. The Castle Grande sham eventually resulted in criminal convictions for Jim McDougal, Susan McDougal, former Arkansas Governor Jim Guy Tucker, and David Hale, an ex municipal judge.

It's estimated that the deal ended up costing taxpayers nearly four million dollars. Ken Starr's November 1998 indictment of Webster Hubbell does not mention Mrs. Clinton by name, but does refer to Hubbell's "1985-86 billing partner."

"CATTLEGATE"

The \$100,000 return Hillary Clinton made in 1978 on a \$1000 investment in "cattle futures" in less than a year has all the ear marks of a political bribe. This was a mammoth windfall considering she and her husband had a combined income of about \$60,000 at the time. She miraculously cashed in her "cattle futures" and got out of the market just before it collapsed.

WEBSTER HUBBELL

Webster Hubbell, Clinton's former associate attorney general (the #2 position at justice), was convicted in 1994 of two counts of criminal fraud involving his billing practices at the Rose Law Firm in Little Rock, Arkansas where he and Mrs.

Clinton had been law partners.

Hubbell was among the Clinton's closest friends. He was a key player in the Clinton's Whitewater and Castle Grande real estate fraud.

WHO IS PAYING

First, Mrs. Clinton used air force planes to transport her and her staff on a multi-state tour to promote her book, *It Takes a Village*. The book's publisher, Simon & Schuster, reimbursed the government only at the rate of first class tickets. Undeterred by criticism she received from that extravaganza at taxpayer expense, she then used air force planes to shuttle her back and forth from New York State to promote her candidacy for the United States Senate.

The White House defends the meager reimbursement formula for Hillary's trips to New York, saying they have mostly involved official business.

"HILLARY AND CHINAGATE"

Mrs. Clinton is a key player in the "Chinagate" scandal---the most serious scandal in the history of the presidency.

"Chinagate" involves the wholesale transfer of America's most sensitive nuclear weapons secrets to Communist China, possibly in exchange for millions of dollars in illegal campaign contributions to the 1996 Clinton-Gore re-election campaign.

At worst, it may involve the outright selling of America's nuclear weapons technology to Communist China in exchange for massive campaign contributions to the 1996 Clinton-Gore re-elections effort.

As a result of all this, communist China has been able to quickly modernize its nuclear missile, making China a formidable threat to the United States. In other words, for "a few pieces of silver," the Clinton White House has

put all Americans in harm's way.

WHITewater

This is the granddaddy of the 38 scandals that have engulfed the Clinton White House. Independent Counsel Ken Starr won felony convictions of three key Whitewater figures, including the late James McDougal, his wife Susan McDougal, and former Arkansas Governor Jim Guy Tucker---all close friends of the Clintons in the Whitewater development scam which cost taxpayers an estimated \$69 million.

"TRAVELGATE"

Mrs. Clinton directed the firing of seven White House travel office workers so they could be replaced by her pals, including Hollywood producer and travel charter service owner Harry Thomason. She then lied about it. A nine page memo by former White House aide David Watkins clearly spells out Mrs. Clinton's role in the firings.

"HEALTH CARE-GATE"

In 1994, Mrs. Clinton set out to redesign the American health-care system and convened a panel that drafted its plan secretly and in violation of federal law. The task force produced a complicated plan to place one seventh of the American economy (almost the entire health-care system) under government control.

Mrs. Clinton's plan prescribed some draconian fines: \$10,000 a day for incorrect paperwork submitted by a physician; \$50,000 for unauthorized patient treatment; and \$100,000 a day for drug companies that messed up federal findings. When told the plan could bankrupt small businesses, Mrs. Clinton showed little concern saying "I cannot be responsible for every undercapitalized small business in America."

ILLEGAL WHITE HOUSE CAMPAIGNING?

Turns out that White House communications director Ann Lewis has been working extensively on Mrs. Clinton's Senate campaign website, even while continuing to be paid as a federal worker by taxpayers. Federal law strictly prohibits the use of any government resources for political campaigns.

Campaign spokesman Howard

Wolfson says Lewis has been working on Mrs. Clinton's campaign website "on her own time" but the issue is whether Lewis is using the facilities of the White House in any way to promote Mrs. Clinton's Senate campaign. Lewis cannot do this work in any publicly owned space or on any publicly owned equipment. Unfortunately for Mrs. Clinton, White House lawyer Jim Kennedy all but admitted Mrs. Lewis and the First Lady broke the law.

This is a significant issue because it further underscores the contempt the Clinton's have shown for laws that everyone else is expected to obey.

HILLARY'S BED AND BREAKFAST

Who can forget Hillary riding shotgun on a scheme to turn the White House's historic Lincoln bedroom into a bed and breakfast for "fat cat" democrat contributors? The price for an overnight stay: A minimum \$50,000 contribution to the Democratic National Committee. It took the center for public integrity several months of dogged questioning to establish that almost 80 donors had been entertained in the Lincoln bedroom. Some paid as much as \$400,000 a night.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Grace Baptist Church of Stanleyville, NC will hold a series of meetings beginning Wednesday, May 10th thru Sunday May 14th. Services will begin at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday thru Saturday. Services on Sunday begin at 9:45 a.m. A lunch will be provided by the ladies of the church. Service will resume immediately following lunch.

Everyone is invited to attend and your prayers are asked for this meeting. For more information contact Pastor Gene Kiger at (336) 377-9808 or gbckiger@gbcstanleyville.com.

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

For more information contact Pastor Todd Bryant at (205) 242-8466 or email toddbr Bryant@charter.net.

The Amazing Grace Baptist Church of Stockdale, TX will be holding special services May 3-7. Brother Alton Horn from Lexington, TN will be speaking. All are invited to attend.

For more information or directions call Bro. Keith Schuetz at 830-789-2101 or Bro. William Peacock at 512-376-0298.

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