

The Berea Baptist Banner

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

NEW LIGHT Baptist History

By Curtis Pugh
of Bocs, Romania

Having neither time nor inclination to debate Baptist history, I nonetheless find myself compelled to write once more on the subject. My motivation comes as a result of reading what I regard as one of the most preposterous, unscholarly, and deceptive pieces of propaganda that I have ever read. While I will not mention names, I must give the source of the article containing these distortions of Baptist history. Two individuals seem to have been the authors of this attack on Baptist history. The reader can find this attack in full at the Internet address <http://www.gpp-5grace.com/graceproclamator/pp0199welshtractchurch.htm> - The title of the article is: "The Church at the Welsh Tract, in the County of Newcastle upon Delaware." The obvious purpose of the article is to set forth the idea that this once-upon-a-time sound Church came into existence without the vote or authority of a previously existing Church. This is done in an effort to bolster the unscriptural views of the authors who deny the need for such authority. In their article they fail miserably and are guilty of not only poor scholarship, but also of a series of false conclusions and statements. I call upon the owner of the web page to remove this deceptive piece from their Internet site and I call upon the Editor of "The Grace Proclamator and Promulgator" to publish an apology and a retraction of the article in that paper. That would be the honest thing to do, at the very least.

Not satisfied with their "new light" on the way Churches are constituted, now we find that these men have "new light" on Baptist history! Will these men who are infected with what Brother Milburn Cockrell used to call "circumstantial theology" resort to any and all means to support their ideas, even to distorting



truth. But his statements are laden with errors. Thus these "New Lighters" fail in their attempt to give us "New Light

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Meekness

By J. Harvey
(1800's)

*'How softly on the bruised heart
A word of kindness falls,
And to the dry and parched soul
The moistening tear-drop calls.'*

This is another important feature in the Christian character, another beautiful link in the believer's golden chain.

Meekness bears a striking resemblance to gentleness, an exposition of which has been given in a previous chapter. But one eminent writer remarks, "There are certain grand principles in religion which must be introduced upon every subject; and repetitions in respect of them are so necessary and becoming, that no learning, ingenuity, or eloquence, can compensate for the omission, such as repentance for sin, faith in Jesus Christ, whatever relates to His person, love, atonement, and grace; regeneration, love to God and man, and the future state of the righteous and eternal retribution. The more full the heart of the writer or the speaker is of the good treasure, the more

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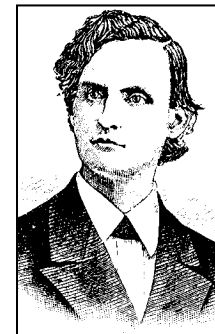
Thorns in the Flesh

By J. B. Hawthorne
(1837 - 1910)

"There was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, that I should not be exalted overmuch" (II Cor. 12:7 R.V.).

Not until we come into the light of eternity shall any of us know what was Paul's "thorn in the flesh." There has been much fruitless speculation about it. Some suppose that it was a physical deformity; others think it was chronic neuralgia; not a few have contended that in early life he was married to a very quarrelsome and disagreeable woman from whom he was compelled to separate, and that the bitter memory of that unfortunate alliance was his "thorn in the flesh." For none of these theories is there any foundation in the sacred record.

There are some people who seem to be in love with their affliction. They are proud of their ailments, and seem to enjoy their suffering. In Paul there was nothing of this morbid temper. He did not take kindly to suffering. He shrank from it; he did his best to get rid of it, he



was a genuine lover of health and heartily deplored all the ills to which flesh is heir. Jesus Christ, the greatest of all sufferers, prayed that the cup of agony might pass from Him. By His example Paul was warranted

in beseeching God three times to remove the "thorn in his flesh." His prayer was not answered, and believing it to be God's will that he should suffer thus, he meekly submitted to the affliction.

1. We do not know what the "thorn in the flesh" was, but we know that the pain which it gave Paul was real and severe. Many of our troubles in this life are imaginary. "A man who had read with deep interest of the expeditions of Sir John Franklin, Nansen, Greely and others in search of the North Pole, fell asleep and dreamed that he was in a bitter wintery clime where he was compelled

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From the Pen of a Country Preacher

Milburn R. Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)

Love of God Wanting

"But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you" (John 5:42).

These words were spoken by Jesus Christ to the unbelieving Jews of His day. He knew, and had known for a long time, the real state of their hearts. The Christ of God knew that they hated God in their hearts and rejected Him as the Messiah. They professed great love for God, and they thought they showed it by their zeal for the law, the temple, and the Sabbath. Other people thought the Jews had great

love for God, but Jesus Christ knew the depravity of their unrenewed hearts. Upon another occasion He declared: **"But woe unto you, Pharisees! For ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone"** (Luke 11:42).

In my text is seen the omniscience of

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When a nation fails to see God, they have already forsaken seeking God.

"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." (2 Chron. 7:14).

May 5, 2007

Volume XXVII, Number 5
Whole Number 335

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THE BEREA BAPTIST BANNER (UPS 546470) is published monthly for \$6.00 per year by the authority of the Berea Baptist Church, 3881 Highway 363, Mantachie, Mississippi 38855. Periodical Publication postage paid at Mantachie, Mississippi.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE BEREA BAPTIST BANNER, P. O. Box 39, Mantachie, Mississippi 38855-0039.

PUBLICATION POLICIES: All matter for publication should be sent to the editor. All manuscripts are to be typed and double spaced. All such material becomes the property of BBB and will not be returned unless requested by the writer. We reserve the right to edit and condense all materials sent to us for publication.

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PUBLISHED MONTHLY with paid circulation in most states in the U.S.A. and some foreign countries.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

One year.....	\$6.00
Two years.....	\$10.00
Five years.....	\$24.00

PLANNING TO MOVE? Notify us three weeks in advance. The post office will only forward periodical mail for 90 days. They charge us \$.70 for each "change of address" they have to send us. Please save us this expense and the post office time.

BUNDLES TO ONE ADDRESS: These are sent for \$4 per paper for a year. An example: 10 papers for one year at \$40 or 20 papers for one year at \$80.00.

LOCATION OF PUBLISHING CHURCH: Our church is located on state highway 363 about one mile south of Mantachie, Mississippi. Readers are always welcome to visit our services.

CHURCH PHONE: 1-662-282-7794.

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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.

Planning a move?
Please let us know your
new address. The post
office charges us \$.75
for each returned wrong
address.

Baptist History

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Baptist History." While space keeps me from reproducing the whole article, I reproduce below the parts concerning the origin of the Welsh Tract church just as they appear in the Internet article. I have numbered these quotes for easy reference in my later comments. I also emphasized some noteworthy phrases for your attention. The first author of the Internet article in question says, "...the following from an account of their constitution as a church of the Lord Jesus Christ from a history of the Philadelphia Association." Then he supplies us with the following quote.

Quote Number "1."

"This church was constituted in Pembrokeshire, in South Wales, in the year 1701, at which time the first members of this church were about to come over into Pennsylvania; they then, **by the advice and counsel of the churches they came from**, in Pembrokeshire and Carmathenshire, entered into a church covenant, and state their number was sixteen persons; and **among them was the Rev. Mr. Thomas Griffith, to be their minister**. After their arrival in this country, they lived, near two years, near Pennepek and the parts adjacent; keeping together and meeting, as they were a distinct church, and had considerable addition to their number. In the year 1703, they removed and settled at the Welsh Tract aforesaid, and continued successful: and the said Mr. Griffith continued with them until he died, which was on the 25th of August, Anno Domini 1725: during which time, several able gifted ministers were raised, by the blessing of God, in the said church; they were Elisha Thomas and Enoch Morgan, both members **when the said church was first constituted**; the said Elisha Thomas was chosen pastor of the church, and after were Jenkin Jones, who removed to Philadelphia, and Owen Thomas. In the year 1730, Elisha Thomas died, and the said church continued under the ministry of the said Mr. Enoch Morgan and Mr. Owen Thomas; during which time, God raised up other two in the said church; viz., Mr. Abel Morgan, who since removed to Middletown, in East Jersey, and Mr. David Davis. On the 25th of March, 1740, died the said Enoch Morgan, and the church continues under the ministry of the said Owen Thomas and David Davis."

Quote Number "2."

William Cathcart gives this account of the origin of this church, "Welsh Tract Church, Del.—Sixteen Baptists in Wales about to emigrate to America **formed themselves into a Baptist church in 1701, with Rev. Thomas Griffith, one of their number, as pastor**. They came to Pennepek, now in Philadelphia, Pa., where there was a Welsh Baptist church. Leaving in this place some of their number, and

receiving accessions in return, they removed, in 1703, to Iron Hill, in the Welsh Tract, New Castle Co., Del. (at that time a part of Pennsylvania). A small meeting-house was then erected upon the site now occupied by the present edifice, built in 1746.

Quote Number "3."

"The following information is taken from the records of the Welsh Tract church under the heading, "Our Beginnings as a Church". It is found in Vol. II of John T. Christian's *History of the Baptists*, P. 121. "In the year 1701 some of us (who were members of the church of Jesus Christ in the countys of Pembroke and Carmathen, South Wales, in Great Britain, professing believers baptism; laying-on-of-hands; elections; and final perseverance in grace) were moved and encouraged in our own minds to come to these parts, viz.: Pennsylvania. and after **obtaining leave of the churches** it seemed good to the Lord and to us, That we should **be formed into a church order**, as we were a sufficient number; and **as one of us was a minister**: that was accomplished and, withal **letters commendatory were given us**, that if we should meet with any congregations of Christian people, who held the same faith with us, we might be received by them as brethren in Christ.

Our number was sixteen; and, after bidding farewell to our brethren in Wales, we sailed from Milford-haven in the month of June, the year above mentioned, in a ship named James and Mary; and landed in Philadelphia the eighth of September following."

Quote Number "4."

Our Internet author says "**Another historian** records the organization as follows:" "In the year 1701, he [Thomas Griffiths] and fifteen of the members of the church went to America in the same vessel. They **formed themselves into a church at Milford**, in the county of Pembroke, South Wales, and **Thomas Griffiths became their pastor** in the month of June, 1701. They embarked on board the ship James and Mary, and on the 8th day of September following, they landed at Philadelphia. The brethren there treated them courteously, and advised them to settle about Pennepeck. Thither they went, and there continued about a year and a half. During that time twenty-one persons joined them, but finding it inconvenient to abide there, they purchased land in the county of Newcastle, and gave it the name of Welsh Tract, where they built a meeting-house, and Thomas Griffiths labored among them as their pastor till he died, on the 25th of July, 1725, aged eighty years."

Regarding "Quote Number "4." We are left to guess at the reason that the author does not give us the name of his other historian nor provide the reader with a source. He gives only a partial quote and does not include certain important information that I shall give

later – information as to the "mother church" of the Welsh Tract Baptist Church. Is it typical of those diseased with "circumstantial theology" to give only partial information and then propagate distorted conclusions based on this incomplete information? Is this because their "new light" will not stand up to the true light of all the facts? Let the reader to decide!

One of our Internet authors writes: "Note the following facts concerning this church organization: **The folks composing it were from two different churches** in Wales and were about to come to America." There is absolutely nothing in the above historical material that even suggests that these people came from only two Churches! That there was more than one Church involved is granted, but there may have been more! Is this the kind of "scholarship" we are expected to respect and upon which we are to rely for truth? What is stated is that these Welsh Baptists were from Churches in two different counties, Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire (modern spelling). From the information provided we just do not know how many Churches were involved.

Next our "new light" Internet author writes: "These **two churches advised and counseled** them that they should enter into church covenant with one another." Here for the 2nd time is the presumptive and erroneous statement that there were only two Churches involved in this matter. But we will leave that having already shown the careless scholarship of the author(s). Notice that it is stated that the "churches advised and counseled them." Now how would a Church do this? Did all the members speak and give their advice? Did they have a shouting match and the loudest voices win? Or did the individual members each travel to all the homes of these 16 people and give them private advice and counsel? - Of course not. Before the Churches could give their advice the will of each one of the Churches had to be determined. Now we know how true Baptist Churches operate when they need to make a decision. New Testament Baptist Churches are democracies. They vote! While it is not expressly stated in our historical quotes that they voted, we can be certain that each of these Churches, however many there were of them, decided to give their advice and counsel. That determination to act would normally have been reached by a vote in each one of the Churches involved! Let us be honest in the matter! The honest mind will conclude that these Churches voted on whether or not to advise their members and what advice and counsel to give those who were about to move away. That is the way Baptist Churches operate! They vote!

Then our author informs us, "Sixteen persons **entered into covenant and**

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became a church. That there were sixteen persons who were organized into a Baptist Church is not disputed. However, the implication made is that the only thing involved was that the members agreed together – covenanted together – and that this made them a Church. We have already shown that there had already occurred votes in the Churches of which they held membership and we shall show that at least one other vote in each Church was taken as well – and there may have well been another, a third vote, in each Church. We shall see that there was more than just entering into a covenant in the forming of this Baptist Church.

The next statement by our Internet author is this: “There is no indication that either of these **two advising church voted to start the church**; they only advised and counseled them to **form themselves** into a church. Cathcart says they “formed themselves into a Baptist church in 1701.” Here we have the 3rd erroneous insistence that there were only two Churches involved! No such conclusion can be honestly drawn from the historical quotes supplied! The statement that “There is no indication that either of these two advising church (sic) voted to start the church” is also clearly in error. This we shall show shortly. Then we are finally and erroneously informed by our Internet author: “In their own account of their beginning these brethren indicated they **“obtained leave” from the two churches to form themselves** into a church...” There is an outright lie here. Whether it is deliberate or not the reader must judge. According to their own testimony the members did not obtain leave to “form themselves” into a church! Their own words are these: “...after **obtaining leave of the churches** it seemed good to the Lord and to us, That we should **be formed into a church order**...” (See Quote Number “3” above). The Internet author falsely ascribes to them the statement “to form themselves” while the testimony of the persons involved is “to be formed into a church order.” These exact words must be accepted as true for these are the words of those persons involved. The eyewitnesses say “be formed.” It is only from later historians that we find the phrase “form themselves!” Whom shall we credit with knowing what happened, later historians or those personally involved? Shall we lend more credence to the second-hand information of historians or to the words of eyewitnesses and participants? There is a great deal of difference between the phrase “formed themselves” and the phrase to “be formed.” That is what our disagreement with the “New Lighters” is all about. They say that two or three

people can scripturally form themselves into a church without any authority from another Church. We say a true Church must “be formed.” Now to “be formed” is a passive phrase like the passive phrases to “be saved,” or to “be regenerated,” or to “be raptured.” In such a statement the persons “saved” do not “save” themselves. They do not “regenerate” themselves, nor do they “rapture” themselves. In order to be saved, regenerated or raptured they must be acted upon by a power outside themselves. That is the nature of language and that is the way New Testament Churches are started! New Testament Churches are formed or constituted by a power outside themselves! And again the author, without any factual basis in the quotes given, limits the number of Churches involved to two saying “both” (churches) “apparently gave leave...” This is the 4th repetition of this untrue statement as to the number of Churches involved! How wonderful is this “new light!” It enables them to know things they have no historical evidence to support and allows them to change the testimony of eyewitnesses. What new revelations shall we expect next from the “New Lighters?”

Now how do members obtain “leave” or “permission” to form a new Church? We know that New Testament Baptist Churches vote to dismiss members! They vote to give permission (letters) to their members either to join a different Church or to be formed into a new Church. New Testament Baptist Churches have authority over their membership. Preachers cannot dismiss members. Deacons cannot dismiss members and neither can members dismiss themselves! “New Lighters,” in order to sustain their error, must take the position that members have the right and power to dismiss themselves from a church. They must deny the corporate authority of the members of a New Testament Church over her members. They must deny that members are required to submit themselves one to another in the matter of membership. But sound Baptists know that a true Church votes in the matter of dismissal of members. So here we logically have the occasion of the second vote of the Churches involved! Our “new light” author says no votes were taken and we have shown that, logically, at least two must have occurred in each one of the Churches involved – and probably a third for decisions were made to give letters of commendation to the new Church.

Now if the reader will reflect just a bit he will see what is behind this article and its attempted distortion of the facts. Our Internet authors advocate the theory that individuals can form themselves into a scriptural Church without authority from any other Church. To them it does not matter whether those forming the church are members in good standing

or excluded ones. It seems that it does not matter to them if the persons have ever been members of a true Church or not. This is the motivation behind their article. What is plain and clear to thinking persons is that these Welsh Baptists were formed into a new Church by Church-authority – by vote of the Churches involved. These Welsh Baptists did not hold to the “new light” theory at all! It is also clear that this Church was formed with the presence, aid and guidance of an ordained minister. Remember the original members themselves stated, “That we should *be formed into a church order*, as we were a sufficient number; and *as one of us was a minister*...” – In their minds they met these qualifications: There were enough people to form a Church and they had a minister to act in organizing such a Church. This ordained minister was in good standing with a previously existing Church and was acting upon their direction and with their permission!

But let us go a little further in our research and look again at *Davis’ History of the Welsh Baptists* pages 72-73. This material was omitted from the quotes of the Internet authors. Davis was the author whom our Internet writer refused to cite by name for whatever reason. (This omission is seen in Quote Number “4.”) The Baptist historian Davis also wrote: “*Welsh Tract came from Rhydowilim Church* in the county Pembroke, South Wales.” Now we have two questions. First, why would our Internet author(s) fail to include this and other helpful information from Davis? And secondly, why would the good historian Davis tell us that the Welsh Tract Church came from Rhydowilim Church? We will let the reader decide the answer to the first question. The answer to the second is this: Sound Baptists form their new Churches by the authority of a pre-existing Church. They do so with the aid, guidance and assistance of an ordained minister who acts on the authority of that previously existing New Testament Baptist Church. Now we ask two questions: Do we know of a Welsh Baptist minister connected to the Rhydowilim Church at this time who could have acted upon the authority of that Church? And do we know of a sound Baptist minister in that area at that time that had an interest in such a new Church? We answer these questions with a resounding YES! Read a bit more of Davis’ “*History*” – information that was kept from us by our Internet author in Quote Number “4” above. “*Thomas Griffiths was born in 1646, in the parish of Llanfernach, county of Pembroke. He was baptized and became a member of the Church at Rhydowilim, in 1667...*” – Here we learn of Thomas Griffith(s) and his connection with the Rhydowilim Baptist Church! Notice please, from the above material supplied by our Internet

author, these words of the persons who actually formed the charter members of the Welsh Tract Church: “...*after obtaining leave of the churches it seemed good to the Lord and to us, That we should be formed into a church order*, as we were a sufficient number; and *as one of us was a minister*: that was accomplished and, withal *letters commendatory were given us...*” First these 16 persons were advised by their respective Churches to be constituted into a new Church prior to their emigration to America. Then they obtained permission from their respective Churches to be formed into a new Church. New Testament Baptist Churches determine whether to give “advice and counsel” by voting. They also determine whether or not to give their “leave” or permission by voting. These first members then state that they thought it good to “be formed into a church order.” Notice that they state that they had the ability to be formed into a Church because one of them was a minister and that they had permission from their Churches – and one of those Churches was the Rhydowilim Church! Thomas Griffiths could act on Church authority – the Church of which he was a member and by which he had been ordained. As proof, I quote now from: “*The Carmarthenshire Antiquary 1942, Vol I, Pt 2* as found at the Internet site <http://www.genuki.org.uk/big/wal/CMN/CMNAntBaptists.html> - They record the antiquity of the Rhydowilim Church as follows: “The oldest Baptist church in West Wales was formed in 1668 at Rushacre, near Narberth. *This church about 1700 removed to Rhydowilim* where it has remained for close on two and a half centuries to give its witness...” And I quote from the Rhydowilim Baptist Chapel Internet site which the reader can access at <http://www.rhydowilim.com/history.htm> - On this site you will find that Thomas Griffith is listed as one of their ministers with the date 1700 following. So it is true just as the Baptist historian Davis wrote: “*Welsh Tract came from Rhydowilim Church* in the county Pembroke, South Wales.” Other Churches (we don’t know from the history quoted how many) gave both their advice and permission for certain of their members to be formed into a new Church. Thomas Griffith, an ordained minister in the Rhydowilim Baptist Church could act on that Church’s authority because they had voted to give their permission for the formation of a new Church. Griffiths acted as an ordained minister in good standing with that previously existing “mother Church” – the Rhydowilim Church! Thus he, with the Rhydowilim Church’s authority, formed them into a new Church. Remember that all the Churches involved had advised such an action and had also given their

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permission for the formation of a new Church. But as Griffiths was from the Rhydwlil Church and acted upon their authority, it was stated by the historian Davis that *“Welsh Tract came from Rhydwlil Church in the county Pembroke, South Wales.”* Although this new Church was formed at Milford or Milford-haven from whence they sailed and so geographically came from that place, it truly in a spiritual and organizational sense came from the Rhydwlil Church.

Finally, It should be noted that sound Baptists have no problem with the phrase to “form themselves” into a church as used by some historians if it be understood properly. New Testament Baptist Churches are voluntary organizations and must be entered into voluntarily whether by a member being added to an existing Church or a new Church being formed. No one can constrain or force an individual or a group of individuals into church relationship! But Church members cannot dismiss themselves whether to be religious vagabonds or to form a new Church. It is only with the “advice and counsel” (direction) and “leave” (permission) of the Churches in which they are members that members may “be formed” into a new Church! And New Testament Baptist Churches decide whether or not to give their direction and permission by voting! And in this instance, we have shown that Churches (plural) must have voted and that an ordained minister, Thomas Griffith or Griffiths, acting upon the authority of the Church of which he was a member, with or without other ministers to help, logically must have “formed” or organized the Church in question. All the historical quotes given show this to be the case! This is the way New Testament Baptists have accomplished the formation of new Churches down through the centuries. To try to say that they acted according to “new light” views is an unsustainable position when all the facts are considered. This old way, this New Testament way, is the way independent, sovereign grace, landmark missionary Baptists have done it – until, that is, some “New Lighters” recently defected from the proper way in order to promote and defend their “circumstantial theology.” Let us be faithful to the Word of God – including those parts of it that teach that we are to submit ourselves one to another – even in matters of Church membership and organization. **“Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God”** (Eph. 5:21).



Love of God Wanting

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Christ. God only can know the heart of man. In Jeremiah 17:9-10 it is written: **“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins. . .”** Knowing the heart is preeminently the work of God, and in Revelation 2:23 our Lord Jesus Christ said: **“I am he which searcheth the reins of the hearts.”** In John 2:24-25 we are told that Jesus Christ **“knew all men”** and that He **“knew what was in man.”** Because He was omniscient He told the Samaritan woman all the things that she ever did (John 4:29). Christ knew who had faith in the heart and who did not. John 6:64 informs us: **“For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.”** Jesus Christ is God, and God knows all things.

WHAT THE LOVE OF GOD IS NOT

Negatively speaking, God’s love is different from mere natural love. Husbands love their wives, and wives love their husbands. Parents love their children, and the children love their parents. Brothers and sisters love each other. Friends have strong affections for one another. Even the unsaved love those who love them (Matt. 5:46). But only to

love those who love us is love mingled with selfishness. This is not the love of God.

It is different from mere habitual love that is among mankind. Some love sports. Some love pleasures. Others love good food. Still others love their country. This love is the results of training and education. One may do all of this and yet have not the love of God in his soul. Truly some are **“lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God”** (II Tim. 3:4).

The love of God is different from mere human friendship. Friends may be kind and considerate to one another. They may have and exercise a disposition to help each other. But this is not the love of God. Many do this that have no love for God in their souls. The love of God is much more than this.

WHAT THE LOVE OF GOD IS

Positively speaking, the love of God implies the regeneration of the soul. This highest of all love can only be produced by the quickening action of the Holy Spirit. In Romans 5:5 it is written: **“And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”** In regeneration the Holy Spirit pours into the heart of man an abundance of love for God. Love is the fruit of the Spirit (Ga. 5:22).

The moral law of God requires supreme

love for God on man’s part: **“And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might”** (Deut. 6:5). This is precisely what Jesus Christ said: **“And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment”** (Mark 12:30). But fallen man does not love God. No man can love God until his heart is circumcised: **“And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart and with all thy soul. . .”** (Deut. 10:6; cf. Col. 2:11-12; Rom. 2:29). It is the work of God’s grace to circumcise the heart of a man and to shed abroad His love there.

The grace of love is from God. John expressly wrote: **“Love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God”** (I John 4:7). Ephesians 6:23 reveals that **“love with faith”** can only come **“from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”** Love is a gift of God’s grace and a fruit of the Divine Spirit.

No person ever loves God until he is brought by the blessed Spirit to see that God loves him: **“We love him, because he first loved us”** (I John 4:19). God’s love to us is prior to our love to Him. He loves His people with an everlasting love (Jer. 31:3). God’s love to us is the motive and cause of ours. With great wonder we must pause and marvel at the **“manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. . .”** (I John 3:1). To think that God loved us **“while we were yet sinners”** (Rom. 5:8) is wonderful. He loved us when we were both unloving and unlovely.

Oh, how I love Jesus,

Because He first loved me.

“Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (I John 4:10).

The nature and perfections of God should make Him an object of our strongest love and affection. We must not merely love God for the benefits and blessings we receive from Him. If this be the only ground of our love, then it is but a little short of selfishness. God must be loved because His character is infinitely worthy of love. This is the purest and most perfect love of a creature toward God. This is a love that resembles that which the Trinity has for each other.

Love for God implies a participation in the efforts of the Redeemer’s sacrifice: **“But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus”** (Eph. 2:4-6). By faith in the shed blood of Christ we receive absolution of sin and

♦ (Continued on page 85)



Love of God Wanting

(Continued from page 84) ♦

deliverance from guilt and condemnation. This is the foundation of our love to God. **“For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead”** (II Cor. 5:14).

HOW LOVE FOR GOD MANIFESTS ITSELF

First, those who love God desire friendship and fellowship with Him. We all want to be with those we love. If we love God then we want to stay in communion with Him, we want to enjoy His sweet fellowship. The Apostle John said: **“. . . truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ”** (I John 1:3). Those who love God will seek His face in prayer; they will delight in seeing His presence manifest in the services of the church. **“O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary. Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee”** (Ps. 63:1-3).

Second, love for God is proved by obedience: **“By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous”** (I John 5:2-3). Loving God and keeping His commandments go hand in hand. We can't love God and be indifferent to His will. Love prompts obedience. Love makes God's commandments easy and blessed (Rom. 13:14). This especially includes gospel commandments such as repentance, faith, confession, baptism, observing the Lord's Supper, giving, and Christian endurance. The test of love is not words, nor warm feelings, nor zeal in defending the truth, but obedience to God's commandments.

Many seem to think they can love God and not keep His commandments. Others believe they can keep His commandments and not love Him. This is an impossibility. Love and obedience sustain the relation of cause and effect, and the one cannot exist without the other. A moral necessity binds them together in this world. Obedience shows that our love is not in word or tongue, but in deed and truth.

Third, those who love God love the truth. II Thessalonians 2:10 makes it plain that when a person is saved he receives **“the love of the truth.”** A lover of God places great value upon the truth of God: **“He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God”** (John 8:47). God's people love the truth; they want to hear it preached; they want to

persevere in it; they want to be preserved by it. The scripture of truth means more to them than thousands of silver and gold. They esteem the truth more than their necessary food. It is the joy and rejoicing of their hearts. The rejecting of God's truth is evidence of a lost condition (II Thess. 2:10-12).

Fourth, those who truly love God have a desire not to offend Him: **“Ye that love the LORD, hate evil”** (Ps. 97:10). Those who love God hate the evil of sin, every thing that is offensive to Him and which will take us away from His favor. A true love for God will show itself in a real hatred of all sin. A true Christian seeks to avoid sin and to abstain from all appearance of evil. When temptation to sin comes upon us we say with Joseph: **“. . . how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?”** (Gen. 39:9).

THE HAPPINESS OF THOSE WHO LOVE GOD

First, those who love God are loved by God: **“I love them that love me. . .”** (Prov. 8:17). **“He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him”** (John 14:21). Those who show by obedience their love for God are loved by the Father, since Christ loves all who are the objects of the Father's love. Those who love God shall see greater manifestations of God's love.

Second, God takes notice and acknowledges those who love Him supremely: **“but if any man love God, the same is known of him”** (I Cor. 8:3). II Timothy 2:19 says: **“The Lord knoweth them that are his.”** God accepts all lovers of Himself; He has pleasure in them. God knows them in sickness and adversity. He comforts them and delivers them from all evil. They enjoy the special favors of God.

Third, God preserves them that love Him: **“The LORD preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy”** (Ps. 145:20). They keep Him in their love and He keeps them by His love. The Almighty takes them under His special care and preserves them from sin and Satan, dangers and difficulties, afflictions and adversities, and from total apostasy. They are **“preserved in Jesus Christ”** (Jude 1) and preserved **“unto his heavenly kingdom”** (II Tim. 4:18).

Fourth, they enjoy the mercy of God: **“And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments”** (Ex. 20:6). What a blessing this is! Men do not need justice; they need mercy. If we had justice from God we would all be in Hell. Oh, how we need the mercy of God! Oh, that we may **“find mercy of the Lord in that day”** (II Tim. 1:18). Surely goodness and mercy shall follow those who love God in their hearts all the days of their life (Ps. 23:6).

Fifth, all things in life and death work

together for their good: **“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose”** (Rom. 8:28). Even their trials and tears work for them an exceeding weight of eternal glory (II Cor. 4:17). The danger and difficulties of life increase our faith and patience (Rom. 5:5; Jas. 1:2). All that God does, He does for them (Ps. 57:2). Even the sins they are permitted to commit work for their eternal good (II Chron. 32:31).

Sixth, even greater things are in store for them in the hereafter: **“But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him”** (I Cor. 2:9). Some of these things are so great that our minds are incapable of understanding them. Human eyes can see them only through a glass darkly, and human ears, even if they heard of these things, would find them unspeakable words. Oh, just to think of a crown, a mansion, a golden harp, and an everlasting kingdom! It is better farther on!

MULTITUDES HAVE NOT THIS LOVE IN THEM

Such were the Jews whom the Lord addressed in my text. They pretended much love for God. They boasted of their obedience to the law, but they rejected God's beloved Son. Earlier in this discourse Christ had said to them: **“and ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not”** (John 5:38). The reason why these Jews rejected Christ was because they did not love God. If they had really loved God they would have loved Him Who is God's expressed image.

Such is the case with all the unregenerated. Men by nature are not lovers of God. This is seen in the Parable of the Pounds: **“But his citizens hated him. . .”** (Luke 19:14). The unsaved are **“haters of the LORD”** (Ps. 81:15; Rom. 1:30). God says of those quickened by the Spirit: **“. . . their soul also abhorred me”** (Zech. 11:8). The carnal man is **“the enemy of God”** (Jas. 4:4); yea, **“enmity against God”** (Rom. 8:7). So it may be said that every unsaved man in the world has not the love of God in his heart.

Such is the case with a mere moral person. A man may be moral, and yet have no love of God. The publicans and sinners went faster into the kingdom than the Pharisees who were moralists. Moral virtues only restrain the outward man; they do not infuse the love of God in the soul. A lion in a cage is a lion still; he is restrained, but not changed. He still retains his lion-like nature. Even so, morals may restrain a man from wickedness, but they do not turn the heart from wickedness. The person who trusts in his morals is hindered from repentance and faith. To be saved and have the love of God in your soul, one must be humbled and made to part with his righteousness

in order to have the righteousness of God by faith.

*Talk they of morals?
O thou bleeding Lamb,
The grand morality is love of Thee!*

A mere professor of religion does not love God. He talks much and boasts much of his love for God. I John 2:15 tells us: **“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”** Titus 1:16 speaks of some who **“profess that they know God, but in works they deny him.”** False professors say that they know God as their covenant Father, and yet the world is their life and love. Those who love the world supremely make an idol of it. You cannot give your affection to the world and at the same time love God as God. If the world is your life and governing principles, you are not a Christian but a false professor. Jesus Christ said: **“No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon”** (Matt. 6:24).

The hypocrite does not love God. In this generation many have a form of godliness but they **“deny the power thereof”** (II Tim. 3:5). Some pretend to love Christ, but even their neighbors know they are mere pretenders. They claim to love Christ while living in disobedience to Him. They say they believe in the church, but they never attend its services. They say that they believe in witnessing for Christ, and yet they never speak to a lost soul. I John 1:6 says: **“If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth.”**

CONCLUSION

Some of you know that you are in the condition of the Pharisees. There is no true love for God in your heart. In fact, your heart is filled with evil of an opposite character. You curse God because you hate God. You never go to church because you have no love of the truth that you might be saved. You don't like Christians because they are God's people. You in truth are a child of the Devil and an enemy of all righteousness.

This condition will subject you to final and everlasting exclusion from the Divine favor and friendship: **“If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha”** (I Cor. 16:22). It is not enough to be a Christian in name only who does not love Christ in sincerity and truth. Why not love the most glorious Lover in the world? Jesus Christ loved sinners and gave Himself to prove His love to them. Those who despise Christ shall be separated eternally from Him and delivered up to irrevocable vengeance. Those who love not Christ must perish without remedy. You must be a lover of the Lord, or you can't go to Heaven when you die!



Following Holiness

PART TWO

By Rosco Brong
(1908 - 1985)

(Continued from the last issue)

UNSANCTIFIED CHRISTIANITY IS A MOCKERY OF THE HOLINESS THAT GOD DEMANDS

"This is the will of God, even your sanctification" (I Thes. 4:3).

A "Christianity" that has departed from God to make peace with the world, that has abandoned divine revelation for human reason, that has lost its fear of eternal torment and hope of eternal glory in its vain ambition for temporal pleasure, pelf, and power, is a mere mockery of the faith of the New Testament. The God of the Bible is the God of holiness, absolutely set apart from all other beings in the infinite perfections of His eternal self-existence, and He demands a measure of His own holiness in those whom He calls His people.

This is one of the greatest doctrines of the Bible, and can be approached in many ways. Viewing the will of God for our sanctification in its full range from eternity to eternity, we may think of *Sanctification in Purpose, in Provision, in Position, in Progression, and in Perfection.*

PURPOSE

God's perfect holiness is most clearly revealed to us in Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son. **"For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens"** (Heb. 7:26).

But it is God's purpose from eternity that *all His born-again children shall become like Jesus*. **"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren"** (Rom. 8:29).

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love" (Eph. 1:4).

PROVISION

It was easier for God to create the heavens and the earth than to redeem His chosen people. In creation, **"He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast"** (Ps. 33:9). But sinners could become saints only at the cost of the precious blood of the Word become flesh.

"Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate" (Heb. 13:12).

So Jesus came to accomplish the Father's purpose, to do the will of God, **"By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. . . . For by one**



offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Heb. 10:10-14).

POSITION

Faith brings us into our position of sanctification that Christ has provided for us. The Savior so

informed Paul when He sent him to the Gentiles,

"To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me" (Acts 26:18).

Sanctifying faith in human experience is possible only in connection with the sanctifying, regenerating work of the Holy Spirit:

"God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth" (II Thes. 2:13).

PROGRESSION

"This is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor. . . . For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness" (I Thes. 4:3-7).

Here we have an exhortation to people already in a sanctified position to be progressively sanctified in practice. Even so, Jesus prayed for those who were already His sanctified disciples: **"Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth"** (John 17:17).

If we have a genuine experience of divine grace and thus occupy the position of saints, we are under strong obligation to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (II Pet. 3:18), **"being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ"** (Phil. 1:6).

Genuine saints of God learn this practical progressive aspect of sanctification under the chastening hand of our heavenly Father, Who corrects

us **"for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness"** (Heb. 12:10).

PERFECTION

Unlike the pitiful pretenders to perfection in this present flesh, the apostle Paul expected to attain his goal in the resurrection:

"Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. . . . I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:12-14).

Only in the resurrection, and then for an endless eternity to follow, shall we bear the image of the heavenly (I Cor. 15:49). *Then indeed we shall be conformed to the image of God's Son* (Rom. 8:29). *Then at last "we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is"* (I John 3:2).

"The very God of peace sanctify you wholly" (I Thes. 5:23).

BIBLE REVEALS HOW GOD'S HOLY PEOPLE BECOME HOLY AS GOD IS HOLY

"As he that called you is holy, be also yourselves holy in all conduct; Because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy" (I Peter 1:15-16, imp. trans.).

No doubt, so far as we know, God could, if He would, create a holy people without the use of means, as perhaps he used no means but His own word and Spirit in creating the heavens and the earth. (Gen. 1:1; Ps. 33:6-9.) But in fact He has chosen generally to work through means, and according to His own word this is especially true in His work of redemption. His people were not designed to be robots, but to become partakers of the divine nature. (II Pet. 1:4.)

Man, therefore, unlike beasts and contrary to the opinions of fatalistic philosophers, is called upon in the Bible to participate and cooperate in the attainment of his own destiny. *If this seems too great a challenge to little souls, it is imply because they "judge themselves unworthy of everlasting life"* (Acts 13:46).

Part of God's purpose for His elect (Eph. 1:4) is **"that we should be holy."** We can be sure that *His purpose will be accomplished, but it will be accomplished through the appointed means and not otherwise.*

MEANS PROVIDED

With comparatively little human instrumentality, *God has provided the blood of Christ, the written Word and the ministry of the Holy Spirit as means of holiness.*

True, God used the wicked hands of men (Acts 2:23) to shed the blood; true, the word came by means of holy men of God (II Pet. 1:21) who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; and true, the Holy Spirit works largely in and through His people (John 14:17).

Yet you and I had nothing to do with providing these means. They are *God's provision for us*, and if God used men in providing them, they were other men, mostly of other generations and unaware even of our then future existence. So we can classify the blood, the Word, and the Spirit as means provided apart from any act of our own.

MEANS OF MERIT

"Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people through his own blood, suffered outside the gate" (Heb. 13:12). **"And almost all things are cleansed in blood according to the law, and without shedding of blood is no remission"** (Heb. 9:22).

Only upon the merits of the blood of Jesus could God justly separate us from our sins and set us apart from a lost world as the chosen objects of His redeeming love. So far as this true that His righteousness in passing by the sins of Old Testament saints did not become manifest until His display of justice on Calvary. (Rom. 3:24-26.)

Moreover, *the same blood of Christ which alone merits the sanctification of unworthy sinners to become the people of God--that same blood is the meritorious ground of continual cleansing:*

"If we habitually walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son keeps on cleaning us from all sin" (I John 1:7 imp. trans.).

"Sanctify them in thy truth: thy word is truth. . . . For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth" (John 17:17-19).

As in all God's work, so in the work of salvation and the "things that accompany salvation," His spoken or written Word has a prominent part. **"I have given them thy word,"** said Jesus in John 17:14, and then, remarking the effect of this word in making His disciples already a people **"not of the world,"** He went on to pray for their sanctification on continually higher ground.

Note that *the same word of God by which His people are called to the beginning of a new life set apart from the world is the word by which TRUE CHRISTIANS ARE SANCTIFIED TO A MORE PERFECT UNION WITH CHRIST.* All attempts to unionize a Christianity heedless to God's written Word can result only in unions

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Tune in to the Berea Baptist Broadcast

STATION	TIME	DIAL	WATTS
WFTA, Tupelo, MS.....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.....	101.9.....	3,000 FM
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DXRA, Davao City, Philippines	Sunday 8:15 - 8:45 a.m.....	783 Khz.....	10,000 AM

Following Holiness

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with anti-christs.

MEANS OF POWER

“God from the beginning chose you to salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth” (II Thes. 2:13). This statement concerning the Thessalonian saints is true of all genuine believers. It is the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit that makes the difference between what some theologians name the “general” and “effectual” calls of the gospel.

Stating it otherwise, on the divine side the Holy Spirit’s work of conviction (John 16:8-10) and regeneration (John 1:13; 3:5-8) is the power that converts a lost sinner into a saint. So Paul and Sosthenes, reminding the Corinthians of their former sinful state, declared:

“And such were some of you: but ye washed yourselves, but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus and in the spirit of our God” (I Cor. 6:11).

Once more, note that the same Spirit *Who set us apart unto God at the beginning of our Christian experience is He Who now provides sanctifying power in our lives:*

“If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin: but the Spirit is life because of righteousness” “Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, in the power of the Holy Ghost” (Rom. 8:10; 15:13).

MEANS APPLIED

Some other means of holiness are also of divine provision, but call for active reception or application on our part. *Without this personal participation or application, we have no promise in God’s Word of any spiritual benefits to us from His provision.*

Among the applied means of holiness, or the means of effecting holiness in our individual lives, may be mentioned *faith, prayer, will, and discipline.*

MEANS OF FAITH

Jesus sent the apostle Paul to the Gentiles **“to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in [toward] me”** (Acts 26:18).

“According to your faith” (Matt. 9:20 etc.) is a principle of wide application. Faith, too, is a sanctifying means not only at our entrance to the Christian life but also in maintaining a holy walk:

“The just shall live from faith” (Rom. 1:17). **“For we walk by faith, not by sight”** (II Cor. 5:7).

MEANS OF PRAYER

It seems hardly necessary to multiply Scripture references to show the need of prayer to attain a greater degree of

holiness. But see for examples Eph. 6:18-20; Col. 4:2-4; I Thes. 3:11-13, etc.

Too often it is as true of holiness as of less important blessings that **“ye have not, because ye ask not”** (James 4:2). God knows how to give good gifts to His children, and Jesus commands us:

“Keep on asking, and it will be given you; keep on seeking, and ye shall find; keep on knocking, and it will be opened unto you: for everyone that keeps on asking receiveth; and he that keeps on seeking findeth; and to him that keeps on knocking it will be opened” (Matt. 7:7-11).

MEANS OF WILL

“This is the will of God, even your sanctification” (I Thes. 4:3).

So we need have no doubt as to God’s will in this matter. But what about our own will? In a general way, we may concede that our will ought always to be in accord with the will of God. But is it? The Scriptures clearly call upon us to exercise our own will in sanctification.

The very command, **“Be ye holy, for I am holy,”** shows our responsibility for holiness. And in I Thessalonians 4:4, the sanctification that is god’s will is explained as meaning **“that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor.”**

“Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 6:11). *Habitually consider yourself dead to sin but alive to God---this is sanctification, and this is an act of will.* In fact, the whole sixth chapter of Romans is an appeal to the will of baptized believers to practice what they professed in their baptism.

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, through the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a sacrifice, living, holy, acceptable to God---your reasonable (logical) service” (Rom. 12:1).

MEANS OF DISCIPLINE

“Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. . . .for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness” (Heb. 12:5-14).

The entire twelfth chapter of Hebrews should be studied carefully in this connection. God will not permit His children to persist in sin without chastisement, of which all his legitimate children are partakers. Verse 8 alone disproves all claims to sinless perfection in mortal life, verse 10 tells us the purpose of God’s chastening work, and verses 11-13 throw upon us the responsibility for a proper response to this chastening.

Assuming that we are not bastards (verse 8), but legitimate children of God, *of we refuse to progress in holiness by any other means, God assures us that He will beat it into us, even if to do so He must beat us to death.* See Psalms 89:30-32; Isa. 22:14; I John 5:16; I Cor. 5:5; 11:29-32; etc.

GOD’S PEOPLE MUST BE SEPARATED FROM SIN IN ORDER TO HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH HIM

“Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” (II Cor. 6:17, 18).

Today’s fashion in religion is compromise. It is supposed to be all right to believe anything, true or false, so long as you do not have convictions strong enough to embarrass anyone that believes the opposite. Unity in Christ in the one faith of His Word is unthought of: there is much mouthing about union and brotherhood, but what is meant is union with the enemies of Christ who ignore or deny the authority of His Word.

Modern “Christianity” has generally abandoned the hope of victory over the world, and so is joining hands with the world against the commandments of God while still wearing His name---taking His name in vain.

The promise of divine fellowship in our text is linked to command to separation. The apostle then exhorts us:

“Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”

IMMORALITY

However much their practice may belie their profession, I suppose there are few Christians today that would deny their obligation to cleanse themselves from every defilement of flesh: that is, from gross sins of immorality. Yet we need constantly to remind ourselves what we must do to cleanse ourselves and stay cleansed from such defilement.

First, we are commanded not to sin. **“These things write I unto you, that ye sin not”** (I John 2:1).

Second, we need to recognize that sin is not only in the outward act, but in the thoughts and desires which may lead to such an act. See Matthew 5:28; I John 3:15; Proverbs 24:9.

CONFESSION

Third, if we are truly God’s children by faith in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:26), we are to remember that **“we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous”** (I John 2:1) and believe that **“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”** (I John 1:9), for **“the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin”** (I John 1:7).

*Fourth---*and this is the point emphasized in our text---*we must learn to hate sin as God hates sin,* whether in our own lives or in the lives of others; we must **“have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove**

them” (Eph. 5:11); *we must be separated from sin and, in a sense, from sinners.*

UNEQUAL YOKES

This separation does not mean Pharisaism; it does mean: “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?” (II Cor. 6:14).

Our need for cleansing from “filthiness” or defilement of spirit is even greater than our need for cleansing from fleshly sins, but the sad fact is that, for lack of scriptural teaching, God’s people generally cannot even recognize their spiritual defilement as the horrible sin that it is in the sight of God.

IDOLATRY

“Thou shalt have no other gods before me” (in my presence), is the very first of the ten commandments, and literal idolatry (the bowing down to or serving of images) is specifically forbidden in the second.

But images need not be of material substance: men may form mental images and worship the vain fancies of their own imagination. So we are told that **“stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry”** (I Sam. 15:23), and that covetousness **“is idolatry”** (Col. 3:5).

One of the most popular idols in modern Christianity is “ecumenicalism,” the dream of a world “church” ruled but a self-constituted hierarchy or religious oligarchy instead of a pope, but with a faith more remote from the Bible than Catholicism has ever dared to be.

On the other hand, *countless Christians have made their particular “church” or “denomination” an idol in their hearts,* giving to its name or its “program” a loyalty and devotion that ought to be given only to God.

Modern false prophets and their followers who sacrifice Bible truth for the sake of denominationalism, interdenominationalism, or “undenominationalism” are just as guilty of idolatry as the worshipers of any graven image ever set up: and idolatry is as great an abomination to God today as it ever was.

HERESY

It is a *shocking fact* that some nominal Baptists seem to think that it does not matter what a man believes, says, writes, or does---so long as he calls himself a Baptist of some variety or other he must be free to serve Satan in the ranks of and at the expense of God’s people, and other Baptists in the same “denomination” are bound to support him in his devilish work.

Freedom for heretics but enslavement of the faithful for the support of their enemies, is the rule sought for and now much practiced among Baptists, to mention no others. God’s rule is different.

“Mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them” (Rom. 16:17).

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Following Holiness

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“A man that is a heretic after the first and second admonition, reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself” (Titus 3:10-11).

WHOSE FELLOWSHIP?

We have to choose whose fellowship we desire: the fellowship of God and His faithful servants, or the fellowship of Satan and his hosts of hypocrites. *We cannot have both.*

“Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord” (II Chron. 19:2).

Therefore, **“Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty”** (II Cor. 6:17-18).



Meekness

(Continued from page 81) ♦

will he enlarge on these subjects, to the disgust of such as, under the influence of pride and worldly affections, savour not heavenly things.”

The precepts and commands of Jesus Christ are to be regarded universally, and the badge of discipleship must be worn uniformly, for it is said that harmony in actions is much more excellent than in sounds. The Psalmist says, **“Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments.”** All Christians do not attain to the same degree in meekness, but it is incumbent upon all to exhibit genuine marks of a meek and gentle spirit. This grace or fruit of the Spirit must be cultivated, this temper of mind must be manifest in our words and actions, the law of kindness must dwell upon our tongues, for **“the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, and meekness.”**

Let us---

I. DEVELOP ITS PRINCIPLES AS A CHRISTIAN VIRTUE.

In us by nature there dwelleth no good thing; but when grace triumphs the inner man is renewed in righteousness and true holiness. The object of religion is to destroy every evil propensity of the heart, to erase from the soul all impurity, and implant those principles and dispositions which produce a new creation, constitute the basis of evangelical hope, and occasion results the most cheering and influential. It expels from the heart all that is sour, callous, and vile; it exiles from the mind

all gloom, sorrow, and turbulency, and all that is sordid, groveling, and contemptible becomes exotic to the character of its possessors. Besides this, it inspires the heart with refined and elevated thoughts, promotes peace, and imparts pure and unmingled happiness to the mind.

Actions good or bad are generally based upon corresponding principles. Christian meekness is not a natural instinct, nor does it consist in the observance of the rules of etiquette, but it is a principle wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit: hence separation, humility, docility, forbearance, and forgiveness are among its characteristic features. There is---

1. *The principle of separation.*

There is a broad line of distinction betwixt vice and virtue, darkness and light, sin and holiness, the world and religion: that difference is quite obvious.

The votaries of the world are known by the conduct and temper they manifest. Fraud, censoriousness, revenge, moroseness, dissatisfaction, anger, and hatred, are common and visible traits in the character of the ungodly. But Christians have put off the old man, are renewed in the spirit of their minds, and have put on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness, and are therefore His workmanship, who walk not according to the course of this world.

They manifest a spirit of honesty, respect, forbearance, kindness, contentment, meekness, and love.

Religion is not a notion in the heard, nor a human discovery, but a principle in the heart, and is a revelation from God; it must not only be patronized and commended, but enjoyed in the heart, and exhibited in the life. Before Christianity can be embraced, the world, the flesh, and the devil must be renounced, for the friendship of the world is enmity with God.

“Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God” (Rom. 12:2). Paul’s advice to the Corinthians on this subject is worthy of being reiterated: **“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you”** (II Cor. 6:14, 17).

By separation from the world I do not mean a removal out of it, for it would be a calamity to the world to remove the children of God out of it. But Christians are to forsake the customs, allurements, vanities, sins, and spirit of the world. **“But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness”** (I Tim. 6:11). The Saviour’s intercessory prayer for His disciples was, **“I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil”** (John 17:15). This Christian grace includes---

2. *The principle of humility.* Meekness and humility are essential and inseparable parts of religion; every constituent part and every species of virtue included in religion must be cultivated. Humility was a distinguishing feature in the character of Abraham, Jacob, Josiah, Hezekiah, Manasseh, David, the centurion, and the apostle Paul.

But the most brilliant and extraordinary example of humility on record is that furnished in the life of Christ. How astonishing was the humility which distinguished His advent into the world! **“Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross”** (Phil. 2:6, 8). Can we conceive of humiliation more profound and wonderful? Can we have a more impressive manifestation, a more comprehensive and instructive lesson than those displayed by the Saviour in His errand of mercy to save our fallen world?

We may also discover the same spirit and temper in His intercourse with men. He appeared as a servant rather than a master; **“He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.”** How wisely and affectionately He reproved His disciples. **“And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? Is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth”** (Luke 22:24, 27).

Again we read, **“He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel and girded himself. After that He poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples feet, and to wipe them with the towel**

wherewith He was girded. When He had done this, Jesus saith unto them, Ye call Me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.”

There are many considerations which should inspire us with humility. When we contemplate the dignity of the Saviour’s person, His infinite condescension, the purity of His character, His unspeakable love, His readiness to pardon the penitent sinner, the meek and gentle spirit He manifested; then reflect on our conduct towards Him and towards each other; we see just cause for humiliation before the Lord. **“God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.” “Better is it to be of an humble spirit with the lowly than to divide the spoil with the proud.”** We must be humble in order to be elevated, for **“he that humbleth himself shall be exalted”** (Luke 14:11). It is said, when Sir Eardley Wilmot kissed the hand of his majesty, on being appointed chief justice, one of his sons, a youth of seventeen, attended him to his bedside. “Now,” said he, “My son, I will tell you a secret worth your knowing and remembering. The elevation I have met with in life, particularly this last instance of it, has not been owing to any superior merits or abilities, but to my humility; to my not having set up myself above others, and to a uniform endeavour to pass through life void of offence towards God and man.” Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, says, **“Mind not high things; but condescend to men of low estate.”** He also exhorts the Philippians to cherish the same disposition, **“Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.”** There is also---

3. *The principle of docility.* **“Learn of me,”** saith the Saviour, **“for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”** And the apostle James observes, **“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering.”**

Docility signifies a disposition to be taught, a willingness to be instructed, a desire to know the will of God, and a readiness to keep His commandments. At the present day men rise to eminence and distinction in human learning, science, and intellectual attainments; but before such plausible distinctions are gained there must be a disposition to learn---application and perseverance in studies. And equally essential are those pre-requisites for the realization of spiritual knowledge, the necessity, importance, and excellency of which every right minded man must admit. **“Behold, the**

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Meekness

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fear of the LORD, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding” (Job 28:28). As learners in the school of Christ, we must be docile as children; for the Great Teacher condescends to instruct us, bears with our imbecility and dullness, and encourages our feeblest efforts.

No one can properly understand the Scriptures without a Divine influence. **“The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned”** (I Cor. 2:14). But, **“If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself”** (John 7:17).

Man is not only capable of knowing the doctrine, but feeling the evidence of its truth in his heart. There must be a humble reliance on the Holy Spirit, **“that we might know the things which are freely given to us of God; Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual”** (I Cor. 2:12-13).

Correct views, spiritual discernment, and deep penetration into the things of God, are not to be expected without Divine assistance, nor until the heart is renewed by the power of the Spirit, washed in the blood of the Lamb, and endowed with pure and heavenly dispositions.

Hence the wisdom and propriety of attending to the advice of Solomon, **“Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding”** (Prov. 3:5) **“The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord; and he delighteth in his way”** (Ps. 37:23). He must sit like Mary at the feet of Jesus, and say, **“Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth.”** Furthermore, I may remark that evangelical meekness tends to promote the spirit and---

4. *The principle of forgiveness.* The Saviour hath taught us how to deal with our brethren when they offend us, and how oft we are to forgive them. **“Peter came to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, until seven times: but Until seventy times seven.”**

It is said that angry disputations, envious competition, resentment of injuries, a revengeful and furious contention for mastery rather than truth, were regarded as virtues and marks of a noble mind among the learned in the heathen world. We cannot pronounce such conduct as wither virtuous or noble,



but sinful and debasing. Such practices Christianity prohibits and condemns; they are incompatible with the spirit and precepts of the Gospel.

The spirit of the world is, **“an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth”**; but the New Testament says, **“Love your enemies”**---**“Speak evil of no man, be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men.”** A profession of religion may provoke the frown and contempt of the world, for **“all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution”** (II Tim. 3:12). But the Christian exercises forbearance, meekness, and forgiveness towards his enemies. He does not allow little abuses to ruffle his mind, nor slight injuries to disturb his repose, but in meekness he possesses his soul.

Whilst the contentious, irritable, and dissatisfied, are whirled about in storms of their own creating, the believer enjoys peace which passeth all understanding.

One Christian writer remarks, “Those storms which pass over the bending reed overthrow the stubborn and unyielding trees of the forest; so those injuries, calumnies, and provocations which keep

the unsubdued temper of the violent and the proud in a perpetual convulsion, make little impression on the meek, patient, and forgiving Christian, and leave his spirit unruffled, his comfort undisturbed.”

Forgiveness is a very important item in the Christian catalogue; but we fear many professing godliness do not sufficiently appreciate it. Some are slow to learn the lesson of forgiveness. It is true they unhesitatingly repeat the Lord’s prayer---**“forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us”**---a false acknowledgment this, whilst enmity lurks in the heart against a fellow-creature. It is absolute hypocrisy. Is it reasonable to expect forgiveness from our heavenly Father if we forgive not one another? Some attempt to gild their conduct by saying, “Well, I can forgive so and so, but I cannot forget them, and I have no wish to come where they are.” Is that Christianity? Was that the spirit of Christ? Is not such forgiveness a very dubitable affair? Meekness influences the temper, affections, and desires: it teaches us to forgive our offenders, and pray for them who despitefully use us.

Hence states the apostle Paul, in his epistle to the Ephesians, **“Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you”** (Eph. 4:32). Observe---

II. THE ARGUMENTS BY WHICH THE IMPORTANCE OF ITS PRINCIPLES ARE INDICATED.

1. *The fact that it is included in the list of social virtues.* It is a characteristic of the saints. **“Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? Let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom”** (James 3:13). It should be manifest in all we say. **“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear”** (I Peter 3:15). It is also commended in the Scriptures. **“Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought His judgment: seek righteousness, seek meekness”** (Zeph. 2:3). **“Walk worthy of the vocation whereby ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love”** (Eph. 4:1-2). We are urged to put on **“bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering”** (Col. 3:12).

It is necessary in order to avoid quarrels and contentions, **“Go not forth hastily to strive, lest thou know not what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbour hath put thee to shame. Debate thy cause with thy neighbor himself; and discover not a secret to another”** (Prov. 25:8-9).

It should be exercised towards all men, whether they are our superiors, equals, or inferiors. **“Brethren, if any man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness”** (Gal. 6:1).

From these quotations of Holy Writ it is evident that meekness is an important Christian grace, and is therefore in the list of social virtues, and must be transcribed into our practice. “As ill-shapen persons give no just idea of the beautiful symmetry of the human frame, so there are some professors of the Gospel who have their minds twisted by prejudice, and their wills made so crooked by obstinacy, that they exhibit a mere distortion of Christianity.” But real Christians are “living epistles, known and read of all men.” They faithfully discharge their duties; are conscious that all the precepts of the moral law are binding upon them. They cultivate personal piety; rise to an elevation of habitual devotedness to God; and demonstrate, by a holy life, the excellency of religion.

“Oh, let our lips and lives express

The holy Gospel we profess;

And let our works and virtues shine

To prove the doctrine all divine.”

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. What is a simple one, two, three way to witness to a friend or neighbor? - Mississippi

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This is an excellent question that is worthy of serious consideration.

We first need to establish what witnessing is, as well as the correct message that must be shared with others. Witnessing is simply sharing with others how Christ has saved your soul and changed your life. It is telling others about the power of God manifested through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ in saving poor sinners from the penalty of their sins. Paul declared: **"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith"** (Rom. 1:16-17). The message of the Gospel of the grace of God in Christ must be the central theme of our witnessing as Paul told the Corinthians: **"And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God"** (I Cor. 2:1-5). It is not the messenger that is most important, but rather an accurate message that points sinners to the Lord Jesus Christ alone as their only hope of salvation.

One of the simplest ways to witness to others is simply by sharing your personal testimony of salvation. I often explain to people how I was lost in sin, how I broke God's laws, and was living in unbelief for the first 21 years of my life. Then a co-worker name Greg Rittenhouse began to share how Christ had changed his life and forgave him of his sins the moment he repented and believed the Gospel. I share with them how stubborn I was and how I struggled with my sin. Then I tell them how the Holy Spirit drew me to the Lord Jesus when He opened

my heart and my eyes to the glory of the crucified, buried, and risen Christ. I tell them of the joy of forgiveness and the assurance of eternal life that comes through repentance and faith. I tell them that nothing on earth compares to the happiness and contentment that I experience in Christ on a day to day basis. Sharing your testimony is a Biblical way of witnessing. Paul said: **"Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief"** (I Tim. 1:13-15). After Jesus had revealed His saving grace to the woman at the well the Scriptures record her immediate reaction: **"The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? Then they went out of the city, and came unto him...And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did"** (John 4:28-30, 39). She simply pointed others to the Saviour.

Another way of witnessing is to learn the art of asking good questions. I rarely ask anyone if they have been saved or born again. Rather I ask questions that force them to think. What if you had to stand before God and He would personally ask you why should I allow you into heaven? This question usually reveals whether or not they believe in works salvation. Here is another good question: Do you know what the Gospel is? If they don't know I take them to II Thess. 1:8-9 and I Cor. 15:1-4 and proceed from there. Another question: Could you tell me how I could know for sure that I am going to go to Heaven? All these questions are aimed at opening up conversation about spiritual and eternal things. When witnessing it is important to simply show from the Bible that all men are sinners in need of the Saviour and that there is only one way to heaven, through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ.

Those of us who believe in the doctrines of free and sovereign grace should be the boldest and most fervent in our witness to others. We know that God is the one who is in control of salvation. We should tell the old story of the Gospel over and over again each and every day God gives us opportunity. Recently I was

privileged to hold a revival meeting at Faith Missionary Baptist Church where Garner Smith is the pastor. He told me about the late missionary to Brazil, Dempsey Henderson who witnessed to everyone he came in contact with. He was fearless in declaring the glorious Gospel of Christ to lost and undone sinners. He had a passion for souls. Oh, that God would convict each and every believer to witness daily with a burdened heart for the souls of men. All of us have a solemn responsibility to witness for the Lord until Jesus comes again. May God give us grace to have the attitude of the old missionary apostle who wrote: **"Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound. Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory"** (II Tim. 2:9-10).

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The simple 1, 2, 3 way to witness to someone you know, or are acquaintances with, may not be all that simple. The answer that I give may not be the answer you were looking for either. I know this for a fact only because I fail miserably in all three of these "simple ways".

Step one: **"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord"** (Heb. 12:14). We can be pretty much at peace with most men and maybe all men if our pride in certain situations does not come between meekness and the pride of life. The problem which encompasses following peace with all men is the child of God's behavior in every day activities.

"But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy" (1 Pet. 1:15,16). Holiness is sanctification, sanctification is purity. To be holy one must be morally blameless or physically pure. Ever hear of the old saying, you are an open book? Well, it's true, you are an open book to the world of lost souls that live around you. God has commanded that we live a life of perfection so we have a way of life that is not demanded by the preachers of Baptist churches but the only Law Giver

and His name is God. **"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect"** (Matt. 5:48).

A life lived to God and not to the flesh is not accomplished by self help books or any other book written of this world. Only God's Word is our guide to a sanctified life that leads others to Christ. Our life, conversation (behavior), is the first step in witnessing to the lost. **"Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart"** (Prov. 3:3).

Step Two: These next steps intertwine with step one as all of God's doctrine does. **"Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil"** (Eph. 6:11). This step is like unto the first. With out the sanctifying Word of God, **"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth"** (John 17:17), one is unable to put on the **"whole armour of God"**, notice that Ephesians 6:15 uses the preparation of the gospel of peace. Preparation means to make ready. Making oneself ready to share the gospel with others is useless unless the Word of God has been studied. God commands us that we are to study and search His Word. **"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth"** (II Tim. 2:15). We, as the children of God, understand the power of the gospel when accompanied by the Holy Spirit. **"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God"** (I Cor. 1:18). For us to enter into a conversation about Godly things we are entering into a realm of a Spiritual battle that we need to be prepared for. Satan hates for God's people to speak of heavenly things to his adherents especially about the death, burial, and the glorious resurrection, and soon return, and coming Kingdom of Jesus Christ. Therefore we need to be wise and understand what the will of God is. **"Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time"** (Col. 4:5).

Third step: Prayer is the last step and not necessarily last in the order of importance but all three are all equal, being the doctrine of God for us to obey. The apostle Paul asked to be prayed for that he may be able to witness of the mystery of Christ. **"Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds"** (Col. 4:3). If we want to be successful in our effort to witness to those around us, we need to ask those that are of the household of faith to pray for us to open our mouth boldly for the cause of the gospel. Remember, the elect of God are waiting for the gospel to be brought to them.

It is we who are the ones to witness

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. What can we as Christians do about the declining moral standard of our country? – Mississippi

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As I ponder upon this question, I have to question, what is the moral standard of this country? Morally mankind is corrupt, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. The moral standard in which all of mankind and countries are to fulfill is God's moral standard. I seem to remember a verse of Scripture that proclaims: **"Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be"** (Rom. 8:7).

I am not saying that this great country that God has given us to live in was not founded upon Christian principles. I am saying that the morally bankrupt people of this earth have no interest in God's moral standard called the Ten Commandments.

I have yet to see anywhere in God's Holy Word that gives instruction to God's people to halt, or slow down, or fix the declining "moral standard" of a country.

What is in God's Word is the responsibility that the child of God has to the Father of Lights. We are the lights that shine in the darkness, but if we do not shine by walking in the Spirit then we are as salt trodden under foot. We are responsible for ourselves and our natural, inherent bent to obeying the law of sin in this flesh. We must be about mortifying the deeds of this body. **"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live"** (Rom. 8:13).

Just as the people of God have been taught what sin is by the law, the world has no understanding what sin is without hearing ears and seeing eyes that only come from God. **"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin"** (Rom. 3:20).

I, too, am concerned for this nation and the souls that are lost. I am invigorated at the same time for the fact that God has set before us His Word that informs us of what is to come. We must open our eyes to see that what is happening is God's Word unfolding right before us. Take comfort, God is in control. My old basketball coach tells me to keep looking up. **"For the Lord himself shall descend**

from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (II Thess. 4:16,17). Let's work for Christ in our own lives before others. That is what is expected from God to us, not to fix other's lives, but to live Godly before the ungodly and in turn praying that souls will be saved and Christ's kingdom be advanced.

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"And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold" (Matt. 24:12).

"For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect" (Matt. 24:24).

"...Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8).

"For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way" (II Thess. 2:7).

"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (II Tim. 3:13).

I think the sad but most accurate answer to this question is "not much." We Christians are commissioned with the responsibility of preaching the gospel message, not correcting the immorality of the world around us. Only changed lives can do that. **"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature"** (Mark 16:15). Over the years, there have been more preachers like Jeremiah, who wept many tears because the people to whom he preached only made a *show* of caring about the things of God but never obeyed, than there have been like Jonah, who saw instant and great national revival.

Peter and those with him preached at Pentecost and 3,000 believed, but those instances are rare. There is nothing to indicate that Paul's ministry had such astounding numerical evangelistic and

moral success as we usually attribute to him, even though the whole then-known world was reached with the gospel. It is the Holy Spirit who opens hearts to believe and obey the gospel, not anything we can do. **"And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul"** (Acts 16:14, italics mine). **"...Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength..."** (Rev. 3:8).

Paul reminds us, **"I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase"** (1 Cor. 3:6).

Every country and, sadly, even many of the Lord's churches that have had the gospel and a Christian testimony have drifted away from the gospel into apostasy. Our country today is reputed to be one of the most generous of countries. Yet the so-called "Christian charity" that is practiced is humanism and is plagued with greed, corruption and desire for personal glory, rather than with the attitude of humility and love seen in Acts chapter four.

The verses quoted above clearly point to the steady decline of both morality and belief which will increase to vast proportions before the Lord returns for His own. Just the presence of the Lord's church, that is to say the ever-present testimony of consistent Christian lives and activity of the Lord's Bride-elect, is a deterrent to evil (II Thess. 2:7, above). *But it is not the church or the people who are actually the deterrent, it is the indwelling Holy Spirit.*

As discouraging as it may sound, the Bible seems to teach that conditions will continue to worsen until true believers will be scarce indeed (II Tim. 3:13, quoted above). I offer two good Biblical illustrations:

THE FLOOD: We can't really know but can safely estimate that the world population at the time of the Flood was about the same as the world population in the mid-twentieth century. Yet despite the preaching of Noah and those before him, there were only eight souls found worthy of salvation.

SODOM AND GOMORRAH: We do not know the population of the four cities destroyed at the time of Lot, but we know that out of that great population, only four souls were taken out: one of them turned back and we can seriously question the morality of the other three.

Yet there is hope! God *will* take His elect out before pouring His wrath

upon the earth, just as He withheld the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah until Lot was taken out. **"Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither..."** (Gen. 19:22).

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II Chronicles 7:14 declares: **"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."** We must repent of our worldliness, covetousness, apathy, coldness, unfaithfulness, prayerlessness, and general lukewarmness if we expect God to restore our country. Judgment must begin at the house of God. If Christians were really concerned about the condition of our country they wouldn't use any excuse to lay out of church services. Our prayer meeting night services would be well attended. We would fervently witness to those within our sphere of influence. We would not allow the world's standards and opinions to infect our lives and churches.

Christians must get right with God before we can ever expect to have any influence for good. As long as there are professing Christians fornicating, committing adultery, drinking socially, cheating, lying, stealing, gossiping, and having a mean spirit we can expect to do little good. May God convict us to walk the straight and narrow road of righteousness. May we learn the balance of being in the world as witnesses without being influenced by those who are worldly. May God give us grace to treat others graciously **"speaking the truth in love"** with a genuine desire to help others spiritually. The things mentioned in these two brief paragraphs would be a good start. Romans 13:11-14 declares: **"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying: But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof."**

TOM ROSS

Forum #1

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of our Saviour. **"And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful"** (Tit. 3:14).

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Matthew 8:1-4: **"When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him. And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them."**

Luke 8:26-39, selected verses: **"27 And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in any house, but in the tombs...35 Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind:...38 Now the man out of whom the devils were departed besought him that he might be with him: but Jesus sent him away, saying, 39 Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him."**

There are a number of step-by-step programs which people have been taught to use as ways to witness to their friends, neighbors and associates. These include "The Four Spiritual Laws," "Four Things God Wants You to Know," "The A.B.C.s of the Gospel," "The Romans Road" and many others. These programs are all available in tract form and may likely be found in your local Christian book store or online.

These programs are organized series of verses showing the need and way of salvation. But these are man-made tools, a simple way of preaching, if you please. I personally see nothing wrong with these programs *as tools or helps*. They are a good way to leave your message *after* you have witnessed to your friend. Tracts are always a good way to leave an evangelistic message when you are

just passing through. It is my practice to never leave a tip without a tract.

But handing out tracts is not witnessing! A witness is one who *tells* what he has seen, what has happened, and what he knows. I have driven over the road for 38 years and have an excellent driving record. But despite that experience and knowledge, I could not be a witness as to an accident that happened in North Carolina while I was in New York State, because I didn't see it and didn't experience it. The point is that you can only be a witness for Jesus Christ if you have experienced salvation yourself. No amount of theological training or methodology will make you a witness.

The verses quoted above pretty well show that. The leper whom Jesus healed in Matthew 8:1-4 was told to tell no one. There was good reason for that instruction. He was first to **"go thy way, shew thyself to the priest"** and then to **"offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them."** There first had to be evidence that he had been healed. There must first be evidence that you have been saved.

Then there was a step of obedience that the healed leper was to take, which was to be **"a testimony unto them."** If there were no evidence of healing (a visible change made) there could be no testimony and no witness.

The maniac of Gadara (in the Luke passage quoted above) had been changed so that there was vivid evidence of the change. Not only was he fully clothed, but he wanted to be out of and away from the place where he had been so grievously tormented. He *wanted* to follow Jesus.

But sometimes being a witness for Christ requires staying where you are, in the circles where you have been known, so that the change in your life is seen in stark contrast to what you once were. Jesus told the man out of whom He had cast the demons: **"Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee."** He was to be a witness. He was to show the things that had happened. That is just what the man did. **"And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him."** In this incident also there was first vivid evidence of change followed by a step of obedience. But there had to *be* a change. Something had to have happened before he could be a witness!

Neither of these men were given a theological method to use. They knew very little Scripture, if any at all. But they were witnesses. They showed and told what great things the Lord had done unto them. *That is the real answer to your question, not some method or tool.*

If you would be a witness for Christ you must first show visible, credible evidence of salvation, then you must take the first steps of Christian obedience such as scriptural baptism and membership in

a sound, New Testament church. Then, as a witness, you can tell your friends and neighbors what great things God has done unto you.

"Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works" (James 2:18).

Confrontation is not witnessing! Doctrine is important and must be correctly taught, but arguing over doctrine is not witnessing! **"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you"** comes *after* **"baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost"** which comes *after* **"Go ye therefore, and teach (literally, make disciples of) all nations."** Whether individual or church, we must take the gospel to the people and *live* the gospel before the people. We have no scriptural basis for waiting for the people to come to our services.

RAY BENNETT



Meekness

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The importance of Christian meekness is indicated---

2. *From the models we have to imitate.* The world has passed high encomiums upon philosophers, politicians, warriors, linguists, orators, poets, painters and sculptors. Such, however, may be the distinctions of men, and yet they may be destitute of true religion; and, therefore, they are not the characters we should so much admire and follow as those whose piety is mentioned in the Bible, and also recorded in the annals of a more modern biography. There may be worldly and intellectual distinctions; but this is mere tinsel, if unassociated with moral principle.

When we search the records of divine truth we find much to admire, and much that is deeply interesting, in reference to the exemplary lives of many devoted servants of God. Enoch was distinguished for his piety, Abraham for his faith, Moses for his meekness, Jacob for determination, Joseph for purity, Caleb for decision, Samuel for integrity, Job for patience, David for sincerity, Jeremiah for patriotism, Daniel for devotion, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego for firmness, Peter for zeal, Paul for usefulness and intrepidity, and John for tenderness and affection. An earnest imitation of departed saints is enforced by the apostle Paul in his epistle to the Hebrews: **"Be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises."** Many have finished their earthly course, passed through the final struggle, and entered into a glorious immortality. These we are to follow: not that they

were free from personal imperfections; but we must imitate their virtues, and follow them as they followed Christ. Their faith in God, their steadfastness, their zeal, patience, and meekness must be imitated. Their imperfections are as beacons, which determine points of danger, and should guard us off the rocks and sandbanks; whilst their excellent traits are designed to excite emulation.

But in speaking more particularly of meekness as a fruit of the Spirit, we observe, it was a striking feature in the character of Moses. It is said of him that he was **"very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth"** (Num. 12:3).

Meekness is a celestial ornament, to be seen and worn on earth; **"for the Lord taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation"** (Ps. 149:4). The counsel of the apostle Peter is worthy of notice, **"Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel: but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."** But in no character was **"the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit"** so effectually exhibited as in the conduct of Christ. His character is a perfect model for us to copy; we must **"follow his steps."** How calmly He rebuked His disciples when they were provoked at the conduct of the Samaritans, and desired Him to cause fire to descend from heaven and consume them. He answered, **"Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them"** (Luke 9:55-56). Although the Saviour firmly insisted on His rights when charged with sedition, and accused the high priest with illegal proceedings against Him, yet, when one of the officers of the court struck Him with the open hand, He mildly said, **"If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?"** (John 18:23). He manifested the same spirit when the bloodthirsty yell rung in His ears, **"Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him!"** And when He hung upon the cross He prayed for His murderers, **"Father, forgive them!"**

With this standard of moral excellence before our eyes---with such a perfect example to copy, let us endeavour, in humble dependence upon the Spirit of God, in earnest pleadings at the throne of grace, and in the exercise of that faith which purifies the heart, **"in all things to shewing thyself a pattern of good works"** (Titus 2:7). Its importance is further indicated---

3. *From the blessings with which it is accompanied.* What happiness there is in the family circle where meekness and piety are blended. "Religion," says

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one writer, "is there seen; perhaps in its beauty, rather than its majesty; if not in its grandest outlines, in its nicest pencillings and softest delineations; if not the throne, the still royal footstool. For though it well knows how to contend, it better loves repose. Like the petrel, it can breast the storm, but more truly resembles the halcyon, brooding in her calm. Here it is real. They who are around us with a quick-sighted perception feel it genuine. They behold it infusing itself into all the little acts of life, and filling up the scene. It is the domestic atmosphere which supports each breath, speeds each pulse, transmits each sound---the soft transparency of every smile and tear---the life of all!"

Many and cheering are the promises to the meek; and great is the happiness they derive from them. Their blessedness consists in satisfaction. **"The meek shall eat and be satisfied; they shall praise the LORD that seek him"** (Ps. 22:26). Divine guidance is promised to them. **"The meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way"** (Ps. 25:9). While passing through this desert land and waste-howling wilderness we are surrounded by dangers, and beset with snares: therefore we need an efficient guide, or we may err in our course, and become bewildered in our pursuits. But the Lord will guide the judgment; and if we acknowledge Him, He will direct our paths. Peace and joy are also promised to them. They **"shall increase their joy in the Lord"** (Isa. 29:19), **and delight themselves in the abundance of peace** (Psa. 37:11). **"The LORD lifteth up the meek: He casteth the wicked down to the ground"** (Psa. 147:6). Their blessedness consists also in their present possessions. The Saviour, in His Sermon on the Mount, said, **"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."** Not that they are to be affluent, and owners of large estates; but they shall enjoy the blessings of this life. Many possess wealth in abundance, but do not enjoy it; being of a discontented and insatiable turn of mind, they are far from being happy.

"True happiness is not the growth of earth;

The search is useless if you seek it there;

'Tis an exotic of celestial birth,

And only blossoms in celestial air."

The meek possess happiness to which irreligious persons are total strangers; they inherit the kingdom of grace on earth, and will eventually possess the kingdom of glory in heaven. **"Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off"** (Isa. 33:17). The righteous shall take possession of the kingdom of heaven, and inherit it for ever.

Having viewed meekness as a Christian

virtue, and the arguments by which its importance is indicated, we must now consider---

III. THE EXEMPLIFICATION OF ITS PRINCIPLES AS A DUTY.

We must---

1. *Ascertain whether we possess this virtue.* The mariner ascertains his course on the deep by observing the compass, and, where dangers are concealed, by consulting the chart. The astronomer fixes the period of an eclipse of the sun or the moon by the aid of figures. Science enables the geologist to determine the situation of the minerals which lie embedded under the crust of the earth. The chemist ascertains the various particles composing a great fluid mass by separating them from each other; he can resolve compound substance into their original elements. A knowledge of geography enables us to describe the position and general features of the earth. And the Christian learns from the Bible what are his duties, privileges, and responsibilities; as well as being furnished with innumerable proofs of the wisdom, love, and goodness of God.

In order to ascertain whether we possess

meekness of spirit, self-examination is necessary. **"Examine yourselves,"** is a duty devolving upon every one. We may respect Christian principles, and acknowledge their importance, but this will avail nothing unless those principles are reduced to practice. **"Examine yourselves,"** not merely in a physical and intellectual, but also in a moral point of view. The region of the heart must be penetrated and surveyed; the depth of feeling must be sounded, the actions must be investigated, and your true position determined. Examine your faith, conversation, temper, love, zeal, spiritual progress, title, and motives. Do not miscalculate your real condition; form not a false estimate of your true character; be faithful with yourselves; know the foundation on which you stand. **"Prove yourselves."** Prove that you are the children of God by obedience to your Heavenly Parent; prove your conduct by the Word of God---see if it be such as becometh the Gospel. If you do not furnish the evidence requisite to justify your claim to religion, you are not answering the purpose for which you were created, nor the will of the Saviour

revealed in His deep humiliation and death on the tree. The mind of man is in constant activity, plying its originative and descriptive powers; and all its efforts and exercises will have a decisive bearing upon the eternal destiny of the soul. Your present and future happiness consists in the recognition and observance of those duties enjoined upon you; but if they are neglected, nothing can prevent you from sinking into everlasting perdition. In order to exemplify this Christian virtue there must be---

2. *The exercise of moral courage and self-possession.* The life of a Christian is a perpetual warfare. **"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places"** (Eph. 6:12). On this verse Wesley remarks: "This single passage seems to contain the whole Scriptural doctrine concerning evil angels. I apprehend the plain meaning of it, literally translated, is this, 'Our wrestling'---the wrestling of real Christians, is not only, or chiefly, **'against flesh and blood'**---weak men, or fleshly appetites and passions; **'but against principalities, against powers'**---the mighty princes of all the infernal regions---with their combined forces---and great is their power, as is also the power of the legions they command: **'against the rulers of the world'**---this is the literal meaning of the word.

Perhaps these principalities and powers remain chiefly in the citadel of their kingdom. But there are other evil spirits that range abroad, to whom the provinces of the world are committed: **'of the darkness'**---chiefly the spiritual darkness; **'of this age'**---which prevails during the present state of things; **'against wicked spirits'**---eminently such, who mortally hate, and continually oppose holiness, and labour to infuse unbelief, pride, evil desire, malice, anger, hatred, envy, or revenge; in **'heavenly places'**---which were once their abode, and which they still aspire after."

The world, the flesh, and Satan are the enemies with which the Christian has to contend; they aim at the destruction of the fruit of the Spirit. It is, therefore, necessary that he should always assume the attitude of defiance, and firmly resist every Satanic invasion. **"He that overcometh shall inherit all things."** Before the hero gathers his laurels, he must engage in the conflict and obtain the victory. So must the soldier of the cross wage war, and overcome his antagonists, before the unfading diadem shall encircle his brow, and the shouts of triumph are heard. Let the prospect and certainty of victory stimulate you in the spiritual warfare. Your object is not military glory, or worldly honours; but an encounter with the infernal chieftain who would fain prevent your entrance into the

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kingdom of Heaven. To be successful in this enterprise you must be clothed with the divine panoply. **"Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God"** (Eph. 6:13-17). Besides the exercise of moral courage and self-possession, there must be---

3. A total and constant dependence on Christ for help. The Saviour hath said, **"Without me ye can do nothing"** (John 15:5). There may be courage and self-possession, but there must also be a full reliance on Him Who is mighty to save, that we may overcome our enemies and surmount the difficulties that surround us. Our safety depends on our union with Christ, and our dependence on Him for help in times of need. **"He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength"** (Isa. 40:29).

There are times when we are severely tried, when our ideas are confused, and our hopes seem to languish; but by imploring help at the Saviour's hands, besieging the throne of grace, we renew our strength, and are enabled to say, **"Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day."** One writer observes: "Here we hold our existence by the help of time; we snatch our very pleasures, like gleams of sunshine, or sudden catches of light between clouds upon a gloomy landscape." We all know by experience that the sea is not always calm, the road is not always smooth, the day is not always clear; but He who sits above the waterfloods, and holds the reins of universal government, will direct and assist all who put their trust in Him. Again, in order to exemplify in our lives and conduct the principles and spirit of Christian meekness, there must be---

4. A constant watchfulness. Places that contain immense wealth and treasures are generally well protected and fortified, to prevent invasion and plunder. The tower of London, in which may be seen the royal diamond-set crown, the costly jewelry, and relics of former days, is guarded night and day. So must the Christian watch over his own heart; for in it is deposited the pearl of great price--the one thing needful. The enemy makes repeated attempts to extract the sacred treasure. Conscious of its value he lays close siege to the citadel of the heart;

which, if left unguarded, he immediately enters and takes possession. **"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."** Keep it in a state of humility, subjection, and meekness. Suppress the first emotions of resentment and impatience. Exercise self-government over all your thoughts, desires, and actions. Let meekness characterize your conversation and temper. Strive to excel in the Christian graces, in the fruit of the Spirit. Live in a spirit of prayer: **"Pray without ceasing."** Cleave to the cross of the once crucified, but now exalted Redeemer. Let the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit be manifest in your daily deportment. **"Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."** **"Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more. For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus."** **"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ"** (I Thess. 5:23).

"How blest are they who still abide

Close sheltered in Thy bleeding side!

Who life and strength from thence derive,
And by Thee move, and in Thee live."



Thorns in the Flesh

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with infinite suffering to walk through leagues of ice and snow. When he awoke, shivering and exhausted, he found that his feet were uncovered and touching the cold footboard of the bed. Out of the brief, disagreeable sensations experienced in that situation his imagination had constructed a whole Arctic tragedy."

It is often thus in life. Out of scant material and passing disadvantages the morbid and unreasonable soul evolves a veritable martyrology. Hysterical women fancy themselves victims of diseases from which they are entirely free, and sometimes become furious with anger when you tell them that their sickness is more imaginary than real. The late Dr. Hunter McGuire had a patient in one of the hospitals of this city who, when she was cured, believed that she was still diseased and refused to leave her bed. The doctor proceeded to treat her mind. He went to the hospital one afternoon and with the aid of nurses removed her from the bed into a carriage on the street. After riding through the city for about an hour he took her out of the carriage and left her standing on the sidewalk a hundred yards from the hospital. He bade her good evening and said that he would call to see her the next morning.

Under the inspiration of anger, excited by his strange conduct, she walked away with a firm step, returned to her room, and the next day went to her own home realizing that she was no longer sick.

But Paul's trouble was not imaginary. It was real; it was intense. But for his faith in God and his grandly heroic spirit, it would have driven him to desperation and despair. All about us are men and women whose distresses of body and mind are just as real as it is possible for any human experience to be. A week ago a prominent citizen of this city went to Southern Florida with the hope of getting relief from a chronic case of extreme facial neuralgia. The disease had defied the skill of the most distinguished physicians; the sufferer had reached the limit of his endurance. If the Florida climate does not afford him speedy relief, death or insanity must ensue. That man's suffering is not imaginary. Not in forty years could Mrs. Eddy and all of her following of so-called healers convince him, or any man who knows him, that it is not real, and intensely and terribly so.

We have mental and heart troubles that are just as real and far more acute and profound than our physical maladies. Every man has an especially sensitive spot, and sooner or later that spot is touched. The painter's right hand is paralyzed; the great concert singer is silenced by a throat affection; the face of the most beautiful woman in the community is marred by a loathsome disease; the tongue of the orator that has quickened the pulse of a nation is palsied; the athlete who has won in a hundred contests is hopelessly crippled. Go where you may, you will find men lacerated in the tender point of their strength, glory, pride, ambition, affection or joy. The very thing they most fear comes upon them. Of the very thing they most fondly cherish they are bereft. The most distasteful and bitter of all cups is given them to drink.

In the city of Selma, Ala., I knew a high intellectual, aspiring and sweet-spirited woman whose only child was killed by a flash of lightning. I never saw a grief like hers. It was stony. For months not a tear bedewed her face. She seemed to be transmuted into a statue of marble. Subsequently I baptized her. But she protested that she had not the faintest recollection of it. Only a lunatic would say that her anguish was not real.

Paul felt that his trouble was of this nature, and, sooner or later, we must all come into the fellowship of his suffering. What an army of martyrs a city like Richmond includes---martyrs scorched by slow fires, martyrs frettled by invisible fetters, martyrs pierced by secret thorns, martyrs crushed by the meanest tyrannies, martyrs dragged through poverty and disease, martyrs for whose woes there is no earthly recompense.

2. Paul could give no adequate description of the affliction which he

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called **"a thorn in the flesh."** It was unutterable, and after he had prayed for its removal he ceased to speak of it. There are troubles which defy expression. A German author says, "The best and quickest mode of banishing a painful impression or feeling is to give expression to it in words." But there are emotions in our minds and hearts sometimes that cannot be revealed in any form of human speech. A man has no eloquence to paint the rapture of his soul when glorious visions pass before it. Nor can he impart to us any adequate conception of the horror and darkness of that soul in its hours of keenest and loneliest anguish.

Great griefs are sacred, and in the midst of them noble men are silent. The rivulet ceases its babble as it joins the wide sea, and the soul is hushed as it merges into some infinite deep of trial and pain. There is the silence of self-respect. We cannot speak of certain troubles without compromising our dignity and manhood. We must humble ourselves before God, but never belittle ourselves before men. There is the silence of delicacy. We see things sometimes that make us sorrowful almost unto death, but there is a refinement of sentiment in us that forbids us to speak of them to others. There is a silence of honor. We must suffer dumbly for other's sake. Many a noble wife has bled in secret rather than reveal the meanness and brutality in her husband. The prophet Isaiah foresaw the indescribable humiliation and agony of Jesus and said, **"As a sheep before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth."** There are occasions in all lives when those who share Christ's noble nature imitate His silence. God has left an inviolable zone of life for exclusive transactions between Himself and the individual soul. All of us have been there, and what we said to God and what God said to us we have never spoken to any fellow-creature.

3. Paul's affliction was incurable. Nothing but God's infinite power could remove the thorn from his flesh, and this God refused to do. He prayed three times for its removal and then knew that it had come to stay. It had pierced him through and through like a barbed arrow shot from a mighty bow, and it remained there until he dropped into his grave

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Thorns in the Flesh

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and found the rest that remaineth to the people of God.

A traveler found on the Atlantic Coast the skeleton of an eagle with a steal trap clasp one of its feet. Hundreds of miles inland the noble bird had been caught in this cruel snare. Weighted with this anguish it had flown across the country until, worn out by the burden and the pain, it expired on the margin of the sea with the instrument of torture still clinging to its limb. Paul was like that royal bird; he was a lover of sun, and sky and sea; but even while soaring in the sunlight of the upper air he was weighted with the burden of a mysterious and unutterable affliction, and the torture of it conquered his brave spirit and drew him down to death and the grave. There are many such into whose soul the iron has entered. In various ways they are hopelessly burdened, entangled and punished. Their eye, like that of the sick eagle, grows dim, their wings grow weary, and there is no discharge for them until they find it in the swoon by the eternal sea. There are some of us who carry in time-worn and feeble bodies maladies that can never be cured, and that are only aggravated by the passing years. There are in some of us disappointment and wounded ambitions and affections which will never bloom. There are blighted hopes that will not revive under any earthly conditions. Stars have gone out of the sky that will never return.

4. Paul's affliction was malignant. He says that, **"a messenger of Satan was sent to buffet me."** This infernal quantity was in the sufferings of Job. His extremest mental anguish was caused by the consciousness that he was pursued and smitten by an emissary of Hell. Our blessed Lord had His darkest, loneliest and most terrible conflicts with satanic power. It was in grappling the arch fiend that He reached the extremity of His humiliation and distress. Every one of us, I suppose, has had an experience akin to this. We are sometimes persecuted for righteousness' sake, and in the midst of the affliction we recognize, in the human instrument by which we are tortured, the presence of a demon whose breath is fragrant with the fumes of Hell. Then it is that our cup of agony is deepest and bitterest.

I have endeavored to give you some conception of the reality and severity of the affliction of this great apostle. But this does not satisfy you. Very naturally you desire to know why this great man in his great and holy mission was subjected to such suffering. I rejoice in being able to gratify your desires. I am able to do it because the apostle himself solves the problem of his mysterious distress.

1. It was for his own safety that he

was so sorely afflicted. He tells us that it was sent upon him **"lest he should be exalted above measure."** He had visions surpassing those of any of the other prophets and apostles. He had seen the risen Christ; he had been **"caught up to the third heaven"**; he had looked upon adorable wonders in the spirit world, heard voices and experienced raptures, of which it was not lawful for him to speak. God had made him wiser, stronger, braver and more successful than any of the men whom he had called into the service of His kingdom. His rare visions, sublime hours, blissful experiences, pre-eminent wisdom, matchless eloquence and grand achievements in the highest realm of human activity might deprive him of Christlike humility. We cannot have mountains without precipices. Privileged spirits standing on crystal peaks and snowy crests of Alpine purity and beauty may see dark chasms yawning at their feet. It does not give us any solicitude to see Christ on the pinnacle of the temple, but the best of His followers may tremble to stand there. The nearness of the best to the worst is a great mystery, and the thought of it should lead the strongest and the safest to watch and pray. We should not suffer a day to pass without putting into our supplications to Almighty God the petition, "Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one." The most gifted and useful minister, the wisest and most influential deacon and the most spiritual and consecrated layman may be unduly exalted in his own esteem and fall from his high estate into sin and disrepute. Such a fall carries with it the complete loss of influence and capacity for usefulness.

This is Paul's solution of the problem of his mysterious affliction. He says, **"That I should not be exalted overmuch there was given to me a thorn in the flesh--a messenger of Satan to buffet me."** Where is the pre-eminently spiritual and useful man in the kingdom of God who, in the light of such teaching, is not ready to pray, "Oh, Lord, if it be needful to preserve me from self-confidence and unholy pride, let me carry to my dying day such a thorn in the flesh"?

2. Through his affliction Paul attained to greater strength. When he prayed for the removal of the thorn in the flesh God's answer was, **"My grace is sufficient for thee."** He found that when he was weakest in the flesh he was strongest in the spirit. Infinitely better is the grace that prepares us to endure with meekness and patience physical and mental anguish than the removal of such sufferings. God takes away our natural strength, chastens the pride of our understanding and will, deprives us of worldly confidence and hope that He may reveal in us a new and diviner strength. For this reason we rejoice with Paul in tribulation.

3. Paul's thorn in the flesh was designed to prepare him for larger

and more efficient service to God and his fellow-man. It was the agony of a protracted physical malady that inspired Cowper to write the sweetest, most comforting and most enduring of all of our sanctuary hymns. In the later years of his ministry a spinal trouble confined Robert Hall to his bed nine-tenths of the time. He was able to preach only once in seven days. But in that one sermon there was an elevation of thought, a clearness and sweep of spiritual vision, a nearness to the throne of God, a grasp of unseen realities, a sympathy with suffering man and a fellowship with the risen and glorified Redeemer that have not been surpassed since the apostolic age.

During the last five years of his ministry Charles Spurgeon preached in great bodily weakness and agony. The cold sweat and the deep furrows on his face were pathetic reminders of his protracted and incurable suffering. But as soon as he entered the pulpit men knew that he had been close to God by

the glory which lingered on his brow. His words were as soft and gentle as falling snowflakes. There was a divine sympathy in every tremor of his musical voice. The pity of God was in his eyes. His bosom heaved with the love of man. His whole being quivered and vibrated with sacred emotion. Visions more glorious than autumnal sunsets, or morning clouds turning to amber and gold, seemed to be fixing the attention of his enraptured spirit. It was in the furnace of affliction that God made him so good and so great. Oh, God! If any thorn in the flesh will awake me to a diviner life, lift me into a loftier fellowship with invisible realities and fit me for a higher and holier service, let me have the anguish of it to the very close of life's pilgrimage.

*"I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,
Supported by thy Word."*



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.

N.J. DRILL CASTS CHRISTIANS AS TERRORISTS

(EP News)--Two angry Christians storm a school and gun down several students. That was the scene in Burlington, N.J., one day last month.

But don't worry — it was just a drill.

Two police detectives portrayed the gunmen. Investigators described them as members of a right-wing fundamentalist group called the "New Crusaders" who don't believe in separation of church and state, according to the Burlington County Times. The mock gunmen went to the school seeking justice because the daughter of one had been expelled for praying before class.

Chris Manno, superintendent of the Burlington Township School District, told the Burlington County Times: "We need to practice under conditions as real as possible in order to evaluate our procedures and plans so that they're as effective as possible."

But is the scenario realistic?

"This is an egregious violation and discrimination against Christians," said Len Deo, president of the New Jersey Family Policy Council. "Christians are not the ones that are terrorizing the world. For a school to even portray Christians in that mode, it's just an egregious example of the bias of the administrators in these schools."

Candi Cushman, education analyst for Focus on the Family Action, said the high school's mock drill was also a mockery of

Christians.

"At the very least it was poor judgment, and at the worst, it was flagrant discrimination against socially conservative, Judeo-Christian citizens," she said. "It's ironic -- and frightening -- that even as high schools across the nation are holding 'diversity' and 'tolerance' programs that exalt homosexuality, they overlook such blatant discrimination against Christian students."

Messages left with the school district were not returned.

A statement on the district's Web site said: "Any perceived insensitivities to our religious community as a result of the emergency exercise are regrettable. It was certainly not the intent to portray any group in a negative manner."

U.S. SUPREME COURT UPHOLDS BAN ON PARTIAL-BIRTH ABORTION

(EP News)—Advocates of a law banning partial-birth abortion are celebrating what one of the law's co-sponsors is calling "first true judicial victory for the unborn since Roe v. Wade."

South Carolina Republican Jim DeMint said, "It upholds the will of the American people." He made the statement on April 18, just hours after the Supreme Court ruled 5-4 that the Partial Birth Abortion Ban Act -- which Congress passed and President Bush

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signed into law in 2003 -- does not violate a woman's right to an abortion, as several federal courts had ruled.

The ban takes effect immediately. Former presidential candidate Gary Bauer has been an active proponent of the legislation. When the decision came down, he said, "This is an important step toward restoring the sanctity of life in our laws [and] toward restoring the promise of America's founding that we are all endowed by our Creator with the right to life."

MATHEMATICA ABSTINENCE STUDY DOESN'T ADD UP

(EP News)--Liberals are touting a study released by Mathematica Policy Research last week that claims abstinence-only education is not effective in delaying sexual activity among unmarried youth. But family advocates say many other studies show that abstinence education keeps kids safe and healthy.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) hired Mathematica to evaluate the impact of federal funding of abstinence-only programs -- totaling \$87.5 million since 1998. Recipients of that Title V money are required to teach abstinence as the "expected standard" and that sex outside of marriage may "have harmful psychological and physical effects."

Mathematica declared the programs it examined ineffective and possibly medically inaccurate.

Valerie Huber, executive director of the National Abstinence Education Association (NAEA), pointed out that Mathematica only looked at four programs out of more than 700.

"The field of abstinence has significantly grown and evolved since that time," she said. "The results demonstrated in the Mathematica study are not representative of the abstinence-education community as a whole."

OKLAHOMA GOVERNOR VETOES PRO-LIFE BILL

(EP News)--Gov. Brad Henry has vetoed legislation that would have prohibited the state funding of abortion. Rep. Lance Cargill, speaker of the House, said the governor's action on April 18 is not in line with the beliefs of Oklahomans who value the sanctity of life. "It's especially sad that on a day when the U.S. Supreme Court is advancing the cause of life, Oklahoma is moving backwards -- thanks to the governor," he said. "The idea that taxpayer dollars could be used to perform abortions is terrible."

COURT RULES "BE HAPPY, NOT GAY" T-SHIRT DEROGATORY

(EP News)--A federal judge ruled April 17 that officials at an Illinois high school can ban a student from wearing a T-shirt

Who Prayed?

*Did you think of us this morning
 As you breathed a word of prayer?
 Did you ask for strength to help us
 All our heavy burdens bear?*

*Someone prayed and strength was given
 For the lone and weary road,
 Someone prayed and faith grew stronger
 As we bent beneath our load.*

*Someone prayed---the way grew brighter,
 And we walked all unafraid.
 In our heart a song of gladness---
 Tell me, was it YOU who prayed?*

---Selected

that reads, "Be Happy, Not Gay," while a lawsuit on the matter proceeds, the Chicago Tribune reported. Naperville student Heidi Zamecnik, now a senior at Neuqua Valley High School, wanted to wear the shirt as part of the Day of Truth -- a national effort by Christian students to publicly oppose homosexual behavior. The campaign follows the Day of Silence -- a day promoting homosexuality. Last year, Zamecnik wore the T-shirt to school, but was told to either change or cover the last two words. Jack Canna, an attorney for the school, said banning the message is part of a policy "to preserve the notion that kids shouldn't make negative or derogatory comments about other students."

IDAHO LAW GIVES ABORTION-MINDED WOMEN MORE INFORMATION

(EP News)--Idaho recently became the ninth state to order doctors to provide abortion-minded women ultrasound images of their preborn child before having the procedure.

The state law, signed by Gov. Butch Otter on March 27, ensures that women have access to as much information about their preborn baby as possible. Experts say providing women with an ultrasound image of their child makes following through with an abortion much less likely.

APPEALS COURT REBUFFS ACLU; BOY SCOUT JAMBOREE WILL GO ON

(EP News)--The 2010 National Scout Jamboree is moving "full-speed ahead."

A three-judge panel of the 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled April 4 that plaintiff taxpayers from Chicago — represented by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) — had no standing in a case that accuses the military of violating the U.S. Constitution by allowing the Boy Scouts of America to use its facilities.

The ACLU sued the Department of Defense in 1999 over its support of the

National Scout Jamboree, because Scouting has a "duty to God" requirement.

"We are very gratified that the 7th Circuit found as it did that the ACLU had no standing to bring this lawsuit in the first place," said Bob Bork, spokesman for the Scouts. "This is very exciting news. It's full-speed ahead."

The Boy Scouts have held the National Scout Jamboree every four years at Fort A.P. Hill near Fredericksburg, Va. Seven presidents have attended the Jamboree, and an estimated 300,000 visitors attended in 2005, along with 43,000 Scouts and their leaders. The 2010 Jamboree will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America.

S.C. STATE HOUSE APPROVES ULTRASOUND BILL

(EP News)--In a landslide 91-23 vote, the South Carolina state House passed a bill March 21 to require abortion-minded women to be given the chance to see an ultrasound of their preborn child prior to the procedure. Republican Sen. Kevin Bryant has introduced a companion bill in the South Carolina Senate, where it is expected to pass. Gov. Mark Sanford told legislators he intends to sign the bill if it reaches his desk. If signed into law, it would be the first such state law in the nation. "I believe that life is sacred," Sanford said, "and in the debate over when life begins, I believe that as a society we should always err on the side of life."

THREE STRIKES AT MARRIAGE MEANS YOU MAY BE OUT

(EP News)--Marriage may become an issue for the current crop of Republican presidential candidates. Rudolph Giuliani and Newt Gingrich have both been twice divorced and thrice married. Some evangelicals, including the Southern Baptist Convention's Richard Land, say that is at least one marriage too many. He says that evangelicals might be able to forgive one divorce, especially if it is in the distant past

and there is a current record of faithful, longterm marriage, but he said that neither Guiliani nor Gingrich meet that test, and it could cost them votes in the primary season especially.

SOCIAL CONSERVATIVES MAY BE HURT BY EARLY PRIMARIES

(EP News)--California has moved its presidential primary ahead four months, from June to Feb. 5. Twenty other states may follow suit, creating what some pundits have dubbed Super-Duper Tuesday. If that happens, experts predict money would rule and pro-family issues would be the victim. Brad Miller, director of the family policy council department for Focus on the Family, said the new primary schedule limits campaign stops in smaller states, states that often have more conservative values.

PACE CRITICIZED FOR CALLING HOMOSEXUAL ACTS "IMMORAL"

(EP News)--Gen. Peter Pace, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the nation's highest-ranking military officer, is taking unfriendly fire for calling homosexual acts immoral. "I believe that homosexual acts between individuals are immoral and that we should not condone immoral acts," Pace told the Chicago Tribune on March 12. "I do not believe that the armed forces of the United States are well served by saying through our policies that it's OK to be immoral in any way." Pace's comments were met with immediate demands for an apology from homosexual activists like Steve Ralls, director of communications for the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, which has represented members of the armed forces dismissed for homosexuality. He said the remarks were "disrespectful" to gay and lesbian service members. But Elaine Donnelly, president of the Center for Military Readiness, said calls for an apology from Pace are "absurd," noting that the 1993 Homosexual Conduct law, which bans homosexuals in the military, is still in effect. "He doesn't need to apologize for supporting that law," she said.

GAY ACTIVISTS ARRESTED AT SOUTHERN BAPTIST SEMINARY

(EP News)--A dozen members of the gay rights group Souforce were arrested March 26 outside the office of a the Rev. R. Albert Mohler Jr. at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. The twelve are part of a group of 22 that is touring conservative Christian colleges and seminaries around the country to protest these college's conservative stands.

GAY MEDIA WATCHDOG HONORS "LOS ANGELES TIMES"

(EP News)—The Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD), a pro-gay media watchdog group, has recognized "The Los Angeles Times" for its favorable coverage of the homosexual agenda. The "Times" received the award

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at GLAAD's annual awards show, held March 26 in New York. "The New York Times" and the "Washington Post" were also recognized. Also honored by GLAAD were HBO's "All Aboard! Rosie's Family Cruise," about Rosie O'Donnell's cruise for families headed by homosexual parents; and "The Oprah Winfrey Show." The event had more than 100 corporate sponsors, including IBM, Time Warner, Allstate Insurance Company, and American Airlines.

CHRISTIAN ATTORNEYS DEFEND "BONG HITS 4 JESUS" STUDENT

(EP News)—A group of Christian lawyers has filed friend-of-the-court briefs defending the right of a high school student to display a sign that reads "Bong Hits 4 Jesus"? The case began in 2002 when Joe Frederick, then a senior at Juneau-Douglas High School in Alaska, stood along a parade route with a message he hoped would create a stir and maybe even get him on TV. Deborah Morse, then the school principal, confiscated Frederick's sign and suspended him. Kelly Shackelford, chief counsel of the Liberty Legal Institute, said religious liberty is at stake in the case. "The good news is that [justices] were clearly understanding [the implications]," he said. "For instance, Justice Alito said that the argument that the school was making was — and this is a quote — 'very disturbing.'" A ruling in favor of the student, Shackelford said, would make it very difficult for school officials to censor religious expression. "If [the student] can say something as outrageous as what he said, then it's going to be a lot harder to censor some kid for sharing his beliefs or having his religious beliefs in an assignment." A ruling is expected in late June.

RESEARCHER WARNS AGAINST HPV VACCINE FOR YOUNG GIRLS

(EP News)--Twenty-six states have considered legislation that would make it mandatory for girls as young as 11 to receive the controversial Merck vaccine Gardasil. Gardasil protects women against several forms of human papillomavirus (HPV), a sexually transmitted infection. Seventy percent of cervical cancer cases result from HPV infection. Pro-family activists have opposed mandatory vaccination for minors, saying the vaccine could create a false sense of security among teens about having sexual activity.

N.C. CHRISTIAN AGAIN ALLOWED TO SHARE FAITH ON THE STREET

(EP News)--A man who was told he had to have a permit to share the Gospel on a street corner has settled his suit against Goldsboro, N.C. Anthony Denham was told by a police officer that he needed a permit. The Alliance Defense Fund (ADF) took Denham's case to court. Nate Kellum, senior counsel for ADF, said people of faith

should not be required to obtain a permit before sharing their beliefs. "The First Amendment was created to keep speech free and protect speech that may be unpopular," he said. "This settlement demonstrates that Goldsboro officials understand that and will no longer require permits for people to simply exercise their constitutional rights. That's good for the entire Christian community and, incidentally, for those of other viewpoints as well."

FAMILY ADVOCATES CALL COPA RULING "TROUBLING"

(EP News)--A federal court in Philadelphia on March 22 declared unconstitutional a law that requires commercial pornography Web sites to deny access to children. Congress passed the Child Online Protection Act (COPA) in 1998 to force porn sites to hide harmful images behind an age-verification system. The law was immediately challenged and has been embroiled in a legal battle since — and therefore unenforceable. In the ruling, Judge Lowell Reed found the law to be "overbroad" and determined that filtering was far superior to COPA. While Reed acknowledged that "protecting minors from exposure to sexually explicit material on the World Wide Web is a compelling interest," he found that COPA "suppresses a large amount of speech that adults have a constitutional right to receive."

WISCONSIN CONSIDERS ASSISTED SUICIDE

(EP News)--Wisconsin is considering an assisted-suicide bill that would make it the second state to allow physicians to end the lives of the terminally ill. The bill contains the usual safeguards: the person must be 18, of sound mind and two doctors must sign off. Still, Susan Armacost, legislative director of Wisconsin Right to Life, said the practice is dangerous. "Misdiagnoses can take place, and there we've made an irreversible decision to die based on wrong information," she said. "It's going to teach the most vulnerable and frail that they have a duty to die." Oregon has allowed physician-assisted suicide for 10 years, and Gail Atteberry, executive director of Oregon Right to Life, described the results as tragic. For example, psychiatric consults are not required. At the start, only 31 percent of candidates were evaluated. "But this last year," she said, "we only saw about one percent of patients were even checked for clinical depression."

LAWMAKERS ISSUE A "CALL TO PRAYER FOR AMERICA"

(EP News)--The Congressional Prayer Caucus, formed in 2005 by Rep. Randy Forbes, R-Va., on March 28 asked Americans to pray for five minutes weekly for the benefit of the United States. The prayer caucus, made up of 38 lawmakers from both parties, has created a web-site where people can sign up for five-minute blocks of time to pray each week for the nation. The web address is www.prayercaucus.org. The

effort has drawn the criticism of the Rev. Barry Lynn, head of Americans United for the Separation of Church and State, who said lawmakers should leave religious decisions to individuals.

COLORADO SENATE VOTES TO BAR ABSTINENCE-ONLY CURRICULUM

(EP News)--The Colorado Senate approved a measure that would require all but one school district to teach kids comprehensive sex education, leaving behind abstinence-only curricula, "The Denver Post" reported. While educators would be allowed to mention abstinence, they also would have to discuss sexually transmitted infections and birth control. Sen. Shawn Mitchell was opposed to the bill and told colleagues the curriculum will teach kids about "condoms, consummation and copulation." The bill, HB 1292, already passed the House.

DEMOCRAT-LED CONGRESS TO RECONSIDER EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT

(EP News)--The Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) is resurfacing on Capitol Hill. Supporters claim it would protect women against employment and sexual discrimination, but opponents say feminists are merely using the measure as a vehicle to drive their agenda. The ERA passed both houses of Congress in 1972, but a constitutional amendment must also be ratified by the states and it fell short by three. Planned Parenthood and NARAL have used state ERAs in the past to promote abortion and abortion funding through the courts.

FLORIDA CHARGES GIDEONS WITH BEING TOO CLOSE TO A SCHOOL

(EP News)--Two men have been charged after handing out Bibles near a school in Key Largo, Fla. Anthony Mirto and Ernest Simpson, members of The Gideons International, were first charged with trespassing, even though they were apparently not on school property when they were arrested Jan. 19. Those charges did not hold after attorneys with the Alliance Defense Fund (ADF) filed a motion for dismissal. Monroe County officials then charged the men under a state law that bans anyone from being within 500 feet of school property without authorization or legitimate business. David Cortman, senior legal counsel for ADF, said he'll fight this charge as well. "This obviously is unconstitutional for several reasons," he said. "The First Amendment gives you a right to be out there and engage in speech."

HIGH COURT TO HEAR CHILD-PORN CASE

(EP News)--At the urging of the Bush administration, the U.S. Supreme Court this fall will review a case concerning a federal law aimed at child pornographers.

The Protect Act helped prosecutors go after Michael Williams, who was caught posting obscene pictures of toddlers on the Internet. Law enforcement shut him down, but the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled the "promotion of illegal child pornography... is protected speech." It also declared that portions of the law are too broad and struck them down. The Justice Department will be arguing that efforts that feed the child-porn industry "deserve no sanctuary." Patrick Trueman, an attorney with the Alliance Defense Fund, said he is not convinced the Supreme Court will do the right thing "because there's been a 5-to-4 split on the Supreme Court, five in favor of First Amendment over children." Trueman said if the Supreme Court does not reverse the decision, it will hamper prosecutors who are trying to protect children.

CORPORATIONS GET INVOLVED IN PRO-GAY ACTIVISM

(EP News)—On March 28, pharmaceutical giant Eli Lilly became the fourth major company to oppose Indiana's proposed marriage amendment, which would define marriage as between one man and one woman. In a letter to Gov. Mitch Daniels, Lilly claimed the amendment would brand the state as intolerant and could jeopardize domestic-partner benefits. "I can't believe a company with the stature of Lilly and their enormous legal resources would take a corporate position like this without any specific legal reasoning to back it up," Republican Sen. Brandt Hershman, the amendment's author, told "The Indianapolis Star." Carla Cox, a spokeswoman for Eli Lilly and Co., said the amendment would have a negative impact on the firm. "It would mainly be around recruiting and retention of employees," she said. "We have employees who are telling us they would leave the company."

SENATE LACKS VOTES TO OVERRIDE VETO ON EMBRYONIC STEM-CELL BILL

(EP News)--The U.S. Senate voted 63-34 on April 11 in favor of S. 5, which would allow federal tax dollars to be used as an incentive to destroy human embryos for stem-cell research. President Bush has promised a veto, and 67 votes were needed to override that veto.

"That would be the end of the bill, but not the end of the issue," said Douglas Johnson, legislative director for the National Right to Life Committee. He said he expects the bill to come up again next year.

DISNEY OFFERS COMMITMENT CEREMONIES FOR GAYS

(EP News)--The Walt Disney Co. that made fairy tales famous is now offering make-believe weddings for same-sex couples, despite the fact that most will go home to states that ban the practice. Disney execs began talking about allowing "commitment" ceremonies under their wedding packages,

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after a same-sex couple complained. Donn Walker, a spokesman for Disney Parks and Resorts, said the theme-park giant is just trying to be “inclusive” and make every guest feel welcome and respected. “We certainly are very aware that not everyone is going to agree with this,” he said. “We’re not trying to change anyone’s mind here, and we don’t believe that it’s our place to make judgments about people or guests or groups of guests.”

MISSOURI HOUSE APPROVES PRAYER AMENDMENT

The Missouri House of Representatives on April 10 passed an amendment on public prayer and sent it to the Senate. The measure could go to voters in November 2008.

The Religious Freedom in Public Places proposal (H.J.R. 19) would “guarantee a citizen’s First Amendment right to pray and worship in all public areas, including schools, as long as the activities are voluntary and subject to the same rules and regulations that apply to all other types of speech.” House Speaker Pro Tem Carl Bearden said his measure is needed, because the boundaries between what is allowed and what is not have been blurred by confusion and outright attempts to prevent religious displays. “School attorneys will go to the tightest-possible interpretation,” Bearden, R-St. Charles, told The Associated Press.

INTERNATIONAL BRIEFS ONLY 10 PERCENT OF BRITISH ATTEND CHURCH

(EP News)—A survey by the British charity Tearfund indicated that only one in 10 Brits regularly attends weekly church services. About 53 percent of the adult population identify themselves as Christians, but that percentage is significantly lower than a 2001 study that found almost 75 percent identified themselves as Christian.

PERSECUTION ON THE INCREASE IN INDIA

(EP News)—Persecution of Christians appears to be increasing in scope and intensity in India. During one recent 24-hour period, Gospel for Asia (GFA) correspondents reported three serious incidents of persecution that clearly demonstrate the increased boldness of anti-Christian extremists in the country.

“As the Nazis in Germany believed that the Jewish race must be eradicated—which led to the brutal killing of 6 million innocent Jewish people, the Hindu religion’s extremists are determined to do all they can to hurt those who believe and follow Christ,” said GFA President K.P. Yohannan. “These minority extremists don’t represent India nor the sentiments of the Hindu majority of the land.”

These extremists consistently accuse Christians of forcibly converting people to Christianity. The extremists say that

Christians use “allurement” to convince people to receive Jesus as their Savior. According to a GFA statement released this week, “This is often the accusation when the conversion comes after a healing. However, in most cases, the people come to the missionaries requesting prayer for healing.”

The extremists are concerned about the growing number of people leaving the Hindu religion, which is viewed by many as the official religion of India. Many people say that “to be Indian is to be Hindu.” Leaders in the anti-Christian movement contend they are simply maintaining a cohesive Indian society by ensuring that Hinduism remains the country’s chief religion.

No matter the reason, these recent reports of persecution are clear indicators that preaching the Gospel and following Christ are dangerous propositions for the people of India.

On March 26, about 40 anti-Christian extremists attacked a group of 15 students who live and study in a Gospel for Asia-related home Bible school in Punjab, in northwest India. The 40 extremists, who are all reported to be teenagers, beat up the students. Thirteen of the students fled to a nearby GFA-affiliated church, and two ran back to their homes to escape the extremists.

TWO CHRISTIANS ATTACKED IN DELHI

(EP News)—Two Sikh converts to Christianity were attacked by members of one of the convert’s families on April 14 because of their conversion to Christianity. The names of both Christians who suffered the attacks are being withheld for security reasons. One of the two is a church elder in the evangelical New Life Fellowship in Delhi, the nation’s capital. He was beaten badly. The other victim was a young female member of his church. She was abducted and returned to her home in Hoshiarpur, in the state of Punjab. Open Doors International said they were warned not to take legal action, or further attacks would occur. These attacks are the latest in a series of moves by Hindu nationals and others to intimidate Christians in India.

THREE EVANGELICALS MURDERED IN TURKEY

(EP News)—Three evangelical Christians were brutally murdered in Turkey, April 18. Necati Aydin (35), Ugur Yksel (32) - both Turks - and the German Tilmann Geske (46) were found tied up and their throats slit in the small Zirve Publishing House in Malatya, Central Turkey.

A fourth person escaped by jumping out of a window and was seriously hurt. Turkish police have arrested five 19 and 20-year-old suspects.

According to press reports the Muslims have admitted the crime. The paper Hurriyet quoted one of the suspects with the words: “May this be a lesson to the enemies of the faith.”



Lord Make Me A Winner Of Souls

Lift up your eyes unto the fields,
See the harvest, great, the laborers, few;
Lord, send laborers to do Your will,
And bring lost sinner to You.

Oh, Lord, I pray You will send the preacher,
For He is eloquent and knows what to say;
Or would You send the Sunday School teacher
Into Your harvest today?



Wait, my child, do you not remember?
My commission I gave to the church!
Of My church are you not a member?
Your duty, are you trying to shirk?

Child, out there in the harvest field,
My sheep are waiting to be told;
To the gospel they will yield,
And come rejoicing into the fold.

My sheep will not perish if you do not bother
To tell them that I died for them;
But your reward will go to another,
The soul-winner’s crown you will fail to win.



Oh, Lord, forgive me for shirking my duty,
And for my cold, indifferent heart;
I want to tell them of your love and beauty,
And how, in salvation, they may have a part.

Lord, give me much love and compassion,
Make me wise and very bold;
Oh, may I go out with zeal and a passion,
To be a winner of souls.

--Kathryn Parrish

Mini-Edition by Joseph Harris

Chairman of Biblical Studies
Southeastern Baptist
College, Laurel, Mississippi
www.miniedition.net



Road Rage

We have all heard stories about road rage and air rage. One of the most insane stories I ever heard was about a 31 year-old driver who punched a 73 year-old man in the face. The younger driver zoomed past the elderly man, crossing double yellow lines, only to be stopped ahead at a red light behind a line of cars. The seventy-three year-old driver shook his head and made a gesture (though not obscene), as if to say, “What a dumb thing to do” and it certainly was. This look and gesture so enraged the younger driver, he got out of his car, walked back, and punched the elderly gentleman through his open window. Sounds like a “real man” to me, beating up on senior citizens. I wonder what the news report would have been if the assailant had emerged from his car with a gun?

Those in the news media usually excuse this kind of behavior, attributing the problem to some abstract thing called road rage, claiming the perpetrator is actually a victim, unable to cope with pressure and stress in life.

Let me label and identify road ragers.

They are self-centered, spoiled hotheads with no self control, who think they are the only ones on the road with a destination. Ditto for air ragers who lose their temper on airplanes. Their problem is an out of control temper that can be controlled. Each person is an accountable being, responsible for his or her own actions, with few exceptions. If we all acted out our anger when we got mad at other drivers, there would be mass murder on the highways daily.

Funny, but I never heard the old timers speak of this disorder. They never mentioned “Plow Rage,” “Barn Raising Rage,” or “Outhouse Rage.” But then they were from an age where individuals were taught self control and personal responsibility. Out of control people in the old days were called criminals and went to jail.

You know, this has possibilities. The next time I get mad at my wife at meal time, VOILA! “Dining Rage.” “Sorry Honey, I just couldn’t help what I said about your Elly May Clampett biscuits. You know how D R is.”

We could also have Wal-Mart rage and (my favorite) computer rage. The sky is the limit for irresponsible individuals who want to scapegoat someone or something for *their* own choices. We did not have a choice when we inherited depravity from Adam, but we do have a choice in our conduct and speech.



BEREA BAPTIST BANNER
Financial Report
3-1-2007 to 3-31-2007

Beginning Balance\$5,721.78

RECEIPTS:

B. C. of Brimfield, Brimfield, IL78.00
 Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS200.00
 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.....50.00
 Big Creek B. C., Wayne WV300.00
 Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY.....125.00
 Buffalo Valley B. C., Clay WV50.00
 Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL.....25.00
 Central Avenue B. C., Tampa, FL100.00
 Eve Knowles, Scarborough, ME.....200.00
 Faith B. C., Seffner, FL25.00
 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, NC250.00
 Grace M. B. C., Marion, IL.....50.00
 Grace M. B. C., Tulsa, OK.....35.00
 Indore B. C., Indore, WV.....200.00
 Joseph Jurzec, Richmond, IL25.00
 Leroy Bullard, Albuquerque, NM.....100.00
 Leston Farrell, Des Allemands, LA.....100.00
 Lord's C. at Beverly Hills, Goose Creek, SC..300.00
 Morris St. B. C., Hobbs, NM.....500.00
 Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH.....100.00
 New Testament B. C., Bristol, TN.....10.00
 New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN50.00
 Ocoonita M. B. C., Keokee, VA.....40.00
 Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL.....100.00
 South Park B. C., Seattle, WA25.00
 Southside B. C., Fulton, MS.....25.00
 Sovereign Grace B. C., Columbus, MS50.00
 Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL.....100.00
 Sovereign Grace B. C., Wake Forest, NC...100.00
 Victory B. C., Courtland, VA25.00
 Walnut Creek M. B. C., Centerburg, OH.....50.00
 Wayne Huffman, McNeil, AR.....80.00
 Subscriptions125.00
 Anon.....230.00
 Dividing Checks125.00
 Sub Total\$4,453.00
 TOTAL.....\$10,174.78

EXPENDITURES:

Postage870.96
 Wages2,000.00
 FICA153.01
 Dividing Checks134.45
 Supplies97.00
 Total Expenditures3,255.42
 ENDING BALANCE\$6,919.36

BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST
Financial Report
3-1-2007 to 3-31-2007

Beginning Balance\$10,008.18

RECEIPTS:

Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY75.00
 Berea M. B. C., West Point, TN50.00
 Grace B. C., Corbin, KY.....100.00
 Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS225.00
 TOTAL.....450.00
 TOTAL.....10,458.18

EXPENDITURES:

Radio Time360.00
 Postage13.10
 TOTAL EXPENDITURES373.10
\$10,005.50
 Interest+2.85
\$10,087.93
 Less Corbin, KY des.-1,171.52
 ENDING BALANCE\$8,916.41

CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT

Beginning Balance\$1,331.52

RECEIPTS:

TOTAL.....1,331.52

EXPENDITURES:

WCTT160.00
 ENDING BALANCE\$1,171.52

More Taxing and Spending for More and More Government

**By Capt. G. Russell Evans, USCG (Ret.)
 of Norfolk, Virginia**

A recent news story reports the department of energy to be spending nearly \$5 billion a year on projects and contracts called wasteful and unnecessary by its own inspector general--a typical example of out-of-control spending brought on by excessive government.

"Washington is a town full of government officials telling other government officials that government is a good thing," says James L. Payne, author of *The Culture of Spending*, in his address at the Shavano Institute for National Leadership Seminar last January in Seattle. Judging from Mr. Payne's analysis, we would add that these federal officials want more taxing, more spending and more regulation for even more government.

Tax payers would certainly not agree. The budget designed to limit spending has become a joke as President Bush proposes the largest budget in history with a projected deficit to beat all records. The trouble is that most everyone wants to cut spending *in general*, but are unwilling to abolish *specific* programs.

When Thomas Jefferson said, "that government is best which governs least," he was talking about the U.S. Congress. But our modern congress could care less. Are our representatives passing out political favors and placating special interests in order to get re-elected? Or, are other factors involved?

Mr. Payne says, definitely yes. Persuasion, propaganda and lobbying overwhelmingly shape congress's views on spending programs. In his tabulation of arguments for and against spending programs, Payne found that the pro-spending witnesses before congressional appropriations committees outnumbered the anti-spending witnesses 145 to one.

Let us look at these lobbyists from what they call "private organizations." Fifty-five percent were former government officials. The rest were highly specialized personnel with long time service around Washington, thoroughly trained in the pro-government world view. They were pro-spending. Ordinary Americans just do not come to Washington to ask for more spending programs.

Another characteristic of the lobbyists is that many are funded in part by the federal government, e.g., the National Council of Churches, the National Education Association, the League of Women Voters to name a few. These are really semi-government entities, depending on government contracts and grants for part of their funding.

Let's not forget the "Beltway Bandits," the hired consultants who analyze the various spending programs. They are supposed to be objective, but in practice, are profoundly biased in favor of new spending programs in general. Federal agency administrators are careful, of course, to select evaluators who favor their programs--and evaluators, on the other hand, are careful to provide favorable input. Their guiding rule: "don't bite the hand that feeds you!"

The end result is that Washington is full of biased evaluators who underestimate costs and overestimate benefits of spending programs.

Whereas, the general accounting office is the official watch dog against waste and inefficiency, it frequently becomes one of the biggest pro-spending advocates. Instead of seeking out wasteful spending projects on its own, the GOA often merely re-documents problems already identified by congressional investigations, complaints and the media--and then calls for fixing them with "better management" and more money.

The Internal Revenue Service has become part of the pro-spending program, as congressmen and other

officials go along with the tide for more and more rules and regulations, resulting last year in *five billion man-hours* to comply with them (8,000 pages).

Virtually all witnesses before congressional tax committees have been from the IRS, the Treasury Department and the GAO. It is safe to say that no one spoke for 100 million taxpayers out there. Our federal tax policy, therefore, encourages government growth, not restraint.

It is time to tell our representatives in Washington that we are fed up with their run-away spending programs. We can get angry, yes, but use a firm but courteous approach in pointing out waste in specific programs, such as the Food Stamp program and over-spending in public education. We should not write off the liberals; they are probably the most impressionable congressmen of all and often will listen to reason.

If we keep punching away, sowing seeds of doubt about various programs--and get our friends to do the same--we can eventually check the waste and power of the entrenched federals. We have to try!

"We can't do everything for everyone everywhere, but we can do something for someone somewhere" (Richard L. Evans [1906-1971]).

(Excerpts are from previous writings of Capt. Evans).



When Jesus Comes

As I sat thinking on a poem to write,
 I thought of Jesus coming to night.
 With trumpet sound and angel's voice,
 How happy I was He made me His choice.



I thought of how His voice would sound,
 As He drew me up from this little town.
 He would speak to me with such sweet words,
 And tell me how He made the birds.

We'll talk for ever when Jesus comes,
 Talk and talk about the rain and flowers.
 I'll finally know where God came from,
 I'll know it all when Jesus comes.

For eternity I'll be with Him,
 Never to feel alone or be sick again.
 The angels will sing in that great space,
 When Jesus takes me from this place.

So as I write this poem to you,
 Are you thinking of His return, too?
 Caught up together to the third heaven above,
 All because, of His great love.



Do you believe that He died for you?
 That's all He asked for us to do.
 So, always be ready, always be true,
 Cause Jesus is coming for me and for you!

By Roger D. Reed



WORLD SCENE

By G. Russell Evans USCG (Ret.) - Norfolk, Virginia

United Nations: Global Democracy



Chapter 5 of the UN Charter, touted, and ratified by the United States nearly sixty years ago, boldly gives the UN "Primary responsibility for international peace," adding, "the members of the United Nations agree to accept and carry out UN decisions."

OUT OF AMERICA'S HANDS

This means that the United States agrees to permit the UN Security Council, where we have one vote out of twenty-three, to commit America's sons and daughters to battle wherever the council decides.

President Truman, in office only a few months, stepped forward on July 28, 1945, and ratified the UN treaty, transferring the power of self-defense, given to Congress under our constitution, to the UN.

UNITED STATES RETAINS RIGHTS

As a sovereign nation, the United States has assisted freedom fighters in Nicaragua and certain African nations in overthrowing corrupt totalitarian regimes. In central and eastern Europe, we supported democratic movements. In all cases, our goal was humanitarian in asserting U.S. rights to relieve oppression.

In no case did the U.S. ask the UN to "legitimize" our actions. Besides, the UN has no power to grant or decline "legitimacy" in such actions. They are inherently legitimate.

Yes, we ratified the UN Charter, but we did not surrender one iota of American sovereignty. The UN Charter, under Article VI of the U.S. Constitution, became equivalent to other U.S. laws---no greater and no less---and can be terminated by a simple act of Congress.

Prominent Americans today, such as ex-newsmen Walter Cronkite and former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, advocate surrendering a bit of American sovereignty to the UN for a safer and more peaceful world. But this is a serious threat to our God-given freedom and is grossly unacceptable as a UN claim over America and our leaders without our consent.

ALGER HISS LED THE WAY

Since its founding in 1945 under the tutelage of American traitor Alger Hiss, the UN has been gradually creeping toward world government. Its "rewritten charter for global democracy was boldly unveiled at the New York summit for adoption by the 100 world leaders. Fifty-six had already signed.

Without question, such a UN global democracy is aimed at U.S. sovereignty and the "unalienable rights" and freedoms guaranteed Americans under our constitution. U.S. acceptance is unthinkable. But watch out. Our media have sounded no alarm.

WARNING TO THE UN

We owe profound thanks to Senators Jesse Helms, (R-NC), and Joseph R. Biden, (D-DE), for teaming up with their Helms-Biden UN reform legislation that should sober up the United Nations revelers with their grandiose schemes for "a new form of global governance" and redistribution of assets for "a better world balance."

This UN reform bill which became law in November, 1999, aims to protect U.S. sovereignty and the American taxpayers' pocketbooks.

SURPRISE SOCKDOLAGER

The ambassadors and other elitists at the United Nations should have seen this sockdolager coming, after three years of wrangling over dues and global "power."

Follow up was January 20, 2000, when Helms, in person, told the UN Security Council the United States is sole judge of its affairs and that the United Nations cannot restrict the rights of American citizens or control the use and development of U.S. Troops, adding:

"A United Nations that imposes its presumed authority on the American people without their consent begs for confrontation and. . . eventual withdrawal."

Helms got no standing ovation for his impudence---only stoical silence, followed by complaints by representatives of China, Russia, England and France that we hadn't paid our dues.

This after Helms had documented U.S. payments of \$10 billion in UN peacekeeping ventures for 1999---far more than any other nation.

'SILLY WASTE'

Helms, in his November 6, 2000 letter to me, called the UN millennium

"silly and a waste of time and money," adding, "it will not result in the end of the United States."

He then wrote, "In November 1999, the Congress passed the Helm-Biden reform legislation. Under the law, the UN is given a simple choice: If the UN wants U.S. funds, it must adhere to common-sense reforms that will make the UN more efficient and protect American sovereignty."

Our constitution should stand alone to guarantee our sovereignty and freedoms, but in these days of meddling for "global democracy" by such internationalists as Henry Kissinger, Zbigniew Brzezinski and Walter Cronkite, the Helms-Biden law is strong reaffirmation of sovereignty and rights.

FLAGS PROUDLY FLYING

As I take my daily walks, I see dozens of American flags proudly flying---new flags, bright colors, strong messages.

There's no need to ask. My neighbors won't surrender an iota of freedom and sovereignty. That's what we fought for. That's what we'll still fight for.

And they are not for sale ever, particularly to an over-bloated United Nations, run by overblown diplomats--overeducated, overrated, overpaid and over here!

And their chief benefactor is the U.S. taxpayer who deserves to have this story, unfettered, uncut and understood. Our senators and congressmen also need this story, in prime time and in full color!

"Success is not forever and failure isn't fatal."---Don Schula

(Excerpts are from previous writings of Capt. Evans).



ANNOUNCEMENT

The First Baptist Church of Covington, OH is seeking a pastor.

This is a Sovereign Grace, Landmark, PreMillennial, Independent Baptist Church.

Any interested God called pastor who holds to these truths may call Shane Christman before 2:00 p.m. each day at 937-778-0391 or call (cell) 937-418-

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6681 or Tom Lewis at 937-372-3218 or (cell) 937-672-1776.

The Grace Bible Baptist Church of Denham Springs, LA is hosting their 11th Annual Bible Conference on June 8th thru 10th.

Scheduled speakers are Elders Tom Horn, Leroy Pack, Larry Wilson, David O'Neal, Al Horn and Keith Kennison.

There will be a light meal at 5:00 p.m. on Friday the 8th followed by services at 6:30 p.m.

Saturday morning services will be followed by a noon meal. Afternoon services will begin at 3:00 p.m. followed by an evening meal at 6:00 p.m.

Sunday morning services will also be followed by a noon meal.

All are invited to attend.

For more information contact Pastor Jerry Dodson at 225-791-4314 or email Jerrydodsonsr@wmconnect.com.

The Grace Baptist Church near Winston-Salem, NC will be holding a Spring Revival May 16th thru 20th.

Elder Al Malo pastor of the Bethany Baptist Church of Rushtown, Oh will be speaking.

Service time is 7:00 p.m. each evening. Sunday service begins at 9:45 with lunch being provided by the ladies of the church. Afternoon services begin at 1:00 p.m.

An invitation is extended to all.

For more information contact Pastor Gene Kiger at 336-377-9808 (home) or 336-377-2154 (church) or email at gbckiger@gbcstanleyville.com



Take A Stand!

By
Capt. G. Russell Evans
\$9.95

The book is a combination of many articles that Capt. Evans has written over the years. I believe the readers of "The Berea Baptist Banner" will be interested in reading this book. Capt. Evans has taken a stand on many subjects in his articles, most of which were quite challenging. Please add \$2.50 for S/H.