

The Berea Baptist Banner

"Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth" Ps. 60:4

Follow the Lord Fully

By Milburn R. Cockrell
(1941 – 2002)

"But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it" (Num. 14:24).

The children of Israel had arrived at the border of the Promised Land. God had assured them He would drive out the heathen nations of Canaan and give them possession of the land. Moses chose twelve



men, one from each tribe of Israel, to go and spy out the land. After forty days in the land they returned with conflicting reports. Ten of them said that Palestine was a good land, but it was held by fierce enemies. Caleb said: **"Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it"** (Num.

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Faith—What It Does

By Paul Stepp
of Indore, West Virginia

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:8-10).

Quite simply, what faith does is miraculous! Faith unto salvation



is a blessing or a favor from God, which is bestowed upon His people, who are ordained unto eternal life. Surely, their

salvation is certain and sure – they are predestinated according to God's will! Just as surely, the means of their salvation will be faith in Jesus Christ.

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The Prince of This World

By E. D. Strickland
(1915 - 2003)

"...the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me" (John 14:30).

At least two other times Jesus referred to the Devil as the world's prince.

"Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the prince of this world be cast out" (John 12:31).

"...the prince of this world is judged" (John 16:11).



Satan is an evil prince. Judgment or condemnation has already been passed on him. Though he has been sentenced, yet his execution has not yet been enacted. He is as sure of the abyss and the lake of fire as the promise of God Almighty.

In the meantime, between his judgment and the executive of his

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Dedication

By Arthur W. Pink
(1886 - 1952)

"And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God" (II Cor. 8:5).

Before attempting to open-up the theme of this verse, a few words require to be said upon its setting. In II Corinthians 8, the apostle sought to stir up the local saints to more liberality in giving. He begins by setting before them the encouraging example furnished by their fellow-Christians in the Macedonian churches. He says, **"Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia."** The words "we do you to wit," is an archaic expression meaning



"we make known to you." The noble generosity and abounding liberality of those

Christians the apostle attributes to the **"grace of God,"** thus giving Him the glory for it a needful reminder for us. II Corinthians 8:1, presents a blessed contrast from Acts 16:9: there it was the Macedonians calling on a converted Jew to come and help them; here the converted Macedonians were sending help to their Jewish brethren in Jerusalem.

"How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep

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May 5, 2019
Volume XXXIX, Number 5

Whole Number 478
Editor: Christopher Cockrell
Staff: Sheron Cockrell, Marsha Kiser, Virginia Cockrell

THE BEREBA 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 BEREBA 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 - U.S.

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATES - FOREIGN One Year \$45

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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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The purpose of the Berea Baptist Banner is as follows:

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.

The Prince of

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sentence, he is very real and active as the God of this world.

"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost. In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not" (II Cor. 4:3-4.)

The Word of God reveals Satan as both the prince and god of this world (system) or age.

Satan is a prince or ruler in the realm of evil and iniquity. Whatever God is and desires, Satan is the opposite. Jesus Christ is the Prince of Life; Satan is the prince that wills murder and death.

Jesus is truth personified. Satan is the wicked liar.

Jesus Christ is light. Satan is the god of darkness.

Sometimes we might be led to believe that Satan is the most powerful person in the world. Remember John 14:30 where Jesus refers to the prince of this world (who) **"hath nothing in me."** Jesus Christ recognized the power and dominion of Satan in the world. Yet He said the Devil **"hath nothing in me."** Other renderings of this passage are: "he hath no hold on me", "he hath no rights over me", "he hath no claims on me", and "he hath no power over me."

We can see here who is the ultimate Sovereign of the world. Though Satan has usurped certain world powers in governmental and religious circles, yet this is seasonal. It will not last forever.

Jesus Christ is destined to be the final world ruler of the universe. The kingdoms of the world both political and religious will become the kingdoms of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Satan and his powers are to

be sure losers. Jesus Christ and righteous forces shall be sure winners and He shall reign over all forces.

Jesus said, as I repeat, "he (Satan) hath no power over me." Here Jesus Christ affirms His sovereignty over the second most powerful being in the universe.

If Christ is sovereign over the second most powerful being, how much more is He sovereign over the less powerful forces.

The sovereignty of Jesus Christ gives God's people extreme optimism and hope!



Faith - What It

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There are many ways in which we can approach such a grand topic as the faith which is revealed unto us in the Holy Word of God. And there are a multitude of paths of enlightenment which we can travel, which will reveal unto us more and more of the facets and faces of faith. In other words, I do not mean to pretend or assume that this series of sermons on "Faith" will in any wise exhaust such a noble and glorious grace of God. I do simply want to encourage you, and perhaps even enable you, to further examine the wonders of the faith which is granted unto each of us who are saved – which faith we may often take for granted, but which is also daily applicable in our lives; daily profitable in our lives; and daily essential to our service unto God.

PRODUCES REPENTANCE

What does faith do? The first result of saving faith – or, we might say, the other side of the coin which pictures faith – is always repentance. Godly sorrow comes to us as we are granted faith to believe in Jesus Christ. The initial

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gift of saving faith is never granted to us apart from repentance – sorrow and grief over our sins; a turning away from sin, self, and the world, while turning unto God and Jesus Christ. Conversely, it is also true that no man has ever experienced true godly sorrow, and repentance unto salvation, apart from saving faith. The two (faith and repentance) go hand in hand. Each complementing or supplementing the other. Each necessary, and neither capable of saving without the other.

In his preaching and in his writings, the Apostle Paul often emphasized both repentance and faith. On some occasions it seems he preached more concerning repentance; on other occasions his words seem to refer more to faith. This is not a mistake. He knew and accentuated the importance of both. Notice what he told the Ephesian elders, near the end of his ministry to that Church: **“And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ”** (Acts 20:20-21). Repentance is meant to be a product of faith. (Or faith is meant to be a product of repentance?) In salvation, neither exists properly without the other. Then, as we preach the Gospel, and we teach and proclaim the Word of God, we must implore men to repent of their sins, and believe on Jesus Christ. We cannot save these souls. Nor can we grant faith unto him. But God can, and God will, as He sees fit.

Faith and repentance are at the

foundation of true Christianity. Though many in Christianity have left off emphasizing the need for repentance, the Word of God makes it plain that, at the beginning of our salvation, there must be repentance – turning from sin, and turning unto God. **“Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if God permit. For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame”** (Heb. 6:1-6). The writer to the Hebrews refers to the maturity of the saints of God, and mentions the perfection that we all seek to attain. However, he mentions that at the beginning, at the foundation or the very core of our belief and trust in Jesus Christ – the beginning, too, of our service unto Him – there is repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God.

I suppose that any aspect or any denomination of Christianity which has forgotten the intricate and unbreakable bond that exists between faith and repentance, has certainly lost its way. Some even go so far as to say that repentance and faith can be lost! Others will contend that repentance or faith must be renewed, in the sense that our contributions must be

repeated and maintained or else the salvation will fail! This is not the Christian faith. This is not true saving faith. The saving faith that is brought to men by God through the preaching of the Word of God, is a faith that is placed in Jesus Christ – not the works of men – and it produces a repentance and a sincere and genuine godly sorrow that is not to be repented of. **“Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death”** (II Cor. 7:9-10). Suffice it to say that true saving faith is always accompanied by godly sorrow that worketh repentance unto eternal salvation. A worldly faith may produce a worldly sorrow, but it will not be effective unto salvation. A human faith might produce an imitation or insincere repentance, but it will not save a man's soul. An emotional response to an emotional plea in some altar call, or in some perverted evangelical movement, might be capable of inducing some sort of faith or trust on a personal and physical level; but such an imitation faith accompanied by an insincere repentance cannot in any wise work to the saving of a man's soul. A faith that is merely mortal or physical in its origin and application, can only be mortal or physical in its level of success – such salvation is limited to the realm or origin of the faith. True, saving faith, which comes from God and Heaven, and which is brought to men through the preaching of the Word and the work of the Holy Spirit, will certainly beget true and sincere

repentance unto a salvation that is both genuine and spiritual. This will be the faith and the repentance that will bring men unto God and into Heaven.

PRODUCES PERSEVERANCE

As we have just noticed, saving faith will produce repentance unto salvation. But let us think a little further about the role that faith plays in the working out of our salvation. The Bible teaches us that this faith will continue throughout the course of the lives of those who are truly saved. In fact, this faith is counted on in order that the sons and daughters of God will persevere in the cause and service of Jesus Christ. Perseverance is a product of faith in Jesus Christ! Peter told his readers about the saints of God, **“Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls”** (I Peter 1:5-9). We are kept and preserved by the power of the faith that is granted unto us. What seems preposterous to the world – trusting in Jesus Christ for salvation and for our every need – is perfectly sensible to the Christian, who has been granted faith to believe in the Son of God as our Saviour. Though the

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Faith - What It

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way be difficult, or some obstacle may appear before us, or even if the tribulations of this world are poured out upon us; still, the Christian will continue on, based on the faith that has been given to him, and the regard that the Christian has for things to come, as opposed to things that be. Those future blessing are made certain to each of us who are saved, because of the faith that is granted unto us.

The salvation that has been brought to us by the faith that is in Jesus Christ, is an inspiration unto us. Through the eye of faith, we see Jesus Christ before us, and we are engaged in His cause, and we are brought on the way towards Him, and we are determined to be diligent and to pursue Jesus Christ. We must certainly persevere, and we are confident (through faith) that we will do so. We read of the preaching of Paul and Barnabas, **“And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch, Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God”** (Acts 14:21-22). Despite the apostasy of much of Christianity, I will always contend (and certainly the Bible teaches this plainly) that the saving faith from God will result in the salvation of the souls of men, who will not utterly fall away, and who cannot be lost again. Though we may stumble and fall, we will not be lost. Faith causes us to persevere! Though we may lose our way for a while, we will return unto the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls. We are preserved

through faith! And, though times or the way may be difficult, our faith in God will sustain us, and we will not finally give up. There will, inevitably, be tribulation – Paul said that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. However, we will enter that kingdom of service in this life, and into that kingdom of rest and glory in the life to come! There is no doubt that God’s will must be done. What doubt may exist in our lives, is not a proof of God’s failure to deliver us and sustain us in this life; nor is it a promise of failure to come. Rather, the doubt that occurs in our lives, as we travel the way to Heaven, is attributable to our own weaknesses, and is a product of our own human nature. From God’s perspective there is never a question as to our preservation and our perseverance. When we consider Him and His work, then we are encouraged, then we are inspired, and then we will carry on – faith in Him is the means for our continuance.

The faith that we have – the faith that our forefathers held to, the faith which the Baptist churches have always proclaimed and been sustained in – is a faith that will produce a people who will “continue in the faith,” and will also “contend for the faith.” **“Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints”** (Jude 1:3). It is a perfect circle: as we proclaim the faith, we contend for it. Those who hear and believe will proclaim unto others, while also contending for the faith. In this manner, the children of God – in particular the Churches of Jesus

Christ – have persevered through the ages, and their perseverance has brought faith unto you and me, in our place and time! It is our duty to persevere and to keep on in the truth of God’s Word. In the Churches of Jesus Christ, we have the opportunity to put the faith that God has granted us, into practice, and to live out that God-given faith in the sight of others. I hope that others will see faith in us and be inspired to be also faithful.

PRODUCES WORKS

I am further convinced that the saving faith from God, which is bestowed upon those who are called unto the service of God, will always result in some form of service – some usefulness in the cause of Jesus Christ. Faith produces perseverance; perseverance yields works and service in the lives of the disciples of Jesus Christ. This is a truth that is inevitable, if one is truly saved. **“Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. 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 2:17-18). If you do not see good works in the life of a person who claims to be a Christian, than you can be certain that the faith in that person is not “good” (genuine) either. Good works in the service of the Lord are the result of faith in Jesus Christ; faith in Jesus Christ mandates good works in order to exalt and honor the One Who has saved us.

So many folks like to focus on works as the means of salvation. So many other folks like to focus on faith as the means of salvation. I submit unto you that both faith and works are necessary – the first unto salvation, and the other because of salvation! It must be so,

since the same God that granted us faith and ordained us unto salvation, has also ordained us unto good works! **“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them”** (Eph. 2:10). There will be evidence of both faith and works in the lives of His people – or, we might say, the works will be the evidence of the faith. If there are no works, there must not be any saving faith. **“For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also”** (James 2:26).

I think these “good works,” or this attitude and desire to do good, is one of the major benefits of the spread of Christianity, as we see it being carried into the world in the time of the apostles, the early churches, and the early centuries of this Christian Age. Christian faith produces good works. This is a simple statement of fact, as we consider the New Testament Scriptures. Now, there are any number of good works that might be produced, and there are various degrees to which the men and women of God will apply themselves to good. But, at its simplest level, and in its purest form, saving faith which comes from Heaven – when it is bestowed upon men, and brought to bear upon the sons of men – will produce good works.

Sure, men and women in this world will “do good” from time to time, and some even very often. However, the good that mortal men do, apart from the saving faith that is found in Jesus Christ, is only profitable in this world, and has no fruit in Heaven. I know it is wonderful, and should be encouraged, that men should do good, behave themselves, abstain from sin, and seek to abide by

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Little Hills

By Nathaniel Hille of
Plant City, Florida



SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON - BIBLE SURVEY #1 INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE

TEXT: II Timothy 3:16-17

DEVOTIONAL READING: Matthew 22:29; Matthew 5:18

SUGGESTED HYMN: *The Bible Stands*

AIM: To show that the Bible is God's Word.

INTRODUCTION—The Bible! Literally means “the Book!” The Bible is the Word of God. The Bible is called Scripture or Holy Scripture.

Our text literally is: “Every Scripture is God-breathed—given by His inspiration—...”¹

We believe the Bible is God's infallible [without error] word. The Bible is the account of God revealing Himself to man. It is “God's own record of His dealings with men, in His unfolding revelation of Himself to the human race: the revealed will of the Creator of Man, given to Man by the Creator Himself, for Instruction and guidance in the Ways of Life.”² The Scriptures are that which the Lord would have us to know: **“The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law”** (Deut. 29:29).

Our Lesson sets forth some basic truths concerning The Bible—

I. THE BIBLE IS GOD'S WORD—**“All scripture is given by inspiration of God...”** (II Tim. 3:16). That God employed men in the writing of the Scriptures, we affirm. That these thoughts originated not with those men, but with God we uphold. “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved (borne along) by the Holy Spirit.”³

“God accomplished the miracle of inspiration by providentially preparing the writers for their work and by so revealing His truth to them and so enabling, guiding, and superintending them in the recording of it as to give to us through them an exact and complete transmission of all that He was pleased to reveal.”⁴

II. THE BIBLE IS THE ONLY THING GOD SPEAKS BY TODAY—Hebrews 1:1-3—Today, many believe that the Lord is still speaking in visions, dreams, giving further revelation(s), speaking with an audible voice, etc. But this simply is NOT true.

The Scriptures make it clear that the Bible is how the Lord communicates to this world—**“For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away”** (I Cor. 13:9-10). Paul wrote that when the Scriptures were completed—dreams, visions, prophecies would all cease. And so today, those who speak by dreams, visions, etc. are not receiving such from the Lord, but from the Devil.

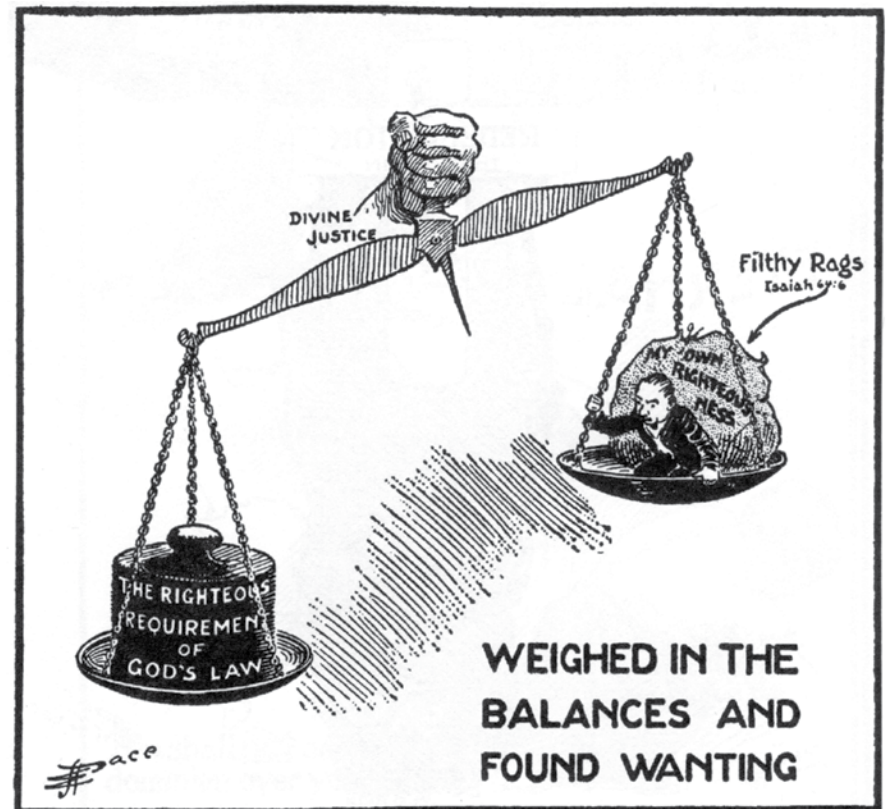
III. THE AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE—“Sola Scriptura” Only the Scriptures! The common phrase used by the Lord's Church is that the Bible is our sole rule of faith and practice. Simply put, we believe

that the Bible alone, is what is to govern what we believe, and how we practice what we believe. Deuteronomy 8:3—**“...by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.”** Rules, laws, morals, are all to be based on **“Thus saith the Lord.”** These are the words of the Creator to govern any and all human thought, deeds, and words. When the early church of the Lord Jesus sought to answer the question of circumcision, they turned to the Scriptures as to what to do—so ought we in our personal life, our family life, our public life, our church life.

IV. THE BIBLE INTERPRETS ITSELF—**“Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation”** (II Peter 1:20). The Bible makes itself clear that it must be interpreted with other Scripture. No verse is a verse unto itself, but rather a part of the whole. Paul instructed Timothy to charge others to not strive about words to no profit (II Tim. 2:14). Rather, we are taught in Scripture—**“For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little”** (Isa. 28:10). In studying the Bible, we must be careful to note the context (surroundings) of the verse we are studying, we must seek to understand it as Holy Spirit leadership, and in light of other Scriptures; for no verse will contradict another verse.

NOTES

1. *The Amplified Bible*: 2 Timothy 3:16
2. *Halley's Bible Handbook: The Bible is God's Word* (pg.22)
3. *Systematic Study of Bible Doctrine* (7th Edition): T. P. Simmons: pg. 39
4. Ibid



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moral principles in this life. And yet, though the good works and the good deeds of men are beneficial to mankind, and may promote peace and civility amongst men; still, this goodness in mortal men is not the good works that I speak of, as we consider those who love Jesus Christ, and who live and die for Him on this earth. Such goodness is a remarkable and miraculous behavior of God's people – to contend for Him and His Word, and to seek to live after the manner of the Son of God! To overcome evil with good. To reward hate with love. To show compassion in the face of animosity. In God's people, there is no desire for personal gain, and there is no desire to please another, other than Jesus Christ! These are the good works and righteous deeds performed by God's people through the faith that we have in Him, as we serve Him in this life, and as we sojourn here in this realm on our way to God and Heaven.

There are examples of good being done in the New Testament, by those who know God, and who have been granted faith in Jesus Christ. Sometimes the faith results in the healing of bodies, such as when Peter and John healed the lame man in the temple in Jerusalem, not long after the Lord Jesus ascended into Heaven. This is how Peter described the healing of the lame man: **“And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all”** (Acts 3:16). Faith heals bodies! Faith gives strength to God's people! Faith leads us

to see and to do what might otherwise be impossible! Faith in God is more than useful in our service unto God; faith is, in fact, essential. We cannot rise above the deeds and goodness of mere mortal men, without the miracle and the grace of the faith that God has delivered unto us. We are not much in and of ourselves; in fact, we are poor excuses as servants of God, naturally speaking. And yet, with the addition of faith, we become so much more than what we were! According to God's grace, and according to the faith granted unto us, we are able – and we are willing – to do good, to live righteously, and to adorn the lovely Name of Jesus Christ.

Of course, the good works that we may perform – or the good works that we may yet aspire to – are not the basis of our salvation. Indeed, we only seek, through our good works and service unto God, to be a credit unto the grace of God, and we only seek to portray the goodness and the righteousness that we know to be in Jesus Christ. In the end, it is His righteousness that we count on, in order to clothe us in the presence of God. It is the imputation of His righteousness unto us that makes us acceptable in the sight of God. I say again, the good works that we do are not unto salvation but are a result of faith and a product of salvation. In the end, the “good works” which serve as the basis for our righteousness unto salvation, are only the works and the righteousness of Jesus Christ, as He fulfilled the Law, and fulfilled righteousness on our behalf. **“Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law:**

for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified” (Gal. 2:16). Faith plays a role here, too. We believe and trust in Jesus Christ as our Substitute in paying for our sins, as our righteousness in the sight of God, and as our Advocate before the Throne of God. The works we do in this life, only serve to prove our faith in such a God and such a Saviour.

I want to close by simply making a reference to the goodness that is the result of faith in Jesus Christ. The Christian faith has done the world a lot of good. There have been many benefits experienced in this world, in places and times that Christianity has been highly esteemed. There are freedoms or liberties that are afforded men and women in societies where the Word of God is recognized and obeyed. There are good deeds done by men and women who are under the influence of the leadership of the Holy Spirit, in places and amongst men, who would never have known such goodness were it not for the presence of the people of God, and the faith that God's people have in Him. Mankind profits from the faith that God has granted unto His people. Though many reject Him, still His goodness is felt on account of, and because of the works of those who are the Christian servants of Jesus Christ. Certainly, the good of individuals, and the profiting of the people of God, is also a result of the grace of God through the faith that He has granted unto us. The truth is, we should not believe in Jesus Christ, were it not for faith. What greater profit is there for any man, than that he should be the recipient of God's grace in the form of faith enabling him to believe in Jesus Christ as the Saviour of men? **“For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them:**

but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it” (Heb. 4:2).



Follow the Lord

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13:30). He urged quick, bold action, insisting that the 600,000 soldiers of Israel should attack with faith in God. His hope of victory was based upon the certainty of God's promise and the knowledge of His all-conquering power.

God was angry and declared that this congregation of rebels would die in the wilderness. **“And the LORD's anger was kindled the same time, and he sware, saying, Surely none of the men that came up out of Egypt, from twenty years old and upward, shall see the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob; because they have not wholly followed me: Save Caleb the son of Jephnnah the Kenezite, and Joshua the son of Nun: for they have wholly followed the LORD”** (Num. 32:10-12).

FOLLOWED ALL HIS DAYS

Caleb did not follow God for a few days and then quit. He **“wholly followed the LORD”** in Kadesh-Barnea when he spied out the land and until he entered into the Promised Land (Josh. 14:8). After he entered Canaan and had been given Hebron for an inheritance, he declared at the age of eighty-five that he had **“wholly followed the LORD God of Israel”** (Josh. 14:14). This could not truly be said of many of God's servants. To the name of Caleb I might add the name of Enoch, Job, Samuel, Daniel, Simeon, and Paul.

The character given Caleb was that **“he had another spirit.”** The other spies said, “We can

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Small Drops

By Joseph M. Sidders of
Temperance, Michigan

"My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: Because I will publish the name of the LORD: ascribe ye greatness unto our God" (Deuteronomy 32:2-3).



ELISHA ON SINCERE WORSHIP

"But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly" (Matt. 6:6).

"Now there cried a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets unto Elisha, saying, Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest that thy servant did fear the Lord: and the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen. And Elisha said unto her, What shall I do for thee? tell me, what hast thou in the house? And she said, Thine handmaid hath not any thing in the house, save a pot of oil. Then he said, Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, even empty vessels; borrow not a few. And when thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and shalt pour out into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full. So she went from him, and shut the door upon her and upon her sons, who brought the vessels to her; and she poured out. And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed. Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live

thou and thy children of the rest" (II Kings 4:1-7).

The ministries of Elijah and Elisha have often been contrasted. Elijah was a fiery prophet who suddenly appeared in a dramatic fashion, while Elisha was a pastor-prophet who ministered in a personal way to the people. Elijah belonged to the rugged hills, Elisha to the peaceful valleys. Elijah was a solitary servant, while Elisha enjoyed fellowship with the people. Broadly speaking, Elijah was a prophet of judgment who sought to turn the nation back to God, while Elisha was a minister of grace who called out "a remnant" before the nation was destroyed. Many comparisons can easily be made between Elijah and John the Baptist; likewise between Elisha and the ministry on earth of Jesus Christ. God has a sanctified place for both types of ministries! Praise God that HE knows how to reach His people!

Three different times we will see the prophet Elisha "shut the door" in this fourth chapter. In this article we want to look at the Prophet's widow and Elisha's council to her. Let us first look at the validity of her debt.

Concerning the creditors, let us be clear they were rightfully owed what they came to collect. "And if thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee; thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bondservant: But as an hired servant, and as a sojourner, he shall be with thee, and shall serve thee unto

the year of jubile: And then shall he depart from thee, both he and his children with him, and shall return unto his own family, and unto the possession of his fathers shall he return. For they are my servants, which I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: they shall not be sold as bondmen. Thou shalt not rule over him with rigour; but shalt fear thy God. Both thy bondmen, and thy bondmaids, which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen that are round about you; of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids. Moreover of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land: and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession; they shall be your bondmen for ever: but over your brethren the children of Israel, ye shall not rule one over another with rigour" (Lev. 25:39-46).

So often today banks or other such lenders are cursed for demanding their money... Christians should be ashamed if they are guilty of such cursing! Money borrowed is money owed. Those that leave their families under a load of debt, know not what trouble they cause. It is the duty of all who profess to follow the Lord, while they trust to God for daily provisions, not to tempt him by carelessness or extravagance. We need to be aware of what the Bible says of taking on debt for nothing tends more to bring reproach upon the Gospel, or distresses our families more when we are gone. "Owe no man any things, but to love one another: for he that loveth

another hath fulfilled the law" (Rom. 13:8). "My son, if thou be surety for thy friend, if thou hast stricken thy hand with a stranger, Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth, thou art taken with the words of thy mouth. Do this now, my son, and deliver thyself, when thou art come into the hand of thy friend; go, humble thyself, and make sure thy friend. Give not sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eyelids. Deliver thyself as a roe from the hand of the hunter, and as a bird from the hand of the fowler" (Pro. 6:1-5).

It was wrong for the creditors to attempt to take her two sons as bondmen (scripture in Leviticus above), but not wrong for her to have to repay what was borrowed. Matthew Henry wrote "The widow must pay her debt with the money she received for her oil. Though her creditors were too hard with her, yet they must be paid, even before she made any provision for her children. It is one of the main laws of the Christian religion, that we pay every just debt, and give everyone his own, though we leave ever so little for ourselves; and this, not of constraint, but for conscience' sake. Those who bear an honest mind, cannot with pleasure eat their daily bread, unless it be their own bread [as compared to bread owed someone else]. She and her children must live upon the rest; that is, upon the money received for the oil, with which they must put themselves into a way to get an honest livelihood."

Now let us look at the widow's particular need. "And Elisha said unto her, What shall I do for thee? tell me, what hast thou in the house? And she said, Thine handmaid hath not any thing in the house, save a pot of oil. Then

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Small Drops

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he said, Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, even empty vessels; borrow not a few” (II Kings 4:2-3).

As is the case for most of us, we often times have what we need but lack contentment in what we’ve been given. Elisha directs the widow to gather what she has. **“And the Lord said unto him, What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod”** (Ex. 4:2). God takes what we have and uses it to meet our need, if we have faith enough to trust him. His providence is on display when we find Him using what has always been in our lives to solve a need we a crushed beneath.

Now we see God’s miracle at the hand of Elisha. **“And when thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and shalt pour out into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full. So she went from him, and shut the door upon her and upon her sons, who brought the vessels to her; and she poured out. And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed. Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest”** (II Kings 4:4-7). We should note that the oil, sent by miracle, continued flowing as long as she had empty vessels to receive it. If she should have had faith enough to gather twice as many vessels, they too would have been filled to the brim with more to spare (notice as she calls for more vessels of her son...there was more to spare!). **“But my**

God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:19).

This debt that was owed was paid in faith! These empty vessels were filled behind closed doors, before her and her sons! What a great blessing when our children are permitted to see the hand of God!! This is the crux behind “Sincere Worship.” 1) That it happens behind closed doors, because God works in and for the hearts of His beloved. **“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). 2) That it is a testimony to be spread by the believers! **“For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe”** (I Cor. 1:21). **“How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher”** (Rom. 10:14)? **“Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand”** (Acts 4:4). **“And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe”** (Acts 15:7). **“And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry. And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the**

law” (Acts 21:19-20).

The obvious metaphor that I would love for us to see from this writing is that we are ‘the vessels’. We are made by the potter (GOD), out of the miry clay. The widow in this text represents mankind, saddled with a debt (sin) he could never hope to be able to pay on his own. The Lord Jesus took these empty vessels, the word ‘empty’ here in the Hebrew is defined as vain or worthless, and He poured out the oil over and over, as much as there were vessels to contain. The word for “oil” in the Hebrew also meant fat, abundance of the fruitful land. We see again the contentment God has called for His people to find; that in all that we have and even that which we don’t have, we find contentment.

In the widow’s mind, all she had was a mere pot of oil. By faith, God took “all that she had” and gave her all that she would need!



Follow the Lord

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not take the land.” He said, “We are well able to take the land.” He loved God and stood ready to obey Him at all times, for any service however perilous and self-denying. He simply believed God’s Word, embraced His promises, observed His directions, obeyed His commandments. Caleb depended on the faithfulness, power, and goodness of God. He was confidently expecting God to do what He said He would do, notwithstanding difficulties or improbabilities. He was not concerned with his own welfare, comfort, or ease. He lived to glorify God and to do His will. He was possessed by an active, zealous spirit. He had courage and perseverance, and no terror of suffering could divert him from his

course.

We have all seen people like the ten spies in our churches. When a great challenge faces the church, they rise in the business meeting to say, “We can not do it. We do not have the money.” Whatever they do in the church it is with unwilling and reluctant obedience. Too many times they are as unstable as water; they waver and halt. They want the rest without the journey, the reward without the labor, the victory without the battle, the crown without the cross! It is not in their hearts to follow Christ fully.

FOLLOWED WITH ALL HIS HEART

Caleb followed the Lord with all his heart. There were no attempts at half-hearted service. He was not given to inconsistencies. The word “fully” is very expressive. He followed the Lord in all that he did and with all the strength and energy that he had. Following the Lord was his chief business, his preeminent pursuit, the leading work of his life. If we would follow the Lord fully, as did Caleb, we must give up our affections, our understanding, and our will wholly to Him. We must hold nothing in reserve. We must yield our body and its members. This is what it is to follow the Lord fully.

There are not many people like Caleb. Most are like Lot’s wife. She went with Lot and her two daughters out of Sodom. But soon she looked back and became a pillar of salt. Moses followed the Lord fully for a time. He was fearless and courageous in Egypt. He was a capable leader in the desert. But then he disobeyed the Lord by striking the rock, for which he was not permitted to enter the Promised Land. Noah was a preacher of righteousness who found grace in the eyes of the Lord, but in his later years he

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Narrow Paths

By Doug Newell IV of
Clendenin, West Virginia

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

EVEN SO, COME LORD JESUS

"He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20). When we say we believe something or have faith in a teaching, how does our belief affect our life? Believing in something should cause an outworking of that doctrine. Some have intellectual beliefs about the Bible, but little or no faith in those same beliefs because they have no fruit in their life. If you believed your house was on fire, you probably would not sit down with a cup of coffee and discuss the philosophical implications of light, heat, and flame. No, you would grab your family and get out of the house. If you truly believe the Bible, you are going to act like you believe the Bible.

One very common theme in God's Word for believers is the soon coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, one of the great hopes of the Christian. We, as it says in Titus 2:13, are, **"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."** Not an "I hope it happens," but a faith knowing it is going to transpire. If you believe the Bible, you confess Jesus is coming again. How does the return of Christ affect your life?

The Apostle John was captured and put into exile on the isle of Patmos, banished for preaching the Word of God and the

testimony of Jesus Christ. He was persecuted and afflicted for righteousness sake and banished to a rocky island, barren, desolate, and void of anything making Patmos a desirable locale. Not exactly an island paradise. The apostle was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day and received the revelation of Jesus Christ concerning the end times. John had little reason for hope. Exiled, hated, persecuted, aged, afflicted; he dedicated his best years to preaching the gospel and teaching the saints only to end it in exile. But John had hope. Not in changing the government to like Christians. John had no hope of living a normal, peaceable life, but his hope was in Jesus Christ. John was not wishing to die, but he wanted Christ to come back and get him, and his eschatology (the study of the last days) impacted his whole outlook on life.

Do you take comfort in the return of Christ? **"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. Wherefore comfort one another with these words"** (I Thess. 4:17-18). Do you desire the return of Christ? When is the last time you meditated on the soon coming of Jesus Christ, let alone desire it? Can you say, **"Even so, come Lord Jesus,"** and mean it? There is a crown of righteousness in Heaven, waiting

for all God's people who love His appearing (II Tim. 4:8). Is there a crown waiting for you? Do you live like Jesus may return today? Or, have the cares and concerns of this life taken over your heart and affections? **"Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not"** (Luke 12:40).

CUT OFF FROM THE LAND OF THE LIVING

Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss. He was arrested and brought before Annas and Caiaphas. The conspiracy advanced. From the Sanhedrin, then before Pilate, Jesus was falsely charged. Pilate, not wanting to be involved sent Jesus to Herod, who in turn, sent Jesus back to Pilate where the Lord was accused and condemned. **"Crucify Him!"** the crowd chanted. Pilate relented and sent him to die. Jesus, bearing His cross fell under the weight, so they compelled Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, to bear His cross to Golgotha, the place of the skull. The soldiers took the hands of Jesus, the hands that had blessed the children, hands that healed the lepers, hands that broke bread with sinners, hands that gave sight to the blind; those same hands were pierced and nailed to a cross. The feet that carried Jesus to the mountain to pray, and to preach. The feet that took Him on His mission to Samaria, to save the woman at the well, and the feet that carried Him from town to town, glorifying God, pierced through with the spike to the tree. Hoisted up above the Earth, the Son of Man hangs, dying.

About the ninth hour, Jesus cries, **"It is finished."** Jesus died. So quickly? Are we sure?

The soldier drives a spear into the side of Jesus, confirming His death. The soldiers broke the legs of the thieves on either side to hasten death, and the saga, it seems is over. Jesus died. A rich man of Arimathaea, named Joseph, begged Pilate for the body of Jesus, and laid the Lord's body in his own new tomb, hewn out in the rock and sealed the door with a large stone. With the thieves, robbers, sinners, the Lord Jesus made His grave with the wicked.

Jesus was cut off from the land of the living, but why? He had done no violence. Deceit never left His mouth or entered His mind. An innocent man was framed and murdered. But we do not chalk this up to a sad tale of a ministry gone wrong. At any time, the Lord could have called thousands of angels to come and annihilate any person who looked at Jesus crossways. Much more went on here than what the Jews and Romans did in their wicked cruelty. The main event happened between the Father and the Son. Why did Jesus die? For the transgressions of His people. Jesus died as a sin sacrifice, atoning for sin, for the sins of God's people, Jesus was stricken. In my stead Jesus died, for my sins He bled.

"He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth" (Isa. 53:8-9).



Follow the Lord

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got drunk and exposed himself to his sons. Samson for a time was a Spirit-anointed judge. He followed well for a time, but then he fell into sin and lost his strength and finally his life. Peter was one of the apostles of the Jerusalem church. He heard the Lord teach, saw Him work miracles, raise the dead, and do many other wonderful works. Then Peter denied his Lord three times. The Galatians graciously received Paul and his preaching. They began well in the Christian life, then they were removed from the gospel of Christ to another gospel.

During the earthly ministry of Christ, multitudes of people came to hear Him preach. They followed Him for a time and were called His disciples. They enjoyed His sermons and fed upon the loaves and the fishes. But it was not long before they became offended by His preaching of doctrine and duty. **"From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him"** (John 6:66). They walked no longer in His company as they had done but returned to their homes, their families and callings.

Have we not all seen such false professors? They profess to believe the gospel under some public excitement. They join the church in prospect of material gain, or with a desire to improve their standing in the community. They receive the Word with joy for a time. Jesus said of such persons: **"But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is**

offended" (Matt. 13:20-21). Having no spirituality of mind and understanding nothing of the gospel, they desert the ranks. Such persons are superficial professors. They fall away now and will be cast away in the day of judgment.

The Ephesian Church was **"blessed...with all spiritual blessings"** in Christ and elected to salvation **"before the foundation of the world"** (Eph. 1:3-4). They were **"followers of God, as dead children"** (Eph. 5:1). They walked in love as Christ loved them (Eph. 5:2). They walked **"as children of light"** (Eph. 5:8). Then they ceased to fully follow the Lord. Christ said unto them: **"Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent"** (Rev. 2:4-5). They were not like Caleb. They did not follow the Lord with all their hearts.

So it was with King Solomon. When he began his reign over the United Kingdom of Israel, it seemed as if he would follow the Lord fully. God gave him an understanding heart that he might be wise above the kings of the earth. The Lord enabled him to build the Temple in Jerusalem and to become very rich. **"And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five"** (I Kings 4:32). Solomon did not endure faithfully. When he was old he loved and married **"many strange women"** and these **"wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father"** (I Kings 11:4). Solomon did not follow the Lord with all his heart.

FOLLOWED AT ALL

HAZARDS

When Caleb plead with the Israelites to invade Canaan the congregation threatened to stone him (Num. 14:10). None of these threats moved him from the path of duty. He would do his duty even if some evil should overtake him. He followed the Lord fully. He would follow the Lord his God both in sunshine and storm. Let us pray that God may raise up a generation of Calebs in these days of spiritual declension and doctrinal apostasy.

Not all are like Caleb. Reproaches make some stagger on the journey. Some follow afar off when the going gets rough. Others follow when being religious is fashionable and to their material advantage. When the offense of the cross comes many are offended. It was so in the apostolic age. It is so today. When John Mark saw that laboring with Paul and Barnabas in Asia would be dangerous, he went home to mama (Acts 15:37-38). The love of the world caused Demas to forsake Paul (II Tim. 4:10). These people did not follow Christ fully. Let us not be like them. **"Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach"** (Heb. 13:13). **"If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified"** (I Pet. 4:14).

Following Christ is not an easy road. There are some cold, dark mountains we must climb over, and there are some dangerous, deep valleys we must pass through. Our Savior Himself had to drink a bitter cup; He was baptized in suffering. He was crowned with thorns, and we cannot expect to be crowned with roses. There are more bloody seas that we must sail than flowery beds of ease. To follow the Lord fully means tribulation, persecution,

nakedness, hunger, and loss of reputation (I Cor. 4:10). It means to chose **"to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season"** (Heb. 11:25). For Christ's sake you may be called upon to suffer **"the loss of all things"** (Phil. 3:8). But let us ever remember that we must suffer with Him if we are to reign with Him (II Tim. 2:12).

Those, who like Caleb, dare to follow the Lord fully may be called upon to give the supreme sacrifice. Like Paul, we must say: **"Neither count I my life dear unto myself"** (Acts 20:24). Our Lord commands us: **"...be thou faithful unto death"** (Rev. 2:10). He also taught us: **"He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it"** (Matt. 10:39). In Revelation 12:11 it is written: **"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."** If it needs so require, let the martyr spirit possess us all for Christ's sake. **KNOW FULLY IF WE ARE TO FOLLOW FULLY**

If we are to follow Christ fully, we must know Him fully. Many would follow Him more fully if they fully knew Him as they should. Hosea 6:3 says: **"Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD."** The Apostle Paul said: **"That I may know him. . ."** (Phil. 3:10). The only way to truly know Christ is to be obedient to Him. Christ told us: **"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls"** (Matt. 11:29). Let us say with the psalmist: **"My soul followeth hard after thee"** (Ps. 63:8). **"I have set the LORD always before me"** (Ps. 16:8). It is keeping the eye on Christ that makes you follow Him fully.

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Other Little Hills

By Timothy J. Hille of
Ashland, Illinois

"The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness" (Psalms 72:3).



PSALM 53:1

"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God" (Ps. 53:1).

God is the God of the heart. He knows what thoughts and motives are in the hearts of every man, woman, boy, and girl. He knows whether or not we believe Him. He knows if we are living as though there is no God, no Creator, King, Judge, and Savior of all. Many say that they believe in God, by which they mean that they believe there is such a thing as "God," whatever or whomever He may be. They do not mean, however, that they are trusting in the true and living God who made Heaven and earth and all the things in them. They do not mean that they regard themselves as God's handi-work, and as owing allegiance, adoration, devotion, and obedience to God. People's estimation of themselves is based on the thoughts of their own hearts – but that is a false estimation. The only right estimation is that which comes from God, who sees and knows all things in truth. What man sees is far different than what God sees. **"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity: there is none that doest good. God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God. Every one of them is gone back: they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one"** (Ps. 53:1-3). Such a condemning indictment! Universal wickedness

and complete depravity with no exception! Yes, we would object to such a verdict. We would hold up our own self-righteousness and declare that we are not so bad as to have such a conclusion as this made against us, calling God a liar. A fool ignores reality. A fool jumps off a tall building and says, "I am going to break the law of gravity;" but instead the law of gravity breaks the fool. Are you ignoring the truth of your lost and sinful condition and the alienation of your heart from God? Are you living as though the God of the Bible does not see your heart and life, and you do not need His saving mercy, love, grace, and power?



Follow the Lord

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THE DISTINCTIONS HE RECEIVED

First, God saw Caleb's conduct and approved of it. The Divine Being publicly commended him: **"But my servant Caleb."** He designated him as His **"servant."** What an honor from the Most High. God noticed his superiority and exalted him before the host of Israel. He was on God's honor roll. It could be said of Caleb that his praise was **"not of men, but of God"** (Rom. 2:29). Every person who fully follows the Lord shall have the **"praise of God"** (I Cor. 4:5). To the obedient servant the Lord will say: **"Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over**

many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Matt. 25:21).

Second, he received a glorious recompense: **". . . him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it."** The others, save Joshua, were excluded from God's rest in Canaan. They fell as monuments of the Divine displeasure against unbelief in the wilderness. But Caleb entered the Land of Promise. Even so, those who live the abundant life here shall have an abundant entrance into the everlasting **"kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ"** (II Pet. 1:11).

Every man, every woman, every child, shall be rewarded according to his own labors for Christ. The Lord will give all His faithful servants an unfading crown and an incorruptible inheritance of the saints in light. Some will rule over five cities, some over ten (Luke 19:16-19). Some will have **"power over the nations"** (Rev. 2:26) and others will be privileged to sit with Christ upon His throne (Rev. 3:21). I have no doubt that every sin, every inconsistency, ever wavering in the faith, every backsliding of God's children, takes away something from their eternal glory. Such a loss is a loss for all eternity. The more fully we follow the Lord now, the more fully will we be rewarded at the Judgment Seat of Christ. The closer we walk with Christ on earth, the closer will we walk with Him to all eternity. **"Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy"** (Rev. 3:4).

CONCLUSION

The only happy Christian is the one who follows Christ fully. The most miserable person on earth is a person who follows Christ afar off. Every time we turn from the way and turn aside after Satan, we err from the faith and pierce ourselves

through with many sorrows. We are mistaken to suppose that it is best to have some secret idol or a little God-substitute in our lives. True happiness comes in self-surrender--in presenting our bodies as a living sacrifice---in giving God our best. Any inconsistency mars our joy and interrupts our communion with Christ. The happiest time in our life is when we walk fully with the Lord in the path of our duty.

Many Christians will not follow the Lord fully as Caleb did. They cannot deny themselves. They are unwilling to suffer for Christ's sake. They want nothing to do with reproaches or persecutions. Others follow for a time and then when an old companion comes along, they fall by the wayside. Jesus said of such people: **"No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God"** (Luke 9:62). Again the Lord declared: **"Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him"** (Heb. 10:38).

The only useful Christian life is the one that follows Christ fully. Like Abraham, the one who cleaves to Christ and His service is blessed by God and he shall be a blessing to others. So if you will follow fully you will bless others in time and eternity. To follow fully is to die the death of the righteous. Inconsistent Christians have a painful death-bed.

What spirit do you possess? What course do you pursue? What is your prospect of entering the good land? Do you have the spirit of the worldly professor? or the Holy Spirit which Caleb had? It must be a renewed and consecrated Spirit, full of zeal for God's glory, if it is like the one Caleb had. Such only will the Lord approve and reward on the great day.



The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. Could you explain **"Let us make man in our image"** found in Genesis 1:26?

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This is the first clear indication of the trinity of God, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. These words were spoken by God to the Son and the Holy Spirit. These words were also spoken concerning man (cf. 3:22; 11:7).

"And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever" (Gen. 3:22).

"Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech" (Gen. 11:7).

It shows that man was not made in the likeness of any other creature, but as near as could be in the likeness and image of God. It is the crowning point of creation, a living human, which was made in God's image to rule creation.

What is meant by **"our image"** is that this defined man's unique relation to God. Man is a living being capable of embodying God's communicable attributes.

"Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man" (Gen. 9:6).

"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).

"And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col. 3:10).

"Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God" (James 3:9).

Man's life before the fall was more rational; he was like God in that he could reason and had intellect, will, and emotion. In the moral sense, he was like God because he was good and sinless.

C. H. Spurgeon said, "As the Father as well as Creator. As to the rest of creation, it is said, 'Let be,' and 'it was.' As to many 'Let us make in our image.' Closely kin by original nature, man is invited to intercourse with the Divine. The spirituality of God's highest creature is the bond of union and fellowship. The languages 'Let us make,' suggests the conception of a heavenly council or conference preparatory to the creation of man; and the new description of the being to be created points to the introduction of a new order of life the spiritual life, as above the vegetable and animal. God entrusts dominion and authority to man in the earth. Man holds from the first the position of a vicegerent for God. There is trust, obedience, responsibility, recognition of Divine supremacy, therefore all the essential elements of religion,

in the original constitution and appointment of our nature and position among the creatures. The ultimate destiny of man is included in the account of his beginning. He who made him in his image, "one of us," will call him upward to be among the super-earthly beings surrounding the throne of the Highest. The possession of a Divine image is the pledge of eternal approximation to the Divine presence. The Father calls the children about himself."

What a glorious day that will be, and then we will be as God intended, for we will be perfect, and be changed, and be as He is:

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (I John 3:2).

"Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye

stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (I Cor. 15:51-58).
God Bless!

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"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). The doctrine of the trinity of God and the trichotomy of man are linked by God's primal statement on the creation of man. **"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: ...So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Gen. 1:26-27).** The spirit, soul and body of man in our Thessalonian text, displays a depth of creation that parallels the depth of our God's nature. Father, Son and Holy Spirit! (3-in-1). Selah! Think about it!

When Adam fell in the garden, the creature was marred and deformed from its perfect trichotomous state from creation. **"But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:17).** The spirit of man perished at that moment, devolving him into a dichotomous creature with only two natures (body and soul). A very REAL death occurred when

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. Why would a woman want to kill her unborn child by abortion? Is it not just murder in the first degree (generally a killing which is deliberate and premeditated, or killing of another human without justification or valid excuse)?

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I am sure that the woman who is getting the abortion could furnish several reasons she deems as valid for exterminating her child in the womb. An unwanted pregnancy, an inconvenient time, the result of an abusive relationship, rape, and probably a hundred other reasons why she justifies her decision to kill her baby. Our reprobate society promotes the idea that it is her body and she may do as she pleases with it. She has been convinced that her baby is just a mass of fetal tissue that can be disposed of if she has an unwanted pregnancy. Unfortunately, we have politicians and feminists who have pushed for laws that allow doctors to kill children right up to birth and even after birth if the child survives the horror of abortion. We live in a culture of death where nearly 3,000 children are exterminated each and every day with no regard for the life and rights of the aborted child. Its remains are often thrown away or their body parts are sold. Tragically, Planned Parenthood targets low income and minority mothers in their quest to weed out what Margaret Sanger called "the undesirables" of society. Ironically, half of the babies killed

are little girls. Abortion was recently deemed statistically as the leading cause of death in America.

The real reason why anyone defies any of the 10 Commandments as revealed in the Moral Law of God is because of sin. The sixth commandment which states: **"Thou shalt not kill"** is easily understood. Sin against God is defined in I John 3:4: **"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."** According to this definition all men are sinners because all have a nature of sin that readily transgresses, defies, revolts, and rebels against the holy law of God. It is for this reason all sinners need to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, His death, burial, and resurrection in order to be justified and freed from the condemnation of the law. Apart from a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ as revealed in the Gospel, all sinners will be justly punished in the Lake of Fire for their sins. **"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murders, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death...And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abominatin, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life:...He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let**

him be filthy still...For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie" (Rev. 21:8, 27; 22:11, 15). It is clear from the above verses that God will ultimately punish all impenitent murderers and liars which would include the politicians and abortion counsellors who are liars, the mother who determines to exterminate the baby, and the abortion doctor who actually does the grisly deed. None will escape the justice and wrath of God unless they repent and trust in the finished work of Jesus Christ who alone can save them from their sins. My heart grieves for the mother who has capitulated to the satanic lies of a world system that hates God and promotes death. She has lost her sense of what is right and wrong. She is without natural affection for the child in her womb. She has been deceived into making a horrible decision that will affect her mental, emotional, spiritual, and physical health the rest of her life. She will be riddled with regret and guilt. Unless she repents and trusts Christ she will suffer an eternity of woe in the Lake of Fire for her sins.

To answer the second part of the question, yes it is premeditated murder on the part of the mother and the abortion provider according to the inflexible law of God. However, in the United States of America and many other countries around the world, the law of God is totally disregarded. Men have made their own laws revealing the murderous lusts that reside in their depraved hearts and perverted minds. As such, there is no punishment for the crime of premeditated murder when it comes to abortion. In fact, the act of murder is applauded

by politicians, feminists, and abortuary providers. Abortion on demand is promoted by Hollywood icons, academics, and eugenicists. The Omniscient eye of God sees all of the murderous rebellion. Make no mistake about it, He will see that justice is meted out. There will be no place to hide when God pours out His holy wrath upon the ungodly: **"And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand"** (Rev. 6:16-17). I urge all sinners to heed the admonition of Psalm 2:12: **"Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."**

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Two questions, two answers. First, why would a woman "want" or "desire" to murder her baby? That is an awesomely frightful question! As we look to answer it, it does no good, in trying to solve this perilous dilemma to place the blame primarily upon frightened or desperate "teen moms." It also does little good to "hate" an oblivious couple deciding to have an abortion after their "one-night stand" or any of fifty thousand other modern reasons. Abortion is a SOCIETAL EVIL that has brought our women (and men) to this apathetic point of "desiring"

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Forum Question #1

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Adam ate of the fruit, as real as the death we witness at a funeral home, where the soul is separated from the body, leaving only one nature left in the inanimate coffin, the body. All three natures have realms of action (or inaction) and the created pinnacle of God called man is not fully operational or representative of God's created glory (in His image) without all three natures/aspects being alive and party unto the whole being. Adam and Eve continued to function on "physical" and "soulish" planes, but became totally depraved in their nature, because their spirit DIED.

The nature that perished and left them in the abominable dichotomous state cannot be altered or remedied, except by the work of the Holy Spirit in the regenerating new birth. Again, from the outside, it is not clearly seen, what occurs when the elect child of God is **"born again."** **"Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit"** (John 3:7-8). A walking "dead man" that we surely are, shows physical evidence of the spiritual birth, as the dying man shows in his eventual coffin. But as surely as Adam was struck with death in the garden, so too are we struck with Life at the moment of salvation. The transformation that makes the difference, is either the subtraction or the addition of an essential element of our creation - either spirit or soul. They are crucial fundamentals of our elemental make-up. Selah! Think about it!

On their respective creative days, God made the water/air creatures from the molecules of water and the land creatures from molecules of earth/clay. **"And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl ...And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so"** (Gen. 1:20, 24). What we have in the animal kingdom are sentient beings with a body and soul. This soul is not eternal (as far as I know), but fulfills the temporal purposes of God in this marvelous creation as evidences of intelligent design. **"Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth"** (Eccl. 3:21)?

As we take a moment and look at these created dichotomous beasts, birds and fish, we can scientifically note the difference between an extraordinary gift of life and the deletion of that glowing life in their eyes, wings, fins and scampering feet, when death/separation comes to wrench out of these creatures the vivifying half of their being. The cold, dead bodies are literally lifeless, without the soul/mind functions of the inner half of God's inimitable gift of life. Death harshly breaks the bond of life between body and soul, and the judgment of Adam falls yet again upon this penalized creation. Man differs only, in having three natures, but the action of severing the bonds of life intensely seen throughout God's creation of nature was exactly what happened on a spiritual plane to Adam and Eve. Death creates lifeless abominations, and it will take a new Heaven and new Earth to forever do away with that

terrible enemy of death. **"The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death"** (I Cor. 15:26). Selah! Think about it!

The marvelous gift of incredibly complex life of day four and early in day five of Genesis 1, is sublimely surpassed when God goes a step further, with the extraordinary pinnacle of His creation. THIS ONE, He says, will be in MY IMAGE! This one began with the same clay as the cattle, but God took it one step further in making it a trichotomous creature. **"And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul"** (Gen. 2:7). This first birth of man is as unique as the second birth of man. And it does the same thing. It turns a dichotomous creature into a trichotomous marvel in the image of God. Glory to our Creator. Selah! Think about it!

To differentiate between the soul and spirit according to Scripture, we state that our spirit of life enables us to communicate with God. Unlike with all of the other created beings on the fourth/fifth days of Genesis 1, God did not stop with a dichotomous soul and body creation, but **"breathed"** the **"breath of life"** into this already animated creature made of clay and soul, and he became a **"living soul."** Not like the previous souls. Add an adjective (living) for a soul with additional life, eternal communion with his spiritual God!

The soul, without a lively spirit has no "spiritual life" inherent, and after the grievous fall of man destroyed that perfection of trichotomy, eventually all of the mutated dichotomous (soul/body man-creatures) will be cast into the garbage heap of an eternal Hell. The soul is just as eternal

as the spirit, but is referred to as "the carnal mind," without the Spirit's genuinely uplifting nature. The body also is just as eternal as the first law of thermodynamics assures us; matter cannot be destroyed. The eternality of Hell's everlasting death is evidence of a soul and body that will be tormented, but never die, or cease to be. **"And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them"** (Rev. 9:6). **"And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched"** (Mark 9:43-44). Fire, darkness, memories and worms are just a few of the unending torments for the "separated" abomination of a sinner and mutated rebel against God's order and beauty.

What was made in God's image glorifies God without parallel. The symbology of the trichotomous man to the trinity (in the image of God) is: 1) God the Father = soul or seat of the will and being. 2) God the Son = body of flesh, blood, and bones. 3) God the Holy Spirit = spirit of man that can communicate with God and other spiritual beings/creations. The departments of our lives are in relation to these intrinsic attributes of our persona. The soul is the mind; the spirit our heart. Not the beating muscle of our circulatory system, any more than the soul is limited to the brain function of the nervous system. I used to ask my children where they were, and as they pointed to themselves, I would incorrigibly answer, "No, that is your arm, or belly, etc...

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Forum Question #1

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Where are YOU?" Eventually, it would dawn upon them, that they were MORE than just a physical being, and that within the shell of their "tabernacle" (II Pet. 1:13-14) was an eternal worth (Matt. 16:25-26) that I was able to teach them- called a "soul." From there, I could further teach them that God had made them a "spirit" of even more tangible worth, if they would repent and believe the gospel of the Creator and Saviour, in the person of Jesus Christ. Selah! Now that is worth thinking about! This "sundered division" between soul and spirit, Scripture says, can ONLY be restored by the gospel of God's Word! **"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow"** (Heb. 4:12). It alone can reach the "dividing asunder" and heal it with grace and the blood of Jesus Christ. Selah! Think about it!

The second aspect of "made in our image" we will not have much space for, so we will save a thorough discussion for a later "Selah," but Adam was made undeniably in the image of Jesus Christ, God the Son. The clearest revelation to what Adam and Eve's bodies were like before the fall, would be to examine the body of Eve's seed, the Messiah, Jesus Christ. Jesus was born of a virgin, because He could not have a "fallen nature or body" such as all of Adam's seed. As the Son of the woman/Eve and simultaneously, the Son of God, Christ Jesus was born with a body in that "pre-fall" condition that Adam, the first son of God, was created in. Remember, Adam was created in

the IMAGE of God! That would be after the pattern of Jesus Christ in His 100% human body. Selah! Think about it!

External forces weighed upon Christ Jesus in His earthly walk, in that His body was "able" to be weary (deprived of sleep, Luke 8:23); "able" to be hungry and thirsty (deprived of necessary food and drink, John 4); "able" to feel pain at His scourging, pummeling and ultimately His crucifixion (deprived of protection and defense, Matthew 27). But that is the kicker here, all of these feelings of pain, hunger, thirst, weariness, etc were externally inflicted upon the body of Jesus, because of deprivation. Internally, He had not the corrupt blood composition of fallen Adam and Joseph, but rather the internal chemistry of primal Eve, through the virgin Mary, whom the Holy Ghost overshadowed in divine conception. The Son of Man, who was the Son of God (Luke 3:38)! In all of His thirty-three and a half years on this earth, the Son of Mary never got sick, because of His perfect immune system, that did not allow for "fallen" viruses, bacteria, etc within His pure red blood cells, plasma and hemoglobin. NONE of His body cells were depraved or "sin-infected," so there was no possibility of cancer, heart disease, smallpox or any internal affliction in His pure body (or rotten stink in the grave!). This is therefore, the original state of Adam and Eve. Pure, sinless and holy on the inside. And on the outside, the pure, sinless and holy Garden of Eden. Made in the image of God and installed in paradise. That is the Genesis creation. Glory to God! Selah! Think about it!

The Third aspect of "made in the image of God" is the marriage of Adam/Eve, where two flesh

became one; ie- 1+1=1. This "images" the trinity also, in that 1+1+1=1. ONE God, manifest in THREE Persons! One of these days, as God continues to work out His plan of salvation and glorification, we Baptists, as the Bride of Christ, will be "married" to the Lord Jesus Christ and 1+1+1=1, yet even more marvelously! **"Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name"** (Rev. 3:11-12).

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"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them...And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day" (Gen. 1:26-27, 31).

This passage of Scripture is included in the literal six day

Creation account. God makes it crystal clear that man was created by God Himself, manifested as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit signified by the plural pronoun "us," indicating that each member of the Holy Trinity was active in the creation of man. Man was a special creation of God, in the sense that he was originally created as a trichotomous being composed of body, soul, and spirit. Man was the only creation of God with an immortal soul that will live eternally. Adam and Eve were originally created with a spiritual nature that corresponded with God's nature enabling them to commune and fellowship with the Almighty. Adam and Eve were endowed with an intellect, a mind capable of reason and rational thought. They were created with the ability to make determinative choices through the faculty of their will. They were created with the faculty of speech, enabling them to speak to one another and to God. They were also created with a conscience which would serve as God's inward accuser after the fall, making Adam and Eve feel guilt and acknowledge sin and wrongdoing. These characteristics of man's creation is what separates him from the rest of God's creation. It is in this sense that man was created in the image of God. As such, man was charged with the responsibility to be fruitful by way of procreation and to have dominion over the animal kingdom. In Matthew 19:4-6 Jesus Christ, who is The Truth, confirmed His belief in the creation account of Genesis. Jesus Christ also affirmed that there are only two genders, male and female who may unite in holy matrimony to fulfill the mandate of procreation, to multiply and

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Forum Question #1

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replenish the earth. To deny the Creation account affirmed by Jesus Christ is to deny the veracity of Christ Himself.

At the end of the six days of Creation God pronounced all of what He had made as very good. It is important to note that God did not make man with the infinite attribute of immutability. Rather, man was created as a mutable being, capable of moral change. Adam was created as very good but not perfect as God is perfect. God is immutably holy, perfect, and righteous in essence and substance. When God gave man instructions regarding the upkeep of the Garden of Eden, He gave a simple law not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, warning Adam that doing so would bring death. Adam was the only man who truly had a free will and he used it to defy, disobey, and rebel against God. Adam's willful rebellion against God brought spiritual death upon all the human race as Romans 5:12 declares: **"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."** From the moment of Adam's willful disobedience and sin all men are born with a sin nature that separates them from God. Every man has a body and soul, but a dead spirit, meaning that man has no ability to commune with or please God. He is spiritually dead and thus incapable of producing any spiritual activity that pleases God. Fallen man will never rise above the depravity of his fleshly nature and choose that which is spiritual or holy. He is incapable according to Romans 8:8: **"So then they that are in the flesh**

cannot please God." The only way that man can connect with God spiritually is through the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit in the new birth, where God Himself creates a spiritual nature that is immediately capable of exercising the spiritual gifts of repentance and saving faith in Christ. Jesus made it crystal clear that unless a man is born again by the miraculous and creative act of the Holy Spirit, he cannot see or enter into the kingdom of God (John 3:3-8). Only through the creation of a new and spiritual nature that corresponds with God's holy nature can man be restored to the spiritual image of God. The ultimate end of what the Spirit creates in regeneration and nurtures in progressive sanctification will one day be fully realized in glorification where the elect are completely conformed to the image of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is in this sense that God's elect will experience the ability to behold and enjoy the glory of God in Christ as the eternal ages roll, bearing the image of Christ and delighting in communion with God. This glorious transformation of man's nature and union with Christ is what Jesus was praying about in John 17:22-24: **"And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."** How I long for the day to experience

the fullness of Christ's prayer! To bear His glorious image and bask in the glory of God for all eternity as the fulfillment of God's purpose of grace in Christ.

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Forum Question #2

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to kill unborn children. Selah! Think about it!

It may surprise some to know that the root source of this societal evil of abortion is evolution. Darwinism, with its desire to do away with God and His supreme authority over mankind, has damaged our society (and young women) in many ways, but primarily these two: atheism and liberalism.

1) Atheism and "false-guess" science has been exalted during these last hundred fifty years plus, where we now have a society where "self" is the long-range evolutionary pinnacle of the battle of "self" preservation. YOU and I are all that matters. You have a "choice" to make. "You" or that unwanted blob of fetal tissue? Guess who wins the battle of choice? Not the helpless baby, that is for sure!

2) Liberalism takes it a step further into our American society and arms the modern Democratic party (of Choice) with "upside-down" RIGHTS. Criminals have more "rights" than their victims. Kids have more "rights" than their parents. Individuals have more "rights" than the moral majority. Authority is anathema to broadening segments of our society. "God" is a name that must be expunged, because He claims His rightful authority to "JUDGE" our actions and choices. Actually, modern "poly-gods" are not the issue, but a real

God that has moral sovereignty written indelibly in one, unique Holy Bible and has the audacity to use the word "SIN" and "ABOMINATION" to brand all those "rambunctious" and "gender creative" connoisseurs? That kind of God is someone that our society is feverishly attempting (with great success) to sweep under the carpet. Liberalism joins atheism in rejecting a Sovereign Creator unto whom we are accountable to, for all of our actions.

So, how do we fix America and the sad state of women "wanting" an abortion?

1) Reinforce the family unit. We need to go back to our original definition of marriage, as a relationship that locks in the vows of "till death do us part," "for richer or for poorer," and "in sickness or in health." The marriage vow is a "selfless, sacrificial action" of true, "selfless" love. To not just say, but verify in deed and actions: "I love you more than I love myself!" Imagine the impact of children watching their parents love each other sacrificially (instead of superficially!) and trusting in God's grace to get their close-knit family through the tough times. Such a daughter would never be left "hopeless" or "hapless" and find herself "wanting" to kill her daughter and her parents' "joyfully anticipated" granddaughter. Selah! Think about it! It is step one in how we "fix" this society abomination.

2) Return to God and church. And I am not talking about all of those modern, slick, feel-good society meetings by liberal "self"-help groups. The trend toward liberal theology that coincided with Darwinism and science falsely so-called, eroded the American faith in a supernatural God that is sovereign in His acts

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Forum Question #2

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and independent of arminian emotionalism. Pastors and evangelists began to deny the six-day creation to appease the “rationale” of faithless “theories.” The gross error of pittance of faith against science turned truth to error. **“Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight”** (Isa. 5:20-21).

Along with the Genesis creation, these modern “churches” joined liberal universities in decrying an ultranatural deity and changed the miracles of “walking on water,” “water to wine,” “crossing the Red Sea,” “preparing a fish to swallow Jonah,” and even the Genesis flood into “mere stories” with only moral purposes. Beloved reader, to fix America of her societal woes, we need to return to a powerful, supernatural God that regularly works miracles in our midst and is unrestrained by any mortal limits. If church becomes just another “club” with no supernatural benefits (blessings!), then why go? It is much more “fun” to go to an NFL game on Sunday, with just as much benefit, unless our churches preach and teach the vital truths of a God to be feared, worshiped and trusted for our everyday existence. Selah! Think about it!

3) Re-elect a government that fears (respects) God. We need political leaders that do not attack Christianity, but rather recognize it for what it is, the producer of our best citizens. Crime goes down when Christianity is embraced in our legal codices and production goes up. Welfare programs quit wasting our money and taxes are

paid with prudent results on our investments. Can we imagine returning to a pre-1950’s society of America? Because that was when the “normal” woman would not “want” an abortion, because she feared God and loved her family and church.

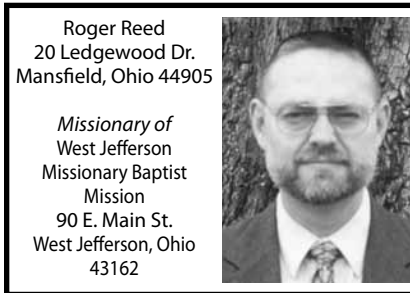
To answer the second question, yes, abortion is murder in the first degree. All life is in the jurisprudence of God, alone. **“And surely your blood of your lives will I require; ...at the hand of every man’s brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man. And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply”** (Gen. 9:5-7). God is the creator and gifter of life and thereby has sole proprietary authority over this precious commodity.

“For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul” (Matt. 16:26)? The value of life is infinite. Our American society of 2019 has devalued life, as fully one half of our nation is following the Democratic Party into advocating a culture of death. Universal homosexuality is ONE generation away from exterminating itself. Universal abortion is ONE generation away from exterminating itself. These awful abominations propagate ONLY DEATH. Left to her own devices, America will exterminate herself, but for the grace of God!

Finally, Life is: 1) Inimitable. Intricately designed snowflakes and fingerprints bespeak individual worth to their Creator. 2) Unrepeatable. Mistakes count, too, but what that essentially means is that everything we do matters. 3) Irreplaceable. Infinite loss equals infinite value. Murder should be unthinkable, not just

a casual trip down the street to Planned Parenthood’s murdering doors. Further yet unthinkable should be the fact that it is the murder of the innocent and helpless. Abortion terminates a life, a heartbeat, a person, because Science KNOWS that life begins at conception. An unborn child has his own blood type, her own DNA, their own personality. May God help us “fix” our societal problems before it is too late. There will be a terrible judgment awaiting any society that “wants” an abortion. Selah! Think about it!

MATTHEW STEPP



The answer to the question is because women are being lied to! Our government (the liberals) has stated that it is the woman’s body and she should be able to choose whether the life that is growing inside her is a separate living being. And I believe it is a separate living soul. I wrote an article not too long ago and I will state here what I wrote then: “The liberal lefts, left-wing politics, and their idiotic views on abortion as well as their views on Roe v. Wade are wrong. For anyone seeking the truth concerning Roe v. Wade, I would highly recommend the book *Won by Love* by the woman herself Norma McCorvey alias Jane Roe.”

I promise I am not going to get political in this article but point out some very important facts.

My research has led me to the Gallup Poll taken September 1984 thru May 2018. The

question was asked, “With respect to the abortion issue, would you consider yourself to be pro-choice or pro-life?” In 1995 56% were pro-choice and 33% were pro-life but as the years have passed pro-life has slowly but steadily gained ground and in May 2018 pro-choice and pro-life were tied at 48%. What that means is there has been an increase for the pro-life movement.

What I would like is for the liberal Christians (I do not know how that is possible but there are) to understand something about abortion when they go to the polls. Abortion is an abomination and affront to God. That means folks, He hates and despises it. Ah, should not a Christian then do the same?

John C. Willke, MD, and his wife, Barbara H. Willke, RN, long time champions of the pro-life movement, have authored much research on the issue of abortion, one of them being their 417-page work titled *Abortion: Questions & Answers*, which was updated in 2003. Concerning the definition of life, Willke writes: “What simple measure would you use to define Human Life? We would ask: Is this being alive? Yes. He has the characteristics of life. That is, he can reproduce his own cells and develop them into a specific pattern of maturity and function. Or, more simply, he is not dead. Is this being human? Yes. This is a unique being, distinguishable totally from any other living organism, completely human in all of his or her characteristics, including the 46 human chromosomes, and can develop only into a fully mature human. Is this being complete? Yes. Nothing new will be added from the time of union of sperm and egg until the death of the old man

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Forum Question #2

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or woman. The only changes are growth and development of what is already there at the beginning. All he needs is time to develop and mature. Note Webster's definition: In a general sense, that state of animals and plants, or of an organized being, in which its natural functions and motions are performed, or in which its organs are capable of performing their functions. Willke continues: Biologic human life is defined by examining the scientific facts of human development." Dr. Willke goes on to say and makes it very clear: "This is a field where there is no controversy, no disagreement. 'There is only one set of facts, only one embryology book is studied in medical school.' The more scientific knowledge of fetal development that has been learned, the more science has confirmed that the beginning of any one human individual's life, biologically speaking, begins at the completion of the union of his father's sperm and his mother's egg, a process called "conception," "fertilization," This is so because this being, from fertilization, is alive, human, sexed, complete and growing."

Let me comment on what you just read. 1) This is not a religious faith belief. 2) This is not a philosophic theory. 3) This is not debatable, not questioned. 4) It is a universally accepted scientific fact. Natural science, biology, and medicine have all concluded that a person is a living organism from conception.

So the conclusion is; Abortion is murder! Therefore, the God-given commandment, "**Thou shalt not kill,**" protects the babe who still resides inside his mother's womb. (I John 3:15) "**Whosoever hateth**

his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." What I have given you are the facts (Rom. 2:3) "**And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?"**

Ask this question before you vote in the 2020 election; Are you guilty of murder if you vote for those who believe in abortion? If you have never seen the movie "October Baby" I would encourage you to get a copy and watch it.

The late Elder Milburn Cockrell wrote in his book, *The Ten Commandments* that, "All murder is killing, but not all killing is murder." I agree! But be aware that those who abort their babies (regardless of the circumstances) have and are committing MURDER! We have a President that is fighting for that unborn child, and it is in our power and responsibility to help him succeed. God Bless!

ROGER REED

Dedication

(Continued from page 1) ♦

poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality" (II Cor. 8:2). The reference here is to the social condition which they obtained. The state of Greece at that time was one of desolation and destitution. It had never recovered from the Roman conquest. Then, too, they had suffered long from the civil wars between Caesar and Pompey, Brutus and Cassius, Augustus and Antonius. The Macedonians had been heavily taxed to pay off the national debt, and were, financially, desperately poor.

"For to their power I bear record, yea, and beyond their power, they were willing of

themselves; Praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of ministering to the saints" (II Cor. 8:3-4). This tells us not a little the spirit and nature of the giving of those early Christians. First, they gave **"beyond their power,"** denying themselves the bare necessities of life. Second, they did this **"willingly,"** spontaneously, without being asked. Third, they earnestly pressed their gift upon Paul: **"praying us with much entreaty"** -which intimates that, under their distressing circumstances, the apostle was reluctant to accept their gifts.

"And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord." **"Not as we hoped"** means, far more than we expected or desired, **"First gave their own selves to the Lord,"** explains it all. They had, unreservedly, dedicated themselves to God. They could truly say, "Naught that I have I call my own, I hold it for the Giver; For He is mine, and I am His, Forever and forever." Whole hearted consecration to Christ is always evidenced by freely giving to His cause, His service, His people.

As this is the first number of our eighth volume, these words seem an appropriate introduction to it: **"But first gave their own selves to the Lord."** May this be the initial act of both writer and reader at the commencement of 1929. But perhaps our text sets forth an aspect of God's truth which many Calvinists know little or nothing about, for one fears that it will hardly fit into the one-sided creed of some. Not a few have been so repelled by Arminian preachers urging the unconverted to give their hearts

to Christ, that probably some would receive quite a shock were they to discover that our text is in the Word of God. The fact is that Arminians have made a wrong use of a right thing: they have applied to unbelievers what belongs only to believers. Our text speaks of a dedication rendered, not by sinners in order to be saved but by Christians because they were saved. It was the answering response of their hearts to the wondrous love of Him who "gave" Himself for them.

But if extreme Calvinists are largely ignorant of the practical truth of personal dedication to God, it is to be feared that many other Christians are strangers to it experimentally. Does not the present state of the cause of Christ on earth bear witness to the fact? Does the reader suppose that there would be such a shortage of missionaries, that half of the human race would still know nothing of the glorious Gospel of Christ, had even one tenth of His people really "given themselves to the Lord?" Would so many departments of Christian enterprise be crippled through lack of funds? Why is there such a shortage of teachers and preachers, we mean really sound ones, not "blind leaders of the blind"? Is it because so few of our Christian young men have "given themselves unto the Lord"?

We are well aware that there is a Divine side in being called to minister God's precious Word, but there is a human side, too. What constitutes a "call" to be an evangelist? God rarely speaks immediately and directly; He generally employs instruments and means. Suppose that late at night you saw a house on fire, and

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Dedication

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there was an axe and a hose on hand. Would you wait for a call before you attempted to help? Would not the very urgency of the case, your knowledge of the danger of those within that house, be sufficient? And would not the means at hand make it your bounden duty to help? In like manner, if God has granted to you a saving knowledge of His truth, and all around are men and women which you see are going down to Hell as swiftly as time can take them, is not that a "call" for you to bid them **"flee from the wrath to come"**?

Ah, the real trouble is that many Christians are afraid to "give themselves unto the Lord" lest He take them at their word. They are fearful that He might send them out to China or India. But, my reader, we have nothing to do with consequences. Our first duty is to "give ourselves unto the Lord:" how God responds, what use He makes of our gift, is His business, not ours. It is not for us to reason why, it is not for us to make reply: it is for us to do, and die, if needs be: **"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren"** (I John 3:16). We do not wish to imply that God would send out to China or India every young Christian who truly dedicated himself to His service, but we do say that this is his first privilege and duty.

What is meant by "giving ourselves unto the Lord?" Surely there is little need for a lengthy explanation. It is the response of a regenerated soul to God's call, **"My son, give Me thine heart"** (Prov. 23:26). It is a

compliance with the terms of Christian discipleship: **"And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple"** (Luke 14:27). It is something which we do, a voluntary act on our part. It is obeying that Divine exhortation **"I besech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service"** (Rom. 12:1). It is the complete consecration of ourselves to Christ, and unreserved placing of ourselves at His disposal. It is love's response to God's unspeakable Gift. It is the glad return of a heart that has been won by Christ.

Truly, this is a **"reasonable service"** (Rom. 12:1). When we think of the Lord of glory leaving the perfect peace and bliss of Heaven, and coming down to this world of sin and suffering; when we recall that while here, He "had not where" to lay His head; when we behold our sin in His own body on the tree; unless gratitude within us is dead, can our hearts remain unmoved? Is there no response unto Him who cried, **"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto My sorrow"** (Lam. 1:12)? Surely the least we can do is to dedicate ourselves to Him, spirit and soul and body. Surely, "Love so amazing, so Divine, demands my life, my love, my all."

Christ Himself has left us an example so to do: **"Who loved me, and gave Himself for me"** (Gal. 2:20). Yes, that bearing shame and scoffing rude, that passing through such unparalleled suffering, that being forsaken both by God and man, was for me. And now

that He has saved me at such tremendous cost, and with such a wondrous salvation, He has left me here in the world for a little while. What for? To make money? To enjoy selfish ease? No, to represent Him, to show unto others something of His spirit; and the starting-point of this is that, we "first give ourselves unto the Lord."

Again; it is only as we thus completely dedicate ourselves unto the Lord that a joyous life is possible. Why do so few Christians retain their first love? Why is it many so quickly lose the "joy of God's salvation?" Why is it that few have settled peace and full assurance? The answer is not far to seek: it is because they have failed to definitely and unreservedly "give themselves unto the Lord." We need hardly say that the man of the world has an altogether erroneous idea of both the nature and source of happiness. He supposes it lies in the possession of things, in the gratification of selfish desires. The Christian knows better: he has learned that all under the sun is **"vanity and vexation of spirit"** (Eccl. 2:11). But he also needs to learn that satisfaction and joy are only to be found in Christ, and they, to the fullest extent, only through entire consecration to Him.

Let us also remind the reader it is failure at this point which constitutes the principal stumbling-block to unbelievers. I cannot commend Christ to others if I am miserable and wretched myself. But if I am **"always rejoicing"** (II Cor. 6:10), if my life is an anthem of praise unto God, those around will want to know the secret of it. Has the reader ever pondered the implication of I Peter 3:15, **"Be ready always to give an**

answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you?" Are you ever "asked?" Ah, my brethren, just so far as we are living for self, we are misrepresenting our Saviour, who **"pleased not himself"** (Rom. 15:3). Just to the extent that we find our pleasure in the world, are we denying the sufficiency of Christ to fill the heart. Just so far as these things are true of us, are we a stumbling-block, a hindrance, a curse, to those around us.

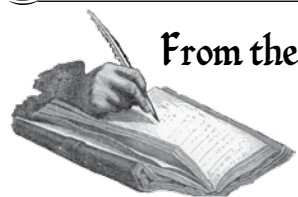
Finally, we ought to "give ourselves unto the Lord" because His second coming is imminent. Each year that passes brings His return that much nearer: **"For yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry"** (Heb. 10:37). Ah, if you knew for certain that ere 1929 expired the Lord Jesus shall have come again to receive us unto Himself, how would you live? Would there not be many changes made in your daily life? Would you not be more devoted to Him, more zealous in His service, more faithful in witnessing for Him? Well, He may come even before this month has run its course! Then let your loins be girded, and your lamps trimmed and burning. Do you wish to see a look of grief in His eyes at His appearing, or one of joy as He says, **"Well done, thou good and faithful servant"** (Matt. 25:23)? O may His love constrain, us to "first give ourselves unto the Lord."

*Take my life and let it be,
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee.*

*Keep my life and let it be,
Glorifying, Lord, to Thee.*

(Studies in the Scriptures, Vol. VII, January, 1929).





From the Pen of a Country Preacher

Milburn R. Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)



The Blood of Jesus

The gospel is the good news of salvation by the shed blood of Jesus Christ. It is a report of peace made by the blood of Christ for poor sinners. The true gospel calls upon men to receive the Lord Jesus and all the benefits He purchased with His own blood.

The blood of Jesus is the subject of the everlasting song of the redeemed above. It is the alphabet of Christian experience to know the value of **"the blood of sprinkling"** (Heb. 12:24). It should be the great and only theme of believers as they live in this world.

The pulpits of the fashionable churches of this age are utterly silent as to this subject. In vain do some try to explain away the truth of blood redemption. Still others scornfully dub this doctrine "a slaughter house religion." But the Bible still says: **"The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."** Yes, the Bible teaches blood redemption. Leviticus 17:11 still reads: **"It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul."**

A scarlet line runs through the Scriptures. From the lamb of Abel to the **"Lamb as it had been slain,"** this scarlet line of atonement through the blood may be traced. The types dripped with blood. It was used in all five of the Hebrew offerings. Throughout all the Old Testament the blood of countless tens of thousands of animals proclaimed the truth that the price of redemption is blood. But

all the blood of animals could not take away sins. The fact that these blood sacrifices were constantly repeated is proof of this. Hebrews 10:4 declares: **"For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins."** These blood sacrifices merely pointed to Christ, the Lamb of God, by whose blood men are actually cleansed from sin.

The importance of blood in the purpose of God is shown in the fact that it is mentioned 427 times in the Scriptures. There are 290 references to God's love in the New Testament, yet there are 313 distinct references to redemption by the blood. Let us study the believer and the blood of Jesus.

THE PRICE OF REDEMPTION

Acts 20:28 speaks of **"the church of God"** which Christ has **"purchased with his own blood!"** The church is not only a Divine institution; it is a blood-bought institution. The blood which purchased the church is the blood of God, as this verse said. The blood was His as the God-man. So close was the union between the Divine and human nature that it is said to be the blood of God. It was the blood of Him Who is God. Those who criticize the church criticize that which was bought by the blood of Christ. Those who lower the moral standards of the church

degrade the precious blood of Christ.

I read in Ephesians 1:7: **"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."** The redemption which the believer enjoys is **"through his blood."** The blood of animals and martyrs could not atone for sin. It took the perfect, sinless, incorruptible, precious, eternal blood of Christ.

Whenever you hear a new teacher or a new message, look for the blood. If the test of the blood is not met, the message may sound attractive, but it is a new gospel without salvation.

Peter tells us: **"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot"** (I Pet. 1:18-19).

All the gold and silver in the world cannot redeem as much as one soul. Such things are corruptible and therefore cannot redeem an incorruptible and immortal soul. The price of redemption is the blood of Jesus. The design of the shedding of Christ's blood was to redeem us, not only from eternal misery, but from a vain conversation.

What did I cost my Savior? The song writer said: "I am satisfied with Jesus ... He has done so much for me ... He has suffered to redeem me ... He has died to set me free ... But the question comes to me ... As I think of Calvary ... Is my Master satisfied with me."

Revelation 5:9 informs us that Christ has redeemed us unto God by His blood out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people. We see in this verse three things.

First, we are redeemed unto God. Second, we are redeemed by the blood of Christ. Third, God's people are redeemed by the blood of Christ out of the nations. The phrase "out of" limits Christ's redemptive work to the elect and teaches a limited atonement.

Nor silver nor gold hath obtained by redemption,

Nor riches of earth could have saved my poor soul

The blood of the cross is my only foundation,

The death of my Savior now maketh me whole.

THE GROUND OF OUR FORGIVENESS

It is written in Colossians 1:14: **"In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."** It is said here as in numerous other Scriptures that the believer has redemption. It is not may have. Every believer is redeemed already.

It was sin which sold; sin which enslaved us. If we are redeemed, we must be redeemed from sin, and this is by forgiveness. At the Last Supper our Lord said: **"This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins"** (Matt. 26:28).

Hebrews 9:22 declares: **"And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission."** Sin cannot be expiated without the shedding of blood. The real remission of sins is due to the satisfaction of Christ. The blood of Christ is not only efficient, but it is sufficient for the salvation of all the elect.

It is shed blood which has always been required for deliverance from sin. This is seen in type and antitype. The truth of God's requiring a blood sacrifice as the righteous ground

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The Blood of Jesus

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for the remission of sin was established beyond all dispute in Old Testament times. Though the many offerings sustained no efficiency in themselves to take away sin, they did speak of the immutable necessity of a ransom by blood as a cure for sin. To challenge this fact is to overlook the teaching set forth in the types and the New Testament's direct explanation of Christ's death.

*Dear dying lamb, Thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed Church of God
Be saved to sin no more.*

THE GROUND OF JUSTIFICATION

In Romans 5:8-9 the Bible says: **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him."** The vicarious death of Christ was indispensable to our justification. It saved us from the wrath which our sins deserved. It is said that we are now justified. Justification like redemption and forgiveness is a present gift.

*Justified---how I love to proclaim it
Justified by the blood of the Lamb;
Justified through His infinite mercy
His child and forever I am.*

THE BASIS OF OUR PEACE

Colossians 1:20 informs us: **"And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things... in earth, or things in heaven."** It is grossly unscriptural to speak of "making our peace with God." It is made. We need only to rejoice in it. God is satisfied with Christ's work, and when the sinner is, there is perfect peace between himself and God.

Sin breeds a quarrel between

us and God. It creates not only a strangeness, but also an enmity. A wholly righteous God cannot in honor be at peace with a sinner while he continues under the guilt of sin. The death of Christ made peace between God and the sinner. Christ's death took away sin and thus restored man to fellowship with God.

The blood of bulls and goats for ages failed

To purge the conscience, burdened sore with sins;

Thy precious blood, O Lamb of God, prevailed---

Through Thee, sweet Peace her endless reign begins.

Thy blood hath made atonement e'en for me:

Complete I stand, O risen Christ, in Thee.

THE FOUNDATION OF OUR CLEANSING

I read in I John 1:7 these words: **"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."**

The blood of Jesus cleanses eternally and completely from the guilt of sin. Being the blood of the Son of God, it is of infinite value in canceling penalty. This verse can read: "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son is cleansing us from every sin." This cleansing is present and continuous. The believer is often sinning but the constant flow of Christ's blood meets sin and cleanses us from it. It is the guilt of sin, not sinning nature, which the blood removes.

Revelation 1:5 says: **"Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."** Notice it is **"washed"** ---past tense. So the believer is washed already. The question is some times asked, "Does blood wash away sin?" Revelation 1:5 plainly

says it does. Sin leaves a stain upon the soul, a stain of guilt and of pollution. Christ shed His blood to purchase for us pardon and purity. His blood actually loosed us for our sins.

What can wash away my sin?

Nothing but the blood of Jesus;

What can make me whole again?

Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

Oh! precious is the flow

That makes me white as snow;

No other fount I know,

Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

THE MEANS OF ACCESS TO GOD

Ephesians 2:13 reads: **"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."** Man in his unrenewed state is far off from Christ, from His church, from the promises, from the Christian hope, and from God Himself. Now by virtue of our union with Christ, we are made nigh to God. This is all made possible by the merit and sufferings of Christ.

Hebrews 10:19 says: **"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus."** The blood of Jesus, shed in sacrifice on the cross and borne into the heavenly Holy of Holies, there to be sprinkled on the mercy seat, is the means of our communion with God. Christ has purchased for all believer priests the privilege of free access to God.

"One poor wise man" hath cried, O God, to Thee,

His blood is counted precious in thy sight.

He liveth, and His name shall ever be

Thy praise, Thy glory, Thy supreme delight.

By Jesus' blood---that new and living way---

God's white-robed priests shall now within the holiest stay.

THE CAUSE OF OUR

OVERCOMING

In Revelation 12:11 I read: **"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."** Each believer has a personal triumph over Satan because of the blood of Jesus. The blood of Christ purified us from all sin and so the accuser can bring nothing against God's elect. Without the shedding of His blood the adversary's charges against us would have been unanswerable.

My sins are all under the blood;

From their stain I am clean,

They will never be seen: Hallelujah!

They are under the blood.

THE BLOOD COVENANT

At Mount Sinai Moses **"...took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people."** Then he took the blood of the oxen just slain, **"...and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant..."** (Ex. 24:3-8).

As the Old Covenant was ratified by blood, even so the blood of the Savior gave force to the everlasting Covenant of Grace. Jesus Christ said: **"This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you"** (Luke 22:20). It is the means of our justification and sanctification (Heb. 10:29).

Amazing grace! tis heaven below

To feel the blood applied,

And Jesus, only Jesus knows,

My Jesus crucified.

THE RECIPIENTS OF BLOOD REDEMPTION

At what point in the believer's experience does he come to see the benefits of Christ's blood to him? Does he contact it in the Lord's Supper or in the water of baptism? A thousand times no! We contact the benefits

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The Blood of Jesus

(Continued from page 21) ♦

of Christ's blood at the point of faith. Romans 3:24-25 says: **"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God."**

There is a fountain filled with blood drawn from Emmanuel's veins. The Sinner who plunges beneath that flood loses all his guilty stains. Zechariah 13:1 says that there is a fountain opened to you for sin and uncleanness. Those who wash in this fountain find that scarlet sins become white as snow and that crimson sins become as wool (Isa. 1:18). In this fountain you can wash your robe and make it white in the blood of the Lamb (Rev. 7:14).

Have you been to Jesus for the cleansing power?

Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

Are you fully trusting in His grace this hour?

Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

There is a fountain flowing for the soul unclean,

O be washed in the blood of the Lamb.

END



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.

REPORT SHOWS INCREASED HOSTILITY TOWARD CHRISTIANS ACROSS EUROPE

According to CBN News, the report from the Middle East Forum showed that across Europe, there has been an increase in attacks on churches and Christian symbols in recent years. In 2018, there were some 1,063 attacks on French Christian churches and symbols, such as statues and crosses. That number of attacks was a 17 percent jump from the year prior. In February, there were some 47 documented attacks on churches and religious sites.

FEMALE STUDENTS STAGE A WALK OUT OVER TRANSGENDER STUDENT USING GIRLS' RESTROOM: 'WE WANT OUR PRIVACY'

(OWH)--Students opposed to a biological boy using the girls' restroom staged a walkout at an Iowa high school last week, chanting "we want privacy" and "he is a male." The students at Abraham Lincoln High School in Council Bluffs, Iowa, gathered on a sidewalk outside the school, while students supportive of the individual's right to use the whichever restroom they pleased climbed an adjacent hill. The protest April 11 was peaceful, and students were not suspended. The walkout was sparked by a female student who believes her privacy is being violated by the transgender student using the girls' restroom. Most students protesting the policy were female students impacted by the situation.

"We felt very uncomfortable with a male who is not doing anything to be transgender going into the female restrooms," student Elana Owens said. Another student, Brandi Scherlund, said, "I believe if you have the male parts you go to the males' bathroom and if you have the female parts you go to a ladies' room and that is just the way I was raised." The protest lasted about 15 minutes, according to the Omaha World-Herald.

OHIO GOVERNOR SIGNS HEARTBEAT ABORTION BAN, SAYS 'MOST VULNERABLE' NEED PROTECTING

(CH)--Ohio Governor Mike DeWine signed a bill into law that bans abortion when an unborn baby's heartbeat is detected, although he acknowledged legal challenges will decide its fate. "It is the right thing to do," DeWine, a Republican, said at the signing ceremony. The bill, SB 23, passed the Ohio House of Representatives 56-40 and the Senate 18-13 this week, sending it to DeWine. The bill says "no person shall knowingly and purposefully perform or induce an abortion on a pregnant woman before determining... whether the unborn human individual the pregnant woman is carrying has a detectable heartbeat." Ohio Right to Life says an abdominal ultrasound can detect a heartbeat between eight and 12 weeks of a pregnancy. GOP Senator Kristina Roegner – sponsored the bill in the Senate. "I am delighted that the governor signed a bill, boldly

declaring that Ohio will protect an unborn life," Roegner said.

NORTH DAKOTA BANS 'DISMEMBERMENT' ABORTIONS THAT TEAR BABIES APART, LIMB BY LIMB

(CH)--North Dakota's governor, Republican Doug Burgum, signed a bill Wednesday outlawing a grisly abortion procedure in which an unborn baby is dismembered, limb by limb, until the uterus is empty. This made North Dakota the 11th state to ban a procedure medically known as dilation and evacuation, according to the pro-choice Guttmacher Institute. The new law, HB 1546, does not use the medical term but instead describes it in graphic detail, calling it "human dismemberment abortion." Such an abortion, according to the bill's text, involves "intentionally dismembering a living unborn child and extracting the unborn child one piece at a time" with the "purpose of causing the death of an unborn child, through use of clamps, grasping forceps, tongs, scissors, or similar instruments." The instruments, the text says, are used to "slice, crush, or grasp the head, arm, leg, spinal cord, internal organ, or other portion of the unborn child's body to cut or rip it off." The law includes an exception for a medical emergency. It goes into effect when a court allows its enforcement or when the U.S. Supreme Court "restores to the states authority to prohibit abortion." The doctor, not the woman, would be prosecuted.

HALF OF PASTORS ARE CONCERNED THEY WILL OFFEND SOMEONE IF THEY SPEAK ON SOCIAL ISSUES

(CH)--In a new report from the Barna Group, half of Christian pastors said they felt occasionally or

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Bible & the Newspaper

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frequently limited in their ability to speak out about controversial issues. The biggest topic they felt pressure to talk about is homosexuality. Nearly half of respondents says they feel limited in how to talk about homosexuality in their church, but at the same time some 37 percent said they felt pressure to speak about it. The study also looked at how pastors feel about religious freedom. Some 75 percent of pastors said they believe religious freedom is becoming "less valued," while about 44 percent said they predict that other freedoms could be threatened in the next 10 years. Many pastors in the study also reported that "extreme" or "major" threats to religious freedom included requiring religious hospitals to perform abortions, forcing religious organizations to hire despite beliefs on sexual orientation and restrictions on religious groups on college campuses.

DESPITE THREAT FROM HOLLYWOOD, GEORGIA PASSES FETAL HEARTBEAT BILL

(CH)--Lawmakers in Georgia passed H.B. 481 – one of the most restrictive abortion bills in the country – despite threats from Hollywood and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). The bill bans abortions after a heartbeat is detected, which is typically around the 6th week of pregnancy. Hollywood was not supportive of the bill. Hollywood claimed it would make Georgia an inhospitable place for those in the film industry to work. Nearly 50 TV and film stars also signed a letter to the governor, threatening to no longer work in the state should the bill pass. However, lawmakers were not deterred. The bill passed 92 to 78. Women were previously allowed to abort up until

20 weeks of their pregnancy.

INTERNATIONAL BRIEFS RUGBY LEAGUE TO FIRE \$1M STAR PLAYER OVER BIBLE VERSE POST ON HOMOSEXUALITY

(CH)--An Australian rugby star, Israel Folau, who makes more than \$1 million per year is set to be fired in the coming days for posting a Bible verse about homosexuality on social media and urging his follows to "turn to Jesus." "First and foremost, I live for God now," Folau told The Sydney Morning Herald. "Whatever He wants me to do, I believe His plans for me are better than whatever I can think. If that is not to continue on playing, so be it. In saying that, obviously I love playing footy and if it goes down that path I will definitely miss it. But my faith in Jesus Christ is what comes first." The controversy started April 10 when Folau posted an image on Instagram that referenced Scripture and read, "Warning. Drunks, Homosexuals, Adulterers, Liars, Fornicators, Thieves, Atheists, Idolaters. Hell Awaits You. Repent! Only Jesus Saves." He wrote next to the Instagram picture, "Those that are living in Sin will end up in Hell unless you repent" and quoted Galatians 5:19-21. The post received 44,000 likes. The same day, he linked on Twitter a story about Tasmania allowing those ages 16 and over to change their birth certificates or to remove gender from the certificates altogether. He wrote: "The devil has blinded so many people in this world, REPENT and turn away from your evil ways. Turn to Jesus Christ who will set you free." That post gained 4,000 likes. "It is obviously a decision that is in the process right now but I believe in a God that is in control of all things," Folau said. "Whatever His will is, whether that is to continue playing or not, I am more than happy to do what He wants me to do."

CHINESE POLICE BEAT 60 CHRISTIANS, CLOSE CHURCH AND THEN BURY BIBLES

(CH)--In January more than 100 Chinese police officers and SWAT team members closed a newly constructed church in Henan, China, and beat the believers, leaving about 15 Christians on the floor moaning in pain. One woman who is in her 70s also was beaten. Police dug a pit and buried the Bibles and hymnbooks. They also removed the air conditioning units, audio speakers, washing machines, a computer and a piano. Police detained the church's director for 15 days. Chinese officials also seized the church's cash and other possessions.

CHRISTIAN ACTIVIST FINED \$55,000 FOR CALLING TRANSGENDER WOMAN A BIOLOGICAL MALE

(CH)--Christian activist William Whatcott must pay \$55,000 to transactivist Morgane Oger, the British Columbia Human Rights Tribunal ordered this week. In 2017, Whatcott printed 1,500 flyers with a photo of Oger that described the candidate as a "biological male" and said she was promoting "homosexuality and transvestism." Oger lost the 2017 election by 400 votes but asked the B.C. Human Rights Tribunal to investigate Whatcott's actions. He claimed the flyer was an act of religious expression. The tribunal decided Whatcott had discriminated against Oger based on her gender. Following the news of the fines, Michael Brown, host of the Line of Fire radio program, said he is worried this type of punishment could come to American activists. "Now, in Canada, a Christian activist has been fined \$55,000 for the 'hateful' act of misgendering an adult male. How soon before this reaches America?"

♦ (Continued on page 24)

BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 3-1-2019 to 3-31-2019

Beginning Balance	\$1,231.13
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	300.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL	60.00
Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX	50.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV	200.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	150.00
Carol Willett, Georgetown, TX	50.00
Citrus M. B. C., Corbin, KY	25.00
Emmanuel B. C., Oldtown, KY	200.00
Faith B. C., Lynn, AR	12.50
Gail Knowles, Scarborough, ME	20.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	200.00
Grace B. C., Rural Hall, NC	50.00
Grace M. B. C., Tulsa, OK	35.00
Indore B. C., Indore, WV	100.00
Janet Stevens, Marion, KY	15.00
The Lord's Church, Goose Creek, SC	50.00
Michael Sherman, Ashland, KY	35.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH	100.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN	50.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL	100.00
Portland B. C., Plumerville, AR	50.00
Russell Shoemaker, Lemaster, PA	24.00
Southside B. C., Fulton, MS	25.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Silsbee, TX	30.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA	25.00
Subscriptions	72.00
Anonymous	722.00
Dividing checks	150.00
Sub Total	\$2,900.50
TOTAL	\$4,131.63

EXPENDITURES:	
Printing	490.00
Postage	527.88
Wages	2,300.00
FICA	175.96
Dividing checks	0.00
Bank Charge	13.00
Total Expenditures	\$3,656.84
ENDING BALANCE	\$474.79



BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 3-1-2019 to 3-31-2019

Beginning Balance	\$1,993.39
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	225.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	100.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	200.00
.....	525.00
TOTAL	2,518.39
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio Time	363.98
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	363.98
.....	2,154.41
Interest	+03
ENDING BALANCE	\$2,154.44

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Portland Baptist Church of Plumerville Arkansas is seeking a full time pastor. Due to aging and failing health (cancer), Elder Lindy Davis is resigning as pastor. For more information call Bro. Davis at (501) 354-1859, or Email pbchurch@tcworks.net.

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

The Stephens Branch Baptist Church of Martin, Kentucky is in need of a pastor. They are an Independent, Sovereign Grace, Landmark, Missionary Baptist church holding to the doctrines of grace and the King James Bible. If you are interested in being considered or would like more information on the church you can call Brother Lonnie Edwards at (859) 629-1413 or write the church at: Stephens Branch Baptist Church, 1025 Stephens Branch Road, Martin, Kentucky 41649.

The Philadelphia Baptist Church of Decatur, Alabama is seeking the Lord's guidance in calling His eternally appointed man to fill the vacancy left when He called His faithful servant Elder Wm. Doyal Thomas unto his everlasting home September 29, 2018.

If any brother of like faith and order would like to be considered for that pastorate or would like information on the church please call or text Brother Mike Gibson at (256) 303-7747 or email Brother James Reynolds at admin@pbcofdecaturalabama.org. or text (ONLY) 931-452-1158.

The Berea Baptist Church of Mantachie, Mississippi is in need of a pastor. For more information please contact (662) 282-7794 or Email:request@bereabaptistchurch.org.

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

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

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



Bible & the Newspaper

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**CHINESE CITY PAYS
CITIZENS \$1,500 TO BE A
'MINI JUDAS' AND TURN IN
CHRISTIANS**

(CH)--China's crackdown on

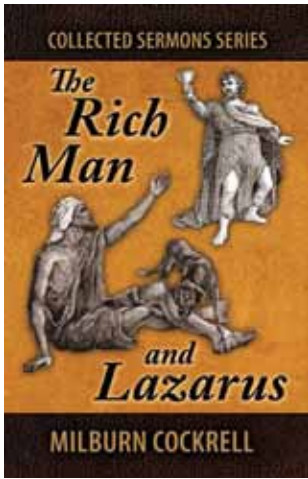
Christianity escalated in March when the government of the fifth-largest city began issuing rewards to those who report "illegal religious activities," including house church meetings. The Bureau of Ethnic and Religious Affairs in Guangzhou said it would reward prizes of 3,000, 5,000 and 10,000 yuan (\$450, \$750 and \$1,500 U.S.) to Chinese citizens who spot and turn in their neighbors to government officials, according to Asia News. The size of the prize will depend on the scale of the illegal activity. All churches in China are required to register with the government. Some churches, though, face severe restrictions in how they worship and practice their faith. Because of this, millions of Chinese Christians worship underground. Referencing the new regulations, one Christian woman said, "Now here in China we live in a Big Brother atmosphere." Under the new law, citizens can report suspicious Christian activities at the government office, by phone or via letter. The law lists as dangerous people who "establish religious places without authorization; non-religious groups; non-religious institutions; non-religious places, temporary places of worship, religious activities and religious donations." This includes "organizing unauthorized religious courses, conferences, unauthorized pilgrimages."



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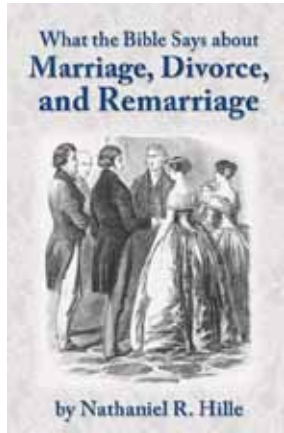
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Now Available!



We are pleased to announce that *The Rich Man and Lazarus* by Milburn Cockrell is available. A simple book dealing with the account given by Christ. This book will be sent free to any prisoner that requests it. Retail price \$4.00. Paperback, 31 pages. 50% discount given on orders of five or more.

Also Available



We are pleased to announce that *Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage* by Nathaniel R. Hille is available. An excellent book dealing with the subject based on the Scriptures. This book will be sent free to any prisoner that requests it. Retail price \$4.00. Paperback, 26 pages. 50% discount given on orders of five or more.

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