

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

"Unmerited Grace," Eternally Our Relationship to the Law

By E. G. Cook
(1898 - 1986)

"By grace are ye saved..." (Eph. 2:8). Therefore "I am what I am by the grace of God." And I will be what I will be in the hereafter by the grace of God. In all probability the doctrines concerning the grace of God are the most misunderstood doctrines in all the Bible. In the first place, none of us can comprehend fully the doctrines of grace. Grace is something that just transcends



poor finite man's understanding. He is just simply not able to ascend to the heights of it, and neither is he able to fathom the depths of it. He has been trying to define the term grace throughout the centuries, but he has never been too well satisfied with his definition.

In my younger days I was more
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By Doug Newell IV of
Clendenin, West Virginia

"What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid" (Rom. 6:15).

What are Christians supposed to do with the law? It is a statement of fact, we are no longer under the law. It is a statement of fact that we are under grace. But what does that mean? Romans 6 tells us we are not to use grace as a way to serve sin. For the Christian, the law of God cannot condemn us (Rom. 8:1), nor can the law save us (Rom. 3:28). As human beings, we are born with the imputed guilt



of Adam's sin (Rom. 5). Born, under the law, born in sin, born owing a debt to God's justice. We cannot earn salvation with the law, and we are justly condemned for our sins by the law. In Christ, we are freely justified by faith in the propitiatory work of Christ and faith in His blood. We are justified, having full and free forgiveness of our sins and the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:25-26).

We are no longer in Adam, but in
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Whom Should We Fear?

By Paul Stepp
of Indore, West Virginia

"And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows. Whosoever therefore shall



confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 10:28-33).

I want to focus on the fear that humanity feels, in regards to the body. Notice that our Lord tells us
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I Peter 4:17-18

By Roy Mason
(1894 - 1978)

I want to read a couple of verses from the first epistle of Peter, the fourth chapter, namely, verses 17 and 18. **"For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"**

The entire chapter of I Peter relates to both saved and unsaved, and I try to make my preaching do the same. I want that there shall



be something in each message for those who are already Christians, and I want at the same time to have a message for the unconverted person. I wish that I could confine my preaching entirely to Christian people, that I could take you Christians on excursions through Bible truths, but I am reminded every time I speak that there are lost people listening in, people who are hanging onto life just by their breath. These people who
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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.

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WCNA, Myrtle, MS.....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.	95.9	3,000	FM
WCTT, Corbin, KY	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.	680	5,000	AM
WFTA, Tupelo, MS.....	Sunday 8:30 - 9:00 a.m.	101.9	3,000	FM
KARL, Blaine, WA	Saturday 10:30 - 11:00 a.m.	550	5,000	AM

"Unmerited Grace"

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or less content with the definition which says grace is the unmerited favor of God. And surely it is just that. But as I studied the subject more I became aware of the fact that this definition was not broad enough to take in all the meaning of that wonderful truth called grace. I came to see that grace is our receiving the unmerited favor of God when in actuality we deserve just the opposite. The ultimate of grace will be our spending eternity in the presence of our Lord, enjoying the bliss of Heaven with Him, singing His wonderful praises and reigning with Him for ever and ever when we really deserve to be roasting in Hell with the devil and his angels. But, who of us can understand all that goes with our spending eternity in His blessed presence, singing His wonderful praises and reigning with Him for ever and ever? And, on the other hand, who among us can comprehend all that goes with spending eternity in Hell with the devil and his angels. It is too much for us.

Sometimes we seem to get the idea that grace is something that is bestowed upon the Lord's saints and them alone. But as I studied this wonderful subject as was signed to me, I came to see more clearly that the non-elect, even the worst of them, are the recipients of God's grace. The difference between the grace bestowed upon them and that bestowed upon us is in degree and duration. The non-elect know nothing of saving grace and all that goes with it. And the grace that is bestowed upon them ends with their death. At that time grace gives way to justice. And our case, grace increases with our death, or with our being changed as the case my be, and justice never comes near us

again.

When we come to see that grace is receiving that which is good when we deserve the worst, we will be able to see that it was nothing short of God's wonderful and unmerited grace that placed a mark upon Cain and protected him from those who would slay him. There are three great reasons, as I see it, why the grace that was bestowed upon Cain was unmerited. First, he had been born a sinner just as you and I were. The second, reason was that he had murdered his own brother in cold blood and that without a cause. And third, he was the human originator of the false religious system that is so precious to this old religious world today. Who could say that Cain deserved any favor from God? To be sure his grace was unmerited.

Then it was nothing short of the amazing grace of God that kept the earth from opening up beneath the rest of those murmuring and grumbling children of Israel and permitting them to go down into Sheol alive alone with Korah, Dathan and Abiram and their families. So it has been throughout the centuries of human history. Even infidels and atheists have profited from the manifold grace of God.

We here tonight are enjoying these wonderful electric lights because Thomas A. Edison, the atheist that he was, was for a time the recipient of God's grace. God gave this man the mind of a genius along with all that goes with that kind of mind when he deserved to be an inmate of some insane asylum.

And what of the infidel Baptist Seminary professors of our day who use their sharp tongues to cut out the Scriptures they do not like, just as Jehoiakim did with his penknife in the long ago? They rip

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Light Contemplations

By Luke Austin
of Cadillac, Michigan

"Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the LORD" (Psalm 107:43).

IS GOD CRUEL?

I have written before on the sovereignty of God. His "sovereignty" is an expression of His almighty rule. No one can say to God "what doest thou?" **"And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"** (Dan. 4:35)?

By God's sovereign all powerful hand we find ourselves in this present distress. It did not come by accident or chance but by the will of God. He has a purpose and a reason in all of the happenings of His creation. The stars shine with a purpose to declare the glory of God, **"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork"** (Ps. 19:1). The sun shines with a purpose to cause the creation to flourish. The earth is full of the glory of God, **"And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory"** (Isa. 6:3). You can be sure that all things great or small have a purposed end that God not only desires but will bring to pass. Whether the raging seas or a microscopic virus it all bows to the power of God and moves at His command.

But does this mean God is cruel? Maybe you see the deaths that are a result of this virus and are tempted to think God is cruel.

Maybe God is unjust or unfair? Be certain that you could not be further from the truth. God is very merciful in His dealings with mankind all throughout history even as it is this day. God is everlasting, all powerful, all sufficient, and completely content within His person. What do we add to God? Nothing. What does God gain from, by the Word of God we understand that God had a plan of redemption in place from before the foundation of the world but by what we perceive as right and just, we were owed nothing. He could have with the same Word that He created all life, wiped it all away justly so and losing nothing that He stood to gain in the process. But God is good. He is good to His whole creation. He causes the rain to fall on the just and the unjust. He allows men and women their portion in this life even though they never bow before His high and everlasting throne. **"But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men. To crush under his feet all the prisoners of the earth, To turn aside the right of a man before the face of the most High, To subvert a man in his cause, the Lord approveth not. Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not? Out of the mouth of the most High proceedeth not evil and good? Wherefore doth a**

living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins? Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord. Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens" (Lam. 3:32-41).

This virus has a purpose. Be sure you understand that purpose is not cruelty. God is working all happenings in this creation to a certain end. The glorification of His Son seated upon the throne of David. The final doing away with sin. The new heaven and the new earth. Somehow, and do not ask a tiny finite mind such as mine to sort it all out into detail, this virus is just a tiny part of the overall eternal plan of God to bring about His will in exactly His time.

"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Dan. 7:13-14).

(Luke Austin is a member of the Cadillac Baptist Church of Cadillac, Michigan.)



"Unmerited Grace"

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and tear God's precious Word to shreds, and teach men so, but still they live sumptuously everyday, and that on an enviable salary which they receive from our Lord's own treasury. What, but God's long suffering, patient, and unmerited grace would permit such a thing to be? But the puzzle of all puzzles connected with God's wonderful grace is the case of William

Hamilton, a theology professor at Colgate-Rochester Divinity School. This man who calls himself an atheist, and at the same time calls himself a Baptist is quoted recently as saying. "We are atheists, but Christian atheists." As we used to say down in the hills of west Alabama. "That is a new wrinkle on the hay horn." Who ever heard of a Christian atheist, that is, until the days of William Hamilton?

He goes on to say, "we do not know, we do not adore, we do believe in God." Even the old devil himself tells the truth sometimes. Then he goes on to say, Gods' death is not a sad thing. For me (he says) the death of God is a liberating experience, a highly moral experience. It frees me to be committed to the service of my neighbor, without God getting in the way." Then he says, "One of the most exciting things is the possibility of celebrating the death of God." Then, since, according to him, there is no God to resurrect us we are not surprised when he says, "I see no way of affirming the life of the human community after death. He, too, has ceased to be." When he was asked how he could ethically justify his taking his pay check from a professing Christian institution he became indignant. He called that an impudent question, as much as to say, where else under heaven do you think I could draw such a fat salary for teaching such stuff as that? Even the old devil himself does not accuse God of being dead as much as he would like for Him to be dead. But still this disgusting, loathsome, repulsive and contemptible enemy of God is permitted, not only to live, but to enjoy the luxuries of this life. God still sends the rain upon his lawn and his garden (if he has one) just as he does upon yours or mine. If we had God's power over such a contemptible "critter" as Bill Hamilton, we would probably

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“Unmerited Grace”

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withhold the air from his nostrils, or take away our protecting hand from his automobile at the opportune time and permit him to burst his perverted brains out against a tree. Oh! who can fathom the depths of God's unmerited grace even toward His vilest enemies?

Surely no one will deny that the grace which God bestows upon His enemies is unmerited, but what of the grace He bestows upon His own? Is it merited in any way? No, in no wise. As we think upon the grace which God bestows upon His own, let us again go back to the beginning of our race. If there has ever been a man who had reason to seek the Lord, and to beg and plead for salvation from his ruined condition, it was Adam. Not only had Adam been placed in an earthly paradise, he had been given dominion over it. He had walked and talked with God. They had enjoyed sweet fellowship together with an unbroken communion. He had been given the most beautiful and lovely wife that has ever lived. You and I may think we have the most beautiful and lovely wife in the world, but we must admit that our wives were born with the marks of sin upon them. They are imperfect whether we can see the imperfections or not. But Adam's wife was the direct product of God's own hands, and all His works are perfect according to Deuteronomy 32:4. The lost sinner today, knows absolutely nothing of sweet fellowship with God, but Adam knew what it was to have that fellowship because he had experienced it. So, I repeat if there has ever been a lost person on the face of this earth who had reason to seek the Lord and to pray and plead for salvation, it was Adam. But instead of seeking the Lord

and pleading for salvation we find in Genesis 3:7 that **“they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons.”**

Down in Birmingham there is a building supply firm that has a do-it-yourself department where you can buy tools and materials to mess up anything from a chicken coup to a dwelling house. Well, the religious world has its do-it-yourself department and it had its beginning here in Genesis 3:7. Adam and Eve, no doubt complimented each other on their handiwork. For a time they felt that their beautiful fig leaf aprons would serve the purpose. But in verse 8 we read, **“And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.”** I can just see those old fig leaf aprons flapping and fluttering in the wind as they ran from God. And I am

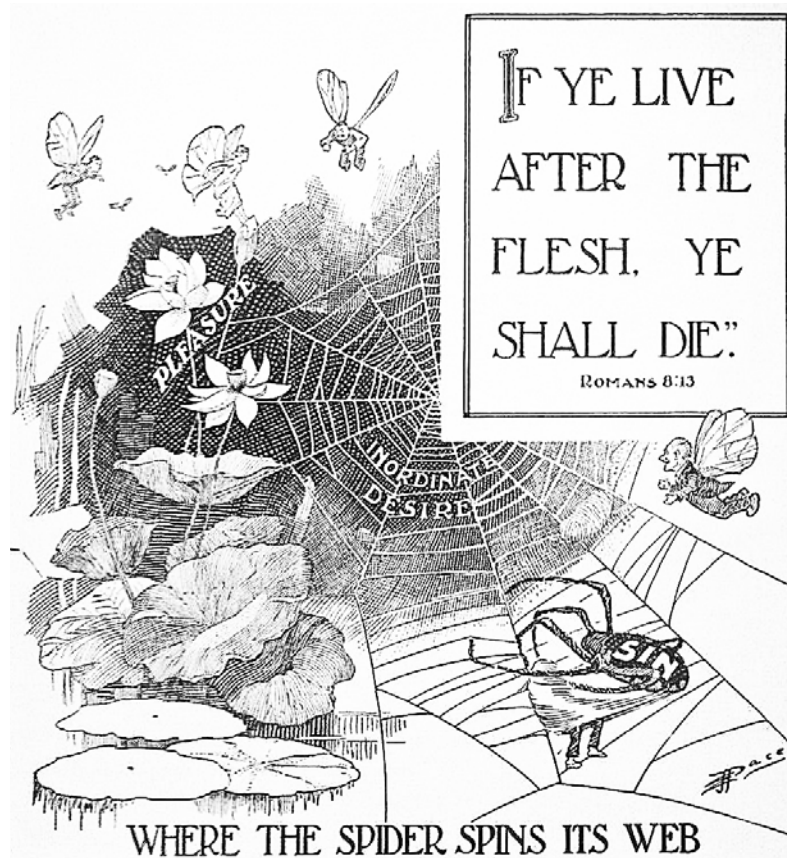
persuaded that by the time they were hidden behind the trees their beautiful aprons were torn to shreds by the limbs of the bushes. Oh! how fragile are the works of man's hands when it comes to our salvation. If Adam had run to meet God and had pleaded with Him for salvation from his awful condition, I would be an Arminian today. But, since Adam's totally depraved condition would not permit him to seek salvation, how, under Heaven, can we expect his offspring who have that same totally depraved condition seek after salvation? It is absurd for us to even think they can so much as desire salvation. Had Adam desired salvation, he would not have run from God. The offspring of Adam are just as content with their fig aprons as were Adam and Eve until God takes the initiative, and quickens them. Surely no one will say that Adam deserved, or merited the grace that was bestowed upon him

since he ran from it. That grace was unmerited to the ninth degree.

But what of us? Do we, in this age, deserve the grace that is bestowed upon us any more than did those Old Testament times? No, not in the least. Let us take a good look at a man we see in Acts 9. This man hated the ground that Jesus of Nazareth had walked upon. And he hated with a passion the ground our Lord's saints were walking upon at the time. In fact, he was breathing out that hated rather than the air around him as he walked down that road. But, when unmerited saving grace was bestowed upon Saul the next thing we heard out of him was “Lord, what will you have me to do? Is it any wonder then that he said in I Corinthians 15:10, **“By the grace of God I am what I am?”** If you feel that you deserve whatever you may have, I assure you it is not grace.

Since we do not merit the grace we receive in this life, what of that we receive in the next one? In I Peter 1:13 we read, **“Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”** We have been the recipients of so much grace here in this life, none of which we deserve, or merit, but still we are told that more grace is to be brought to us at the revelation of our Lord. This grace is to be manifested by His resurrecting those of His who have died, and by changing those of His who are still living at that time. It is to be manifested by His clothing us with bodies like unto His own glorious body. In Isaiah 61:10 we read, **“He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robes of righteousness.”** You and I deserved to be clothed in the garments of utter destruction, and to be

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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).

DO NOT WORRY

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:6-7).

The Christian is not supposed to be full of care and worry. And no, that is not easy for me to say. Anytime you face some unknown situation, or a dangerous problem, you should be concerned enough to analyze the facts and take into consideration the possible outcomes and prepare for them. If you are not concerned for yourself or for others when situations arise that are life threatening, or life changing then there is something wrong. This passage is not saying that we are to be stoics, apathetic and uncaring about everything in life. It would be sinful if we did not care and had no concern about whether or not people go to Hell, or for the well being of our friends and family (cf. I Corinthians 12:25; Philippians 2:25).

What the passage is dealing with is the state of continual anxiousness. There comes a point when we have done everything we can do within our power. You have prepared as best you can, you have taken all the precautions, and now, it is in God's hands. Now we must be trusting in the Lord. But what do we do with that anxiety? You read about the virus, and you get concerned and take the precautions, but now what? The text tells us the care

is in the heart and in the mind, otherwise a God given peace would not be necessary. If you were free from care, why would God need to give you peace? You need peace when you do not have it, and if you are anxious, you do not have peace.

What do you do with the anxiety? Take it to the Lord in prayer. The Christian should not live in a state of anxiety but rather take everything to God and pour your heart out to Him in prayer. Everything. Do not hide from God. When the heart is full of care, PRAY. The text says **"let your requests be made known unto God."** Tell Him. Make them known. But does God not already know? Jesus said **"your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him."** Why do we have to make known our requests, if God already knows? God wants us to pray to Him. God uses our prayer as the instrument of fulfilling His will. And prayer is good for us. It is the way God provides peace for the anxious soul trusting in Christ. The instruction was to pray unto God and let God know why we have worry and anxiety. Through Christ Jesus, He will give you peace. He will protect and keep your heart and mind. Christ will give you peace, because He cares for you. Come to Christ in prayer, praise Him in thanksgiving, make your requests known, and trust Him. Rest your soul, knowing your God will keep you.

(Doug Newell IV is pastor of the Buffalo Valley Baptist Church of Clay, West Virginia.)



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covered with the fires of Hell, but in spite of all our unworthiness He has clothed us with the garments of salvation and has covered us with the robe of righteousness. Who, O who, could dare ask for more? But in Phillipians 3:21 we are told that He **"shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body."** And in I John 3:2, John says, **"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."** Who of us feel that we are worthy to be clothed in bodies like unto His own glorious body? But not only are we to be clothed in bodies like unto His own glorious body, but in I Thessalonians 4:17 we are told that we are to ever be with Him. Who, O, who, can comprehend the unmerited grace of God?

This is the time when we will experience the literal fulfillment of Galatians 1:4. There we are told that He **"gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world."** So when we are caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air to ever be with Him, we will be completely delivered from this present evil world. In order for us to really appreciate this we need to know something of this evil world that our Lord is to deliver us from. The Greeks have two main words for evil. One is KAKOS which means that a man is evil and corrupt, but he is content to just rot in his own corruption. He does not care whether you are like him or not. In some cases he may even warn you not to become like him. The other word is PONEROS which means that a man is evil and corrupt, but he is not content

unless he is corrupting everyone else. This word for evil is used in Galatians 1:4. This old religious world is not content unless she is corrupting even our Lord's elect ones. And when we come to see what a good job she has done with her Christmas, her Easter, her t-shaped cross and her many perverted ways of salvation in which God is dethroned and man enthroned we can really appreciate our being delivered from her grasp. How we should appreciate the unmerited grace of God that has done, and will do all these wonderful things for us.

Then this grace that is to be brought to us is to be manifested by our Lord's taking unto Himself those of His people who have made themselves ready (Rev. 19:7) to be His bride. And after this His abounding grace is to be manifested by His permitting us to reign with Him for ever and ever. (Rev. 22:5). O! the wonderful things that are ours because of God's unmerited grace. But, to me, one of the most astounding things found in the whole Bible is that found in I Corinthians 1:8. Here we are told that we are to be **"blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ."** Just think of that! What but the unmerited grace of our great and Almighty God could ever make you and me blameless at any time? And how we should thank Him, and sing His praises continually for His unmerited grace. For had He died ten thousand deaths on Calvary's Cross, and had He suffered the pangs of Hell six thousand years instead of the six hours on that cross, it would have availed you and me absolutely nothing were it not for His wonderful, marvelous, amazing and unmerited grace.



Whom Should We

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to **“fear not them which kill the body.”** I want you to know that the **“body”** that we live in, is not the most important part of man. There is the spirit and the soul that ought to be considered. And yet, the world of men manifests fear in regards to any threat to the body itself as if that body were the most important part of man.

I do want to establish, first of all, that there is a need for the world of men and our society in particular to show some esteem for mortal life. We ought to show some honor and some respect for life. After all, the breath of life of all men is a gift from God. In our nation and around the world, many folks show a blatant disregard for the importance of life, either through abortion, murder, or the pointless shedding of blood. Life is precious, especially as a picture of that spiritual life, and the life to come. But, we must remind ourselves, that this life is not all there is. There is a life to come that is far more enduring.

In this message, I just want to ask a series of questions, as to whether or not we (as Christians) should fear certain aspects of our lives and our environments.

SHOULD WE FEAR DEATH?

I reckon that all men, at least all sane and reasonable men, demonstrate a fear of death in at least some regard. Or, maybe we could better say, all men demonstrate a certain love of life, which causes us to fear death on some level. There is an innate sense of self-preservation that is present in most men. However, the focus in the world of humanity seems to be to emphasize the mortal life, and the needs and requirements and pleasures of that life, while the spiritual life, and the needs

and the desires and the very life of that inner man is hardly ever addressed. In reality, this focus upon mortality and this stress that is placed on physical life, is contrary to our efforts to save the immortal souls of men.

As I address Christians, I would like to ask you this question: Should we really fear death? I mean, death is just the end of this body and this mortality. Death, in this life, has no bearing on the life or death of the soul and spirit. So, should we fear a mortal death which cannot affect our eternal lives and our inheritance in Heaven?

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit” (Rom. 8:1-5). I do not know that I have ever used this passage of Scripture to make this point, but, consider this: do you walk **“after the flesh”** or **“after the Spirit?”** Is your focus on the things of flesh or the things of the Spirit of God? And, is it not true that wherever your focus is, there will be your greatest fears and desires?

God has redeemed us from the life of sin and death and wickedness. Now, as children of God we can face death without

fear – for death is merely that transition from mortality to immortality. (See I Cor. 15:53-57). We read in Romans 8:36-39, **“As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”**

The Isaac Watts hymn tells us this:

*There is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign;
Infinite day excludes the night,
And pleasures banish pain.*

*There everlasting spring abides,
And never-withering flowers;
Death, like a narrow sea, divides
This heavenly land from ours.*

*O could we make our doubts remove,
These gloomy doubts that rise,
And see the Canaan that we love
With unobscured eyes;*

*Could we but climb where Moses stood,
And view the landscape o’er,
Not Jordan’s stream, nor death’s cold flood,
Should fright us from the shore.*

SHOULD WE FEAR AGE?

Even as death is inevitable, for those that would live out their lives on this earth; so, also, it is inevitable but that we will grow old in these bodies, the longer that we remain on this earth. When we read the chronologies of the men and women that are listed in the Old Testament, we realize that to grow old is inevitable. And,

there is no doubt but that at some point, our lives will cease – unless the Lord will return first. **“For all our days are passed away in thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale that is told. The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away. Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath.”**¹² So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom” (Ps. 90:9-12). Even the longest lives are but nothing when compared to the passing of time – and less than nothing when compared to the span of eternity! And yet, while here, should we not be ready to spend our days considering our own frailties and our own weaknesses; and concentrating on, and applying our hearts to, the pursuit of wisdom and knowledge in the things of God?

I know that all of the world seeks for remedies that will alleviate or minimize the effects of age on these mortal bodies. But, remember, these bodies are not the essence of our existence! These bodies are merely the habitations of clay in which we (the children of God) dwell for just a few days (comparatively speaking)! Therefore, “Should we fear age, or the effects of growing old?” I mean, do we really want to live in these bodies forever? Would it not be far better to endure this life and these bodies for just a little while, so that we can inherit the immortality of Heaven itself?

I tell you now, that there are times when I dread the thought of growing old. And, there are times when I wish that I could retain more of my strength of body and

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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).



THE LASTING GIFT

Like many of you, my family has experienced seasons of financial hardship. When I was a younger man, I thought sheer determination and a good work ethic would have made me rich by now. In truth, my talents are not my own, and I am still far from earthly riches. What I now know, though is that there is no amount of money that can care for the people and things I hold dear. I was recently laid off from my day job due to the COVID-19 virus. This circumstance has not changed much in the way of what still needs done. I am still called to encourage others and lead my congregation. I am still called to speak of the hope that lies within me. I am still called to tithe to my local church. I am still called to put food on my family's table. Why will not God give His people a pass during troubling times such as these?

In I Kings 17 we see Elijah the prophet during a great drought and famine. During this time the prophets were nomads; they did not have a home in which they could regularly return and stock up. Rather, living by faith, they went where the Lord sent them and were provided for by Him along the way. In the first seven verses we see the prophet hungry and thirsty. Rather than dropping manna and quail right where he was, God asked the prophet to faithfully travel further until he got to the brook, Cherith. Elijah did as God had asked and found

cool, fresh water to drink there while ravens brought bread and meat in the morning and evening. He was hungry, and by faith he was filled.

Just a few verses later God sends Elijah into Zarephath to care for a widow woman. This unnamed woman who had only a handful of meal and a little oil was gathering a few sticks in preparation for her family to have their last meal and wait for death to arrive. God told the prophet that this woman would care for him and feed him, so Elijah asked the woman to bring him a vessel of water and a morsel of bread. Could you imagine? She only had enough to eat one last meal with her son, and here comes the preacher-man asking for a handout...this was God's plan?

"And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith the LORD God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth. And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days. And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Elijah" (I Kings 17:13-16).

Our ways are not God's; our plans may never match His.

Though it may not make a lot of sense to us to give up the last of what we have, many times that is the only way we can learn to live by faith as we should. The famous children's show host Mr. Rogers once said, "When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, 'Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.'" This is good advice regardless of your generation. If you can be a helper in these troubling times, lean on the Lord and be strengthened to offer help. If you need help, lean on the Lord and ask for it. May God grant you and your household peace in a time when our plans may not match our circumstance.

(Joseph Sidders is pastor of the Grace Missionary Baptist Church of Temperance, Michigan.)



Whom Should We

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mind. It seems that I am not able to physically exercise (or recover from physical exercise) like I used to. It seems that my mind cannot retain the thoughts and the memories and the information that I could at one time call upon. And yet, is the weakening of the flesh, and this aging of the body something that we ought to fear? Are the effects of time itself to be feared at all?

Surely, if we are going to fear the effects of time, then we must live miserable existences on this earth! Surely, if we are to bow to the fears that consume the world, we would be turned away from the promises of the spirit and the promises of the life to come!

SHOULD WE FEAR SICKNESS?

I know that it is important to take care of these bodies in which we dwell. Therefore, I

know that it does us some good to seek to sustain our strength in a reasonable way – even given the inevitable nature of the effects of time on these bodies. Likewise, I think that the Lord God expects each of us to seek to retain good health and active bodies and minds as much as possible – even in the face of sickness or disease that might be rampant on the earth. I mean, though others are sick or may fall victim to some disease, this does not mean that we ought to resign ourselves to falling prey to the same sicknesses or diseases. We should seek to remain healthy as much as possible so that we can be active and useful in the service of our God.

And yet, in the larger scheme of things, is sickness itself something that we ought to fear? Surely, the Lord God is certainly in control, and the fate of His people and the lives that they live, lies, ultimately, in His capable Hands alone. Therefore, should we live our lives in fear of becoming sick? Or, should we live our lives in fear of contracting some disease? I think not! The children of God ought not to live their lives in such a way that they let the threat of sickness or disease keep them from their purpose and from accomplishing the will of Jesus Christ (See Isa. 28:9-21).

The records of the saints of God are full of examples that have gone on before; of persons who have lived their lives in poor health, and who have yet striven mightily in the cause of Jesus Christ. We can examine history and see many famous men and women who have contended for the faith, and yet their days on this earth have been consumed with sickness and distress and weakness in the flesh. And, we can examine history and see many

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famous men and women, who by all human reasoning seem to be better suited to long life than we, and yet they live only a few years on the face of this earth, and then they are carried away to the life beyond.

Is your life so important to you that you would retain it always? Is your health so important to you that you would sacrifice all else just to remain healthy and strong just a few days longer? We read in Romans 8:18-23, **“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.”** I reckon (along with the Apostle Paul) that this life which we now live does not compare to the life that we will still yet live. The troubles and the sicknesses and the distresses may haunt us in this life, but this small inconvenience cannot prevent us from the truer and the greater joy – to be in the presence of Jesus Christ!

SHOULD WE FEAR SATAN?

Should we fear Satan? Well, I

want to say that within the context of this message, the answer is (as with all of the others that have gone on before) a resounding NO! We read in I Peter 5:8-9, **“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.”** I am aware that we ought to pay heed to Satan; and, I am aware that we need to be alert and conscious of his efforts against us; and, I am aware that he deserves our utmost and sincerest defense; and I am aware that we are constantly engaged in battle against a terrible and malicious foe; but, in the end, can Satan take from us what God has given us – that is our eternal life? Sure, he can destroy our bodies, but he cannot take our soul from the Grip of the Hand of God! **“And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul...”**

Every fear that we have so far mentioned in this sermon – indeed, every fear that men might have of any sort (other than God Himself) can affect only the matters of this life, and mortality itself. Now, I know that Satan is a hunter of men’s souls; and, I know that he has taken, is presently taking, and will continue to take, upwards of billions of souls with him into the pits of the Lake of Fire. But, do you know what? Satan has never successfully taken or doomed a soul that is one of those that belongs to the Blood of Jesus Christ!

I know that we must temper our resolve with a dose of reality. Therefore, it is to be assumed that we will, from time to time, manifest fear in this life. But,

surely a consideration of the Word of God ought to bring us some assurance. Even when we are assaulted by the very powers of Satan and Hell, we can find relief and comfort and strength and sustenance in the person of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ! **“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand. I and my Father are one”** (John 10:27-30).

SHOULD WE FEAR GOD?

In my final thought today, I want to remind you Who it is that you (and all of the world) ought to fear: **“And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell”** (Matt. 10:28). The bodies that we live in are like garments – one day we will lay them aside and take upon us immortality itself. So, what fear should we have for those things that affect only the mortality? What fear should we have for those terrible persons and things and situations that only have power to destroy the things (and life) that pertain to mortality?

However, there is One that is Lord of the both the souls and the bodies of men – that is God Himself. We owe Him fear and reverence and respect and devotion. **“By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him”** (Ps. 33:6-

8). We owe unto God our very existence – whether it be in this life, or in the life to come. I tell you now, that a God that has such power and control and might and glory deserves all of the fear and reverence that humanity itself can muster! Oh, that the world of men might fear God, and stand in awe of Him today!

You know, one day those that are saved will stand before the judgment seat of Christ, and we will give account of the things that we have done in the service of God. (See Rom. 14:10). And, we ought to all be reminded that ours is a terrible and a mighty and a just God – a God that will chastise and punish His people, in order that He might bring them back into the way that they should go. (See Heb. 10:30-31). We should fear God and show Him respect and reverence as is due His Holy Name.

But, in the case of those that are not saved, let me remind you that your fear of God should be manifest as well. Remember, this is the God which has created all that exists, and this is the God that will judge all of His creation. Remember, this is the God that does not sin, and this is the God that will not tolerate sin. Remember, this is the God that you have rejected, and this is the God that you have sinned against. The fate of the wicked is a terrible thing! **“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according**

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Brief Truths

By Randy Johnson of
Texarkana, Texas

"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation" (Ephesians 1:13).



ARE YOU CARNAL OR SPIRITUAL?

"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. 8:6-8).

God uses Romans chapter 8 for two reasons, (1) to show His blessings to the redeemed or spiritual and (2) to show His condemnation to the lost or carnal. God calls the saved spiritual and the condemned lost carnal and this is done for a specific reason, to separate the sheep and the goats. The image here we need to see is the controlling factor of two sorts of people, the carnal is worldly controlled and the spiritual is Holy Spirit controlled.

Paul, in speaking to the church at Corinth called the church membership, because of their mind-set and actions, "carnal minded." **"For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men"** (I Cor. 3:3)? But remember, this is a church therefore they are actually saved, but they were worldly in their thinking and acting as though they were lost. Therefore, Paul told them in verses 1-2, **"And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with**

milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able."

This is a sad place for a Christian, but even sadder for a church to be "carnal-like." This is what happens when you stop teaching the meat of the Word, you become child-like and can only handle milk. I mostly preach the milk of the Word when I am among lost people with no ability to have spiritual understanding, but how horrible when a church has none, even a counterfeit church. Folks, please just teach the Word, as it is, the Holy Spirit will lead and direct your services in the Word.

Every church needs to remember who controls their church, **"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. 2:5). Whom do you seek to please, God or people? Paul said in Romans 8:5 a very profound fact for all believers and churches to remember, **"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit."** Paul also wrote on this subject to the church at Galatia these facts, **"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that**

ye would" (Gal. 5:16-17).

Folks, please understand this, true churches and sound Christians are both spiritual in nature, we both seek to walk in the Scriptures, not by man's commentary of them, but by the Holy Spirit's teaching of them. The Scriptures do not change because you change, they do not change because the world changes, they are eternal just as God is eternal, **"God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? Behold, I have received commandment to bless: and he hath blessed; and I cannot reverse it"** (Num. 23:19-20).

There are four kinds of people in this world, (1) those who are lost and carnal, (2) those who are saved and spiritually minded, (3) those who are saved and carnally minded, and (4) those who are lost and act as though they are spiritually minded. What group do you and your church fit into?

Paul also wrote these profound words, **"So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God"** (Rom. 8:8). Carnally minded people, whether saved or lost, will never please God, even if they call themselves "a church." The only way to please God is to be spiritually minded and walking in the Spirit which is after the truth of the Word. **"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness"** (Rom. 8:9-10).

(Randy Johnson is pastor of the Sovereign Grace Missionary Baptist Church of Texarkana, Texas.)



Whom Should We

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to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:11-15).



Our Relationship

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Christ. We have righteousness in His obedience to the law imputed to us and by His righteousness, God has declared us justified unto life (Rom. 5:18). The law came so that we would see the sinfulness of sin, and the more we see our sin, the more we come to Christ. The law shows us how bad we truly are and God's grace abounds in our minds when we see the depth of our depravity. But that does not mean the Christian keeps on sinning and is free to break God's law. The moral law of God does not change. Our relationship to God's moral law changes.

Sin is the transgression of the law. The Christian is not to live in sin. But, in Christ, we have been justified. We are declared righteous. We have the righteousness of Christ, and we are not only free from sin but we are counted as righteous in Christ. Jesus' active obedience is mine and I am a righteous person. In union with Christ, I died with Him and now I live unto God with Him. Therefore, I am no longer "under" the law's judgment. Apart from Christ, you are in your sin and

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Our Relationship

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already condemned. In Christ, I am free from condemnation and live, not under the condemnation of the law, but under the grace of God.

How then does someone take Romans 6 and come to the conclusion we can live in sin? "I am no longer under the law, I am in the law of Christ." Amen. But what is the law of Christ and how does it differ from the Old Testament laws that concern our piety towards God, our love for our neighbor, and the regulation of our hearts?

As a Christian, I follow the law of Christ, which is the same, in substance and spirit as the law of the Old Testament. You may object to that and say, "I am supposed to love my neighbor and God, I am not supposed to follow the book of Leviticus." Where in the Bible do you find that law to love your neighbor? Was Jesus the first to say that? If not, who was and where would you find it? It is not as easy as saying "Old Testament bad. New Testament Good." The same chapter, Leviticus 19, that tells us to love our neighbor is the same chapter that tells us not to wear garments of mixed fabric. The law of Christ is the same in substance and in matter in the Old Testament as it is in the New and you will find the law of Christ throughout the entire Scriptures. This law is agreeable to God and directs one to godliness, love toward our neighbor. God gave it to us as a rule of righteousness. It would be simple if there was one section that said, "Christian, do this and only this." Then we could read it straight through and call it a day. But God wants His people to think about how they live and think about what God requires

of us and to apply the truth. The legalistic spirit wants a list. Either a list to follow or a list to throw in the trash for the antinomian, but a list all the same.

It is God's way, and a mercy to us, that we must be discerning people. To pray over matters, to search the Scriptures, and to mediate on God's law day and night. That is walking in the Spirit.

The law does not change, but your relationship to the law is based on your relationship to Christ. Thomas Boston said we should think of it this way, you do not take the law from Moses' hands. We do not take the law from God's hands apart from Christ. But we take the law from Christ. The Law remains the same, but our relationship to the law changes.

But what about mixed fabric and shellfish? God gave Israel laws that prefigured and pictured Jesus by type, ceremony, and worship. There were laws given to Israel to show the difference between God's people and to protect Israel from the idolatry of the heathen of the land. Laws to teach and remind the people of God they were a separate, sanctified people. In Christ and in the blessings of the New Covenant, the need for those elementary reminders are gone.

When you first start learning a stringed instrument like the violin or the cello, the teacher will put tape on the fingerboard so the student knows approximately where to place the fingers. There are no frets on a fiddle, so learning where to put your finger is challenging for the new student. But, as you advance in knowledge and ability, the tapes are not needed. To play the F note on a violin, the master and the student will put their fingers in the same spot on the string. But only the student needs the elementary

guide and reminder.

When Jesus came, those laws were no longer necessary. Why celebrate the Passover when Christ delivered us from sin, and death, and died for our sins by shedding His blood? Why go to an inferior priest, when Christ is our High Priest? Why offer blood sacrifices of bulls and goats, that never washed away sin, when Christ died once for all for sin forever? The Old Testament was a figure of the New, so it is no longer needed. Waking in the Spirit, in the blessing of the New Covenant is far supervisor than the laws of separation, though the principle is still the same.

Moses was a man under two covenants, Abraham's, and also, the covenant established in Exodus. However, God is of one purpose. God did not change the covenant to Abraham and will not change. God also did not change when He gave the law to Moses. He is the same God in Genesis as He is in Leviticus as He is in Galatians. Those covenants were not antagonistic. The nation of Israel was put under the tutelage of a strict ruler (the law), to both keep them and to point them to the coming Christ. But once Christ came, the vehicle of the Old Covenant that brings us to Christ was no longer needed. The Old Covenant was a servant to take God's covenant people from Abraham to Christ. It would be like if I bought a car and drove across country to see the Pacific Ocean, and then proceed to sit in the car, with its luxurious seating and "fine Corinthian leather" for 40+ hours, arrive at the beach, then be content to stay in the car and smell the breeze of the salt air, but never go to the water. I would be crazy to rejoice in the car. The car brought me to the ocean, but it was not the point of the trip.

There is nothing wrong with the car. In fact, the car is good and I would recommend it to everyone because it served its purpose.

To remain in the Old Covenant is to view the means as the end. In Christ, God's children walk in the Spirit, not under the law. Now, we get to the crux of the issue. Which Old Testament laws would the Holy Spirit tell you to break? Which law are you comfortable breaking in the name of Christ? Which of Christ's laws will you break in Heaven? Will you take the Lord's name in vain in Heaven? Will you build an altar to Beelzebub? If the law has nothing to say to the Christian, what do we make of this? **"And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life"** (Rev. 21:27).

I can eat shellfish because I have Acts 10. I can wear mixed fabric because I have Acts 15. I can understand Sunday because I have Matthew 12. The New Testament shows me what was designed to lead to Christ and what was a law designed to show me sin and holiness. There were also laws given to the country of Israel, to rule the people. Since we do not live in ancient Israel, the laws of that country do not apply, though we can still see what pleases and displeases God in those laws. During the virus restrictions, the law of New York does not apply to me in West Virginia. In fact, our government has made restrictions by county. So the restrictions at my house are different than if I drive a mile down the road and cross the county line. Civil laws of any nation apply to its citizenry.

Ancient Israel was a theocracy. We expect the civil laws to reflect

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Little Valleys

By Timothy J. Hille of
Ashland, Illinois

"He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills." (Psalms 104:10).



THE EXCLUSIVITY OF JESUS CHRIST

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). Jesus made some outstanding claims. He claimed that He was sent down from heaven. **"I am the living bread which came down from heaven"** (John 6:51). He claimed to have power over life and death, His own as well as that of others. **"...I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again"** (John 10:17-18). **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live"** (John 5:25). **"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation"** (John 5:28-29). He claimed to be equal with God. **"I and my Father are one"** (John 10:30). He claimed to be the fulfillment of all Biblical prophecy, the center of God's eternal plan, and the One in whom God will complete, conclude, and fulfill all things. **"...all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me"** (Luke 24:44). **"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the**

end, the first and the last" (Rev. 22:13).

Jesus claims to be what no one else is. He claims uniqueness. He claims that apart from Him all men are lost in sin, undone, without hope, already condemned in the sight of God, and certain for eternal doom, unending misery, and torment. He claims to have the exclusive power to forgive sins, apart from any priest, pope, preacher, saint, sacrament, church, or ritual. He claims exclusively to be able to give eternal life. He claims to have the right to rule and reign exclusively over all things. He claims to be the One who will alone be the final judge and determiner of all things. He claims to be the exclusiveness owner and possessor of all things that were, are, or ever shall be, whether visible or invisible, in heaven and in earth.

Many churches, preachers, popes, priests, and philosophers have attempted to remove the uniqueness and exclusivity of the Lord Jesus Christ. They want to add to or take away from His person and works. They want to incorporate their own thoughts into His identity and His saving work at the cross of Calvary. They want Him to be a good teacher, but not the saving Son of God; and baptism, church membership, good conduct, prayers, charitable works, or just being "nice" to be the way of salvation. Jesus claims to be the one and only way of salvation Himself. He claims that apart from Him, all are dead in sin and incapable of being made alive. God declares that His

salvation is to be found in only one source, His Son Jesus Christ. God certifies His selection and approval of Jesus, in that Jesus fulfilled all things that the Bible said concerning Him and rose again from the dead after laying down His life as the sacrificial Lamb of God to take away the sins of the world. The people whom the Bible records as being saved from their sins and receiving God's gift of eternal life were all saved when they, in repentance and faith, received Jesus Christ as being who He and the Scriptures exclusively claim Him to be. They took Him for who He is, the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world; the Son of God, sent down from heaven to save fallen sinners; the Anointed One of God, who alone has the power to reveal God to men and raise the dead unto eternal life. Have you?

(Timothy J. Hille is pastor of the Pleasant Plains Baptist Church of Pleasant Plains, Illinois.)



Our Relationship

(Continued from page 10) ♦

God's holiness. **"Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live"** (Ex. 22:18). That is a civil law for the nation of that time, not for me. But, what does that tell me God thinks of witchcraft? Do you think God is pleased with witchcraft today? Many of my more liberal minded brethren will wax poetic about illegal immigration, and feel free to quote a few verses down. Exodus 22:21-22, **"Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child"** (It is funny to me that these same men scoff at people for praying and believing II Chronicles 7:14). Do we throw out the widows and orphans because it is in the

same chapter as Exodus 22:26, **"If thou at all take thy neighbour's raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the sun goeth down."**

I am not under the law. I have never taken my friend's Carhartt jacket as collateral. But, should I not pay back my neighbor if I borrow something from him, and should I not be generous to him? Should I steal from orphans and not care for widows because I am no longer under the law? Should I join a Wiccan coven? Here is another question I will not provide the answer to. Is it wrong for a man to dress like a woman? Does the Bible forbid it and if so, where? I believe we should read the Bible like Paul, who said that we are not under the law, but also said, in I Timothy 5:18, **"For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward."** Paul quotes Luke and Deuteronomy to show the principle of paying your pastor. He did not take it out of context. He did not twist the scripture. He used his mind and applied the principle of the law.

Take tithing for example. Christians are to give to God. Christian's are to give unto God through the church (II Cor. 9:6-15). How much? What amount should I give unto Christ? The principle of giving in Scripture is a tenth. Abraham, 400+ years before the law was given, tithed to Melchisedec 10%. This tithe was continued in the Old Covenant, and different amounts were for different purposes. They brought their tithes to the Levite priests. After the priesthood of Aaron ended, God's people are still to give, right? Muzzling the ox and etc. Do God's people have to tithe? No, you are free to give much more

♦ (Continued on page 15)

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. In Matthew 28:17 it states **“but some doubted.”** Did some of the apostles still not believe that Jesus was risen from the dead?

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“And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted” (Matt. 28:17). No, the eleven apostles did not doubt that Jesus was risen from the dead. He had already appeared to them on several occasions to prove that He was risen from the dead. It is also implausible to believe that any of the eleven apostles doubted the resurrection since the text plainly states that when they saw Him they worshipped Him.

Is it possible that some of the apostles doubted something other than the doctrine of the resurrection? That would seem more plausible, especially considering the depraved nature that still exists within every believer. Though the doubters are not specifically named, it is not hard for me to believe that saved sinners still harbor doubts and fears within their carnal nature. Consider that after Jesus had risen from the dead and appeared to Peter, it appears that he became disheartened and led the other disciples to go back to fishing (John 21:3). The very fact that Matthew would mention that some doubted, is a testimony to the truth of verbal, plenary inspiration of the Holy Scriptures.

The announcement to meet on a specific mountain in Galilee had

been issued at least three distinct times. Before Jesus was crucified He told the disciples He would go before them into Galilee after His resurrection (Matt. 26:32). After Jesus had risen from the dead the angel at the tomb told the women to go tell His disciples that He would go before them into Galilee (Matt. 28:7). Jesus Himself appeared and told the disciples to go tell His brethren that they go to Galilee where they would see Him (Matt. 28:10). Some commentators have surmised that this is the occasion where Jesus appeared to above 500 disciples at once as recorded in I Corinthians 15:6. Perhaps there were some in that crowd that doubted.

Whoever the specific doubters were, and whatever it was that they doubted, all those doubts were dispelled as Jesus came and spoke to them in Matthew 28:18 announcing that He had all power and authority in heaven and in earth, after which He gave the church the tenets of the Great Commission.

As I reflect upon the idea that “some doubted,” I get convicted as I remember times in my life when my faith was weak and I became disheartened. I am reminded how important the presence and power of the Lord and His Word are to dispel all fear, doubt, and discouragement. We know that whatever doubts may have existed in the first church it did not last long. They were empowered by Christ with the baptism of the Holy Spirit and they energetically carried out the Great Commission with

great zeal. They filled Jerusalem with their doctrine, and then took the Gospel to regions beyond, so much so, that in Acts 17:6 it is recorded: **“These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also.”** May God be pleased to dispel all our doubts and fears so that we may boldly preach Christ to every creature!

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Luke 18:8, **“..when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?”** Faith! What a marvelous gift of God. **“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God”** (Eph. 2:8). But like most gifts or talents, it must be exercised to be strong and if neglected, it will not suffice. “Use it or lose it,” the saying goes. Selah! Think about it!

Faith is truly strong medicine. Check out the unlimited limits of true belief, trust, faith. **“And Jesus said unto them...verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you”** (Matt. 17:20). Wow? Yeah, wow! Nothing shall be impossible. A high level of trust will overcome any and all obstacles and or opponents. Promise of God and yet, why do we find our faith fluctuating from day-to-day from fearless to feckless to fearful?

Faith grows, beloved reader. Listen to a beginner in this issue of faith, as he comes to the faith

master after a lifetime of failures. **“And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief”** (Mark 9:24). Yep, it is there. Unbelief in the back of our minds, as we attempt to believe (how is it said?) with “all” of our heart and mind. Even the Apostles on the Galilean mount are in the business of growing faith. **“Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted”** (Matt. 28:16-17). Not that they did not know who Christ was; not that they did not know He was resurrected; but there was still some doubt, unbelief, unsettlement in what the future held for them concerning the Master. Selah! Think about it! They needed more faith, and Jesus, as He commissioned them, gave them more faith, through the medium of more knowledge.

“Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed” (John 20:27-29).

Our original gift of faith in irresistible regeneration is what is necessary for salvation, but as we launch into our life of service, we realize that more faith is necessary to perfect our relationship, as servant to the almighty Lord. Watch Peter exercise the greatest of faith in the desire and love of his precious Lord; and then lose it when he looks away, only to find

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. Is there any significance to the Lord calling two sets of brothers as apostles?

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I am sure that there is significance in the Lord calling two sets of brothers as apostles. Everything that is recorded in Holy Scripture is significant.

It is interesting that the two sets of brothers are mentioned first in Matthew 10:2: **"Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother."** These four apostles are probably the most well known of the original twelve. We know that Andrew was a disciple of John the Baptist and upon hearing that Jesus was the **"lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world,"** he promptly started following the Lord Jesus, and then found his brother Simon (Peter) to tell him they had found the Christ (John 1:36-37, 41). We also know that Andrew and Simon (Peter) lived together (Mark 1:29). It is obvious that these two brothers shared an unbreakable bond in Christ spiritually and by blood relation physically. They loved one another and cared about one another. They worked together. They no doubt were a great encouragement to one another. Peter no doubt reflected often upon how Andrew introduced

him to the Messiah. They both were fully engaged in following the Lord Jesus Christ. Even though Peter was much more famous, it appears that Andrew was never jealous of his brother's fame.

James and John were the sons of Zebedee and were nicknamed the **"sons of thunder"** (Mark 3:17). Interestingly enough, wherever James is mentioned in Scripture he is always mentioned with John. James is always mentioned first, probably because he was the older of the two. They were inseparable. They worked together in a fishing business with their father Zebedee. They were both zealous and ambitious. Next to Peter, John was probably one of the most famous disciples, yet James never seemed to be envious of his brother's notoriety.

The personalities of the two sets of brothers seemed to complement one another. It must have been a tremendous privilege and blessing for these two sets of brothers to work alongside one another as they followed the Lord Jesus Christ.

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I can not find or do I see any significance to the Lord calling two sets of brothers as apostles other than Jesus knew them

already (because God chose them before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4, **"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."**) and that Jesus knew right were to find them.

We may note, too, that Jesus had encountered Peter and Andrew before, near Bethabara, in the Jordan region, where Andrew (and perhaps Peter as well) had become a disciple of John the Baptist (John 1:35-42).

I do not know if this helps, I mean we could go on for a long time presenting their background, and the meaning of their names, but that really does not help in answering this question. God Bless!

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Everything in the Bible has significance, whether in precept, principle, or pattern. Some of God's wisdom is directly imparted in His commandments, laws and statutes in precept form. (Thou shalt not!) Some of His righteousness is taught in the great principles (love, joy, etc) of His personal character and we follow in His footsteps and act and live according to them. Lastly, there are patterns (what our forefathers did, and were blessed of God) exhibited throughout Scripture where no particular doctrine is named, but the configurations are laid out for Godly living. Selah! Think about it!

"And Jesus, walking by the sea

of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him. And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him" (Matt. 4:18-22). So what is the significance of the Lord calling two sets of brethren as Apostles? At least a couple of things to Selah! Think about it!

First of all is the preeminent place given to families in the Word of God. God's three institutions of family, church and national governments are part of His order for humanity. The basic building block is the family and God puts emphasis on it, whenever He desires, such as in our apostolic choices. I often think about the passenger manifest on Noah's ark, when the matter comes up. God could have used His grace to grant a ticket of salvation to a wide diversity of a potential billion population. In modern typology, it could have been one Canadian, one American, one Mexican, one Trinidad, one etc., until the manifest was full, but it was one man, his wife, three sons, and three daughter-n-laws. One family instead of a diverse multicultural sampling. Would there have been anything wrong with the latter? Certainly not! But God was emphasizing once again, His important family unit. The marriage bond and familial ties are precious to Him and He loves faithfulness and unity, so His

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Forum Question #1

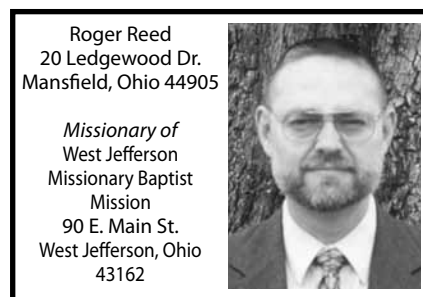
(Continued from page 12) ♦

it again, before he slips below the waters of unbelief. **“And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God”** (Matt. 14:28-33).

Imperfect as yet in our amateur hands, there is no lack of power in faith. **“Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked”** (Eph. 6:16). Not a dart can get through, if we use it properly and expertly. Where does this expertise in faith come from? Obviously from God’s storehouse of grace, but pertinently, through the exercise and use of this valuable asset. Have you ever marveled at the expert swordsman? Of course we know the many long hours spent in practice is the reason for his confidence or faith in his blade and ability? How about us and our shield of faith and the sword of the Lord? Have we used it today? Have we trusted God today? Have we taken a leap of faith? Do we have “much assurance” in the spiritual warfare against Satan’s attacks? **“For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy**

Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know ... also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad” (I Thess. 1:5, 8). Selah!

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Yes, I believe at first it was a hard concept for them to believe just what happened. So, I believe some of them did hesitate at first, until Jesus drew nearer to them and they certainly recognized Him, and then they worshipped Him. **“And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen”** (Luke 24:52-53).

A close reading of Luke chapter 24 reveals much of this doubt. **“It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles. And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not”** (Luke 24:10-11). Then in the next verse it appears that as Peter thought about the words of our Lord it made him and John run to see for themselves not believing the women. **“Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass”** (Luke 24:12). **“So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre”** (John 20:4).

John Gill has this to say about

Matthew 28:17, “But some doubted; or “some of them,” as the Syriac and Arabic versions render it; that is, some of the eleven disciples: not that they doubted now that Christ was risen from the dead; since he had appeared several times to them before this, and had given them all the proofs of the truth of his resurrection they could desire; but they, who worshipped him now in Galilee, had doubted before in Jerusalem; not only Thomas, but all of them: they looked upon the words of the women as idle tales; nor did the rest believe the two disciples, with whom Christ traveled to Emmaus: wherefore he upbraids them for their unbelief, Luke 24:11, or else the sense is, that some of them, though they believed Christ was risen from the dead, of which they had had the strongest assurance; yet they doubted whether what they then saw on the mountain was he, or whether it was not a spirit, or a mere phantom; and therefore, as in the next verse, he “came” nearer to them, when they knew him: or else this may be understood of some of the seventy disciples, or of the five hundred brethren, who saw him at this time, and at first had some doubts of his resurrection, but were afterwards fully satisfied.”

Concerning I Corinthians 15:6 Gills says, “After that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, Not at, or near Jerusalem, for the number of the disciples that were together there, made but about an hundred and twenty, Acts 1:15 but in Galilee, where Christ, in the days of his flesh, had most chiefly conversed, most frequently preached and wrought his miracles, and where the number of his disciples and followers were very large: here he promised his disciples to go before them, and show himself

to them after his resurrection, as he accordingly did, Matt. 26:32. And this being signified by the apostles to the brethren there, it is no wonder that there was such a number of them gathered on that occasion.”

I believe the main thing here is they remembered the words of Jesus and were very happy and at peace that their Lord had risen, because they all worshiped Him and we still worship Him because we believe He was raised from the dead and is set down at the right hand of God. Even for a brief moment some doubted. **“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God”** (Heb. 12:2).

Do we not even today sometimes doubt? That is why Jesus ever makes intercession for us. **“Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us”** (Rom. 8:34). **“Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them”** (Heb. 7:25). Lord, help my unbelief. God Bless!

ROGER REED



Forum Question #2

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grace exhibits that principle and pattern throughout Scripture.

The second pattern established by the election of these fisherman family preachers is the heightened awareness of personal evangelism. The gospel is meant to be both

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Forum #2

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personal and accountable to the recipients of its powerful grace. What is to be the immediate and inevitable response of a saved person? She is to take it to her inner circle of loved ones. **“One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ”** (John 1:40-41).

There is a pattern of God’s people in Scripture that constantly show a desire to impart the good news of Jesus Christ to those that they love best. This is both simple intimacy and simple geography. **“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth”** (Acts 1:8). Examine the expanding concentric circles around this primal Jerusalem Baptist church. Preach in Jerusalem, first, because that is where your fleshly brothers and sisters are. Then, not satisfied with keeping the joy to yourselves, visit your cousins in Judea with the gospel; then insatiably let the grace of God flow into the tainted villages of Samaria and as godly, missionary families emigrate into the Gentile world, the gospel of Jesus Christ will be the impetus of a world-wide Holy Spirit revival. Selah! Think about it!

But note the new birth re-creating also this pattern of brothers and families being the core of these new Baptist churches and their evangelical witnessing. In every new town, you will find another Andrew being saved and

then pointing his brother to the Messiah Christ. Hallelujah! That is the pattern of God. **“And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the (local) church daily such as should be saved”** (Acts 2:46-47). Selah! Think about it!

MATTHEW STEPP



Our Relationship

(Continued from page 11) ♦

than 10%. Is giving God a tenth of what He has given you a burden? Is counting every penny to the last red cent a way to be a cheerful giver? Does the law of Christ free us to be less giving than our Old Testament brethren?

The remainder of the laws reveal to us our sinfulness and God’s holiness and how we are to live in our desire for living under grace. If we use the law to gain favor with God, or to try and earn with God we are wrong. If we use the law to show us what is pleasing and unpleasing to God, then we use the law, lawfully.

I am not free TO sin, but free from sin’s dominion. I am not under the law, that I must earn favor with God, but I am under grace that I am justified and have Christ’s righteousness.

But, does that mean, that since I am united to Christ, by faith, I am free to live under the domain of sin? Does that mean that I take my body and use it as instruments of sin? Of course not I am not under the law. I am under God’s amazing grace. I am free to serve righteousness unto holiness.



I Peter 4:17-18

(Continued from page 1) ♦

need the Lord and need salvation as nothing else in this world, I can not ignore.

When I lived in Brazil back some years ago, there was a group of English people there in that city of about 400,000, and those English people had a church building, and they belonged to the Church of England, and they had a church of that denomination. They went to church, went through their ritual, and they made not the slightest effort in the world to reach those Brazilian people with the Gospel. Day after day, up and down the street in front of that church surged a mass of lost humanity, but that did not disturb these people of that church in the slightest. They went ahead with their little forms and ceremonies designed only for Christian people. I do not see how people can do that. As I see lost people, I have an impelling desire to bring to them the knowledge of the way of life.

I found out a long time ago that if a Preacher tries to be true to his calling, he is going to receive criticism and abuse. It does not matter what one does, somebody is going to criticize. A long time ago, I decided to try to do what I believe to be right in my ministry, and let people say what they pleased. But I think the two most astonishing criticisms that I have ever received has been criticism about saying too much about Christ, and preaching too much to the lost. Can you beat that? Well, I will say this, the most wonderful person I have ever heard about or known about is Jesus. He did the most wonderful thing that anyone ever did, when He left Heaven for our sakes, and came and died that we might have everlasting life.

And the Bible says that the time is coming when every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that He is Lord. I can afford to say a lot about a Person who is going to be bowed down to by every person who ever lived, and I can afford to preach to lost people when I have a message of life everlasting. I have something to tell you lost people about, such that if you will receive it and believe it, you can get up from your radio there with a life that will never end. You can get up a child of Heaven’s King. You can get up from your radio as certain of Heaven and all of its glories, as if you walked the golden streets this minute. Why should I not tell lost people about such wonderful things?

The apostle here speaks about the sufferings that Christians often have to go through, and he tells us that when we endure such for Christ’s sake, to be proud of it. We do not know much about persecution in this day and time, but, listen, if Communism ever wins out in this country, we are going to know what it means. Do not ever forget that Communism is anti-God and anti-Christ. Since China has gone Communist, missionaries have been tortured and killed. The same thing has happened in the part of Korea that has been overrun by Communism. We are told here to be willing to turn those who abuse and persecute us over to the Lord, that He will handle them in His own good time.

Then turning to the thought of the unsaved, the Apostle Paul says, **“What shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God,”** and I want to talk about that especially for a few minutes. We can get the proper conception of things if we glue our eyes onto the present moment. We ought

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Little Hills

By Nathaniel Hille of
Plant City, Florida



SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON - BIBLE SURVEY #13 NOAH

TEXT: Gen. 6:1-22

DEVOTIONAL READING: Heb. 11:7; II Peter 2:5

AIM: An Over-view of the Life of Noah Suggested Hymn: *One Door*

INTRODUCTION: We now look at Noah, The Preacher of Righteousness

I. THE TIME OF NOAH: Gen. 6:1-7—There is a false notion that Noah was a good man. He was not. The Bible describes to us the sinful condition of society during the days of Noah.

1. Intermarriages: Gen. 6:1-2—When sons of God (those who were saved) married daughters of men (lost people) it led to a departing from the Word of God.

2. Depravity Manifested: At this time, people manifested their sinful condition to the fullest. The Holy Scriptures describe it, **“And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination (purposes and desires) of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually”** Gen. 6:5 (Cp. Rom. 3:9-20, 23). Noah was as vile as everyone else. Guilty and wretched; worthy of being destroyed (Vv. 7).

II. NOAH SAVED BY GRACE: Gen. 6:8-9—We must take note of the order of these verses. Noah was not saved by grace because he was a just man and perfect in his generations and walked with God; but rather he was a just man, perfect, and walked with God because he was a saved by Grace.

1. Found Grace In The Eyes of the Lord: Sin had reached a climax, but Grace super abounded (Rom. 5:20). Grace is first mentioned here! Grace=kindness or favor. God showed kindness or favor unto Noah that Noah did not deserve. Noah was as guilty as the rest, but the Lord was full of pity and mercy toward Noah and saved him. Such is still true today. That sinners are not worthy to be saved, but it is God that does it all out of grace (Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5-7).

III. A JUST MAN: Gen. 6:9—By God's grace, Noah became a just man. The word **“just”**= “righteous” in the eyes of the Lord. God had pronounced Noah to be just/righteous. No longer was Noah an unrighteous man (I Cor. 6:9). By God's grace Noah was made right with God.

1. How Can Man Be Right With God: Job 9:1-4—Man has wronged God. God requires complete obedience to His Word/Law. In Adam, we disobeyed the Lord. In our lives we have also disobeyed the Lord. There is but one way to be **“right with God”**—Gal. 2:16—**“Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ...”**

IV. WALKED WITH GOD: Gen. 6:9—Enoch and Noah both

walked with God (Gen. 5:24). This means that their lives were pleasing unto the Lord (Heb. 11:5-6). Noah is called a **“preacher of righteousness”** (II Peter 2:5). Everyone who has been born-again, redeemed, found grace in the eyes of the Lord ought to be declaring the righteousness of God to them that are lost. This will be well pleasing to God.

1. The Bible Order: We must remember that this is the Bible order. First, the sinner finds grace in the eyes of the Lord and is made just. Then they walk, or have a life that is well-pleasing unto the Lord. Many are trying to live a life that is morally acceptable, yet they have neglected the righteousness of God which can only be found by faith in Jesus Christ.

V. NOAH OBEYED GOD: Gen. 6:14-22—We are told that **“Noah walked with God.”** This we know means that his life pleased the Lord. God gave Noah 3 commands. Noah obeyed them by faith (Heb. 11:7).

1. Commanded to Build the Ark: Gen. 6:14-22—We are told that God warned Noah of **“things not seen as yet”** (Heb. 11:7). It had never rained, nor flooded, yet Noah took God at His word. He believed what God said. And, **“Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he”** (Gen. 6:22). Noah did not attempt to improve or change God's design of the ark, nor the materials. We must be careful, to do it the way of the Lord (Deut. 4:2; 12:32).

2. Commanded to enter the Ark: Gen. 7:1—Noah was commanded to come into the Ark. In the ark, all who entered would be saved. Again we read of Noah's obedience to the Lord's command—**“And Noah did according unto all that the LORD commanded him”, “And Noah went in...”** (Gen. 7:5, 7). We find that the LORD shut Noah and the inhabitants in the Ark (Gen. 7:16). There is safety and security in obeying the Lord.

A. God has commanded all men everywhere to repent—Acts. 17:30, 31; Have you?

3. Commanded to Exit the Ark: Gen. 8:15-18—Just as Noah went, in, so he went out—at the command of the LORD. It was at this time that the Lord blessed Noah (Gen. 9:1). We must understand that it is in obeying the Lord that we will find God's blessings and His promises kept.

VI. NOAH AND THE END-TIMES: Matt. 24:37-39—The Lord taught that He would come again in similar times as that of Noah. Beloved, we are in those times. Folks are extremely wicked. And there be few who walk with God.

Oh, that you might find grace in the eyes of the Lord, calling upon the Name of Jesus that you might be saved—and walk with God, submitting to Scriptural Baptism and becoming a member of the Lord's church, serving Him faithfully in accordance with the Word of the Lord. AMEN!

(Nathaniel Hille is pastor of the Bible Baptist Church of Plant City, Florida.)



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always to ask, "What will be the ultimate outcome of this or that?" People ought to ask that when they begin to fool with liquor. It does not look so bad in the kindergarten stages. You see people drinking some nice little cocktails out of attractive glasses. They are not drunks, they are not drunk, and they are not slaves yet, but just wait until the appetite gets fastened on them. I was told some time ago about a man who got to drinking under the influence of some people of my acquaintance, and drink got more and more of a hold on him until he is now in the crazy house. The end of the thing for him was insanity. I mean the physical and mental end, but the ultimate end will perhaps be torment. Sin in all of its forms has the habit of growing and developing. It is like the rattlesnake that the man raised that I heard about. He found this rattlesnake when it was a tiny little snake, harmless, and made a pet out of it, but as time went on, it developed fangs and poison sacs, and finally bit the man and killed him. It is like the boa constrictor the man raised. He taught it tricks and he thought that he was its master. It would wrap its coils around the man's body, and then uncoil at his command, but finally one day it became angry while in this position, and suddenly it tightened its folds such as to crush every bone in the man and reduce his body to pulp. Sin grows, and finally it completely masters and ruins those who indulge in its practices. You know that that is true as well as I do. You have seen it happen time and time again. But what is the pleasure of the moment that sin brings is the important question, but what will

the end be? God's Word answers that by saying, **"And sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."**

We Christians have it over anybody else, in that everything will turn out right for us in the end. Take, for instance, world affairs. They are hopeless from the human standpoint. If I were not a Christian, if I did not have God's Word to assure me, I would feel so hopeless that I would feel like jumping in a nice deep lake somewhere. We have an almost hopeless moral and spiritual breakdown in this world today. If you are an unsaved person, with no outlook save on this world, then you have a pretty blue prospect, but to the Christian, things are different. The Bible tells us beforehand that these things and these conditions are going to come to pass. It tells us that in the last days of this age, the time will be characterized by wars and rumors of wars. It tells us that nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, it tells us of men's hearts failing them for fear of what is coming on the earth. It also tells us the end of all of these things, it makes clear that the darker earth's night becomes, the nearer we are to the dawn of a new day, when Christ the Lord shall return and take over the reins of human government. After the New Testament Scriptures speak of the wars and commotions, and of the Gospel being preached in all the world for a witness, then we have the statement, **"Then shall the end come."** Not the end of time, you understand, but the end of Satan's dominion and domination of things, the end of world confusion and strife, the end of all hard times for Christians. If there ever was a time, it seems to me, when it is sensible and sane to become a

Christian, that time is now, as we see the shadows of a fast-closing age drawing around us. If you have nothing but this world to look to, then your world is in a mess, and it is rapidly getting into a worse one, but the Christian has the Word of the eternal God telling him that all things are going to be made to come out well for him in the end.

Now let me center attention on that expression, "What shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God?" That is a question that is pertinent to every unsaved person in this world. Where are you headed? What will your end be? Have you ever had the courage to look that question straight in the face? If not, will you do it now? First, let me ask, what will your physical end be? Well, the answer is, of course, that you are headed just as straight toward the graveyard as you can go. That is an unpleasant thought, but it is the truth, nevertheless. I remember seeing a prehistoric mound that had been dug into, and there lay some scattered bones and a grinning skull. I thought to myself, "This was once a living, breathing human being, and now this is all that remains." That is what you are going to look like one of these days. You can spend your thoughts on how you are going to feed and clothe that body, and gratify the appetites of that body, but if you will let your mind run ahead just a little, there is how your body ends---food for the worms! When you live for the flesh, and that is all an unsaved person can live for, that is exactly where you are headed. Maybe you will say to me, "Well now, there is where you are headed, too." I answer, "Not on your life!" The Lord of Heaven came out of the grave, proving Himself the conqueror of it, and He says to me, "Because I live, ye shall live also,"

and He gives me a picture of the outcome here in the Scriptures. Here is what it says, **"For the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first."** If I die before the Lord returns, I shall be raised at His coming to stand on my grave, and to shout, **"Oh death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"** You unsaved people who die in that condition, are not going to be in that resurrection. Those bones and that grinning skull will lie there in the ground. A horrible prospect, is it not? Yes, and I urge you to get out of your unsaved state and get over on the Lord's side, where there is something worthwhile for the future. When you live for the physical---for the flesh---for this world---you are bound to lose out. All the past is eloquent of that truth.

Several summers ago, I was out in New Mexico and Colorado, and I visited the ruins of ancient cliff dwellers. Some of their dwellings were perfectly preserved, their houses remain, but where were they? Every one of those people have been dead for centuries. I saw the skeletons of some of those people in the Government museum nearby. I saw the dried-up mummy of one of those people. Immense races of people have populated different portions of this earth. All of those races of the past have perished. We who live today are in the process of perishing physically. Sometimes, when we have been away from some person for years, when we meet them, we are almost dumbfounded as we note the changes in them. We have been thinking of them as we knew them. We are not prepared to see

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the ravages that time has made.

I remember that when I was in the Seminary, there was a man who had graduated just a short time before, and he was just beginning to serve as a teacher. I had classes under him, in fact. I did not see that man after leaving there for thirty years or more, then one day his picture appeared in the Seminary paper, and I was astonished. His hair was a white as snow, his face was seamed and wrinkled and he appeared as an old, worn-out man. A few months later, I read the account of his death. How quickly people go from youth to age, decay and death! How can we see that sort of thing going on around us, and still not look ahead, not think anything about the life that stretches beyond the grave, when we know that we have to live in that life? I could not be content to go on that way. A long time ago, I placed my soul on deposit with Christ in the bank of Heaven. I know that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day. I know that the future is safe and secure, and that is exactly what I am urging you to do. That is why I speak so often to the lost, that is why I continually stress salvation and the need of it. There just is not anything for you if you neglect the salvation that has been provided for you, and I urge that you not neglect it any longer.

Again, I go back to our text, which says, **“What shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?”** I have said that your physical end is going to be the graveyard, but now I have come to talk about your spiritual end, and what it will be. That spiritual end will be that place **“where**

the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched.” Suppose that when lost people die, they should just die all over, or suppose that God should eventually just completely annihilate all the unsaved such that they ceased to exist. If all punishment for sin should be eliminated, and if there was to be no unhappy existence ahead, even then I would hate to think of your ending like that. That would mean a little short span of years, and after that, nothingness. But the situation is far worse than this. As a matter of fact, God is not going to annihilate or blot out the unsaved. I know that such a doctrine is taught, but I know equally well that it is only by warping and twisting the Scriptures that such a thing can be sustained. But the Revelation tells us of the time when the Antichrist and his false prophet will be cast into the lake of fire, and then it pictures the time a thousand years later, at the end of the millennium, when the Devil is cast in where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever. The beast and false prophet had been there a thousand years, and that shows that they were neither burned up nor blotted out, and when it speaks of tormented day and night forever and ever, that makes plain the fate of the lost. Let us face the awful truth that the end of every lost person is going to be in the eternal Hell of awful suffering and misery.

Were you ever in a court room when the verdict was brought in, and did you ever hear a man condemned to prison for 99 years, and condemned to hard labor? Sentenced to be shut out from the world, from family, from loved ones, sentenced for life, sentenced to hard work for life? That is an awful thing, and often the

sentenced man has turned white and has completely collapsed. We know that there remains some shred of hope in the heart of a man under such sentence. Men have sometimes been pardoned, men have sometimes been paroled, men have sometimes had their sentence reduced for good behavior, but when a person dies lost, there is not any such hope as concerns the eternal world. There is no possibility of a pardon. As you now are, there is pardon for you. You can turn to Christ and receive Him as your Savior, and receive the immediate remittal of your sins, but opportunity for pardon is over and done forever when the breath leaves your body. As you die, so must you remain forever. For that tremendous reason, I urge that you turn to Christ for pardon and remission of your sins, right now while the opportunity is before you.

Here is another great difference between a man going to a penitentiary and his going to Hell. He may have to work, but he is not being punished and tormented every minute. His body is often at ease, and he often gets a restful night's sleep, but according to the Bible, Hell is not just a place of confinement, it is a place of fearful punishment. That expression, **“And shall be tormented day and night forever and ever,”** is one of the most terrible expressions that I have ever read. Somebody says, “Yes, but that is said concerning the Devil.” I answer, “The Devil's followers shall share the Devil's punishment. You live for the Devil and serve the Devil and refuse to break with the Devil, and nothing is more sure than that you are going to share his fate.” So awful does this seem to me that I stop and urge everyone of you to break with him this hour. To follow him means ruin,

and ruin forever. Suppose you could look into the future, we will say, a thousand years ahead, and you can see yourself in perpetual agony, all hope and all happiness and every pleasure is vanished and there you are. Would you think that whatever pleasure of sin you are enjoying is worth that? Would you not rather turn in horror from such a fate? But suppose this scene shifts and you see yourself ten thousand years from now, and there you still are, and your sufferings and your punishment unabated, nothing to look forward to but that, forever and ever. Your very soul would grow sick at such a fate, and you would say, “Let me break with the life that leads to that kind of an end.” “What shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?” says our text. There it is, and worse than anything that I have, or that I can possibly describe. And because there is such a future in store for every person who dies lost, because Hell is so unspeakably awful, because it is so very final, the Son of God was willing to leave the wonders and glories of Heaven, to be born here and to suffer and die that we might have a way of escape. To save my life, I can not see how any person can turn down a Savior who did that for us.

Suppose that when we had the war going in Korea, that a group of our men had been trapped and surrounded, and they faced capture and perhaps torture. Another group of men, knowing their predicament, fight their way through to open the trap, and they cut a way out for the entrapped troops with fearful cost of life. Can you conceive of those men who had been surrounded, scorning what has been done for them, refusing to take the way

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out? Of course you can not. But that is what you are doing when you refuse the Savior and the salvation that He makes possible for you. There is a way out for you. You know it and know what it is. Will you take it, or will your once more refuse it? I want to bring you right up face to face with that issue, just exactly as it is.

Suppose that a thousand years from right now, you are in torment with every hope and every prospect gone forever, and you remember this appeal that was made to you. Do you not suppose the thought would come, "What possessed me to refuse the Savior and to refuse a salvation? What was I thinking about to turn a deaf ear to the Gospel?" It is illogical and unreasonable and almost unbelievable that people should hear and know the way out of such an unspeakable fate and refuse to pay any heed. If you had cancer and I had the remedy for it, you would hasten to take it. If you had leprosy and I had the cure, I would not have to beg you to take it. I have something worth a million times more. I have the offer of eternal life to present to you in God's name. I have a Savior from your sins to tell you about, I have One who offers to keep you out of a Devil's Hell, and with all the earnestness of my soul, I urge you to receive Him, and then to confess Him before men.

Our Father, we pray for every lost person who has been hearing us. We pray that Thou wilt stir and quicken into concern. Bring to repentance, and bring to saving faith in Christ those who have been listening out of Christ, we earnestly ask in His Name, Amen.



An Exposition of Job 19:25

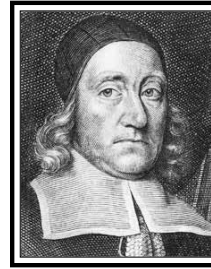
Part One

By Joseph Caryl
(1602 - 1673)

Verse 25: **"For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth."**

For the clearing of these words, I shall premise two general veins of interpretation.

First, The Jewish writers interpret this context of a metaphorical resurrection, in reference to Job's outward condition, or of his resurrection from a state of affliction. We have this sense of a resurrection illustriously held forth (Ezek. 37) where the return of the people of Israel out of Babylon is described by the reviving of dry bones. God Himself makes the comment (verses 11-12) **"Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel."** An estate of extreme misery and danger is often in Scripture expressed by death. Paul saith, that he had been "in deaths often" (II Cor. 11:23) and that God had delivered him from **"so great a death"** (II Cor. 1:10) that is, from deadly danger. Such a condition deprives us of all the comforts of life, and makes our lives oftentimes more bitter than death; yea, men in such a condition are spoken of as buried and dissolved into dust. In pursuance of which metaphor,



deliverance is called, a quickening, a reviving, a raising again. Psalm 71:20: **"Thou which hast shewed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again and shall bring me again from the depths of the earth."** Also Psa. 80:18, 85:6, Isa. 26:19, Hos. 6:2, Rom. 11:15. In which last place, the calling and restoring of the Jews, is called "Life from the dead." Now (I say) the Rabbines generally, as also some of our learned expositors run upon the strain here; conceiving that Job therefore calls God his Redeemer, because he had to that day preserved him alive in the midst of so many deaths and dangers, as also because he had a sure hope that he should through the power of God survive them, and be restored to such an estate of honor and riches, as he had enjoyed in the former part of his life; this they call his resurrection and redemption, and so accordingly they fit an explication to the several passages of this context; yet their opinion is strongly opposed by others, with much evidence of reason.

Three special reasons may be urged against it.

First, The height and spiritualness of Job's language tells us, that his thoughts moved, and that his hopes were fixed above this worlds felicity; His faith soared aloft in the meditation of a Redeemer, in the premeditation of the last judgment, and in the vision of God: all which argue more than a metaphorical

resurrection.

Secondly, Though his expressions in the letter may be fitted to that inferior sense, yet if we remember what hath been touched more than once in the former passages of this Book, we find that Job had, as it were, disclaimed all hope of restoring unto any temporal happiness in this life, affirming that "his hope was gone," and that he was worse than "a tree cut down" of which there is hope, that it will grow again, and put forth tender branches from the root; as for him, as he had no desire, so no expectation of recovering his former beauty and greatness, with promises of which his friends (upon the supposition of his repentance) had often endeavored to raise his spirits and fill his sails. Therefore it seems altogether improbable, that he should rise to that height of hope about it in this place, contrary to the current of all his former discourses upon that point.

Thirdly, He saith, that "he should see God with the same eyes, that he should see him for himself and not another," which argueth that he intended not a resurrection of his outward estate; for what doubt could there be, that if he were raised from affliction, but that he should see God with the same eyes, and that he himself should see Him, and not another, or not for another; but to believe the restoring the same body, or the identity of the eyes of his body after all had molded in the dust, this was a high act of believing. From these reasons it appears that Job holds forth his faith in a resurrection, not to a temporal good in this life, but to eternal life. In which second sense I shall open and prosecute the several passages of this scripture. Besides

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many others, one of the ancients gives his judgment clearly for it; "what (saith he) can be more manifest than this prophecy. None since Christ came in the flesh have spoken so plainly of the resurrection, as this man did before the coming of Christ in the flesh."

"I know that my redeemer liveth," etc.

As if he had thus argued; "He that waits by faith in the Redeemer for the resurrection of his body to eternal life, after death hath done its worst, is not a wicked man, or an hypocrite, as you have charged me."

"But such is my faith, I believe in the Redeemer, and I look to rise (after this body is consumed and eaten of worms) to an eternal happy life; therefore I am not such as you judge me to be, neither wicked nor hypocrite. You account me as rejected of God, yet I know that God is my Redeemer, I know that He lives for ever, and the He is mine for ever, and therefore do not think, because I have no hope of this life, that therefore I despair of life: do not take upon you, that you only know these mysteries, and that I am ignorant of them, as my friend Bildad concluded in the 18th Chapter (this is the portion of the man that knows not God,) for even I also know that my Redeemer liveth, and shall stand upon the earth at the latter day."

"For I know..."

What this "knowing" is, hath been opened (Chap. 13:12) upon those words, "I know that I shall be justified." In brief, 'tis knowing upon the greatest certainty, knowing without all wavering; As if Job had said; My Judgment is fixed, and my faith confirmed

in this thing, it is as clear to me, **"that my redeemer liveth,"** as if I had already seen Him alive. It is as sure to me that I shall rise again as if I had been dead, and were already risen. My Faith makes this as evident to me now, as my experience hereafter shall.

"...I know..."

This "knowing" came not in either by sense or any natural demonstration; Faith is the gift of God, and so is the knowledge of Faith, or that knowledge which is the full assurance of Faith. There is an exceeding greatness of the power of God put forth to thoseward who believe according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead (Eph. 1:19-20). Faith is the evidence of things not seen; who can make things not seen evident to us, but He Who is every where

evident, yet no where seen? Faith is the substance of things hoped for, as the Apostle gives the definition (Heb. 11:1). Who can make things absent from our enjoyment, present to our comfort, but He Who is always present? Saints do not see what they believe, yet they know what they believe. When Joseph brought his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim to his father Jacob for his blessing, Jacob put his right hand upon the younger, and his left hand upon the elder, Joseph observing this, humbly corrects his father's error, **"Not so my father: for this is the firstborn; put thy right hand upon his head"** but his father refused and said; **"I know it, my son, I know it"** (Gen. 48:19). I do not this upon mistake, I know what I do, though the sight of my eye be dim, yet I see clearly

enough what I do. Faith sees not upon whom it layeth its hand, but it knoweth upon whom it layeth its hand (II Tim. 1:12). "I know whom I have believed." Faith gives us acquaintance with God, before we see Him, and when we see Him, faith shall be swallowed up.

"I know that my Redeemer..."

The word which we translate "Redeemer," comes from a root which is applied three ways in Scripture.

First, To buying again of that which was alienated by sale or mortgage, and so to reduce it unto the possession of those whose it was before (Lev. 25:25).

Secondly, To the rescuing or bringing back of those who have been taken prisoners and led into captivity. There is a double way of redeeming such.

First, By force and power. Thus when Lot was taken prisoner by those four Kings that came against Sodom, Abraham armed his servants, and by force redeemed or brought him back (Gen. 14:14-16).

Secondly, There is a redemption by price or ransom; "To redeem is to buy again;" captives are often ransomed and redeemed by price; Christ hath redeemed us both ways, as will be shown further in the opening of this Scripture. And because when we are surprised by, or engaged in any pressing danger, it costs much, or calls for much power to vindicate and restore us, therefore this word "redeeming" is used in Scripture to signify deliverance from any eminent or imminent danger (Psa. 69:18). **"Draw nigh unto my soul, and redeem it."** And again; (Psa. 72:14) **"He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence."** That is, from all secret plots and open actings tending to destruction. And

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thus the Lord is said to redeem His people **“from the hand of the enemy”** (Psa. 106:10). And Jacob speaks of the Angel which redeemed him from all evil (Gen. 48:16). Job’s redeemer and this Angel who redeemed Jacob from all evil, is the same, even Jesus Christ. Of whom the Lord speaks to Moses (Ex. 23:20-21) **“Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name is in him.”** This Angel can be none but Christ, the creating, not a created Angel. Pardon of sin belongs not to creatures, nor is the name of God in them; Some creatures have a name of God upon them; but he only hath the name of God in him, who is of the same nature with God.

Thirdly, This word is applied to the avenging of their death, who have been wrongfully slain (Num. 35:12). “Goel” is the avenger of blood, or the redeemer of blood, because he came to take vengeance on such as had unjustly shed the blood of his kinsman. He may be said to redeem a man from death, who according to justice pursues him who took away his life. Christ is not only our Redeemer, by restoring us to life, but our avenger by pursuing and spoiling him (that is, the Devil) who was our murderer, or the contriver of our death.

Again, To be a redeemer is taken two ways.

First, More largely for a deliverer, or helper; so ‘tis one of the names of God; and to redeem is both His work and His honor. (Ex. 6:6) **“...I will redeem**

you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments.” In which sense also Moses is called a deliverer, (Acts 7:35) according to the Greek, which the Syriac translates by a word that signifies a Judge, or one that determines a controversy. God sent Moses to manage His controversy with Pharaoh, and deliver His people from that state of bondage. And thus God was Job’s redeemer, because He pleaded his cause, and determined for him, delivering him out of his affliction, as is reported in the latter part of this book; Under this more general notion (I say) God is often called a Redeemer; for as He suffers His people to be carried away by, and fall into the hands of their enemies, and sells them into the enemies’ hands (that they may know the difference between His service, and the service of the nations, as He speaks (II Chron. 12:8), yea, he sells them for nought (Psa. 44:12). As sometimes they are said to sell themselves (Isa. 51:1) “...which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you...?” It was a custom among the Jews that parents who were poor and unable to pay their debts, sold their children to their creditors, or their creditors took their children for their debts, as appears by the pitiful complaint of the widow to the Prophet Elisha (II Kings 4:1). In allusion to which the Lord challenges the Jews to name His creditors (if they could) to whom He had sold them: As if He had said, “I am not in debt to any man or nation of men, that I should need (as you sometimes do) to sell my children to free my self; no, for your iniquities (as it follows) you have sold your selves.” Now when God fetcheth His people back again, and delivers them from that captivity or misery,

into which either He sells them, or they sell themselves (though indeed He never sells them, till they sell themselves) then He is called a Redeemer. (Jer. 15:21) **“And I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked....”** And in Psa. 130:7: With thee there **“is plenteous redemption.”** That is, with Thee there are many redemptions, thou multiplied deliverances as fast as our troubles multiply.

More strictly to redeem, and the title Redeemer, is applied to Jesus Christ; To Whom also, I conceive, we may particularly apply all those works of redemption, which in the Old Testament are ascribed to God. For He was God the Redeemer from the beginning, long before He was God manifested in the flesh. And all the redemptions of His Church and people from temporal affliction, as well as from eternal damnation, do properly belong to Him. “It was (saith God) by the blood of thy Covenant,” that is, by the blood of Christ, with whom God made the Covenant in our behalf, that “God sent forth the prisoners”; that is, the captivated Jews, “out of the pit wherein was no water; that is, their disconsolate state in Babylon (Zech. 9:11).

In this strict sense the word “Redeemer,” suits Christ fully for God signifies one that is near to us in consanguinity, one of our blood, bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh. Hence an ancient Translator renders here; “I know that my kinsman, or he that is near to me liveth.” And such were under a special obligation to redeem. As appears in Ruth 3:12, and chapters 4-5, where the case is set down between Boaz, and the other kinsmen. Boaz was a kinsman and had right to redeem, yet because there was

a near kinsman, he would not meddle but upon his refusal. As if he had said, you have the first right, and may make use of your privilege if you please; **“If thou wilt redeem it, redeem it: but if thou wilt not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know: for there is none to redeem if beside thee; and I am after thee.”** For this proceeding ‘tis evident that redemption belonged to those that were near of kin, and first to the nearest. Jesus Christ is near to us, therefore properly and in a strict sense He is (Goal) our Redeemer, He is flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone, He is one with us. As we are the children of God by regeneration, so the brethren of Christ by adoption. **“For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren”** (Heb. 2:11). Christ and we are “all of one,” that is, of one nature; we and Christ as man are not only of one Father or Efficient cause which is God, but we are of one nature or material cause which is flesh and blood. In which respect He is our redeemer upon the strictest terms and laws of redemption. And in that strict sense, besides Him there is no redeemer. For though God the Father in the Son by the Holy Spirit be indeed our Redeemer, yet properly and according to the signification of this word, Jesus Christ alone is our Redeemer; Who taking our nature upon Him, and becoming our brother, had right to redeem us, even as being God in our nature, He had full power to redeem us. We are redeemed by the blood of Christ. (Eph. 1:7) **“In whom we have redemption through his blood....”**



The Short Pews



Brief Articles
by Curtis Pugh
(1944 - 2018)

WERE YOU RECONCILED TO GOD?

Men as they are naturally born are at enmity with God. **"...the carnal mind is enmity against God..."** (Rom. 8:7). This enmity is seen in men's actions: **"...know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God"** (James 4:4). The love of sin displays human beings for what they are: enemies of God.

Once Adam walked with God, but he fell from that holy estate, becoming the enemy of God. We, his offspring, display our love for the world and its sins. But Christ came to destroy this enmity. Paul wrote of this reconciliation work of Christ in Romans 5:10, saying: **"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."**

Often we hear of people saying that they have made peace with God. Humbug! How can a sinner make peace with a Holy God? How can he pay for his sins other than by receiving the just reward for his deeds? And how can a sinner do what Jesus Christ has already done?

Notice that this reconciliation took place when we, who are no longer enemies, were yet enemies. So those who were reconciled, being yet enemies of God, had nothing to do with bringing this reconciliation to pass. Christ accomplished it by His death! You

and I were not even alive back then! If you are reconciled to God it is something that God did for you before you existed.

Paul says that those reconciled by the death of Christ are safe for they shall be **"saved by his life."** Now either they will be finally and completely saved and are therefore safe, or they are not. In spite of what you may have been told, those for whom Christ died are reconciled and are safe for they **"shall be saved by his life."**

The question is expressed by our title: Were You Reconciled to God? You were not there. Can you know for sure, and if so, how? The knowledge of your reconciliation comes from God's Word to those who have had an experience of grace: to those in whom the Holy Spirit resides. Again we quote Paul who wrote: **"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his"** (Rom. 8:9). No good works or religious rituals can cause the Spirit of God to dwell in you! The moving-in of the Holy Ghost is called being born again and man's acts and will have nothing to do with it for this experience comes, **"...not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God"** (John 1:13). Have you had a genuine experience of grace? That is the question!

FALSE FAITH IN THE TRUE GOSPEL

The word gospel means "good news." But this good news is hidden to many: **"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, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto**

them," (II Cor. 4:3-4). It is clearly the teaching of the Bible that the devil has blinded the minds of some individuals and thus the light of the good news about Christ means nothing to them for they walk in spiritual darkness.

But what exactly is the gospel? Someone said the Old Testament Law given to Israel can be summed up in these words: "do this and live." That law system ended. The Bible says, **"The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached..."** (Luke 16:16). The present age in which we live is often called the age of grace because the true gospel is **"...the gospel of the grace of God"** (Acts 20:24). Grace means undeserved favor. Grace is when God saves sinners apart from works who are deserving of eternal punishment.

Paul sums up the essence of the gospel in I Corinthians 15:1-4 where he says, **"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures."**

Notice from this last passage two things: (1) the gospel is the good news of Christ's sacrificial death, burial, and resurrection. His death was the fulfillment of all the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah – the Deliverer – the Savior. Christ was the one true sacrifice anticipated by all the Old Testament sacrifices which were only types of the

true. (2) There is the danger of believing **"in vain."** The words **"unless ye have believed in vain,"** indicate the possibility of hearing the true gospel and only believing it intellectually without ever having been brought to **"...godly sorrow..."** (II Cor. 7:10) and repentance which is always accompanied by true faith, (Acts 20:21). Jesus spoke of true faith saying, **"...If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed"** (John 8:31). There is a work of God whereby His sheep are given the kind of faith that continues trusting in the finished work of Christ regardless...

Never forget the Bible says: **"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"** (Eph. 2:8-9).

AN UNUSED WORD

There is a word seldom used today. It is the name of a concept that our present day society has thrown away. This word and its meaning are unpopular: nay, are hated by the fleshly nature with which all were born. That word is modest. It is used in the Bible to describe clothing that is designed to conceal rather than to reveal. Paul wrote: **"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works"** (I Tim. 2:9-10). Being modest is directly related to whether or not one dresses so as to cover their nakedness.

Revelation 3:18 uses clothing in a figure and speaks of **"...the shame of thy nakedness..."** God

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The Short Pews

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regards nakedness as a shame. So much so that His Old Testament Jewish priests wore robes with **“linen breeches”** underneath, (Exodus 28:42). Besides those requirements God specified this: **“Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar, that thy nakedness be not discovered thereon”** (Ex. 20:26). When it is remembered that all the priests were men and that men only were allowed in that part of the temple where the altar was located then we begin to understand the extent to which God regards nakedness as a sin. The Bible book of Leviticus contains numerous prohibitions regarding the sin of seeing the nakedness of family members.

In speaking of judgment God through the prophet Isaiah said, **“Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen...”** (Isa. 47:3). And again through His prophet Nahum God said, **“Behold, I am against thee, saith the LORD of hosts; and I will discover thy skirts upon thy face, and I will shew the nations thy nakedness, and the kingdoms thy shame”** (Nahum 3:5). And again when the Lord Jesus spoke of His coming in future judgment He said: **“Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame”** (Rev. 16:15). All the Scriptures cited prove that God regards nakedness as a shameful thing. He condemns it as sin.

Wearing clothing that is designed to reveal can be more enticing than complete nakedness. So we find in Proverbs 7:10 the mention of **“...the attire of an harlot...”** i.e. the immodest

clothing of a prostitute. Obviously such clothing is designed to stir desire and leads to both mental and physical illicit sexual acts. From the Bible it is clear that both men and women are to cover their bodies with clothing that conceals. Tight-fitting, sheer or “see-through” clothing or styles that display body parts or the whole body are marks of inward sin: such clothing reveals the wicked hearts of the men and women who dress to provoke sexual desires in those who see them. Today’s professing Christians who dress that way or who allow their children to dress similarly commit sin. There can be no disputing that.

THOUGHTS ON UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE

The Bible itself is its own best commentary and study help. Some Bible books have a “key” or “theme” that is repeated again and again. When taken into consideration as you study a particular Bible book these help to understand the meaning and purpose of each one.

For instance: in the Book of Judges this statement is made twice and serves as a key to this book: **“In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes”** (Judges 17:6 & 21:25). Such was the spiritual condition of the people of Israel in the days of the judges. Bear this in mind when reading and studying that book.

Another example: The Book of Ecclesiastes has this phrase, **“under the sun”** repeated exactly 27 times. This expression does not appear anywhere else in your Bible. The phrase refers to natural life and has nothing to do with spiritual things. Written by **“the Preacher, the son of David,”** or Solomon, the purpose seems to be to show the emptiness and futility of life apart from God.

He wrote, **“I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit”** (Eccl. 1:14).

The word “vanity” appears 29 times in Ecclesiastes and is the word used to describe the unsaved man’s life “under the sun.” Solomon wrote: **“Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun”** (Eccl. 2:11). Keeping in mind the purpose and attitude of the writer will enable us to understand this Bible book. The lives of the unsaved are just chasing after the wind!

One further example, this time the Divine outline given of the Book of Revelation. John was told by **“one like unto the Son of man”** (Rev. 1:13) exactly what the outline of his book should be. Revelation 1:19 says: **“Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter.”** And that is exactly what John did! He was told first to write **“the things which thou hast seen:”** these things were the vision of the glorified Christ. They are to be found in chapter one. Next he wrote **“the things which are:”** the letters to the seven churches which existed in John’s day. And finally he wrote **“the things which shall be hereafter,”** or after these things – i.e. after the churches.

That John did this is seen in an examination of Revelation 4:1 where we read, **“After this [after John wrote to the seven churches] I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.”** So John

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BEREA BAPTIST BANNER

Financial Report

3-1-2020 to 3-31-2020

Beginning Balance	\$2,074.44
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	300.00
Bruce Allen, Pooler, GA	25.00
Carol Willett, Cottonwood Shores, TX	60.00
Citrus M. B. C. Inverness, FL	25.00
Faith B. C., Lynn, AR	12.50
Grace B. C., Gladwin, MI	50.00
Grace B. C., Rural Hall, NC	50.00
Grace Missionary B. C. Tulsa, OK	35.00
Indore B. C., Indore, WV	100.00
Jimmie Settlemoir, Lizton, IL	40.00
Kay Umfress, Mantachie, MS	100.00
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
Parkway L. B. C., Springfield, OR	100.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL	100.00
Portland B. C., Plumerville, AR	50.00
Southside B. C., Fulton, MS	25.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Silsbee, TX	30.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Wellington, KS	100.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA	25.00
Subscriptions	40.00
Anonymous	220.00
Dividing checks	300.00
Sub Total	\$2,632.50
TOTAL	\$4,706.94
EXPENDITURES:	
Printing	490.00
Postage	573.36
Supplies	193.65
Wages	2,300.00
FICA	175.96
Dividing checks	300.00
Bank charge (Feb & Mar)	26.00
Total Expenditures	\$4,058.97
ENDING BALANCE	\$647.97



BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST

Financial Report

3-1-2020 to 3-31-2020

Beginning Balance	\$2,671.09
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	225.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	200.00
Calvary Ind. B. C., Sumas, WA	100.00
TOTAL	525.00
TOTAL	3,196.09
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio Time	363.98
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	363.98
.....	2832.11
Interest	+0.02
ENDING BALANCE	\$2,832.13

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Brother Tom Ross is reprinting a revised and enlarged version of Cultivating Christian Character which includes 7 new chapters. He is also doing a reprint of Teachings on the Local Church.

Both books must be ordered and prepaid by May 15th. Cultivating Christian Character is \$14 plus postage. Teachings on the Local Church is \$16 plus postage. On orders of 25 books or more there will be free shipping. On orders of 50 books or more there will be a discount of \$2 per book and free shipping.

For more details you may contact Bro. Ross via Facebook Messenger, or email tomross@zoominternet.net; or text message at 304-617-6843 to get an order form with postage rates. Send all checks or money orders payable to Tom Ross to 6339 County Rd. 15; South Point, OH 45680.

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Cortland, Ohio, has called Elder Nathan Long as pastor and he has accepted the call. Please remember this church and their new pastor in your prayers.

The Grace Bible Baptist Church of Denham Springs has called Elder Robert (Bob) Keller as pastor and he has accepted. Please remember this church and their new pastor in your prayers.

The Beauty Mountain Baptist Church of Edmond, WV has called Bro. Jonathan Bailess as pastor. Please remember this church and their new pastor in your prayers.

The Grace Missionary Baptist Church of Temperance, MI, and

pastor Joe Sidders would like to announce Revival Services for May 28th -31st.

Service times are Thursday thru Friday at 7:00 p.m., Saturday Fellowship meal at 5:00 p.m. followed by services, Sunday 10:00 a.m.

Speakers are: Thursday, Elder Michael Jackman; Friday, Elder Justin Meier; Saturday, Elder David Green; Sunday, Missionary Nathan Long and Elder Matthew Stepp.

Should you need accommodation options or more information please contact pastor Sidders at (567) 686-7853.

The Indore Baptist Church of Indore, WV, and pastor Paul Stepp would like to announce their annual Bible Conference scheduled for June 19th thru 21st.

Service are Friday at 7:00 p.m., Saturday 9:30 a.m., and Sunday at 9:30 a.m.

There are two speakers scheduled for Friday evening. Saturday has four speakers in the morning followed by lunch with two in the afternoon. Three speakers are scheduled for Sunday morning service followed by a noon meal that will conclude the conference.

All are invited to attend.

For more information contact Pastor Stepp at (304) 807-5069.

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 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.

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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.

The Short Pews

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wrote from chapter four verse one onward of things that shall be after the churches. [Brackets added].

Only the pre-millennial, pre-tribulation position on the return of Christ in the air for His Bride and her friends fits with John's Christ-given outline. The "mid-trib," "post-trib," "pre-wrath," etc., eschatological positions on the rapture ignore this outline of the Book of Revelation. Consequently they divide this Bible book contrary to its proper outline.

Let us be careful students of the Word of God paying attention to repeated words and phrases and instructions given for the writing of our Bibles. Only in this way will we properly understand the meaning and intent of the penmen and of God the Spirit who superintended their writings to give us the Word of God.

