

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

The Approaching Storm

By Joseph M. Sidders
of Guntown, Mississippi

"But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness,



that that day should overtake you as a thief" (I Thess. 5:1-4).

From Lincoln, Nebraska we hear the following report. "I was about 6 or 7 years old, living in Lincoln, NE, and ready to end the school year. Coming home from school one day, I saw a dark blue to gray

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Luke 9:46-56

By Roy Mason
(1894 - 1978)

LUKE 9:46-56

I am going to begin reading with verse 46 and continue through verse 56, "Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest. And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by him. And said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive



me receiveth him that sent me: for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great. And John answered

and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbad him, because he followeth not with us. And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for

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The True Gospel

By Tom Ross
of South Point, Ohio



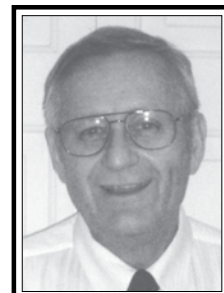
"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness" (Rom. 1:16-18).

Like Paul, I am not ashamed of the true Gospel of Christ. The Gospel of Christ is the demonstration of God's power in the salvation of sinners. Many people in our religious world have different opinions as to what the Gospel is. There are not many Gospels; there is only one. The one and only true Gospel must be believed and obeyed in order for a sinner to be delivered from the penalty and

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Baptist Preachers Parroting the Teachings of False "Jehovah's Witnesses"!

By William J. Stang
of Lexington, Kentucky



I have listened to some of our young preachers who have remarked from the pulpit that we have a serious problem with John 1:1. One, in particular, repeated this "we have a problem" stuff three or four different times in the course of his message. I do not lay the blame so much upon him as upon the Bible Institute teacher who taught him that. You have heard that "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing." This is truly a case thereof. Let me say that I, myself, do not have such a

problem with John 1:1 and I suspect most of our brethren have no such problem, but these who are deceived enough to say such a thing really do.

The issue is upon whether there is an article, no article, or a definite article between "...and the Word was ___ God." Is it "a God," or "the God, very God." Sadly, they are displaying the most shallow of an understanding

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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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STATION	TIME	DIAL	WATTS
WCNA, Myrtle, MS.....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.	95.9	3,000 F M
WCTT, Corbin, KY	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.	680	5,000 A M
WFTA, Tupelo, MS.....	Sunday 9:30 - 10:00 a.m.	101.9.....	3,000 F M
KARL, Blaine, WA	Saturday 10:30 - 11:00 a.m.	550	5,000 A M

Approaching Storm

(Continued from page 1) ♦

cloud coming towards my house. It was weird because as a little kid I probably wouldn't know what a super-cell was. I saw my mom's car and then heard her yell my name. It scared me because she was so loud and said to 'get in the car now'. I didn't know what was happening so I ran to the car and got in. She immediately started the car and told me to buckle up. So I did and she backed out. That is when I looked back at the cloud and it terrified me. The cloud had a small funnel- looking cloud inside of it. My mom said to keep my eyes ahead. We eventually got to the house and then we heard a loud siren. She said to get inside the house now and get downstairs. My dad looked scared. He brought the radio and a flashlight, while my mom got some batteries and snacks. Once we all got downstairs, we heard really loud banging on the roof. My dad said that it was hail, and my mom was trying to keep me and my sisters calm. Then after a few minutes it got quiet, so we turned on the radio and heard that an EF-2 tornado touched down just east of Sheridan Elementary (my school), ripping a chunk of the school off. I was really sad and near bawling, and then I heard a massive loud rumble that began to shake the house. Then the lights went out. My dad turned on the flashlight and the rumble began to slow. We listened to the radio and heard that something was dissipating. I could not understand what it was saying but I assumed it meant tornado. This was the scariest moment of my life and I hope nothing like this happens ever again."

Over in Haltom City, Texas we read a story from April 4, 2007.

"Storms were everywhere, and sirens were going off. My father's friend, who owned the property, told me the following story the day after the storm while he was recovering from injuries in the hospital. They were standing outside while sirens were going off looking at the skies when things got unusually calm and quiet. My father looked up and saw a 'hole' in the sky and shouted 'RUN!!!!'. The friends split up. My father went under a large wooden rack where tons of lumber was stored. His friend hung onto an oak tree and didn't let go. Debris flew all around them severing my father's ear in half. When that happened, he looked over and saw the shelf was going to collapse on top of my father. He shouted for him to get out from under the lumber and run to the tree but unfortunately the sound of the roaring tornado was too loud for my father to hear his friend. The shelf collapsed with my father under it and the F1 lifted up and was over. After my father got pulled out with the help of everyone that was around, someone performed CPR but there was no saving his life. He had no broken bones and his body was still intact. The medical examiner ruled it cardiac dysrhythmia. My father's friend made it out with cuts and bruises."

Finally a case from Little Rock, Arkansas which reads "I was out on the back lot, what we call the backing pad, when it began to storm. So I told everybody to take shelter until the lightning stopped. Some people went to their cars; some went inside. It was just a light rain and the lightning was in the distance so I stayed in my pickup truck parked next to a fence with a large tree in front of me and a metal carport to the left of me. Directly behind

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PONDERING THE TIME



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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).



LOVE YOUR WIFE

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Eph. 5:25).

There is no question how much a husband is supposed to love his wife, **"even as Christ also loved the church."** Why did God never tell the wife the same requirement? It is because the wife is subject to her husband. Husbands and wives are not on equal footing in the family, the wife is subject unto her husband, yes even in the twenty-first century.

"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing" (Eph. 5:22-24). There is really no question what the word submit means; it means "to be subordinate" which means "under the authority or control of another." There is not a more blessed woman than one who serves the Lord in the family as the Lord has commanded her. This is the way God has ordained the family; the husband is the leader, then the wife, then the children, and God is Head of the family. There is no question what God is saying, He could not have spelled it out any clearer.

But our focus today is on the husband, and how much he is to

love his wife, **"as Christ also loved the church"**, men, that is a tall order! A man's wife is a gift from God, as children are. As Christian men we are to love and cherish God's gifts to us. It is sad that most families do not understand God's order for the family, but the world also does not accept much of what God orders. Only true Christian families are subject to God's commandments; those who do not accept and follow God's commandments are obeying the world and not God.

The reason God ordered the husband to love his wife with such great love is compared only to Christ's love for His church. Now, husbands, that is great love, we are not commanded to love anyone outside of the Lord Himself with such love. People often ask other people who have been married for such a long time, "What is the secret"? It is a family living biblically ordered lives. The key to everything in life is "love and obedience." The greatest Christian, church, or family is those who obey God and His scriptural commands. Those that refuse are scriptural dysfunctional, and nothing works as God said it would. A marriage between a man and a woman is meant to be for a lifetime, and obeying God is the foundation to that marriage lasting for a lifetime. Gentlemen, let us all show our wives the love God has commanded, and we are without excuse if we do not. Ladies, serve your husbands as a help-mate

and not as a ruler, a good wife always inserts the Scripture in her life. We are to obey God and not the opinions of the world, Satan controls the thinking of this world. Husbands love your wives as Christ loves the church; think about that.

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



Approaching Storm

(Continued from page 2) ♦

me, sitting perpendicularly to my pickup truck, was a semi-truck. The rain was light. My truck was running and I had the windshield wipers on. I looked out the driver's side window and noticed it was getting a little windy; some of our camping chairs blew over.

I looked out my right windshield and noticed the vines growing along the fence were starting to blow around kind of funny. A moment later, just like that, all around me was wind and it got really dark. The wind was going in a way that I've never seen before. Then a section of a roof blew over me and just shredded apart mid-air. That's when the back windshield on my pickup truck shattered, throwing glass all over me.

The tree sitting directly in front of me, which was relatively large, blew over like it was nothing. Also part of the fence blew over top of the hood of my pickup. I crouched down real low in the driver's seat and just prayed. I held onto the steering wheel for dear life. I could feel the back of the truck lifting. I could still see out the front windshield and I could see power lines exploding out in front of me. The visibility was really poor at this point but I could still see the flashes. It lasted for about 45 seconds but it seemed like a

lifetime. I remember praying out loud and my hands were shaking. I was freaking out and praying to God thinking that I probably wouldn't live. I could see the semi that was behind me had blown over top of me and landed next to the carport.

I could barely walk. I was in a state of shock, knee-deep in flood water. I walked around more or less like a zombie shaking and trembling, looking at the other two semis that had blown over. There were people running about in every direction. I don't know how long I wandered around. Some of my other instructor colleagues saw me and came up to me and asked me if I was okay. I couldn't even speak. Finally, I managed to phone my wife at work but she can't pick up so I left a voicemail that she still has; I don't think I ever want to hear that message because I do remember I was screaming.

I don't know how long it took me to calm down and regain my senses. I've been through a couple traumatic incidents in my life as a veteran of the Gulf War. This was, hands down, one of the most traumatic and terrifying moments of my life. I think the real reason why I was so terrified because I had no training, no warning, and no defense against whatever was coming."

In II Peter 3:10-12, Peter poses a question we must answer here today **"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all**

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Approaching Storm

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holy conversation (This word for ‘conversation’ is ἀναστrophή [anastrophē] and Strong’s defines it as ‘manner of life, conduct, behaviour, deportment’) **and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?”**

I write to you today concerning the subject of the approaching storm. I have given you some examples to consider of what essentially is the most basic response of many folks to a sudden storm. The Lord’s return is not sudden in the sense that it is unexpected. Of the precise time, we know not, but we do know He is coming, praise the Lord!

First let us notice the emotion that these survivors describe in their accounts. Notice in the example from Nebraska how the volume of the mother’s voice and the look of fear in the father’s eyes petrified the child. His own words read that he was “really sad and near bawling” and that it was the “scariest moment of my life and I hope nothing like this happens ever again.” Grown men in Texas in our second example were shouting for one another to “run.” The veteran in Arkansas prayed because there was nothing else he could do. He described his own emotions well when he said he could not even audibly speak. He had said he could not listen to his own voice message to his wife today because of the volume and emotion in his own voice on the day of the event. I think that perhaps the most profound portion of all three accounts came from this veteran when he said “This was, hands down, one of

the most traumatic and terrifying moments in my life...because I had no training, no warning, and no defense against whatever was coming.”

I want to ask you this day, have you ever witnessed to your loved ones with this emotion in mind? Our beloved Sunday school teacher here at Berea, Brother Steven Kiser, said that “No man should die untrained.” He was describing a military style mantra that spoke to the level of understanding and preparedness a soldier should have before going into the field. Our brother was brilliantly using this as an illustration for how we should warn others of judgment of the Lord. So I ask you again, when is the last time you warned others about this approaching storm that is the wrath of God with such emotion as we see above? Let us go a few steps further and consider our holy living...Christians, do we tithe with this emotion in mind? Do we sing or pray with this emotion? Do we sing “Praise Him praise Him” with the joy of surviving the coming storm, not based on merit, but solely on the grace of God?

I now want to speak to the lost with this article: has anyone ever warned you of the coming judgment of God in such a way that you sense the panic that should precede this approaching storm particularly, for you will be caught in His crosshairs lest the Lord Himself save you?

Secondly, let us notice the speed of this approaching storm. Think of these examples with me again, please. Do you recall the urgency in the mother’s voice as she was yelling for her child desperately to get into the car...yelling to the point she scared the child? If you recall (or revisit) the account the child saw his home in the distance

yet the eagerness of his mother caused for her to drive the short distance to ensure his safety. Would we yet today travel even a short distance that one might be spared the devastation of the approaching storm?

The man in Texas saw the hole in the sky and shouted “run” to all who could hear. **“He that hath an ear let him hear!”** Run to Jesus, beloved! If you are reading this and you know not the One who has saved my soul, hear me now; you cannot and will not experience nor even see the Kingdom of Heaven lest ye be born again. Get into His Word; there are countless websites and phone applications now in which you can do this for free. Read the Holy Scriptures and believe. This storm is real and it is coming quickly.

Think of the incident in Little Rock where little urgency was given to the man’s warning to seek cover from the signs of the storm. “Some went to their cars, some went inside...” The man described dangers all around, ‘appearances of evil’ if you will, yet very little haste was shown. He said “A moment later, just like that, all around me was wind and it got really dark. The wind was going in a way that I have never seen before.” Oh how it ought to break our hearts that the judgment of God might come upon our loved ones in such a way. Will they be able to say they were never told? That they were never warned?

Finally, we must make a note of the devastation and finality of the approaching storm. I find eye-witness testimonies like this to be fascinating because you are reading the words of someone who was completely without power or control. If you are hearing them tell you the tale you can still see the emotion welling

to the surface in their eyes and mannerisms. Again I have to ask: when was the last time you gave your testimony in such a way? You, dear elect child of God, were completely without power or control on the day of your salvation. Where is the emotion in our retelling of the old-old story of how our Savior came from glory to save a wretch like us? We had no power by which to call down forgiveness from the Omnipotent One. We had absolutely no control in that we could bob-and-weave out of the storms path by creatively laying claim to falling grace intended for our neighbors. There was no merit by which we could hope to earn the Savior’s attention and there would be no condition in which we could change His mind.

Our text there in I Thessalonians speaks truly of **“sudden destruction”** and the lost being without escape from the wrath of God. This is the approaching storm that we should be crying out to “RUN to Jesus that ye might escape!” If your loved ones were in the path of a terrible storm, would you not cry out with all that you had to give them a warning? “Maybe” you say “they’ll be safe and the storm will go over or past them,” child of God, maybe those you might witness to are already saved by God’s grace...but what if they are not?

“..What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation (manner of life, conduct, behavior, deportment) **and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat”** (II Peter 3:11-12).

What other conversations are

♦ (Continued on page 5)



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).

GOOD GRIEF

"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted" (Matt. 5:4). Mourning is grief too deep to conceal, so how can someone who mourns be considered blessed? I have attended funerals where the deceased did not know Jesus Christ as Saviour and unless God had mercy at the last moments of life, they were in Hell. The family, themselves without Christ, were despondent mourners, without hope. Does Jesus say these mourners are blessed? No, I do not believe so. The particular kind of blessing comes from a particular kind of mourning. The gospel mourning that brings blessing is a Holy Spirit produced mourning over sin. There is a worldly kind of mourning that works death and has no good end and produces nothing but more sorrow. Judas mourned this way after betraying Christ, and his self-centered sorrow led him to commit suicide. II Corinthians 7:9-11 gives us a clear picture of the two different types of mourning, **"...godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation...but the sorrow of the world worketh death."**

Jesus is talking about mourning over our sin, what it is, and what it does. Sin is the true cause of all our sorrow. The wages of sin is death and when sin entered the world, so did the curse for it. We should weep over sin, because of its treachery, and the destruction it wreaks on humanity. Sin is rebellion and lawlessness. It is enmity against God and dishonors His holy name. Iniquity tramples on God's law, makes light of His love, and grieves

His Spirit. Personally, sin steals our joy and robs us of all comfort. Trespassing the law is the path of the Devil, it wounds us, hurts us, hardens us, and kills us. Sin is a reproach to any people and the filthy garments of a wicked people. And we do it willingly.

Do you weep over sin? Do you cry out like the Apostle, **"Oh wretched man that I am!"** (Rom. 7:24), and if you cannot weep, do you mourn it? Sin hardens the heart and worldliness sears the conscience all the while, pulling us down the broad path that leads to destruction. The wages of sin is death. Not only physical death, but spiritual death and those who die in sin will spend eternity in the Lake of Fire. The idea of the eternal night, where the worm dies not, is a horrid prospect. And the Bible says, **"...all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"** (Rom. 3:23).

Do you mourn? Then lift up your eyes because there is hope. **"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"** (I John 1:9). Do not follow the path of Judas, but Christ. Indeed, mourn over sin, but then go to the One who can cleanse you. Christ heals those wounded and brokenhearted mourners. There is happiness because those who truly mourn over sin will find hope, help, healing in the blood of Christ.

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



Approaching Storm

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left for the born-again believer to have outside of this "holy" one described here? What shall the opened books say of us in our time before the King of kings and Lord of lords?

To get the full context of what Peter was writing, let us now read II Peter 3. **"This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour: Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass**

away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen."

Much like Noah we have been charged with crying to this dying world that a storm quickly approaches. There can be no escape except through the Ark that is Jesus Christ. We can be sealed from the wrath of God if we are found in Him. Do you know the Lord Jesus to be your Savior?

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Approaching Storm

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Are you truly born-again?

Hear me well, this storm is coming. These illustrations are poor ones in that many of us know of tornadoes that have come near our homes, but it always seems to happen somewhere else and to someone else. This storm that is God's wrath shall be sent forth for every sinner. Either it was poured out on the Son, Jesus Christ, and we were saved from that eternity in Hell we so richly deserve, or it will be poured out on us for all eternity. The rich man in Luke 16 awoke to find himself in Hell praying that Lazarus or some man be sent to warn his brethren of the approaching storm. No man should die untrained, let God's people truly go unto all nations declaring **"Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand"** (Matt. 4:17).



Baptist Preachers

(Continued from page 1) ♦

of the Greek language. It is simply not as simple as all that. There is such a thing as the "anarthrous" use of the article in the Greek language. The "an" means "no" while the "arthrous" indicates the article itself. Yet the very absence of the article is considered a use of the article itself. To be exact, there are specific instances where the very absence of the article denotes an emphatic construction giving more definiteness than a simple article itself can denote. In other words the exceptions to the rule are more important than the general rule itself. For those who do not know what we are talking about, think of "a" or "an" as an indefinite article, while "the" is a definite article. But again, it is not

as simple as to leave it at that.

When I took my first year Greek down at Clarksville Baptist College the grammar book we used was Summers' *Essentials of New Testament Greek*. I suspect it is the same book that our Bible Institute teacher used. It is the most condensed and abbreviated Greek grammar that there is on the market. If that is all you know about the Greek language then you know little indeed. Some only remember one sentence in an early chapter and nothing of the rest of the book. On page 16, in one of the very first few chapters, in an introductory chapter on nouns, Summers gives this short sentence on the article because he will need to use the article to introduce the noun. He says: "There is no indefinite article in Greek" on page 16. So, generally, in a sentence speaking about a man, if there is no article the student is to think: "a man." But he does not have a whole chapter about the article itself until one of the very last chapters of the book. He does so because he knows that the study of the article in the Greek is one of the very most involved studies there is into Greek grammar. In A. T. Robertson's Greek grammar he devotes the whole of 42 pages just to the study of the article itself. Dana and Mantey *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament* gives a full 19 pages to the study of it. Both of them speak extensively about the anarthrous use of the article explaining that in such a sentence structure it is the identity and the quality of the character that stands out, and they both use John 1:1 as their primary example of a sentence structure where the anarthrous use stands out denoting that the "Word" is indeed "God very God." It is the primary example they

give as the proof of how emphatic (emphasis) the anarthrous use can be.

When A. T. Robertson's book was published in 1914, Dana and Mantey said it was far superior to any Greek grammar previously written. Sadly, there were those of the false "Jehovah Witness" category who, just like our Bible Institute teacher, took one such sentence out of his book out of context and began teaching that "See, even according to a Baptist teacher's Greek grammar book, Christ was just 'a' god." I guarantee you that they did not bother to read the 42 pages on the complete use of the article in his book. And that they, as our poorly informed brethren, knew nothing about the anarthrous use.

In Dana and Mantey's book the exact page that he discusses the anarthrous use in which he gives John 1:1 as the primary example is on page 140. He says that it "emphasizes Christ's participation in the essence of the divine nature." And goes on to say: "The articular construction emphasizes identity; the anarthrous construction emphasizes character." In A. T. Robertson's book the best pages to begin your understanding of the use of the article is pages 754-756, and wherein he specifically refers to John 1:1 is pages 767 & 795 as a prime example of this anarthrous use designating an emphatic sentence structure, and there are probably others as well. In his index of quotations on page 1315 he lists twelve references to John 1:1 throughout his book. Summers' does not name the anarthrous use by name. He tries to describe it somewhat without calling it by name in that 12th chapter of his book on page 129 (a bad idea in most any case). He does his readers a great disservice in that. Like a parent trying to

keep his children from finding the gun in the closet when they already know that it is there. They just do not understand the use thereof. A surer way of getting them to go wrong by wanting to play with it and end up misusing it I know not of. Those of us who have successfully trained our children in the safe use of firearms early on, therefore taking all the mystery out of guns, know what I am talking about. My grand children represent at the least the 4th generation so trained without incident. So much for that rabbit trail. But Summers book is a total of 171 pages including all the indices thereof and there are many. There are but 134 pages of text. A. T. Robertson's is 1454 pages. Dana and Mantey's is 368. Our first year, first day Greek Scholar at the Bible Institute has a lot to learn. But I must admit, so do I. Even after two years of Greek I am but as a young child. And yet this one thing I know: John 1:1 in the KJV is a good translation thereof.

You must understand that in the grammarian's way of thinking even where there is no use of a definite article it may be the anarthrous use; or the absence of the article itself can be considered a special use of the article. No article itself is a use of the article. Just read their books and see. The context, subject and sentence structure itself denotes the anarthrous use, denoting an emphatic sentence structure. The word order may be different in the Greek but the anarthrous use still designates the emphatic nature of the sentence. The King James translators understood that and thus set the word order in the English to do just that: denote an emphatic sentence structure. If you ever hear someone read

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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).

SENT INTO THE STORM

"And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away" (Matt. 14:22).

There is a passage of Scripture in Matthew 14 that encourages me. It is the account of the disciples caught in the storm. Many would focus on Peter walking on the sea and we will get there but first do not miss all the blessings of God's sovereignty (Absolute rule, power, and control).

First of all, who is Jesus? He is God in the flesh. Not 50/50 God and man. He is 100% God and 100% man. Having all the capacities of both. Understanding that God has absolute power over everything in His creation; did He "accidentally" send His disciples into the storm? Surely not. He sent them on purpose and for His purpose. Can the wind blow without God? Can the storms rage without God? Can the disciples take another breath without God? No God sent the disciples into this storm and did so absolutely without question on purpose. He constrained them, He did not suggest it, He made sure they met their providential storm right on time.

"But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary" (Matt. 14:24).

Secondly, notice that Jesus did not come to their aid ahead of the storm. He would come to their aid,

walking on the water but not until this providential storm did what Jesus has purposed it to do. He could have spared them the storm but that was not His purpose in it. Put yourself in these disciples' shoes for a moment. They have fought the rigging. They have rowed to fight the contrary wind. They have let down sea anchors to steady the ship. They have done everything within their human capabilities to do and now they were at the mercy of the storm. Now they were in the right place. Now they needed a Savior.

"And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea" (Matt. 14:25).

Third, **"In the fourth watch."** The last part of night as the dawn approaches. These disciples are spent. They are ready to surrender to the storm. They have no strength left. Now the Savior arrives. And He does so in divine fashion walking upon the stormy seas. The storm has no effect upon the One who sent it. Also if you read this passage of Scripture you will notice a shift in the account from here. The storm is no longer the focus. The focus has now been shifted to the One walking on the stormy seas. He has captivated the attention of His disciples. The wind and the waves have lost any power to trouble the disciples. All their focus is on Him.

"But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid" (Matt. 14:27).

Fourth, Jesus speaks and says be not afraid. And we know His word has authority because Peter went from terrified to walking on the water in verse 28. Do not miss this, the storm has not stopped. Jesus says **"be not afraid"** and obviously His word had an effect but the storm still rages. Jesus does not have to stop the storm to speak peace to your soul.

"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" (Matt. 14:28-29).

Fifth, now we get to Peter walking on the sea. Could Peter have ever done this without being sovereignly sent into that storm? There is a purpose to every storm that God sends us into. Consider all the good that came from going through this storm. The disciples understood more about Jesus and His power. Peter learned more about trusting Jesus. The disciples learned that there is comfort in any circumstance with Christ. The multitudes through the ages that have read this account have had their faith in Jesus bolstered. And these are just the quick observations of my finite mind. The effects go far beyond what I can grasp.

"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" (Matt. 14:30-31)?

Sixth, we see why the storms can affect us. The storms cannot touch us when we keep our eyes on Him. But when we look at the storms we begin to sink. Jesus will never allow us to be swallowed up

by the storm. He will catch us. He will not suffer His people to be overwhelmed.

Finally, can you not see the application for you today, dear Christian? We will always have storms. Some personal that only you go through. Some Christians experience as a whole, but Jesus will not let you down. Keep focusing on politics and all you are doing is focusing on the storm. But remember the storms are always and every time on purpose and for a purpose of good. **"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose"** (Rom. 8:28).

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



Baptist Preachers

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very laboriously and without any emphasis, very hard to follow; you know one thing for sure: they have no understanding of grammar. Grammar gives us reading instructions. It tells us how to read the sentence. (Some of you who do read well with good emphasis where it is due, may have more of an innate understanding of grammar than you thought). Nevertheless, in John 1:1 the instruction is to pause just before the last word "God" to give emphasis to that: **"and the word was (p) GOD."** The King James translators were far and away some of the best language scholars the world has ever seen.

But now I must turn to what I believe really lies at the root of this problem, it is in the lack of confidence that these young men and others are having in the preservation of the received texts,

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for this is what I fear their problem really is: they do not trust in the worthiness and preservation of the Word of God itself! There is a tendency to be carried away with new and weakened versions based upon untrustworthy texts that leads to a willingness to stand before our people casting doubt upon the preserved Word.

Let me say: I believe that there are no doubt distinctions in the methodologies which God used between inspiration and preservation, all of which we may not fully know; and of which men like Peter Ruckman does not account; nevertheless we should not be so quick as to write off God's sovereign ability to accomplish His purpose in the preservation of the texts as being just as capable as His sovereign hand was at the writing of it. Let me suggest, you would not question His ability to do it. Why should you question His doing it? He promised He would do it. For example: Repeated in all three synoptic Gospels for emphasis: **"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away"** (Matt. 24:35, Mark 13:31, Luke 21:33). And again: **"The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations"** (Ps. 33:11). Also: **"For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations"** (Ps. 100:5). And, at the end of the Book of Revelation He gives strict warning to any who would add to or take away from His words. I should think that to cast doubt upon them is equally such an offense in His sight.

Let me ask: Who did God give His Word to? To His people? Or to a few false clerics in the Vatican

library and a handful of monks down in a monastery in the Sinai Peninsula, where they were buried for well over a millennial and a half? That is where the Vaticanus and the Sinaticus texts came from. The Sinaticus was found in a trash can in that Sinai monastery and the Vaticanus was lost in the stacks of the Vatican library, both deemed unworthy of use. Not till the German Count von Tischendorf found and stole that manuscript out of that trash can and sold it for as much as he could get for it in 1844, and then in the later 1800's they trotted that unused (to this point) Vaticanus text out to support the theories of Westcott and Hort, not till then was there even the question made: "which is the Word of God?" "which is the preserved text?" I pray some of our brethren would examine well the questioning of that most subtle of serpents in Genesis chapter 3 wherein he said **"Yea, hath God said,..."** Putting the question in Eve's mind, "has He really said?" "Are you sure of that?" He is still whispering that into the ears of everyone who reads "these verses are not in the most ancient and reliable texts." I tell you they are neither the most ancient nor the most reliable, but only those who take it upon themselves to really study it out will ever know just how subtle and treacherous that devil really is, and how important this issue. Everyone I know who has really studied this out has come to the conclusion that those two texts are what is left over from the fifty copies that Emperor Constantine commissioned Origen, the third century gnostic, to make. Constantine wanted total compliance. He wanted every faction to join his new state church. The bone he threw to Origen and the gnostics was

giving Origen this commission to make those fifty copies to be put in the leading churches of the empire. Sinaticus and Vaticanus are the only two that remain. And just as befitting today's modern gnostics, the false "Jehovah's Witnesses," they deny the deity of Christ, the doctrine of the trinity, and the eternity of hell. Interestingly, most all of the verses that are put in question by the Sinaticus and the Vaticanus are verses that teach exactly those doctrines. Selah. The doctrines they deny they leave out, though not as thoroughly as they might have hoped in the 3rd & 4th century (it was, after all, the age of controversy, division, and heresy) and so the attempt to remove those doctrines is still there as demonstrated in those two texts.

The Textus Receptus, the Received Texts, and the Byzantine Texts are all the same thing: the texts of the people. When the Byzantine Empire fell with the fall of Constantinople in 1453 those Greek-speaking people took their Greek texts throughout all Europe. This was the true beginning or impetus of the Reformation, though most people miss this fact. Between those and the texts that the Anabaptists already had, there were 1,000's and 1,000's of complete texts or portions thereof. And doctrinally: **THEY ALL AGREE IN ONE!** And the history of the preserved text largely goes hand in hand with a people often called "Anabaptists;" imagine that! But Sinaticus and Vaticanus do not even agree with each other. If you get that, the rest comes easily. At the end of the 1800's when the modern "textual critics" were raving about these two corrupted texts they called them "the most ancient and reliable texts." Though that has since been proved to be a

misnomer this critical crowd are yet to this day repeating it.

True, our texts were being used. They were thumbled to death. They were not buried in a dry, arid climate of a monastery or left unopened in a library in Rome. God's people **USE** their Bibles! But those who believe God's Word keep God's Word. There is much in the Bible about those who "keep" His Word. But those who do not believe it throw it away. We are talking about a people who wrote His Word upon their hearts and meticulously made copies when they wore their old copies out. They were a people who thumbled their Bibles to death. But yet the thousands of copies of such still to this day doctrinally agree perfectly! Listen, Origen could not personally make those 50 copies for the state churches. It is known that he distributed the work to other Gnostics in Alexandria and Antioch and other centers of Gnosticism. But why does one of those copies leave the exact space on the precious parchment - the exact sized area left blank - for the size of that large passage that was left out of both of those two corrupted texts, if that one particular scribe did not know that what he was doing was wrong? (On a parchment deemed so precious that spaces were not even left between words!) And how is it that now that the Dead Sea Scrolls have been discovered we find an exact full copy of the Isaiah scroll that perfectly agrees with the text behind our KJV Old Testament that even predates any of Origen's by 100's of years? Again, "those who believe God's Word, keep God's Word; those who do not believe it throw it away." (With partial reference to those Sinai monks who tossed their copy in the trash, and also

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Small Drops

By Joseph M. Sidders of
Guntown, Mississippi

"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).



COME AS YOU ARE

I hate going to a new event and having to figure out how to dress, what to bring and so on. The idea of preparing for something unfamiliar is so overwhelming that I would as soon stay in bed most times! What if I wear a suit when everyone else will just be casual? What if I wear a long sleeve shirt and it ends up being extremely hot in the venue?

Charlotte Elliot, the poet, was at a party one evening when she was asked if she was a Christian. The question, though very simply stated, drove her into a tailspin. According to one person's account she was kept awake by distressing thoughts of her condition, which led to questioning her own uselessness and inability to change her condition in hopes of changing her answer to this question.

"Charlotte began to question the reality of her whole spiritual life and wondered whether it were anything better, after all, than an illusion of emotions..." according to *The Hymns and Hymn Writers of the Church Hymnary*.

Completely overwhelmed by the idea that she could not have been less prepared to answer the question, "are you a Christian?" Charlotte did not sleep for two days as she wrestled spiritually with all she had felt was real in her life until she felt it bubble over from her insides. A peace is described as falling over her from a sensation that started at her top and fell to her toes. She described this as not being emotion but rather her salvation: her Lord,

His power, and His promise.

Being a poet Charlotte sat to describe this sensation she now called, "the formulae of her faith." This exercise led her to believe that on her own she would have continued in fear, that grace must be of God! Of the effect of His grace on her soul she wrote: "Just as I am – without one plea; just as I am – and waiting not; just as I am – though tossed about; just as I am – poor, wretched, blind; just as I am – thou wilt receive; just as I am – Thy love unknown; just as I am – of that free love, the breadth, length, depth, and height to prove, here for a season, then above, - O Lamb of God, I come!"

This poem was of course written into a hymn *Just As I Am*. What poured out of her the most in her writing was how she started each verse with "Just As I Am." She could not find this answer within herself because being a Christian, a follower of Christ, was not her decision to make. As she began to wrestle with what she could not find "that free love" was given to her, praise the Lord! Each verse she illustrates first that she just "is," she merely exists in a lost state. She could not hope to find her own salvation or to manufacture it in any way...a lost person knows where they are they would have no benefit from finding themselves, they need God, beloved!

At the end of each verse she exclaims in response to God's free gift, "O Lamb of God, I come." She has been quickened or made alive by God's love, by His simple words to Matthew in Matthew

9:9 "follow me" and now all that remained was to follow the irresistible call of her Lord and Savior. Charlotte responded the same way he did as she "arose and followed Him."

Is it not a great relief, dear friends, that the great Physician came to heal the sick? Not the best dressed or the wealthiest; nor even those have come the most "prepared" in their own works and efforts, but those penitent souls who realize they are but sinners in need of a Savior.

(Joseph Sidders is pastor of the Berea Baptist Church of Mantachie, Mississippi.)



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to those verses left out or "thrown away," in both Sinaticus and Vaticanus, and also, again, with reference to the modern critics who freely toss out and throw away quite a number of verses and whole passages practically at a whim). You would not believe how often our dear old Brother Ken Johnson drummed those words into our brains: "those who believe God's Word keep God's Word, and those who do not believe it throw it away."

I might add, that since those days of Westcott and Hort (late 1800's) other portions of text dated from BEFORE Origen's day have been uncovered that again agree fully with that family of texts behind the KJV. But the skeptics of the critical school of thinking still robotically roll off that rote phrase: "these verses are not in the most ancient and reliable texts" though it is been disproven time and again. They have made their bed and now they are committed to sleeping in it. And they will take as many as they can with them.

So, if those two disagreeing texts were the preserved text, were we without the Word of God those 1500+ years they were hidden? Or did God's people have the Word of God all along? Yes, they had the Textus Receptus, the received text of the people. That is what "Received Text" so indicates. It was the people's text. That is what "Recieved Text" means. That is what the history tells. And it was the text that the King James Bible was based upon. Other than in the commissioning of it, King James did not have anything to do with it. But the level of scholarship of the language scholars of that day was unparalleled before or since. It was in the divine providence of God that it happened that way. Those who would protest in some wise, invariably have no idea the enormity of what was accomplished there. And once God got His Word into the English language, why in the world would He Himself complicate the issue with a myriad of other later versions that only spread confusion? **"For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints"** (I Cor. 14:33). Those are not even "versions" in the true sense of the word, they are altogether new translations of corrupted texts. By "disagreeing versions" I mean that they disagreed not only with the TR family of texts, but that they disagreed with each other as well. The only Bible in the English language that is actually based upon the TR and gives no consideration whatsoever to any other text (as some of those modern translations that claim to be based upon the TR but yet give repeated consideration to those two corrupted texts time

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and again); but the KJV is truly the one and only translation from the TR that there is in the English language. It was made at a time when Sinaticus and Vaticanus were not even publically known.

The language scholars of today are of a different ilk. They call themselves textual critics. They believe it is their job to critique the Word of God. But one day soon they will find that rather than us critiquing the Word, it is the Word's job to critique us. We are not to correct it. It corrects us. We are not to change it. God's Word is to change us. The real problem we have with the Word of God is not at all the problem that young preacher supposed. The real problem we have is that our righteousness does not at all match God's holiness. And our only hope is that Christ, the living Word, is indeed the God that John 1:1 tells us He is, for anyone less could never save us from the just desert for the penalty of our sin.

As for myself, in all my years of studying the Word of God while appealing to the original languages for help, all I have ever been able to do with the Greek and the Hebrew is use it to help me to understand it a little better, ponder it a little deeper. Why, just the time that it takes to look into it gives me more time to think about what ever passage it is. But I have never yet been able to change the Word of God. It has oft given me a chance to consider the various nuances of a word. In the time spent my understanding may have been enlarged. But so too, may one who will take the time to use a good commentary, or even better yet, just making a habit of using the dictionary in the

back of Strong's Concordance, or other various Bible study helps to so come to a better understanding of a passage. But let us not lightly dismiss the fact that just by getting a faithful translation of the preserved texts into our language, God has opened up the understanding thereof to all who would seek therein.

Just think of that phrase: "the preserved texts." Those two passages I noted: Psalm 33:11, and Psalm 100:5 = preserved "to all generations." Sinaticus and Vaticanus missed out on 1,500 hundred years of being known to the generations of this world. What more need I say?

However much of the Word of God, was at any time given, it was from thence preserved. So though Baptists have now been parroting, off and on, for almost a whole century, the arguments of Charles Taze Russell and Judge Rutherford, who were themselves almost 1900 years too late; Should I not correct this error? In writing this I pray that I may deliver some from the error of preaching heresy from the pulpit. It is a serious thing to cast doubt upon the deity of Christ even if it might be unintentional. May God give us all wisdom.

So, grammatically, whether it is in the Greek or the English the word "God" in John 1:1 is the word that is to be emphasized; in the English by its emphatic position in the sentence structure, and in the Greek by the very anarthrous use of the article that our young critics are so worried about. By the way, if that Bible Institute teacher had just read and understood one of the last chapters of Summers' book, the one ON "the article" he may have been pointed aright. For it is the same thing that Summers is talking about when he speaks of "the divine character or essence

of God" on page 129 and 130, even alluding to John 1:1 there, though he does not name it. But if you were one of the King James translators and you were trying to figure out a way to express that emphasis from the Greek into the English, you would translate it in the exact English construction in which we find it. It really is an excellent translation. It really does mean the exact same thing with the exact same emphasis in both languages. It really is the preserved Word of God. Do not let the critics fool you.



Luke 9:46-56

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us. And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him. And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem. And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village."

I want to speak today on egotism, sectarianism, and the spirit of retaliation. The first thing we discover here in this passage is emotion, and verse 46 says, **"Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest."** One of the most dominating things in this world is egotism, and many people are

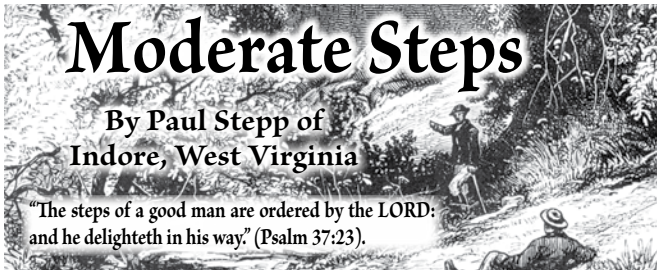
affected by it without realizing it. It is amazing how many people want to be "big shots" along some line or other. The disciples wrangled time and time again over who was the greatest. They even had an argument over that question on the night of the last supper, and Jesus terminated it by getting a basin of water and washing their feet. At the time we read about here, they probably thought that Jesus would overturn the Roman authority and would institute a temporal kingdom. If he did that, there would be places of prominence to fill, and each one wanted the biggest place. Somehow, people want power; they went to rule over their fellow creatures, and if they are given any authority, it goes to their head. Christianity back at the beginning had virtually no organization. Christ never planned any organization. He did not say to His disciples, "Tarry ye in Jerusalem until ye have mapped out an organization to reach the world." No, He said, "Tarry ye until ye have been endued with power from on high." But as time has gone on, Christianity has become a highly organized thing, and the modern church is simply organized to death, and the whole organization scheme is utterly contrary to the New Testament. Why has all this organization grown up? It is to play on human egotism. I have had people say to me, "The secret of a successful church is to organize so as to give everybody something to do." I do not believe one word of that. That "give everybody something to do" is not a thing in the world but a play on human egotism. The idea is to make a person fifteenth vice-president of something or other so as to make him feel that he is important. A lot of people fall for that sort of thing, and they go to church if they can officiate and can feel that they are some kind of a "big

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Moderate Steps

By Paul Stepp of
Indore, West Virginia

"The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD:
and he delighteth in his way." (Psalm 37:23).



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

The path of the just is the way in which the children of God must go. It is not just a good way; it is not just the right way; it is not just the direction in which we travel as a result of good moral decisions. Rather, the **"path of the just"** is Jesus Christ, Himself. We read in the New Testament, **"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). The path of the just is the way into Heaven and this way is Jesus Christ. The path of the just is the pursuit of truth, for Jesus Christ is Truth. The path of the just is the only means of eternal life; our Lord and Saviour is life everlasting.

This path of the just is not just the way that redeemed sinners travel, in the pursuit of truth and life, but this path of the just is itself just and true, holy and righteous, because of Jesus Christ. Only the just shall travel in this way, because the Just One has made the way for us. Christians should be honored and privileged to travel in such a way. Christians should be willing and eager to proceed along this path of the just. However, it seems that many Christians would rather travel a different way, and are so enamored by the pleasures of this world, that the path of the just seems not so inviting. Indeed, many so-called Christians today are only fooling

themselves. They do not know the One and only God and Saviour of men, or else they would love Him, follow Him, and rejoice to be included amongst the pilgrims who sojourn in the path of the just. **"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it"** (Matt. 7:13-14).

As God's people travel in this path of the just, the effects upon us are wonderful, transforming, and of enormous potential. To walk in this way, is to walk with and in Jesus Christ, to be close to Him, to be near Him, and as we move along this way to be more like Him. The farther we go with and in Jesus Christ, the more clearly we behold the shining light of the way. The farther we go towards God and Heaven, that light **"shineth more and more unto the perfect day."** In this life we can see God and His Son, Jesus Christ, through the eye of faith. In this life we can see somewhat of what and who He is. As we travel in this path of the just, our eyes are fixed, our minds are enlightened, our hearts are full, and our desires are focused on Him. More and more, as we travel this way, as men behold us in this life, we will become more and more like Him. Better able to tell others of Him, and better able to please Him and obey Him and exalt Him. Then, one day, we will come into His

presence and we will see Him as He is. **"For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known"** (I Cor. 13:12).

(Paul Stepp is pastor of the Indore Baptist Church of Indore, West Virginia.)



Luke 9:46-56

(Continued from page 10) ♦

shot," but the Bible knows nothing about all of the little jobs and offices that have been created to blow up human egotism. There are only two offices in a Scriptural church, the office of Pastor and Deacon. Every other office is man-created. Every church auxiliary on earth is without Bible warrant, and is an insult to Jesus Christ, for they indicate that Jesus did not have sense enough to organize His church like it should be organized. And I invite you to think over the statement that I have just made, and if it is not so, then I would like to know why it is not so. I have known all sorts of rivalries in churches as church members juggle for power and for position. If so and so was not elected for a certain office, he got mad and quit attending church, and maybe removed his membership. I have often thought of the two girls who played piano for a church that I was Pastor of out in Oklahoma. One played for the Sunday School and the other for the church service. The Sunday School pianist quit and said, "That other girl gets to play for the biggest crowd, and if I can not play for the biggest crowd, I am not going to play." There it was, same old wrangle that we read about here in our Scripture, so they reasoned as to which should be the greatest. Listen, when people act in that manner, they throw away whatever reward the Lord would otherwise give them. When people

serve to be seen of men, they get all the reward right there that they will ever get. Speaking of such people, Jesus said, "Verily, I say to you, they have their reward." There is not any place in the cause of Christ for this big shot stuff. There is not any place for self-seeking in an attempt to be something big in the sight of men. Even men in the ministry give way to egotism and a desire to be big and honored in the sight of men. They like to have places on boards and committees, and they like to be moderator of this or that. Listen, one day men shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ, and shall answer for their lives. In that day some strange things will be revealed. The big shot pastor and evangelist who made self-advancement the main thing will not be the big shot there. Many an humble man who served God faithfully and loyally, who received nothing in the way of worldly recognition, will be rewarded far above those who made the big stir in the world.

Jesus tells us how to be great, how to be truly great. Here in this Scripture, He says, "He that is least among you, the same shall be great." On another occasion, He told the disciples that the one who served the most was the greatest. I tell you, we act the fool when we throw away our eternal reward for the sake of the praise and the plaudits of men, and if we allow ourselves to work and do primarily to be seen of men, that is exactly what we shall do.

But let us pass on from this to another human weakness that is illustrated here in this Scripture, and I refer to bitter, mean sectarianism. In verse 49, we have John saying, "Lord, I saw a man doing things in your name, and I told him to cut it out, because he is not in our crowd." We have had that spirit

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. Could you comment on Proverbs 8:34?

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The first Scripture that comes to mind is spoken by Jesus himself: **"But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch"** (Mark 13:32-37).

Proverbs 8:34 is basically telling us that a man is blessed who listens, watches for, and is obedient to the Word of God. No matter where we are or what we are doing, we are ever to keep our eyes on Him!

In *Pilgrim's Progress* the Christian was told to stay on the path, no matter how narrow it got or how hard it was to see and get through, he was supposed to stay on the path. In other word's, keep your eyes on Jesus.

I remember my first pastor told us a story about a contest the

children were given to see who could walk the straightest line. After they all finished, the teacher asked Jonny, "How did you walk such a straight line?" Jonny said, "you see that big oak tree out there? I never took my eyes off it." Let us never take our eyes off of Jesus!

John Gill says concerning this verse: "Blessed is the man that heareth me, Christ in his Gospel, as speaking by his ministers; for hearing them is hearing him, Luke 10:16; they have their commission from him; are his ambassadors, and represent him; receive their gifts from him; speak according to his mind and will, revealed in his word, and preach him himself. This shows with what attention and reverence the Gospel should be heard; what credit should be given unto it; how it ought to be put in practice; this accounts for the efficacy of it on the souls of men, it being no other than the word of Christ, or Christ himself speaking; and from hence it appears how sad and dreadful will be the case of such that despise it: to hear it is the way to have the knowledge of Christ, and an increase of it; faith in Christ, and a growth therein; the joy of faith, and a furtherance of it; love to Christ, and aboundings in it; and to have spiritual food and nourishment; wherefore it is both the duty and privilege of persons to hear the Gospel of Christ, since these things come by it; watching daily at my gates; the gates of Wisdom's house, the church of Christ, which are the public ordinances thereof; called in Scripture the gates of Zion, Ps.


87:2; in allusion to the gates of cities, where Wisdom cries, or the ministers of Christ preach, Prov. 1:21; see Isa. 26:1; or to the gates of kings, palaces, where courtiers watch to be admitted and received as favourites, or to give in their petitions for themselves or others, Esther 6:10. The church is the palace of the great King; it is an honour to be admitted here, to have a name and a place here, and to sit with the King at his table."

There is more that he had to say, but I think this is sufficient to answer this particular question. God Bless!

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Proverbs 8:34 states: **"Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors."**

Much of Proverbs chapter eight deals with the Lord Jesus Christ as the personification of Wisdom. Christ is revealed in the chapter as the eternal and infinite God, in union with the Father from all eternity, and as a participant in the creation of the universe with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit (8:22-30). Starting in Proverbs 8:31-33 Christ, the second person of the Holy Trinity, is revealed as the only person of the Godhead whose responsibility was to take upon Himself human nature to live and dwell among men. Jesus Christ was born of a virgin, just as was prophesied by the prophet Isaiah. He lived among men and did what no other man has ever or will ever do. Jesus Christ lived a life of

complete perfection, fully obeying all of the law both inwardly and outwardly, thereby pleasing the Father in everything He did. He then willingly gave Himself as a sacrifice on the cross where He offered His blood, merits, and righteousness in order to pay for, blot out, and put away the sins of all those the Father gave Him to redeem in the Covenant of Grace. Jesus Christ died on the cross, was buried, and then rose from the dead. All those who are brought to saving faith in the Gospel by the power of the Holy Spirit are given the gift of eternal life just as Jesus had faithfully promised in John 5:24: **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."** You will notice that the language Christ employed in John's Gospel is very similar to the language used by the wise man in Proverbs chapter eight. Salvation, spiritual happiness, and everlasting life are bound up in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ and are freely given to those who hear, believe, embrace, and receive His instruction and walk in His ways. Jesus Christ is the way of truth and godliness which are vital keys to everlasting happiness.

Proverbs 8:34 simply reinforces the blessedness and happiness of the man whose ears have been spiritually opened and quickened to hear the truth as it is in Jesus. Those who hear Christ's Word, receive His truth, and who walk in His ways will be careful to maintain fellowship with Him by consistently exercising a watchful spirit by way of holy communion. This may be done privately every day as the believer reads the Word,

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. What is a "willing mind" mentioned in II Corinthians 8:12?

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Our God is really concerned about our attitude when it comes to serving Him. He is not concerned about how much we give, but our attitude in giving. We are to have a readiness and eagerness to serve as Paul spoke here.

If a person were to give twice the amount grudgingly, God would accept someone who gave a smaller amount willingly and joyfully more, because that person has a "willing mind" to do what God wants. Do not get me wrong, if you want to give a double portion, whether it is your time, talent, or money, that is wonderful, just give it willingly!

This is where religion fails. They think their way is better, but God does not want what we think, **"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD"** (Isa. 55:8). He wants a willing mind that will do His way. **"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death"** (Prov. 14:12).

Let me ask the questioner; do you have a "willing mind" to do it God's way, or do you think your way is better than God's? That is why there is so many disagreements among Christians today. It is always much better to

be obedient and have a "willing mind" toward God and please Him, than to rebel against Him like Israel did. God Bless!

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"Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit (be aware) of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia" (II Cor. 8:1). Ah, the grace of giving! This sacrificial gift of God was exemplified by the Macedonian churches and the Apostle Paul desires to add that particular grace with five other important graces that he sees in the First Baptist Church of Corinth in vs.6-7: **"Insomuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also. Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also."** Selah! Think about it!

"I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love" (II Cor. 8:8). Paul cannot "command" what will eventually be called "a willing mind" to give, but he makes them aware of this opportunity to give, just as mission reports and prayer requests make known opportunities for "willing

minds" to give. If we would abound in this grace of giving, it will be an outlet to "prove" the sincerity of our "love."

The apostle gives one of the prettiest analogies of sacrificial giving by showing what Jesus Christ did when He "gave His ALL" for us on Calvary. **"For ye know the grace (still in context of that grace of giving!) of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich"** (II Cor. 8:9). Christ exhibited the graces of faith, evangelism, doctrine, diligence, and love that the church at Corinth had, but how hallowed is made this grace of giving when applied to God, Himself? **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life"** (John 3:16). Selah! Think selfless, sacrificial love!

The apostle is acknowledging the ease of folks "saying" that we do love and will give, But to love in Deed! ...to love in truth! What about when the rubber hits the road? Will reality carry out the decreed will of God's people? **"Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have"** (II Cor. 8:11).

The next verse uses the words that we have been kind of focusing on: "a willing mind." I really think that is what is important. Some folks might ask how much you gave, others are concerned with comparisons and wonder about limits, minimums, tithing percentages, etc... But God is not concerned if you have only got "two mites" left, or only have "five loaves and two fishes." What are they among so many? Just

about right, praise God! **"For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not"** (II Cor. 8:12). Thus saith the All-knowing One: **"I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name"** (Rev. 3:8).

Not everyone has the same open door opportunities for sacrificial giving. It is different for each of us, is it not? But the "willing mind" and the "heart for performing the doing of it" is what the Lord adamantly requires of His faithful stewards concerning talents, time and finances. **"Then Peter said, Lo, we have left all, and followed thee"** (Luke 18:28). Willingly, Peter? You know it! Then, that is all that matters. God will take care of the rest, we are assured. **"For I mean not that other men be eased, and ye burdened: But by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want: that there may be equality: As it is written, He that had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack"** (II Cor. 8:13-15).

None will be slighted or shorted by the perfect giving of God. Assurance of that will motivate our willing minds even more. **"And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword..."** (Heb. 11:36-37). Even to the point of Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, eh? Lord, I give my all, time after time, martyr after

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Forum Question #1

(Continued from page 12) ♦

meditates upon holy things, and prays by way of personal devotion. It may and should be expressed in family worship where the things of God are freely shared, prayers are offered, and praise is lifted up to the Almighty. This watching at the gates and waiting at the doors may also be applied in a corporate way as believers assemble together as the Lord's church to worship, receive instruction, and covenant together to carry out the Great Commission. The Lord's New Testament Baptist churches are called upon to happily hear and receive the truth as it is in Jesus. The Lord's churches are then responsible to take the truth of the Gospel into all the world, preaching to sinners far and wide that Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Part of the watchful spirit includes keeping the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper as they were delivered by faithfully administering them until Jesus comes again. Those who have believed on Jesus and who have been scripturally baptized into His kind of church ought to delight in serving Him, worshipping Him, and waiting for His soon return. These spiritual activities combined with a watchful attitude are to be the consistent employment of believers and the Lord's churches until Jesus comes again. Mark 13:33-37 declares a similar exhortation: **"Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when**

the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch."

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Wisdom is personified in Proverbs 8 as a godly woman that is vividly in contrast with the ungodly foolish woman of Proverbs 7. As literal and real as are the foolish and wise choices of our daily lives, are the foolish and wise ends thereof. Wisdom is hereby presented as an eminently practical attribute that has to do with our Christian walk. **"I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge...By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth. I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me"** (Pro. 8:12, 15-17). Selah! Think about it!

Portrayed akin as a wise mother or wife (of Solomon or Matt Stepp), wisdom dispenses her graces to all that will stop to listen to her prudent voice of reason, or witness the diligent astuteness of her life choices. **"Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice? She standeth in the top of high places...unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of man. O ye simple, understand wisdom: and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart"** (Prov. 8:1, 5). As this awesome chapter progresses in

poetical alliteration, Solomon develops the personification of wisdom's maternal heart into an intimate lover's knowledge of even the very ancient thoughts of our almighty God. **"The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was...Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth...when he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: ...then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men"** (Prov. 8:22-27, 30-31).

The antiquity of wisdom (herself?) is revealed in these verses concerning the decrees and actions of the Creator God. Certainly, the nature of God is more than just saying that He is a wise god. The Holy Book is going much deeper than that, reminiscent of the phrases also found in Scripture **"God is love"** and **"I am holy,"** that Himself, God is wisdom is incontrovertible. The very nature of God is compelling wisdom, enveloping righteousness, holy love, and justice. Truly an immutable, omniscient God cannot be anything less than the very source and dispenser of wisdom as an omnipotent and sovereign God cannot be anything less than a God of complete foreknowledge and authority. Not just what God is, but selah! That is who God is! The noun of wisdom, holiness, love, etc.

This correlation of wisdom and God herein, has led many to an exegesis of this chapter, saying that

the heart of this chapter is Jesus Christ. While I have no problem with saying that Christ, the son of God is wisdom personified, also, it is indeed, also (in addition to). I do not believe the "woman" of this chapter is Christ, any more than it is God the Father or God the Holy Spirit. Her very femininity denies that. None of the Godhead was witness to God's glory, that would be the angels of Job 38:7, but the plurality of Elohim was complicit in creation, not the least being the **"word"** of John 1:1. Wisdom's iconic woman may picture "some" of the attributes of the glorious Godhead, but if we capture the intent of Solomon's perfected poetry, it is to reveal to us the availability of wisdom (herself!). As saved individuals, we already have Jesus in our souls, and the desire of the Holy Spirit's proverbs is to entice us to greater heights of wisdom, love, and honor.

As practical holiness and love are linked to a knowledge of God, so, too, is wisdom. The Big Creek definition of wisdom is: "thinking like God does!" The summation of this wise chapter is filled with action verbs that we need to be doing. **"Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways. Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord"** (Prov. 8:32-35). Listen to the voice of wisdom, as she speaks from the bounty and riches of God's Word! Harken unto her! Watch daily at her gates (or opening opportunities!) and wait, wait, wait until wisdom has delivered her message to our hearts and minds before we act

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Forum Question #1

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(wisely or foolishly?).

The quest for God's wisdom is not a trivial endeavor. If we seek diligently, she will be found, but at the opposite swing of the pendulum is a betrayal of immortal souls and an ignorant (foolish) despising of our own person. **"...he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me (wisdom) love death."**

MATTHEW STEPP



Forum Question #2

(Continued from page 13) ♦

martyr, a willing mind to give! Selah! Think about it!

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II Corinthians 8:12 states: **"For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not."**

The entire context of II Corinthians 8 has to do with sacrificial giving as first exemplified by the churches of Macedonia (8:1-7); who willingly gave from a position of deep poverty. Their spirit of liberality came first from their giving of their own selves unto the Lord (8:5) in order to do the will of God. This is what prompted them to give to the work of supporting the saints of God and the Lord's servants.

The work of the Lord Jesus

Christ is also used as an example of sacrificial giving from a position of immense wealth as set forth in II Corinthians 8:9. Though Jesus was infinitely rich He was willing to give Himself, (body, soul, and spirit) as a holy sacrifice in order to enrich the elect with the righteousness of God. This great transaction took place on the cross when Jesus took upon Himself the sins of His people in order to fully pay the ransom price, the penalty that the law required. Though He was rich with righteousness, He was willing to be impoverished so that His righteousness could be imputed to His people. He willingly became sin in order to impute the righteousness of God unto His people as II Corinthians 5:21 declares: **"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."**

By virtue of these two weighty examples, Paul is urging the Corinthian believers, and by extension all believers, to have a **"willing mind"** when it comes to the grace of giving to support the work of the Lord, missions, and works of charity through the ministry of the local church. Before we were saved all we had was a carnal mind that was characterized by fleshly desires (Rom. 8:6-8). In the new birth God the Holy Spirit created a new spiritual nature that immediately responded to the Gospel message by exercising the gifts of repentance and saving faith. The mind, will, and heart of God's elect are miraculously changed in regeneration and conversion. For the very first time ever, a regenerated, converted, and justified individual is capable of bringing forth spiritual fruits of grace and righteousness as Romans 6:17-18, 22 state: **"But**

God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness...But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." Now that you are born of God and washed in the blood you are able to respond to the admonition of Ephesians 4:22-24: **"That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful; lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."** This renewed mind is one that desires to please God and have the mind of Christ. Spiritual aspects of the mind of Christ include humility, obedience, servitude, and sacrifice as set forth in Philippians 2:5-8: **"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."** Oh that God would stir us to have a **"willing mind"** to serve and to give sacrificially like our Lord did and like the poverty stricken Macedonians did! I believe a **"willing mind"** has the mind of Christ and therefore will motivate believers to cheerfully obey the command to give of themselves and their resources unto the Lord. Most Americans have much more than the basic necessities of life.

We could all stand to give more of our time and money to missions, to the work of the ministry, and the service of God. God loves a cheerful giver with a willing mind.

By way of practical application, I have a story about my grandson Gavin who recently made a profession of faith in Jesus Christ regarding his willingness to give to the work of missions. Recently a dear brother in the Lord and a faithful friend, Orval Lawson passed on to glory. Memorials in the form of love offerings could be sent to the Wheat Field Baptist Mission, where Orval's grandson, John All's is the mission pastor. Our church voted to send an offering to that mission work on a Sunday night. After church services were over, Gavin came to me with tears in his eyes and said "I have fifty dollars that the mission work needs more than I do and I want to give it." I was moved by his child like faith and willingness to give what he had to the work of the Lord. That illustrates what it is to have a **"willing mind"** that moves someone to sacrificially give. May God be pleased to give all of us more of this child-like faith and the willingness to act upon it.

TOM ROSS



Luke 9:46-56

(Continued from page 11) ♦

manifested many times through the centuries. The Pilgrims came to America back in colonial times to escape the religious persecution and intolerance of Europe, and then they became just as intolerant in persecuting themselves. Baptists were on the punishment end of the persecution. Another religious group got in power in Virginia, and Baptist preachers were fined and jailed for preaching the Gospel. Down through the centuries, Baptists alone, to say nothing of others, furnished fifty million martyrs. Those people were not put to death by the heathen. They were put to death by others who claimed to be Christians. The spirit was that if they do not belong to our religious group, do not let them exist, pop them!

I am glad that we have religious freedom in this country. I do not believe as many religious sects and groups believe, but if I had power to use police force to stop them, I would not do it. They have the same right to believe that I have, they have the same right to practice their beliefs that I have, and they are answerable to God for the things that they teach and preach. I am a Baptist by definite conviction, not because Grandma was a Baptist. I believe that Baptist beliefs are in accord with the teachings of the Bible, and I am going to preach my convictions, but would I, if I had the power, stop anybody else who is not a Baptist? Not by one thousand miles. There are devout followers of Christ, genuine sure-enough born again people who are not Baptists, and I thank the Lord for them. I hear from such people nearly every day I live, and I have for more than 25 years now. People of that kind listen to my radio preaching and they write me letters of help and

encouragement. John ran ahead of Jesus and told the man who was doing things in the name of Jesus to cut it out. You are not one of us, so I demand that you stop it. What did Jesus say? Read that 50th verse, **“And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not, for he that is not against us is for us.”**

Jesus at this time was on His way to Jerusalem for the last time. He knew that this would be His last trip and He knew that He would be put to death there. Look at the 51st verse. It says, **“And it came to pass that when the time was come that he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem.”** There is one expression here that attracts my attention. It says here that He steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem. He knew that it would cost Him His life to go, but He knew the will of God, and He set Himself inflexibly to do the thing that He knew He ought to do. We can be wishy-washy, drifters going the way of least resistance, or else we can be people of steadfast purpose, one or the other. Many professing Christians have no steadfast, determined purpose, and consequently, they are never worth anything. They are at the mercy of every circumstance. Half the time, they or some member of the family are not well enough to attend church. They let every little ache and pain hinder them. They let every little circumstance of the weather hinder them. There are others who establish an inflexible purpose to worship and serve God, regardless of what comes or what goes, and those are the kind of people who keep things going. When a person is saved, he ought to set his face steadfastly toward the making a success of his Christian life. First, he ought to clear out of his life every habit that would hinder him from being the kind of Christian that he ought

to be. He ought to establish some Christian habits and Christian principles in his life, with the determination to abide by them, no matter what difficulties arise. Lack of steadfastness of purpose is back behind people's backsliding. My, how many people I have seen come and go through the years. People make professions and come into the church, and in no time, they have drifted on out and away. No strength of character, no power of determination, no steadfastness.

Now as Jesus journeyed from Galilee down to Jerusalem, He had to pass through Samaria. Samaria was populated by a mixed-breed people called the Samaritans. They had a rival temple and a rival worship and they hated the Jews, and the Jews in turn hated them. The Samaritans have dwindled down until there are only about three hundred of them left. I visited their place of worship when I was traveling in Palestine, and I talked with the High Priest. He was a very dignified old gentleman. He wore a robe and a heavy shock of whiskers. A High Priest would not look the part without a robe and whiskers, would he? I do not know what there is holy about candles and whiskers and robes, but people seem to think that there is something holy about them. Let me tell you a secret just here. There is not anything holy about a candle, about a robe, or whiskers, either. As I started to say, Jesus had to travel down through Samaria, so as they came in the direction of the village, He sent some men ahead to make arrangements to stay. I guess they must have had some kind of a boarding house there, or inn, but since Jesus and those with Him were headed towards Jerusalem, the Samaritans would not allow them any accommodations. It made them furious to see crowds of people headed towards Jerusalem

for the Passover. They had their worship, they had their temple, they had their own Passover, and they regarded the worship down there at Jerusalem as in rivalry against their own, so they refused to even allow Jesus to stay in their town, and it says that they would not receive them. Listen, suppose that Jesus were here in the flesh as He was in that distant time, and suppose He asked for lodging in your home, would you refuse Him? Maybe not, but I will tell you one thing that some of you have done---you have refused Him in a place in your life. Christ has been presented before you time and time again, you have been invited to receive Him, but each time you have said “No,” and when you have said that, you have said “No” to the One Who created the earth upon which you live, you have said “No” to the One Who gave you your life in the world, you have said “No” to the One Who furnishes you with the breath that you breathe. I want to ask you, how do you expect to enter Heaven when you die when you refuse to receive Christ in your heart and life? Maybe you have never thought of that, but it is something to think about, I will tell you. Christ is before you now for your acceptance or rejection, but I remind you that the time is coming when you will be before Him. What you do with Him now will determine what He shall do with you in time to come.

We do not hear any word of impatience from the lips of Jesus when He was refused lodging in the Samaritan village, but this incident made James and John mad through and through. They were more than mad, they were just boiling, and what did they do? Well let us read there in verse 54. It says there, **“And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord,**

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Luke 9:46-56

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wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?" Lord, give us the power and we will just bring down fire and brimstone on this place. We will burn it down. I guess there were babies and children and helpless old people in that town, but no matter, they would have blotted the whole town out of existence. That is a sample of how people feel when they get mad. I have seen church quarrels, and I have seen church members get so mad at each other they would have called down fire if they had possessed the power to do it. A deacon and his pastor had a slugger match, and in another case, two deacons got mad and thumped each other in the ribs. Things like that are a disgrace to the cause of Christ and Christianity in the community. Many an unsaved person has gone to Hell, humanly speaking, because of professing Christians acting the fool like that. The Devil never has so big an opportunity to get hold of you as when you are mad. Homes break to pieces because husbands and wives get mad, tragedies occur because people get mad, churches quarrel and split in two because people get mad at each other. Someone has given the advice for us to never settle or decide any question when we are mad. If we do, it is liable to be decided in the wrong way. Let us burn them up, Lord, give us the power and we will burn this place off the map. What answer did Jesus give? Here it is in verse 55, **"But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of."** They were mad and hot-headed and they were manifesting the spirit of the Devil.

I recall that when I was a student in Georgetown College, a fellow

started in to school. He was a ministerial student, and he was a very impulsive and very hot-headed man, and one day he got into an argument with another fellow who was not a Christian and they both got mad, and they got to the point of blows. I remember the preacher yelled out to the other fellow and said, "Go to Hell." The unsaved boy said, "You claim that God's called you to be a minister. Did the Lord call you to tell people how to go to Hell?" Well, that was like exploding a fire cracker under that young minister. No, he knew that the Lord had not called him to direct people to Hell, and here he had just told a lost man to go there. He wilted down right there and apologized to the other fellow and sneaked away. Jesus rebuked the murderous spirit of James and John, and then He added something that I want you to get. Verse 56 says, **"For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them."** Do you know what the name Jesus means? It means "Savior." Before He was born, the angel in announcing His coming said, **"Thou shalt call his name JESUS, for he shall save his people from their sins."** The strange thing is that any human being should have any antagonism toward Jesus, for He never did harm to any man. And women and children ought to love Christ especially, for women and children were little more than goods and chattels when Jesus came. Christianity has given the women and children a freedom that nothing else in this world has ever brought about. Poor people ought to love Christ, for He was a friend of the poor and the down-trodden. When He spake there in the synagogue at Nazareth, He said, **"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor."** Sinful, needy human beings ought

to love Christ, for as He said, **"The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."** No man, no woman, is debarred from Christ because of sin. That is the reason why you ought to come to Christ. You have a disease that He alone can cure. There are remedies and cures for various human ailments, but there is no cure for sin save Jesus. He will cure your sin disease if you will come to Him, by taking your sins and by bearing them for you. The old Prophet Isaiah spoke of this when he said, **"All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all."** If your sins are still upon you, if you are under their weight and condemnation, it is because you have not received Jesus as your sin-bearer. Satan's mission and effort is to destroy men's lives, but Christ came to save. I do not minimize or despise the present, I think that we ought to make much of the present things, but at the same time I remind you that the present is not all, the present can not last, we are all traveling somewhere, we are on our way to a vast eternity. We are going to have to live somewhere out yonder. Have you ever given any real, serious thought to where you are going to spend eternity? There is not anything out here in the world to induce you to think about eternity. The music of the world is a lot of clatter and racket and noise designed to help you to be just as scatterbrained as possible. Just about everything you come in contact with out here in the modern life is designed to banish the thought of an eternal future from your mind. But there will come a time when you are going to be suddenly snatched into the realization that you are leaving this world, and going out into another one, and the question is, will you

be ready? If you just let things slide along without doing anything about the salvation of your soul, you will not be. Sometimes people go through a long, lingering illness, and during their illness, they have time to do serious thinking, but that is not always the case. I ask you, is it safe or sensible for a person to drift along without any preparation for the future, in the thought that they will do something about it when death gives the warning that he is somewhere near? Face the fact that he does not give any such warning in many cases. The only place that you are likely to be reminded of your spiritual need is at church, where the minister is faithful enough to your soul to urge you to turn to Christ, or listening in to a broadcast like this, perhaps. I am not your enemy, but your friend when I tell you that you are lost without Christ, that you are in danger of taking off for Hell unexpectedly. I have your deepest welfare at heart when I tell you this, and I am telling it to urge that you receive Christ as your Savior now, while you have another golden opportunity. This can be the great hour of decision for someone hearing me today. Will that someone be you? I pray that it may.

Now Heavenly Father, we thank Thee for the Savior Who came into this world to seek and to save that which was lost. We thank Thee that He has already saved millions of people who have lived down through the centuries, and that there are many people today, yea, millions in the world, who have come to Him and have received from Him eternal life. And we would pray that some listening in today might take the same step, and might come to know Him, who is the way, the truth and the life, for we ask it in the name of Jesus. Amen.



The True Gospel

(Continued from page 1) ♦

power of sin. Because the Gospel is so essential to salvation it is a subject that no man can afford to be in error about. It is of utmost importance that we know what the true Gospel is.

Dear reader, do you know what the true Gospel is? Are you thoroughly acquainted with the power of the Gospel of Christ? The reason I ask these questions is because if you do not know what the true Gospel of Christ is, it is impossible for you to believe and obey it. And if you cannot believe and obey the Gospel, you will ultimately be judged for your sins and experience the wrath of God. II Thessalonians 1:7-9 clearly supports the foregoing statement: **"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, AND THAT OBEY NOT THE GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power"** (Emp. TWR).

The Gospel of Christ is one of the most important truths of the New Testament because it is intricately connected to the salvation of sinners. It is so important that Jesus commanded His people to preach the Gospel to every creature throughout the world until He returns. Yet, the true Gospel is believed and preached by relatively few people. There are many false gospels that are being passed off on unsuspecting people with no power to save or transform the lives of guilty sinners.

Paul the apostle regarded all deviations from the true Gospel

to be satanic in origin and under the curse of Almighty God. II Corinthians 11:4 ;13-14 states: **"For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him. . For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light."**

Paul warned the Galatians about receiving a false gospel in very forceful language: **"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed"** (Gal. 1:6-8). Dear reader, if you are trusting in a false, man-centered gospel you have built your faith on sandy ground which will not stand the raging storms of an eternity in the lake of fire.

THE TRUE GOSPEL REVEALED

1. I have purposely concealed the true nature of the Gospel thus far with hopes that the reader will search his heart and life to determine whether or not he knows what the Gospel is, and whether or not he has truly believed the Gospel to the saving of the soul. The true Gospel must be revealed to the heart and mind of the lost sinner in a supernatural way by the power of God. Every lost man, whether he knows it or not, is blinded by Satan and his own sinful nature. Lost men are in the

captivity of Satan and are unable to escape the bondage of sin unless God intervenes in mighty power to reveal the consequences of sin and the only way of deliverance. II Corinthians 4:3-4 declares: **"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world (Satan, TWR) 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."** There is not a lost man alive who can spiritually comprehend the saving power of the Gospel unless God intervenes in a mighty demonstration of power. In fact, the lost sinner considers the true Gospel to be foolishness, and a stumbling block as I Corinthians 1:18 declares: **"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."**

2. Because the true Gospel is hidden from every lost man it is easier for Satan and his preachers to delude and deceive with false gospels which have no power to save. Dear reader, do you know and believe the true Gospel, or is it hidden from you? Have you trusted in a man-made gospel, joined the church, become religious, and yet have no peace or assurance in your heart that you are truly saved? Before explaining what the true Gospel is, it is necessary to show what the Gospel is not.

Believing the Gospel is not having some religious experience where you were encouraged to pray the sinner's prayer for salvation. Your faith must be in the finished work of Jesus Christ, not in a prayer. Many people have been deceived into thinking that they are saved simply because there was a time in their life when they were very emotionally distraught which led them to go to the front

of the church at the "old fashioned altar" to pray through. I can not count the number of people that I have met while visiting whose lives have never been transformed by the saving power of the Gospel, yet are trusting in a religious profession they made when they were younger. My friend, if you are not now living for Christ your religious profession is of very little worth.

Believing the Gospel is not having the experience of speaking in tongues. I see many churches that advertise they are a "full gospel church." Yet speaking in other languages has absolutely nothing to do with the experience of salvation through belief of the Gospel. The full Gospel is the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, plus nothing, minus nothing.

Believing the Gospel is not doing the best you can, practicing the golden rule, or attempting to amass enough good works in order to merit Heaven. If you are depending upon your good works or your church membership to get you to Heaven, you have deceived yourself and are headed for Hell. Paul testified of **"...the gospel of the grace of God"** (Acts 20:24), not the false gospel of works which so many religious people have been ensnared by. The Bible is very clear in stating that men are not saved by their good works, law-keeping, religious affiliation, or charitable giving. Galatians 2:16 declares: **"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."**

The Gospel is not water

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The True Gospel

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baptism. Many churches attach saving qualities to the ordinance of baptism. Yet the waters of baptism have absolutely no power to save. Paul states very clearly in I Corinthians 1:17 that baptism is not part of the Gospel: **“For Christ sent me NOT TO BAPTIZE, BUT TO PREACH THE GOSPEL: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect”** (Emp. TWR). Later Paul told the Corinthians that he had begotten them through the Gospel, not the waters of baptism as so many teach: **“For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel”** (I Cor. 4:15).

If you are trusting in anything other than the shed blood of Jesus Christ to wash away your sins and make you acceptable to God, you have never been saved and are headed for Hell. God's power was manifested in Christ dying for sinners, being buried, and rising again from the dead. It is folly to presume that baptism must be added to the finished work of Christ in order to save a sinner. Everyone who believes that baptism has a part in their salvation must readily admit that they must go to a human mediator in order to be saved because someone has to perform the ordinance. That means that their faith must rest in a man as well as in the waters of baptism which is completely contradictory to Paul's teaching in I Timothy 2:5 which states: **“For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.”**

Faith in Christ is all that is necessary to obtain eternal life

according to John 5:24 which states: **“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.”** Dear reader, I hope that you have not built your faith upon the shifting sands of mere substitutions for the true Gospel of Christ. Good works, baptism, sacraments, and church membership do not have the power to pardon your sins and make you acceptable to God. Those things cannot save you from an eternity in Hell. Only faith in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ is able to save you from sin. Jesus declared: **“...I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me”** (John 14:6).

3. The true Gospel is clearly revealed by the Apostle Paul in I Corinthians 15:1-4 which states: **“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”** (Emp. TWR). The true Gospel is very simply the good news of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ

The first aspect of the Gospel is the substitutionary death by Christ on behalf of His people. Christ died as a substitute, meaning that He died in the place of others. The

punishment that I deserved was placed upon Jesus Christ. Christ bore my sins, suffered the penalty that I owed, and paid my sin debt in full when He offered Himself up as a sacrifice for my sins. I Peter 2:24 declares: **“Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.”** I Peter 3:18 declares: **“For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.”**

My heart is at once filled with awe and wonder when I consider that the blameless Son of God suffered, bled, and died for me. Christ was falsely tried, beaten beyond recognition, mocked, spat upon, and finally nailed to the cursed tree to pay for my sins with the ransom price of His own life's blood. His sufferings for His people were so great that darkness veiled the bloody scene for three hours. Not only did the sun refuse to shine, but the earth quaked as the blood of Jesus Christ fell to the ground. As Christ hung on the cross the justice of God was exacting the full payment for the sins of God's elect. Jesus cried: **“I thirst”** (John 19:28) because that would have been my cry throughout an eternity in Hell. He cried: **“My God, My God, Why hast thou forsaken me?”** (Matt. 27:46) because He was suffering the equivalent of my eternal separation from God in the lake of fire.

Dear sinner friend, have you ever viewed Christ by faith, dying in your stead? I beseech you to view the Lamb of God as dumb before His shearers; view Him as the Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief; go with Him to Gethsemane, and behold Him sweating drops of

blood. Look yonder to the cross of Calvary, where the hands and feet of Christ were nailed to the cursed tree, as He pours out His life's blood for sinners. Faith in Christ alone is the only hope for broken sinners. His blood is the only remedy for the sin-sick soul.

The second aspect of the Gospel is the burial of Jesus Christ. He was buried in the borrowed tomb of Joseph of Arimathaea. The burial of Jesus Christ proved that He actually had been put to death for sin. It also signified that the sins of His people had been paid for on the cross and put away by the death of Christ. All of my sins were taken by Christ to the grave; therefore, none of them can ever rise up to condemn me. Christ paid my sin debt in full, and put away my sins so I can say confidently with Paul: **“Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. 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. 8:33-34).

The final aspect of the Gospel is that Christ rose from the dead after three days and nights in the tomb of death. It is truly remarkable that one man could pay the sin debt of a multitude of sinners by sacrificing Himself on the altar of the cross. But it is even more remarkable that He rose again from the dead and is alive forever more. The death and burial of Christ showed that He had borne the curse of the law and the penalty of sin on behalf of His people. The resurrection of Christ proved that He was truly who He said He was; the Lord and Savior of men. Acts 2:36 declares: **“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus,**

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The True Gospel

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whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

If Christ had not risen from the dead, there would be no salvation from sin. Romans 4:25 declares: **"Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."** The resurrection of Christ defies human reasoning, but it is the truth according to the Scriptures, and as such must be received by faith. The fact of Christ's resurrection from the dead is proven every time some believing sinner is brought from death unto life and changed by the power of the living Christ. Christ conquered death, Hell, and the grave in His resurrection. All those who trust in Him are also conquerors and possessors of eternal life. Praise God for the true Gospel which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth!

4. To the lost sinner whose heart is hardened by iniquity, and whose eyes are blinded to the reality of sin and its consequences, the Gospel is just empty words. But to the sinner that has been made to feel the weight and burden of sin by the power of the Holy Spirit, and has been made to feel the condemnation of the law, the Gospel is truly good news from God. Imagine the joy that would flood a condemned prisoner's heart if on the day of his execution the jailer would open the bars of his cell to tell him that someone had volunteered to die in his stead and pay the price of his crime. Jesus paid our sin debt to grant us liberty from the shackles of sin and the dominion of Satan. Praise God, believing sinners are free from condemnation and set at liberty through faith in the Gospel of Christ!

Blind Bartimaeus



Caleb Newell, 2021

And as Jesus "...went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the highway side begging. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me. And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee. And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus. And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way" (Mark 10:46-52).

THE TRUE GOSPEL RECEIVED

1. The Gospel must be received by faith. Saving faith is characterized by an abandonment of all false hopes and self righteousness. It is marked by surrendering yourself to the righteousness and Lordship of Jesus Christ. Saving faith is when you see that you cannot save yourself from your sins by religious performances and good works, and you simply trust Christ to save you from your sins. You actually believe that He died in your stead and rose again for you. Saving faith is the assurance that all the blessings God has promised in Christ will be received. Perhaps for the first time in your life the Holy Spirit has awakened you to the fact that you are lost and undone in the sight of a Holy God, and justly condemned to Hell for your sins. Perhaps you are now thinking to yourself: "What must I do to be saved?" Acts 16:31 provides the answer and the only ground of hope for sinners: **"...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. . ."**

2. When the true Gospel is received by faith the believing sinner is delivered from the penalty and power of sin. The moment a sinner believes he is free from condemnation and becomes a possessor of eternal life. John 3:16 and 3:36 declare this truth plainly: **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. . . He that believeth on the Son HATH everlasting life: and he that believeth not the son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."** Those who have truly believed the Gospel do not wait until they die to receive eternal life, they become the possessors of eternal life the moment they receive Christ.

3. When the true Gospel is received by faith the believing sinner is justified, declared not guilty of all his sins through faith in the shed blood of Jesus Christ. The moment the sinner believes on Christ he is clothed with the righteousness of Christ. Though

the guilt of sin and the blackness of it would have plunged you to an eternity in Hell, if you have believed on Christ it means that Christ paid your sin debt in full and was punished in your stead. It also means that the spotless righteousness of Jesus Christ has been charged or imputed to you. The moment a man puts his trust in Christ, he is freed from all condemnation--past, present, and to come; and from that day forward he stands in God's sight as though he were without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. If you have believed on Christ you are accepted by God as though you were perfect, as though you had kept the entire law; for Christ has kept it, and His righteousness is yours by faith. You have broken the law but your sin has been charged to Christ, and He has been punished for it. God now looks at you through the obedience and spotless righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. As such, they who believe in Jesus are as much accepted by God the Father as

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Little Hills

By Nathaniel Hille of
Plant City, Florida



SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON - BIBLE SURVEY #22 THE BOOK OF II SAMUEL

TEXT: II Samuel 22:36

DEVOTIONAL READING: Ps. 31; Ps. 51

AIM: Over-View of the Book of II Samuel

SUGGESTED HYMN: *Trust and Obey*

INTRODUCTION: We now look at the 10th book of the Bible; the 5th in the Historical Section: II Samuel. Originally, 1st Samuel and 2nd Samuel were one book. When translated into the Greek and English they were separated into 2 books. In this book, we will follow the life of David from the time of Saul's death till David's own death. We follow David's first 7 years as king of Judah in Hebron, followed by the last 33 years as king over all Israel from Jerusalem, totaling 40 years as King.

I. AUTHOR: Unknown, possibly Gad and Nathan (I Chron. 29:29-30). It is the first of the "writing prophets".

II. THEME: Obedience to God's Word. We find that "unfaithfulness to God always brought punishment in its train, while obedience was rewarded with His favor" (*Westminster Introductions to the Books of the Bible*). "The key truth illustrated is the same as the theme of Deuteronomy: obedience to God brings blessing, and disobedience brings trouble and judgment" (*Nelson's Complete Book of Bible Maps & Charts*). Although II Samuel shows a person's obedience or disobedience to God has direct consequences for that person's life, we also see that God will rule and overrule so that His purpose and redemption will come to pass.

III. OUTLINE: A basic outline of II Samuel:

1. The Triumphs of David: II Sam. 1:1-10:19
2. The Transgressions of David: II Sam. 11:1-27
3. The Troubles of David: II Sam. 12:1-24:17
4. The Restoration of God: II Sam. 24:18-25

IV. KEY PERSON(S):

1. God: II Samuel shows the Lord dealing with Israel, in particular her king. His rewards to faithfulness, His chastisements to unfaithfulness. His providence in overcoming sin. His restoration for His people when they turn from their sins in repentance and faith.

2. David: II Samuel follows the life of David as King of Israel. He is the central person to whom the Lord God deals with throughout this book. He is the leader of God's people/nation. He is a type of the Lord Jesus Christ as King of the Jews, and King of kings. A covenant is made with David of which Christ will fulfill.

3. Mephibosheth: II Sam. 9:1-13---a descendant of Saul's house, he was Jonathan's son. He was lame in his feet. He was shown kindness by David for another's sake (Jonathan's). He was taken in and nourished at the king David's table. In this we have a glorious picture of the sinner saved by the Lord Jesus.

4. Bathsheba: II Sam. 11:1-27---The wife of Uriah the Hittite. She is always referred to such in Scriptures. This is whom David (though married to another woman) lusted after. A child was conceived with her by David. David then had her husband, Uriah, murdered. All of this was known to God.

5. Nathan: II Sam. 12:1-15---Prophet of the Lord. Used immensely in the life of David. The Lord provided David with a spiritual companion to keep him on the "strait and narrow" pathway. It was the Lord who sent Nathan to David to chastise him with the Word of the Lord regarding his sin.

6. Absalom: II Sam. 13:1-18:33---David's son. He rebelled against his father, David. He was made king in Hebron. He was later slain by Joab, David's commander of his armies. David lamented over the death of his son immensely (II Sam. 18:33). Absalom's rebellion was in part due to David's failures as a father.

7. Araunah's or Ornan: II Sam. 24:18-25---The owner of the threshing floor that was purchased to build an altar and offer sacrifice unto the Lord for sin. Ornan was willing to give the threshing floor and the instruments and the animals to David, his king, that there might be sacrifice unto the Lord. David, however, would not sacrifice without price to God.

V. KEY CONCEPTS: The concepts conveyed by the Lord in II Samuel. Are similar to the theme: Obedience to God's Word. What Saul failed to do (See I Sam. 15) in His reign we find David doing in his. Though he was not perfect, unlike Saul, David had a heart that was after the Lord's (I Sam. 13:14).

When we open the book of II Samuel we find David following the Lord. Such events as uniting the kingdom, desirous to build God a house, being merciful to Saul's house, bringing the ark of the covenant out of Philistine captivity. These were high points in the life of David all because of obedience to God's Word.

We then note the transgressions of David. His adultery with Bathsheba and murder of Uriah. Yet we find that David was quick to repent when confronted by the Word of God. There was no hardening of David's heart as there was with Saul's. David's troubles came from disobedience to God's Word, which then led to troubles (Gal. 6:7-9; Num. 32:23). Yet, the Lord did restore David upon repentance (II Sam. 12:13; II Sam. 24:25).

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



The True Gospel

(Continued from page 20) ♪

His Eternal Son is accepted. Acts 13:38-39 declares: **"Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."**

4. When the true Gospel is received by faith the sinner is forgiven of his sins through the blood of Jesus Christ. What an amazing truth this is! Every man has enough sins and guilt to plunge him to the lowest Hell. Think of all the sins that you have accumulated through your lifetime. Each day you dwelt in unbelief your sins were mounting up to Heaven. Yet, in Christ every sin is forgiven, pardoned, and put away! What grace is revealed in the Gospel to the believing sinner! Ephesians 1:7 declares: **"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."**

5. The moment the sinner believes the Gospel he is accepted by God and declared to be complete in the finished work of Jesus Christ apart from any works or religious performances. Colossians 2:9-10 declares: **"For in him (Christ) dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power."**

6. The moment the sinner believes the Gospel he acknowledges Christ as Lord. His entire life is changed by the power of God. He can no longer enjoy sin; now his life is to be devoted entirely to his risen Lord. Romans 10:9-10 declares: **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the LORD JESUS,**

and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." When a sinner has truly been saved he will say: **"...Lord, what wilt thou have me to do..."** (Acts 9:6), just as Saul of Tarsus did when he was saved on the road to Damascus.

Dear reader, if you have never been changed by the power of the Gospel, if your life does not evidence a genuine relationship with Jesus Christ, you are deceived if you think you are saved. If you have never submitted to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and acknowledged Him as a Prophet to instruct you, and a Priest to intercede for you, and a King to reign over you, you have never truly been saved. II Corinthians 5:17 declares: **"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."** If you are still in love with your sins and live life like you always have you have never truly come to Christ for salvation. If you are never convicted of sin, and desirous of keeping the commands of Christ you can make no claim of salvation even as Jesus said in Luke 6:46: **"And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"**

7. Dear reader, God knows your heart and your present spiritual condition. You may be able to deceive others by your false religious profession, but you cannot fool God. I implore you to repent of your self-righteousness and sin and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. He alone can save you and change your life. There is wonderful power in the Gospel. When it is believed, it changes sinners into saints, enemies of God

into friends of God, blasphemers into prayer warriors, prostitutes into lovers of holiness and virtue, drunkards into those who thirst for righteousness rather than the devil's drink. I know that I speak the truth about the power of the Gospel because my life has been wonderfully changed by God.

THE TRUE GOSPEL REJECTED

1. I am sure that there will be those who read this article and say very smugly to themselves: "I am very satisfied with my present state, and as long as I have my religion I do not need to repent and believe the Gospel." My friend, if you do not receive the Gospel you are rejecting the declaration of eternal life. What is even worse is that you are openly calling God a liar by your unbelief. I John 5:10-12 declares: **"He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."** What a terrible crime to not believe and obey the Gospel. You are not only rejecting the only way of life, but you are calling God a liar and charging Him with falsehood.

2. Those who reject the free declaration of the Gospel will be judged by God and spend an eternity in the lake of fire. You will be eternally separated from God and experience His wrath being poured out on you as the eternal ages of time roll on. Hebrews 2:1-3 declares: **"Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken**

by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; HOW SHALL WE ESCAPE, IF WE NEGLECT SO GREAT SALVATION; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him" (Emp. TWR). This Gospel message will haunt you throughout an eternity in Hell, if you do not repent of your sins and believe on Christ. If you are trusting a false gospel, all your religious sincerity will not matter one bit on the day of judgment. You will be in the company of those who were mere professors of Christianity, but not possessors of eternal life. Matthew 7:21-23 records the awful plight of all false professors of religion thusly: **"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works: And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."**

3. Dear reader, you are not good enough to go to Heaven based on your own merits. Do not deceive yourself into thinking that God will receive you into Heaven because you think you are a good person. The Bible says clearly: **"As it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one. . .there is none that doeth good, no, not one. . .For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"** (Rom. 3:10, 12, 23). **YOU MUST REPENT AND BELIEVE THE GOSPEL!**



The Short Pews



Brief Articles
by Curtis Pugh
(1944 - 2018)

THE PURPOSE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT LAW

“Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:19-23).

Coupled with such verses as Romans 6:15 which says, **“What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid”** it is clear that there are some people who are under the law and others who are not. Those under the condemnation of the Law are the unsaved: i.e. those who have not been regenerated or born again by the sovereign Holy Spirit of God. God’s regenerated elect individuals are not under the Law!

The passage quoted in the first paragraph above makes it clear that there is no way that anyone can be declared righteous (**“justified”**) in God’s sight by the Law. The Law was not given as a means of sinners being righteous in God’s eyes! Paul wrote, **“But we know that the law is good, if a man use it**

lawfully; Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine” (I Tim. 1:8-10). There is, then, both a right or “lawful” use of the Law and an unlawful or wrong use of it!

By the Law is the knowledge of sin as the Scripture states above! That is its purpose. It is for those under it: i.e. unregenerated sinners! Those who have been regenerated are not under the Law! They are under grace. God graciously (without anything done by the recipient) begins the elect sinner’s experience of salvation with his regeneration. Regeneration is accomplished in a manner above the comprehension of the individual. Just as each individual’s experience of life as a separate person begins with his or her birth, so it is with the new birth. The sinner is a participant in the new birth, but is not the cause of it. Thus righteousness has no connection with the Law. It is by the faith that God gives following godly sorrow and repentance.

That there is only one hope for sinners was emphasized by the Lord Jesus when He said, **“..Ye must be born again”** (John 3:7).

BEING A FRIEND TO THE WORLD

The word “world” appears in the King James New Testament 203 times. Depending upon its usage and context it can mean a variety of things. It can mean the creation, the Roman Empire, the nations in contrast to the Jews, those without

Christ, etc., and is even used of both the elect of God and those whom He has not chosen to save. For example, John, who wrote the Gospel of John, the books we call First, Second and Third John, and also the Revelation used the word world in a number of ways, but never used it to mean all of humanity. Rather he used it in a variety of ways.

Consider this verse: **“Ye adulterers and adulteresses, 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). James does not necessarily mean that his readers were adulterers and adulteresses in the moral, sexual sense, but rather in their unfaithfulness to God. This unfaithfulness was clearly evident because they were friends of the world.

These who ought to be faithful to God were instead in love with the material things of the world and desired the sinful pleasures as well. They had departed from what they ought to have been and were no longer loyal to God. Rather they had aligned themselves with the enemies of God – the whole godless system consisting of man’s ideas, pleasures and goals. They had left off loving God first.

Merriam Webster gives the following shades of meaning for the word “friend” that help us understand the verse under consideration. “Friend” can mean (1) “one attached to another by affection or esteem,” (2) “one that is not hostile,” (3) “one that is of the same nation, party or group,” (4) “one that favors or promotes something,” (5) “a favored companion.” We understand, then, that being attached to the things of the world and the philosophies, pleasures associated with lost men

◊ (Continued on page 24)

BEREA BAPTIST BANNER

Financial Report

3-1-2021 to 3-31-2021

Beginning Balance	\$2,094.23
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	300.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL	120.00
Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX	100.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV	200.00
Bruce Allen, Pooler, GA	25.00
Carol Willett, Cottonwood Shores, TX	75.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL	25.00
Emmanuel B. C., Oldtown, KY	200.00
Faith B. C., Lynn, AR	12.50
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
Grace B. C., Gladwin, MI	50.00
Grace B. C., Rural Hall, NC	50.00
Grace Missionary B. C., Tulsa, OK	100.00
Indore B. C., Indore, WV	100.00
The Lord’s B. C., Goose Creek, SC	50.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Cheapeake, OH	100.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN	50.00
Parkway Landmark B. C., Springfield, OR	200.00
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	200.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA	25.00
Subscriptions	0.00
Anonymous	220.00
Dividing checks	0.00
Sub Total	\$2,507.50
TOTAL	\$4,601.73
EXPENDITURES:	
Printing	507.15
Postage	572.59
Wages	2,300.00
FICA	175.96
Dividing checks	0.00
Bank charge	13.00
Total Expenditures	\$3,568.70
ENDING BALANCE	\$1,033.03



BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST

Financial Report

3-1-2021 to 3-31-2021

Beginning Balance	\$3,309.74
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	225.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
Calvary I. B. C., Sumas, WA	100.00
.....	425.00
TOTAL	3,734.74
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio time	363.98
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	363.98
.....	3,370.76
Interest	+0.02
ENDING BALANCE	\$3,370.78

The Short Pews

(Continued from page 23) ♦

and women, looking at things and pleasures with admiration, not being opposed to such things, being “in” with those who live in the realm of worldliness or favoring the world’s system as opposed to God’s program is a friend of the world!\

There is no middle ground here. Either the child of God loves God and His Word, kingdom, people and godly living or he is hostile to God and His program. Seen in this light, Oh how the children of God need to be constantly in repentance: turning away from these things to God! Our hearts ought to be broken down in sorrow because of our love of the world – our natures being bent toward its comforts and pleasures.

Only those willing to give up the comforts, ease and sinful pleasures of this world system fully follow after the Lord. Being a friend of the world means that we are enemies of God. What a serious matter to contemplate! Whose friend are you?

WHAT DOES GOD THINK OF WHAT YOU LOVE?

Few will take time during this hectic Christmas season to think seriously about what is really going on. People are just too busy to consider what God thinks about things. Church members are busy with programs, living nativity scenes, choirs and all sorts of religious fun this time of the year.

But consider the principle Jesus laid down in Luke 16:15: **“...for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.”** The dictionary definition of abomination is, “something regarded with disgust or hatred.” The principle stated by the Lord Jesus here is that God hates and is

disgusted by those things that the world considers important and to which the world is devoted.

Now “the world” is used in a multitude of ways in the Bible, but here it means those outside His sheep. Of His little traveling congregation of spiritual sheep Jesus said, **“If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you”** (John 15:19). And again in John 17:14 when praying to His Father said of this little church **“I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world”** (John 17:14-16).

The Lord’s true churches are most certainly not held in high esteem by the world. But a great many things are **“... highly esteemed among men.”** Consider the things on which the population spends the most money – things beyond necessities. Lumped all together they can all be seen to be pleasures. While some people take great pleasure in one thing,

others are given over to near addiction to another, etc. So it is seen that the natural man is a pleasure-seeking animal bent on pleasing himself. Look around! You can compile your own list of those things that are **“... highly esteemed among men.”** And when you have made your list of these things you can say as the Lord Jesus did, these things and such like things are an **“... abomination in the sight of God”!**

This preacher is well aware that few will bother to read these few lines and fewer still will agree with them. How dare anyone to bring into suspicion the things that the majority of people hold dear and in which they take great pleasure! Old stick-in-the-mud! Old foggy! Bible thumper! Religious fanatic! Dinosaur! And worse names than these! But it matters not what either you or I say. What is important is what God says: and the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, said, **“...that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.”**



ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Faith Baptist Church, 3692
Huntertown Road, Versailles, KY.

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40383, and Pastor Joe Collins would like to announce their upcoming Bible Conference on May 14th -16th. Service times start at 7:00 p.m. All are invited. For more information contact 859-873-2263.

The Beauty Mountain Baptist Church of Edmond, WV, and Pastor Jonathan Bailess would like to announce a revival meeting from May 3rd -7th. Service times are at 7:00 p.m. each night. Elder Clint Keith from Monticello Kentucky will be the speaker. All are invited to attend.

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 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.
