

The Condition of Christians in the World

By William Jay
(1769 - 1853)

"I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil" (John 17:15).

These words were spoken by our Saviour, on a very memorable occasion--an "hour" unparalleled in the annals of time. **"Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end"** (John 13:1). While He was with them, He had withheld no proof of His kindness and care. He gave them free access to His presence, He relieved their complaints, He removed their doubts, He bore with their infirmities. Such an intercourse of sacred friendship had endeared Him to their affections, and rendered the prospect of separation inexpressibly painful. When the venerable Samuel died, **"all the Israelites were gathered together, and lamented him"** (I Sam. 25:1). When



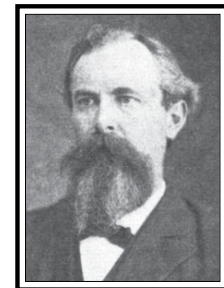
the amiable friend of David fell **"on his high places,"** the bleeding survivor said, **"I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women."** When Elisha beheld the reformer Elijah ascending, **"He cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof"** (II Kings 2:12). The case of the disciples was more peculiarly afflictive; and "sorrow filled their hearts." Our Saviour was never deprived of self-possession: in every state, He had the full command of His powers; and even in the immediate view of His tremendous sufferings, He does not forget any one circumstance that claims His attention. He thinks

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The Drift of the Times

By Matthew Thomas Martin
(1842 - 1898)

The times in which we live are fraught with potency for good or evil. The energies and activities in every department of life, in every channel of thought, are momentous, and involve issues vital to the well being of the race. Everything is in a whirl, and there are many whirlpools as the result. Thought in the domain of religion has caught the inspiration of the hour, and the religious world is like a heaving, restless sea. There is an idea, and it has deluded many, that religion must progress with the age. Many and gigantic are the efforts to relegate to the background the simplicity of the religion of Jesus Christ as revealed in the Word of God and practiced by His followers. If the plain teachings of the Scriptures do not accord with the demands of the distempered fancies of men, they must be so changed and distorted as to do so, or be discarded altogether. The Scriptures are recognized as a rule of faith and practice only so far as they are in harmony with the



prejudices of men.

The forces that oppose Christianity in their onward sweep, it has been feared, were leaving the religion of Jesus behind in the struggle. The cry has been, "We must keep pace with the enemy," "We must advance with the advancing age" all with good intent and with a jealous care for the well-being of Christ's cause. If these admonitions and exhortations had been understood and heeded as meaning that we should be more active and energetic in contending for the same old truths, we will say, in the same old ways, it would have been well; but they have led to the adoption of means which in their tendency conform the church to the world; they have led to a looseness of doctrine and discipline which seems to be almost obliterating the lines between the church and the world. In this matter

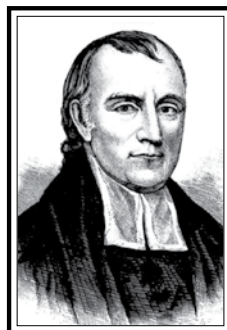
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Effectual Calling

By Thomas Baldwin
(1753 - 1826)

"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).

In this chapter, the apostle has presented before us the safety and happiness of all who are in Christ Jesus. The distinguishing characteristics of the believer, are drawn with a plainness not to be mistaken. From the manner in which the subject is introduced, we must consider it as an inference from what had been said in some of the preceding chapters. **"There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit: For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and**



death" (Rom. 8:2). And not only the apostle, but all other believers, who walk after the Spirit. **"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh"** (Rom. 8:3); not that the law itself was weak, but those who were in the flesh, who were under the influence of depravity, were weak; therefore, **"God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh;"** that is, Christ in our nature condemned sin, **"That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us."** Here the apostle introduces the great

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Of Children and Choice

By Jason Shults
of Washington, Illinois

"If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small. If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works" (Prov. 24:10-12)?

Approaching any subject in which you want to gain attention, a good way to start is to tell a cute story or an interesting anecdote. But since it is my purpose to address the topic of abortion, I do not know any cute stories to start that with. It is a topic - plain and simple - that demands our most serious attention.

Now some modest explanation of our



text is important, I think, before seeing how it can and will be applied to this issue this evening. The main thought is in verse 11 where the writer says **"If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto**

death, and those that are ready to be slain..."

Pictured in this verse is any group of individuals who through no fault of their own are found to be in a moment of mortal danger. They are drawn to their death. They are being dragged toward that final moment. They are ready to be slain. That word is literally "slaughtered." And the assumption is that we - who are

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A little man may cast a long shadow.

Though his talents are small, his influence may be great.

A holy life may tell upon a wide circle, and prove a blessing to many generations.

"The just man walketh in his integrity: his children are blessed after him" (Proverbs 20:7).

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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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Effectual Calling

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mystery of redemption; and shows, that through the obedience and death of Christ, sinners can be saved consistently with righteousness, or with the strictest requirements of the divine law. The righteousness of the law is not dispensed with in the gospel method of salvation, but **“fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”** You will here observe, it is not fulfilled by us, but in us. By virtue of our union with Christ, we become interested in His obedience; and in this sense Christ is said to be the **“end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth”** (Rom. 10:4).

In further delineating this character, the apostle shows, that the real Christian is not under the influence of a freshly, worldly temper, but has the Spirit of Christ dwelling in him: That he has received the Spirit of adoption, by which he is enabled to call God his Father. By this gracious act of adoption, he is made “an heir of God and a joint heir with Jesus Christ.” This high relation, however, does not exempt the Christian from trials, but only assures him, that if he suffers with Christ, or for His cause here, he will be glorified with Him hereafter.

In order to support the people of God under the crosses and trials of this present life, and to show them the favorable issue of all their feelings, it is added in our text, **“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.”**

What an extensive, precious promise is here! All things, however diversified and contrary in their nature, shall eventually work for good to the believer; to the soul that loves God. But as it is presumed that no person ever loved God in the sense of the text, until called by grace; and as they are called according to a divine purpose, we are therefore naturally led, in contemplating the subject, to begin with what the apostle places as the foundation of all our hopes, i.e. the immutable purpose of God.

From the subject thus placed before us, we shall attempt to show,

I. What is implied in being called according to God's purpose.

II. That all such, and such only as are thus called, do really love God.

III. We shall consider what is the import of the declaration in the text, that all things work together for good to them who love God.

It will be impossible to explain the apostle's meaning in the text, and to allow him to speak intelligibly, when he says, we are called according to His purpose, unless we allow that this purpose existed antecedent to our being called. We can as easily conceive of its having existed, as of its existing but a day

or an hour before the event takes place. But it may be asked, Has God purposed any thing respecting those who are called by His grace antecedent to their believing? I answer, He most certainly has; and that their calling is not owing to any contingent or uncertain cause, but according to this divine purpose.

Will any person presume to say, that the divine purposes are formed from day to day, so as to correspond to the characters of men in a state of probation; and that the will of God is suspended in its determinations on some uncertain changes in the moral tempers of men? No, my brethren, we will not entertain a sentiment so dishonorable to the all wise, omniscient Jehovah, as to suppose He governs His purposes by second causes. With the eternal God there is nothing new. He clearly saw the end from the beginning. The whole plan of man's salvation, in its utmost possible extent, was all adjusted in the divine mind from everlasting. It will hence appear that the purpose of God, according to which we are called, is an eternal purpose. What has now been asserted will receive full confirmation by consulting a few passages of Scripture. (The reader is desired to examine with candor Eph. 1:4-5; 3:5, 6-9, 11; II Tim. 1:9; Rom. 8:9-11).

That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs with the Jewish Christians, and partakers of the promise in Christ by the gospel, was a mystery, which from the beginning of the world had been hidden in God. Yet we are assured, that the calling of the Gentiles is not the effect of any change in their moral condition, but **“according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord”** (Eph. 3:11).

It may be asked, does not this sentiment militate with the free agency of man, and with the general proclamation of the gospel? It is believed that it does not in the least. But even if it did, if God has declared in His Word that He has formed an eternal purpose concerning the heirs of salvation, and that they are called conformably to it, I should hold myself bound to believe it, so long as I professed to draw my sentiments of religion from the Bible.

And this purpose, so far as it respects individuals, is a secret hidden in the mind of God, it can have no effect in influencing any person to reject the gospel. Nor does it act as a grace are brought to embrace the truth. Neither the one who rejects, nor the other who embraces the great salvation is conscious of any influence inconsistent with free agency. The one under the influence of sovereign grace willingly receives the gospel; the other, under the influence of depravity, as freely and heartily rejects it.

There are some who are unwilling to own that they wholly reject the sentiment under consideration, as there is so much of it found in the Bible, but attempt to

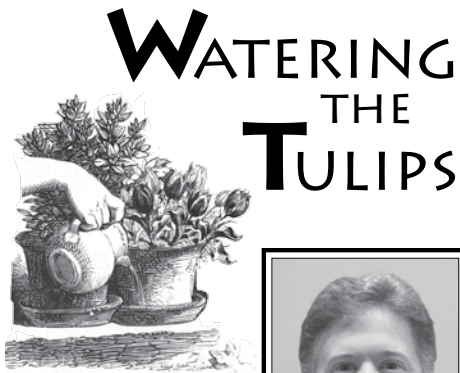
explain it in a light less exceptionable to the feelings of depraved nature. They will tell you they hold to election. But if you ask them how they hold it, you will be answered that we are elected when we believe, and not before. But how can it be said that we called according to His purpose, if no purpose respecting our salvation existed until we believe? If our being chosen is an effect of our believing, or in consequence of it, then it will unavoidably follow, that God's choice is dependent on ours: for in believing, the soul actually chooses God for its portion and everlasting all. This sentiment makes our believing the cause of God's choosing us; while the sentiment I advocate, makes God's choice the cause of our believing. The former, while it soothes and flatters the pride of the sinner, deceives him, by leading him to believe that he can choose what his heart is totally opposed to; the latter, although it abases the creature in the dust, exalts the character of God, who by His sovereign grace saves the sinner, who would never do any thing, if left alone, to save himself.

Do we not, my brethren, in all cases where we elect persons to any office, or to fill any place of trust, act in a similar manner? Do we, when we choose a person to represent us in the Legislature of our Commonwealth, first put him into office, and then choose him? Or do we choose him in order to put him into office? Most certainly the latter. The very supposition that we get into Christ somehow or other, and by our own exertions become believers, and then God chooses us to eternal glory, is too absurd to be admitted.

If, to evade the force of the force-going reasoning, it should be said, that sinners are not converted by their own unassisted exertions, but by the influence of the Spirit of God, it will be admitted, but the difficulty is not obviated. For one of two things will necessarily follow; either that God operates in a greater degree upon them that believe, than upon others, or that they had some previous good dispositions, which the others did not possess. Let the opposers of the doctrine of sovereign grace choose which side of the dilemma they please.

Those who deny the eternal purpose of God, respecting His people, frequently argue from Peter's addressing his brethren, as **“Elect according to the foreknowledge of God, through sanctification of the spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ”** (I Pet. 1:2). They here understand the apostle to assert their election to be at the time they are sanctified through the Spirit unto obedience; or other words, at the time of their conversion. But they seem to overlook an important part of the passage, which declares their election to be according to the foreknowledge of

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By Todd Bryant
of
Northport, Alabama



God Is In Charge

“The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all” (Ps. 103:19).

All honest Bible believers will agree that God is in charge. No matter what it may look like today, things are working right along with God’s plan. We certainly do not mean to imply that God is pleased with all that is going on in our sinful world. He most certainly is not. However, He is ultimately in charge. No believer in God’s Word could ever doubt that.

It seems every election year, even Christians are worried about the future. And while we certainly should be concerned enough to vote, our confidence for the future must rest in God’s power – not the government. No matter which presidential candidate wins the upcoming election, God will still be the only One sitting on His throne. Daniel 2:21 says, **“He removeth kings and setteth up kings.”** Again, we should vote. However, it seems our prayers would carry a whole lot more weight than our vote since we are praying to the Sovereign of the Universe.

Do God’s people have to live on the edge of a nervous breakdown due to the coming election? Absolutely not! God has promised that He would supply all our needs (Philippians 4:19). This promise was not conditionally based on who was the sitting President of the United States. No matter what power any man may hold, he cannot shorten the arm of the Lord (Numbers 11:23).

Nebuchadnezzar had more power (humanly speaking) than any President of the United States has ever had. And yet, God easily brought him down. The monarch was made to believe he was an ox who dwelled out in the field for 7 years (Daniel 4:33). Many, no doubt, feared the power this man wielded. And yet, with all his earthly power, he was no match for the Lord. In fact, when God caused him to look up at the end of the 7 years, it was Nebuchadnezzar who declared, **“And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding**

returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou” (Dan 4:34-35)? Oh, that our leaders today would realize this blessed truth. Even yet, how wonderful if God’s people would grasp hold of this truth!

Many of us give lip service to the sovereignty of God. But, I wonder how many of us actually take time to apply it? How, much practical good do we get out of this blessed truth? If God is in charge, why do we worry so much? If God is in charge, why are we not more confident in prayer, even prayer for the salvation of our loved ones and friends? If God is in charge, why are we not bolder? This list could go on and on. If we really grasp hold of the fact that the God Who has saved us by His wonderful grace is fully in charge, it should actively affect everything we do each and every day. May God help us to apply this blessed truth and may His people get great comfort in it.



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God. But what has the foreknowledge of God to do with their election, in case this depends on their believing? Should it be said, that God foreknew they would believe; I ask, How did God foreknow this? Was it from His foreseeing any previous disposition in them to believe? Or from His own eternal purpose to bring them to the knowledge of salvation in their effectual calling? Our text asserts the latter; that those who love God are **“called according to his purpose.”**

That the apostles were agreed in this important sentiment, and that I have given the true sense of the foregoing passage, will more fully appear, by comparing it with our context. Here Paul continues the argument with great force and plainness. **“For,”** saith he, **“whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate, to be conformed to the image of his Son”** (Rom. 8:29). To predestinate, is to foreordain; I know of no other fair meaning to the word. He has not, as the opposers of the sentiment argue, predestinated persons to live as they live, and die impenitent, and yet go to Heaven; no, but to be conformed to the image of His Son. He has chosen them to be holy here, and happy forever. To place the matter it would seem beyond the possibility of a doubt, the apostle continues, **“Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and**

whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified” (Rom. 8:30). We may here join with the apostle and ask, **“What shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?”** (Rom. 8:29-31). Here, my brethren, you see a complete chain; and **“the scripture cannot be broken”** (John 10:35), without “putting asunder what God hath joined together.”

The apostle Peter is, however, by some, made to support a very different sentiment. The passage referred to is II Peter 1:10: **“Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things ye shall never fall.”** Much stress has been laid upon the apostle’s mentioning calling first, before election. But who were the persons addressed? The first verse will inform us. **“To them who have obtained like precious faith with us”** (II Pet. 1:1). What, and got to do something yet to be elected? How long is it to be supposed a man may be a believer and not elected? Very probably the persons whom the apostle addressed had been possessed of this precious faith, some for months, and others for years. Be this as it may, one thing is certain, they are said to have precious faith, and are called in the text **“brethren,”** therefore they must have been both called and elected before this, according to the sentiments of those who suppose men to be elected when they believe: for none else are mentioned in the context but believers. Those who so much account of the order in which these two words are placed by Peter, are desired to compare them with the following passage of Paul, II Timothy 1:9: **“Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.”**

We have now compared the sentiments of two apostles, and find them to agree, that the calling of His people is according to the foreknowledge and eternal purpose of God. Let us now inquire for a moment, whether John has said any thing which corresponds with our subject, or whether he has left his testimony against it. He has said some things about our loving God, and of God’s loving us. How does he state it? Does he say, he loves us because we first loved him? (This indeed would look like the notion of our being elected because we believe.) But does it appear to you, my brethren, to give that glory to God which is due to Him, in every view of our salvation? No certainly; let us then read it right, and cherish the important idea. **“We love him, because he first loved us”** (I John 4:19). God’s love to us, is antecedent to our love to Him; yea, it is placed by John in this passage, and by other inspired writers, as the efficient cause of our love to Him. God, speaking by the prophet Jeremiah, of Israel, said

“I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee” (Jer. 31:3). You will observe it is not here said, although it is true, I will love thee, but **“I have loved thee with an everlasting love.”**

It may appear unnecessary to add any further proof, but it would seem improper not to notice what our Lord has said on this interesting subject. A little before the death of Jesus, when He had concluded His valedictory address to His disciples, He **“lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come: glorify thy Son, that thy Son may also glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him”** (John 17:1-2). Christ’s universal dominion is here asserted, and a plain reason assigned for it, i.e. “that he should give eternal life to as many as his Father had given him.” If every individual of the human race is given to Christ in the sense of this text, it will conclude strongly in favor of the salvation of all the human race; but is this limiting clause, **“as many as thou hast given him,”** means only such as believe; then it establishes the sentiment under consideration, that all that ever have, and all that ever will believe, were given to Christ in the covenant of redemption before the world began. This text, if it has any meaning, and I believe you will allow that it has, must mean that Christ has many given Him to whom He has not yet given eternal life. For it follows, **“and this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent”** (John 17:3). Very many, we would humbly hope, whom the Father hath given to Christ, have not yet been called by grace; perhaps millions that are yet to be born.

This perfectly agrees with what Christ had said, when representing Himself under the character of the good shepherd (John 10:16); **“And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.”** The visible flock of Christ at this time, had been collected from among the Jews. The gospel had not as yet been preached to the Gentiles; but Christ had sheep among them, which He said He **“must bring.”** And though hitherto they had remained deaf to the voice of mercy, yet, said He, **“they shall hear my voice.”** **“Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power”** (Psa. 110:3). This perfectly harmonizes with the apostle, that he hath predestinated us **“to be conformed to the image of his Son”** (Rom. 8:29).

Indulge me, my hearers, to add one remark more under this head. Our Lord, no doubt with a view to impress this sentiment more deeply upon the minds of His disciples, said to them,

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Effectual Calling

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“Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you” (John 15:16). That is, ye did not first choose Me, as the cause of My choosing you. Simon Peter, and Andrew his brother were not seeking Jesus when He found them, but mending their nets. Matthew was sitting at the receipt of custom when Jesus called him, and for aught that appears, wholly bent upon his money concerns. Where was Paul when Jesus found him? Was he seeking Him, or persecuting him? Certainly the latter. Was it not the case with many of us, that at the moment when our attention was first arrested, we were thoughtless and secure, and felt not the least notion of heart towards the blessed Jesus? Shall we not hence conclude with the apostle, that **“we love him, because he first loved us”** (I John 4:19). And that the gracious calls of His Spirit, by which He brings us to repentance, are according to His eternal purpose.

Here, my brethren, is a foundation which looks permanent: The fixed, eternal purposes of the great Jehovah. These cannot be shaken by all the opposition of carnal reason. They still remain as immovable as mountains of brass. What foundation besides this have we to build a hope upon, that ever another sinner will be converted? Can it be on any thing in the heart of depraved man? Certainly it cannot. Both reason and Scripture forbid such a conclusion. If we cherish at all the pleasing hope, of the future enlargement of Christ's kingdom, it must rest entirely on this consideration, that God has said, “I will work, and who shall let it?” But does God carry on this work of His Spirit in the hearts of men without any previous design? Without any plan? Changing and accommodating His purposes so as to meet the exigency of things? Can any thing take place to produce such a change which was not known before? And could any thing be foreknown, even to God himself, which was not previously certain? To answer these questions, we need only to attend to the voice of truth, which saith, **I am God, and there is none like me. Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure”** (Isa. 46:9-10).

What majesty and glory shine in such language as this! How calculated to raise adoring sentiments in the mind of the humble Christian! On this high ground faith takes her stand, and casts her eye over the wide range of distant ages, and sees the accomplishment of all that God has promised. Without this, there can be no certainty that either the predictions or promises will ever be fulfilled. It is difficult to conceive how any future event could

be predicted, unless the divine purpose stood security for its accomplishment. In short, give up this, and all will be plunged in uncertainty. All must then depend on the volitions of depraved man, which are ever changing. But, blessed by God, this is not the case. All is safe in the hands of our exalted Redeemer, through **“whom we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will”** (Eph. 1:11).

Thus, brethren, you see that your calling springs from the everlasting love of God, and rests wholly upon His immutable purpose. In whatever way this change has been effected, or whatever means have been employed, you will be constrained to acknowledge that it is all of grace. Whether your minds have been gradually impressed with a sense of your lost condition, or whether you have been suddenly arrested and turned about; if in either case you have been brought to embrace the Lord Jesus Christ, you may rest assured that you have been **“called according to his purpose.”**

From the unusually solemn attention which I have observed while discussing this important subject, I cannot but hope the arguments have made a due impression on your minds; and that every believer will see, that his safety rests not upon any thing in himself, but upon the eternal unchangeable purpose of God. Who, my brethren, that contemplates this amazing plan of grace, can forbear exclaiming with the apostle, O the height, the depth, the length and breadth of the love of God! It is high as Heaven; it reaches to earth; it began in eternity; it extends to eternity! But I proceed,

II. To show, that all who are thus called do really love God.

There are many Christians who often doubt whether they have been savingly called, and consequently doubt whether they ever loved God aright. With a view to determine this point satisfactory, we will briefly explain what is meant by loving God, and then produce some of the evidences which prove the existence of such a temper.

To love God in the sense of our text, is to feel and exercise a temper of heart, corresponding in some good degree to the requirements of the divine law. That law which requires us to love God with all the heart, soul, mind and strength, is a transcript or exhibition of the moral perfections of God. It is the same under every dispensation. It claims our obedience from the immediate relation we stand in to Him as our Lord and Lawgiver. Our obligations are founded in the nature and fitness of things, and can never cease, so long as God continues worthy of esteem, and we have capacities to love an amiable object.

This heavenly temper can never exist in any proper degree, but where

the undivided affections of the heart are supremely placed on God, no rival can be admitted. And however strong our affections may appear for some endeared created object, they will all be subordinated to this, when the heart is rightly exercised.

Do any of you, my Christian friends, begin to suspect yourselves, whether you are the subjects of this holy temper? We will now place before you some of the evidences by which you may try yourselves.

1. This love embraces with delightful complacency the whole of the Divine Character. This distinguishes it from a false or spurious affection, which generally fixes on some single attribute, such as mercy, or goodness; but is wholly unreconciled to justice and holiness. True love rejoices in God because He is God; because He is just such a being as He is. His law and government appear perfectly right. This pious heart often expresses the language of David, **“O how love I thy law”** (Psa. 119:97). The innumerable objects which surround the believer, each bearing some mark of the Divinity, serve as so many conductors to lead his thoughts up to God. His soul sweetly rests in the divine favor, and exclaims with holy ardor, “Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none on earth that I desire besides thee.”

This heavenly temper is not less visible in adversity than in prosperity. Sometimes God is pleased to hide His face from His own dear children, probably to bring them to repentance for some forgotten sin, or to try the strength of their love. You may now find them **“cast down, but not destroyed”** (II Cor. 4:9). They go mourning from day to day as without the sun; and are often saying to themselves, “O that I knew I might find him.” Still seeking, and still disconsolate, they ask the watchman, When **“Saw ye him whom my soul loveth”** (S. of S. 3:3). I mourn an absent God, and nothing can satisfy my soul but the returns of His love.

2. Another mark, or evidence of our love to God, is, an unfeigned love to those who bear His image. **“We know,”** says the apostle John, **“that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren”** (I John 3:14). But is this a certain criterion? Are there none that love Christians but those who have been born from above? There are none who love them with a right affection, but such as have the love of God in their hearts. It is a distinguishing trait in this love, that it attaches to the divine image, and to nothing else. It forms a union, or oneness of soul, which cannot be formed upon any other principle. **“He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.”** If we love God whom we have not seen, we shall certainly love our brother whom we have seen.

It is not to be doubted, that many

serious reflecting persons, who have never experienced a saving change, feel a regard and veneration for Christians, which they do not for vicious persons, but this differs, after all, from Christian love. Can it be supposed that any but a parent ever knew that peculiar distinguishing love which parents feel to their tender offspring? It is a fact that they do not. Many have thought they did, but when they came to be parents they knew to the contrary. So others, before their conversion, have thought they loved the children of God as Christians love one another; but when they came to experience a change of heart, they have found an affection to the disciples of Christ, totally different from what they ever felt before.

3. A further evidence of our love to God, and of our being called according to His purpose, is manifested by a cheerful obedience to His commands. Where the divine law is impressed upon the heart, it is a sure pledge of interest in the new covenant, and never fails of producing obedience to the whole revealed will of God. Our Lord lays this down as a test of our friendship to Him. **“If ye love me, keep my commandments.”** Again, He states it more positively, **“If a man love me, he will keep my words.”** Not all the fears of Hell, nor dread of future punishment, ever produced a single act of acceptable obedience. The real Christian is not driven to duty by a slavish fear; but drawn by the constraining influence of divine love. Animated by this noble sentiment, duty becomes a pleasure, and the Cross of Christ his chief glory. The most difficult and self-denying precepts are not grievous, but joyous. He delights to do the will of God, because it is His will. He ardently desires that happy period, when he will be entirely conformed in heart and temper to the holy will of God. I add,

4. This holy affection is also manifested by a sincere delight in the worship and ordinances of God.

The public worship of God seems designed, not only to impress the mind with a solemn reverence for the Supreme Majesty, but to furnish the soul with an occasion of delightful intercourse with God. Hence these seasons have been highly prized by good men in every age. Who can fully conceive of the pious joy which animated the chosen tribes, when repairing to the hill of Zion! They preferred the holy solemnities of the temple above their chief joy. With what inimitable beauty does David express the feelings of his heart, when lamenting his absence from the house of God! **“How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God”** (Psa. 84:1-2). **“As the hart panteth after the water brooks,**

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Twelve Hindrances to Prayer

By John Wycliffe
(1320 - 1384)

Here follow twelve hindrances to prayer, whereby men may know better why they are not always heard when they pray to God.

The first hindrance to prayer is the sin of him that prayeth. In Isaiah 59:2 "Your wickednesses have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear." And in Jeremiah 5: "Our sins have kept God from us." And in Lamentations 3: "We have done wickedly, and have deserved vengeance; therefore thou mayest not be prayed [that is, pleased by our prayer], And thou hast covered thyself with a cloud, that a prayer pass not through." And David saith in the Psalter: "If I beheld wickedness in my heart [that is to say, If I loved wickedness], God shall not hear."

The second hindrance is the doubt of him that prayeth. In James 1 it is said: "Let a man ask in faith, nothing doubting, for he that doubteth is like a wave of the sea, which is driven of the wind, and tossed about. Let not that man guess that he shall get any thing of the Lord." And Bernard saith: "He is proved unworthy to have heavenly blessings, that asketh of God with doubting desire."

The third hindrance is this---that a man asketh not that which ought to be asked. In Matthew 20:22 it is said: "**Ye know not what ye ask.**" Oft the Church is not heard, when it asketh that tribulations be taken away.

The fourth hindrance is being unworthy of Him to whom we pray. For God, in Jeremiah 7:16 and 11:14 saith: "Pray not thou for this people, for I shall not hear thee." And in Jeremiah 15 God saith thus: "Though Moses and Samuel stand before me, my will is not to this people; cast them out from my face and go they out."

The fifth hindrance is the multitude of evil thoughts. In Genesis 15, Abraham drove away the birds; that is, he that prayeth shall drive away evil thoughts.

The sixth hindrance is the despising of God's law. In Proverbs 28:19 God saith: "The prayer of him that turneth away his ear, that he hear not the law of God, shall be abominable, or cursed." And in Proverbs 1:28-29 "They shall call me to help," saith God, "and I shall not hear them; for they hated teaching and chastising."

The seventh hindrance is hardness of soul; and this is of two types. Some is hardness against poor men, of which it is said in Proverbs 21:13 "If a man stoppeth his ear at the cry of a poor man, he shall cry and he shall not be heard." Another hardness is to them that have trespassed,



when a man will not forgive them. In Mark 11:25-26 Christ saith: "When ye stand to pray, forgive ye, if ye have any thing against any man; that also your

Father which is in heaven, forgive to you your sins. That if ye forgive not men, neither shall your Father forgive you your sins."

The eighth hindrance is increase of sin. In James 4 he saith: "**Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.**" He draweth nigh to God, that ceaseth from evil work. Concerning this hindrance, and that which goeth before, Isidore speaks, and saith thus: "In two manners a prayer is hindered, that a man may not get the things that are asked; one is, if a man do yet evils, that is, wilfully continueth in sin; and the other is, if he forgive not sin to man that trespasseth against him."

The ninth hindrance is suggestions of the Devil; that keep many men from prayer.

The tenth hindrance is littleness of desire. Augustine saith: "God keepeth that thing from thee, which He will not give soon to thee, that thou learn to desire great things."

The eleventh hindrance is the impatience of him that asketh. In I Samuel 28:7 Saul asked counsel of the Lord, and he answered not Saul. And Saul said: "Seek ye for me a woman that hath an evil spirit."

The twelfth hindrance is the lack of perseverance in prayer. In Luke 11:18 Christ saith: "If a man continueth knocking at the gate, the friend [that is God] shall rise and give him as many loaves as he needeth."

Now hast thou here twelve hindrances to prayer, well grounded in Holy Scripture. It is good, before thou prayest, to search thy conscience, so that thy prayer is not hindered by any of these, and so by grace to have the answer to thy prayer, and eventually to come to bliss without end.



Effectual Calling

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so panteth my soul after thee, O God" (Psa. 42:1). When shall I come and appear before God? There, my brethren, are the sentiments and feelings of all who love God, who have been called according to His purpose.

We seldom, if ever, enjoy more of God, than when waiting upon Him in ways of

His appointment. When He is graciously pleased to favor us with His divine presence in His ordinances, our joys rise "unmeasureably high, and heaven begins below."

You are not, my Christian friends, strangers to these devout pleasures. What precious seasons have you enjoyed within these walls! How often have your souls been animated with the glories of Christ displayed in His gospel, so as to lose sight of every thing but God! And although like Anna, you could not abide in the temple day and night, yet you have carried a sweet savor of religion with you into the business and concerns of the week. I trust that many of you could appeal today to the great Searcher of hearts, who knows the sincerity of your affection, that you often most ardently long for the return of these precious seasons. You place them among your happiest moments; and look forward with joyful anticipation to that day, when you will join your kindred spirits above, to worship God in the beauty of holiness. But I must not enlarge.

I am far from thinking that I have described all the exercises of the soul by which the love of God manifests itself; but these must suffice for the present.

III. We proceed to consider the unlimited declaration in the text, "**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).

I have scarce time to glance at this part of the subject, but would briefly observe, that if there were not another promise in all the Book of God, this, if fully realized, would be sufficient to support the believer under all his trials. "**All things work together for good.**" It is not said that "all things," separately considered, or of their own nature and tendency, work for the good of the believer; but, (let the idea never be forgotten) it is under the controlling agency of our covenant God, that all things are made subservient to our good.

Some things are in their nature so opposite to the happiness of the believer; that if permitted to take their own course, they would work his eternal ruin. Such is the nature and tendency of all sin and unbelief; and such would be their final issue, if not controlled by the gracious interpositions of Heaven. Hence the opposition of the enemies of religion is not to be estimated by the injury produced, but by what was intended. Could we believe the language of the text, would it not serve to calm our minds under the crosses and trials of life? But so slow are we to learn, that, after having experienced in innumerable instances the truth of this promise, yet, when beset with new trials, we cry out with Jacob of old "**All these things are against me**" (Gen. 42:36). God sometimes arrays Himself with terrors, and effects the

purposes of His love in such mysterious ways, that His own children are filled with amazement.

We are usually called to encounter trials and difficulties without being permitted to see their final issue. It is in this way only that our faith and love can be properly tried. Had Abraham known beforehand what God intended in calling him to offer up his son, we should never have discerned any great degree of heroism in his faith. He might indeed have shown considerable zeal in repairing to Mount Moriah, and with great parade have erected his altar and laid the wood in order; but had he known, after all, that he had only to offer up a ram caught in a thicket instead of his son, it could not have been considered as a very high expression of love to God. But taking the account as it is, and it exhibits one of the severest trials, and at the same time one of the noblest instances of unwavering faith, of magnanimous, undissembled love recorded in the history of man. Abraham, by this transaction, proved his love to God; and by the issue, God proved, that all things work together for good to them that love Him.

The promise in our text is designed to be of common use to all believers. It comes to their relief upon every occasion. It travels with the Christian through the whole journey of life, and rests with him at every stage. Whatever may be the allotments of Providence respecting him, whether riches or poverty, prosperity or adversity, all shall work together for his good. The temptations of Satan, the opposition of wicked men, and even the struggles of the old man within, shall all be overruled for his good. Should one trial follow another in swift succession, like Job's messengers; should the dark clouds of adversity collect with sevenfold blackness; the believer may calm his mind with this consideration, that all shall work for his good in the end, however painful the operation. O how privileged is the good man! Who would not, like Moses, "**choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God,**" (if this is to be the end of their sufferings) "**than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season**" (Heb. 11:25)? Surely nothing can harm us, if we be followers of that which is good. We shall ere long come off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through Him who hah loved and given Himself for us. Then shall we see, with greater clearness than ever, God's gracious designs in permitting the sorrows and afflictions which befall us in the present life, and shall be fully satisfied that all have contributed to promote our greatest happiness. They that come out of great tribulation, will be finally presented before the throne in robes washed white in the blood of the Lamb. But I must draw to a close.

1. From the subject thus opened and

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explained, we see most clearly the safety and happiness of the people of God. They are safe, because that, conformably to an eternal purpose, they are in Christ Jesus, and consequently freed from condemnation.

This is evident, from their effectual calling, from their love to God, and from their walking in the Spirit, and not after the flesh. They are happy in what they now enjoy, and from their interest in the promise in the text, that all things shall work for their good. What a firm foundation, my brethren, does our subject present, for our hopes to rest upon. The immutable, eternal purpose of God; His unchanging love and faithfulness, accompanied with the most gracious declarations and promises! Will not a consideration of these things serve as a constant stimulus to duty? Will they not bind us in everlasting obligations of gratitude? **“While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us”** (Rom. 5:8). Yet He had died in vain, had we been left to ourselves. We should have still continued in our sins, and remained enemies to the gospel, had it not been attended with **“the power of God; Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began”** (II Tim. 1:8-9).

In this deep laid plan, what amazing riches of grace do we behold! “God’s kindest thoughts are here expressed.” Boundless love and mercy have burst forth upon the children of men, to the astonishment of angels! And have you, my brethren, been made the happy participants of this grace, while many around you still refuse it? Let me exhort you, to live to Him who died for you. Let your daily conduct and conversation witness that you have been with Jesus. If you have a saving interest in Christ, you will not walk after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Your trials may be many and severe; they will probably be short; and while they continue, they are all at work (whether you preceive it or not) for your greatest good. When you shall be finally prepared for your inheritance among them who are sanctified, Christ will receive you to that **“kingdom (which was) prepared for you from the foundation of the world”** (Matt. 25:34). **“And so shall you be ever be with the Lord.”**

2. Our subject suggests the only solid ground of hope to the anxious sinner. Has he not long been trying every effort, which an unrenewed heart can make? And what relief has he gained? None at all. Nor can he expect any from this quarter. In vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, or from any thing else, but

the infinite mercy of God. Can you place any dependence upon yourselves, that you will ever be any better until renewed by grace? If you have any acquaintance with your own hearts, surely you cannot. But you may ask, Can there be any hope for a wretch so vile as I am? For one who has sinned so long against light and love, and all the tenders of mercy? Hear the gracious answer of God himself! **“Thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help.”** From the very circumstance of your being awakened, you have reason to hope God has designs of mercy for you. Jesus hath said, **“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out”** (John 6:37). Are you really burdened with sin? Can you adopt the language of one of old, **“I did mourn as a dove; mine eyes fail with looking upward; O LORD, I am oppressed; undertake for me”** (Isa. 38:14)? Then hear the inviting voice of Jesus; **“Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest”** (Matt. 11:28). O that you may know the sovereign, distinguishing love of Christ, in your effectual calling; that you may be enabled to give your hearts unreservedly to Him, and enjoy all that peace and consolation which results from believing. I add once more---

3. That there is no other foundation on which sinners of any description can build a hope of salvation, but that which is laid in the eternal purpose of God. Many have said; “If this doctrine be true, it is very discouraging.” But it may be asked, “What is there to encourage them if this doctrine be not true? Is there any thing in depravity which would ever lead a sinner to God?” If so, we have mistaken its nature. The sinner, whose heart is today in opposition to the gospel, will remain the same tomorrow, unless changed by sovereign grace. It would be the most cruel of all deceptions, to flatter him, that if left wholly to himself, unembarrassed by a divine purpose, he would do well enough. Though opposed at present, yet at some future period. He would undoubtedly be willing to forsake his sins and turn to the Lord. This is a very plausible error; but it is the very height of delusion and falsehood. As well might you expect a stream, that had been descending for ages, to turn about of its own accord, and ascend to its source.

Do any of you, my dear hearers, begin to make the ancient, though too common objection; If all is dependent on God, **“Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will”** (Rom. 9:19)? Nothing which I can do can alter the divine purpose? To this I reply; “You may rest assured, that God has never purposed to save any in impenitency and unbelief; nor to damn any, who repent and believe the gospel.” Are you not commanded to **“. . . seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness”** (Matt. 6:33);



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to **“strive to enter in at the strait gate”** (Luke 13:24); ---to **“Labor for the meat which endureth to everlasting life”** (John 6:27); --to **“repent and believe the gospel”** (Mark 1:15; I John 3:23). If these are commanded duties, under the gospel dispensation, and you live and die in the neglect of them, be assured you will not be condemned for what God has done, or not done, but because you have violated the holy law of God, and neglected and despised the great salvation. O that you might feel your own impotency to every thing that is good, arising entirely from your opposition of heart to God; that the Spirit of the living God might awaken in you a deep and affecting sense of your need of salvation; and that you may be enabled to **“seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near”** (Isa. 55:6).

You will not think that we, who preach the gospel to you, feel indifferent towards you, or unconcerned about your eternal well-being. Far from this, with all the tender solicitude which your situation, and our own accountability can inspire, we endeavor to set before you the whole counsel of God; and cease not to **“pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power”** II Thess. 1:11). To the infinite compassion of that God, who is **“able even to subdue all things to himself”** (Phil. 3:21); we commend you, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.



Of Children and

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strong – are in a position to lend some aid but we do not.

This does not specify a group of unborn children and I will not pretend that it does. It is intentionally vague. It could have said “prisoners for their faith” or “innocent bystanders” or “widows weak and uncared for.” It is specifically vague. By saying none, it applies to them

all. There is no group named because the writer wants to encourage support for any innocent group of weak individuals being carried unjustly to their demise.

Verse 10 deals with a possible cause for our failure. Perhaps we faint. That word there in Hebrew means to sink down, to relax or to be disheartened. Perhaps we think our strength is small.

But verse 12 is where I want to bring your attention. It deals with the consequences of failure and it is startling. The folks there defend themselves by saying “We did not know!” But we do know, do we not? We can not claim that the past 39 years have gone by in our ignorance. We do know!

However, the writer does not say that they defend themselves by claiming “We do not know” and God says “Yes you did!” The writer makes it clear that even ignorance is not an excuse for inaction.

“If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works.”

Why did you not know? God will look in your heart and find out. If you knew, you have no excuse for allowing it. If you do not know, you have no excuse for not knowing. We cannot dodge God’s judgment when we fail – be it by fear or ignorance or apathy – to intervene in the unjust deaths of individuals who find themselves innocently placed in mortal danger.

That is essentially our introduction into why this issue of abortion is so important. God’s people are absolutely held accountable for their inaction and/or indifference when innocent people are taken to their deaths.

Oh, but that word “people” is the sticking point, is it not? This is important to understand the entirety of the abortion issue comes down to one single question, “Is it a person?” That is important, I think, even in our text. After all, God does not demand action to protect an unviable fetus, but He demands defense of innocent people! So which is it? If that entity within a mother’s womb is merely a fetus – some scientifically defined mass of blood and tissue – then we have done nothing wrong. But if that is a person, if it is a child, if it is a baby – then we have clearly crossed the line.

It is important for us to determine if this call to action in Proverbs is applicable to the question of abortion today. And the best way to do that is to ask the question, “Is it a person?” We will try to answer that question in a couple of different ways. We will first consider, from just a logical standpoint, the potential personhood of an unborn child. Secondly, we will examine if the Word of God lends any definition for the unborn.

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The Rantings and Ravings of Brother Ritechus N. Dignation by Joseph Harris



Forgive and Forget

Churches today sure can get in a mess. The problem is that churches are made up of people and after all, people are human.....sinfully human. In some churches, the problem is worldly members, in other churches, there's a power struggle, and in some churches, all they do is bicker and squabble and some even split, and it's usually over nothin'.

One problem that can always be found in every church is unforgiveness. Some folks just can't get over some penny ante junk and they pass the family feud on down to their kids. It usually ain't nothing more than like when Aunt Suzy got a bee in her bonnet at cousin Clara 'cause they happened to wear the same hat to the Sunday-go-to-meetin' meal, and neither one of 'em ever got over that cat fight. Then there was that time that Uncle Eb made a sour face over widow Magnolia's carrot cake. She went and spread lies all over the county about his drinkin' problem that he never had, but the church near 'bout threw him out, until no witnesses could be found.

Every preacher would do well to preach on forgiveness once every three months, cause brother, all it takes to get crossed up with folks is puttin' your mouth in gear before you engage your brain. Job said, **"Man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward"** and some folks make sparks continually. Ever'body's gonna offend at some time and ever'body's gonna get offended eventually. Jesus said that offenses would come, but woe be to those who bring them. Apparently, Jesus is not too happy with folks who go around offending. However, since He gave us a heads up, and promised offenses would come, we should focus on doing the right thing and gettin' right with God and man after the offense, by doin' our share of forgivin'.

How dare anyone not forgive another person, especially since God has already forgiven us more than we will ever have to forgive anyone else. Some church members won't forgive others over one little word spoken out of place, when God has already forgiven them of a boat load of sins. Shame! Unforgiveness hinders, hurts and halts the Spirit of God among His people and has caused many a split in families and churches. Brethren, these things ought not to be. When the Devil tells you that the other person should

forgive first, you just ignore the father of lies, forgive, forget, then keep on walkin' and don't look back. You will find that you can actually sleep at night and you won't live in fear of runnin' into widow Magnolia when you go to town.



Of Children and

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THE LOGICAL ARGUMENT FOR PERSONHOOD

It is fair to say that the question of Pro-Life and Pro-Choice can get muddled into a thousand different directions when the two sides start debating. However, it is always going to prove fruitless debate if we do not keep it focused on the single important question, "Is it a person?"

Both sides are guilty of ignoring this question. We immediately begin to jump to the "is it right or is it wrong" arguments without answering this question first. We are trying to answer a question of morality without ever establishing the facts. We need to get rid of all the side arguments by bringing it back to that issue alone.

TODDLER TACTICS

Scott Klusendorf, president of Life Training Institute makes a good argument for this. He writes that the issue can be brought to that single point by using what he calls "Toddler Tactics." Essentially if we will apply any of the reasoning for the allowance of abortion to a toddler instead of a fetus we will see the question really becomes one of definition. Is it a child?

For example, a common argument is that a woman has a right to privacy in making these decisions. Is it okay to kill a toddler in private? No! A toddler is a person even in private.

What about a question of affordability? Some families will opt for abortion because they simply can not fit the ever expanding cost of children into their available budget. Well, would it be okay for a family in hard economic times to eliminate three mouths to feed by putting their toddlers to death? No, a child is a person even if their parents are poor.

What if the child is not wanted? Well, first as an adoptive parent I can assure you, it is wanted somewhere. But even if not, would we apply the same standard to an infant? After all, it does not become more or less wanted just because it has been born. Let us say that there is a 3-year-old who is not wanted. And by the time he is 5 he will have been physically and mentally abused. At what point does that make it okay to kill him? A child does not stop being a person because they are unwanted or might be treated badly.

What if the baby will have disabilities? After all, medical science can now

somewhat accurately predict some mental and physical disabilities. But imagine there is a 2-year-old, mentally disabled, can not walk, can not talk, will not ever be able to do either. Let us say it even looks ugly. Should we spare that child and ourselves the pain of its continued existence?

Even the most extreme arguments become focused with Toddler Tactics. For example, I am sure you have heard the question "what if the poor girl had been raped? Should not she be allowed to have an abortion?" To answer that, we must consider how should a civil society treat innocent human beings that remind us of a painful event?

If a woman came to you and said "here is my child. He is the product of rape. He looks like his father and he reminds me of that horrible experience every waking moment. I'm afraid he is going to grow to be just like him." You would have a great deal of compassion for that mother and her dreadful situation. But, you would never say "grab the pillow and put it over his face." A person – even if that person reminds you of horrible experiences – is still a person and there are better options available.

By the way, just to give you that statistics, less than 1 percent of abortions are performed due to rape or incest. Six percent are because of potential medical problems with the child. Saving the life of the mother does not even make the chart. Former Surgeon General C. Everett Koop said that in his entire career he not once encountered such a situation. The vast majority – about 93 percent – fall into the category of social reasons such as: a child would be too expensive, unwanted, inconvenient, etc.

So then, that is the real question, is it not? It does not matter if it is wanted or not, if the mother can afford it or not, if it has disabilities or not, or even if it is the product of rape. If it is just tissue, then get rid of it. But if it is a child – it has a right to life. All else is irrelevant. So let us start trying to answer that question.

GENETICS AND APPEARANCE

Unborn children, from the earliest stages of development, have all the genetic material necessary for humanity. The smallest particles of life which we now understand is the DNA code included in our cellular system. Within that code we have all the parts of a working human from the color of their hair to the propensity for talent in certain areas to the likelihood of specific diseases.

In fact, if you gave a DNA scientist the smallest cells of life they would be able to identify it as to the genus and species. "This is human," they would say – not knowing if it came from you, me or an unborn baby two days after conception.

It is that code which starts the human fetus on the remarkable development journey through its first nine months. Within the first moments of fertilization,

the gender of the child is a forgone conclusion. In the first few weeks, the neural tubes are formed, setting the foundation for thought, senses and feeling.

The heartbeat begins in the fifth week and arms and legs begin to appear. By the seventh week, eyes, ears, mouth, nose, fingers, toes are forming and clearly recognizable. By week eleven, almost all the organs are not only formed, but also operating. By week fourteen in development, babies can be seen sucking their thumbs.

By the time the child is only half-way to the normal pregnancy, the baby has developed the cells needed for taste, smell, hearing, sight and touch. He or she will kick, punch, wiggle, calm when they hear familiar sounds like music and voices and be startled when they hear loud and unexpected noises.

Legally, you still have another month or sometimes more after that to have an abortion. If it was an eagle egg, it is illegal to destroy even if it has just been laid and is nothing but a yolk and some goo. Eagles are a protected species. Nobody argues that the egg is not an eagle yet. It is given that status just because, if let to natural processes, it will become an eagle.

Yet, an unborn child with all the genetic code for humanity, with heart, lungs, fingers, toes, eyes, ears and nose - who can think, feel, kick, suck its thumb, be comforted, be frightened – is not a person until the moment it is born. The difference, as far as I can tell, is somebody will stand up and say they want the eagle to live, but the child is not wanted.

Some would argue, "Oh, that is not it! It just is not a person until it is born!" Why? It looks like a person. It reacts like a person. It feels like a person. What standard do we use to determine it isn't?

Stephen Schwarz in his book "The Moral Question of Abortion" discounts the four main arguments against the humanity of an unborn child.

1. Size or Appearance. Many say that an unborn child is simply too small to assign humanity to it. After all, in some of those stages of development I listed, the baby is still only about an inch or two long. However, that argument does not stand to reason. Men are generally bigger than women, does that make them more human? I'm bigger than most of you reading this, but that does not mean I am more of a person than you. Size and appearance are not determining factors of humanity.

2. Level of Development. Some would argue that the stage of development is so early and new that we can not call it human yet. It just is not a person because it has not fully developed. But, do we somehow forfeit rights because we are not as developed? A 14-year-old is more developed than a 2-year-old but that does not mean the teenager is

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more of a real person. Humans do not become disposable because they are underdeveloped, helpless, defenseless or dependent.

3. Environment. Well, maybe it is about a change of locations? I’ve never understood this one. The birth process from womb to outside world is a change of about 8-9 inches. What happens in that birth canal that makes the child that comes out different from what it was on the inside? A doctor would be convicted of murder if he took that baby after it made that trip and killed it. But somehow it is okay if he reaches inside with a vacuum and sucks it out? A change of locations is a morally trivial argument to whether it is a person or not.

4. Degree of Dependency. The difference, most would argue, is that an unborn child is dependent to such a degree to its mother that the mother’s choice of self-determination supercedes the child’s right to life. But no baby is viable or independent if that is the test we set. When does a baby stop being totally dependent? 1-day, 1-week, 1-month, 1-year? If that is the standard, it also supports infanticide – the murder of infants. What about someone totally dependent on insulin, nitroglycerin or oxygen regulators? We might be dependent on others for our survival, but that does not mean we are dependent on others for our value. Perhaps they are dependent persons ... but they are still persons.

Logically, we have every reason to include an unborn child in our definition of valuable humanity and any argument to exclude them from personhood fails based on logic. Is it a person? Yes, an unborn baby is a person.

GOD’S WORD DEFINES VALUABLE LIFE.

However, we are not exclusively limited to the scope of human logic and philosophy when it comes to determining our important question, “Is it a person?” God’s Word makes several statements about the personhood of unborn children.

GOD SEES OUR START AS BEING IN THE WOMB.

“Did not he that made me in the womb make him? and did not one fashion us in the womb” (Job 31:15)?

“For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother’s womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect;

and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them” (Ps. 139:13-16).

Where was Job made? In the womb. He was not baking. He was not being prepared to be made. Job says God “fashioned us in the womb.” David says in Psalm 139 he was made in secret where none could see but God. He is “**fearfully and wonderfully made.**” He describes in verse 16 a God that sees us for who we are even before we are fully developed. He sees our substance and our members, even when they are incomplete and “**as yet there was none of them.**”

Job and David do not picture a passive God. They picture a God who takes an active role in the development and growth of the child in the womb. That unborn child is the creation of God and the development of the unborn child is in the hands of God and only He has the authority to either advance or hinder it.

THE BABY IN THE WOMB IS PERSONALLY KNOWN

Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations” (Jer. 1:5).

Do you understand what the Lord is saying there? Not only does it repeat the previous point, that the Lord is the One who controls the formation and development of a child. It also designated that God looks at an unborn baby and sees its purpose and potential and plan for its entire life.

Jeremiah, before he was even born God had made the plan for his life. So what is God’s answer to our question, “Is it a person?” In the Bible, God speaks about those unborn children in a very personal way.

They have personalities. They have wants and desires and gladness and even jealousies. Genesis 25:22 says of Rebekah’s pregnancy with Jacob and Esau that “**the children struggled together within her.**” Brothers fight. That is what children do, is it not?

Incidentally, in that verse, Moses uses the normal Hebrew term for a child.

“**And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among**

women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me” (Luke 1:41-43)?

This is a wonderful occurrence. Two women, cousins, both pregnant, come together to speak. But they are not the only ones there, are they? Elisabeth is older and she is pregnant with John the Baptist and Mary her young cousin is pregnant with Jesus. While those mothers are happy to see one another and it sure seems like those unborn children are happy as well, does it not?

John “leaped in the womb” excited at the very sound of Mary’s voice.

Incidentally, the word for “**babe**” there is βρεφος (brephos) – the exact same word that is used when Jesus is born and the “babe (βρεφος) is wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger” and also in, “**And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God”** (Luke 18:15-16).

The born and the unborn are given the same regard in the Bible and it is not some impersonal view, but the acknowledgment of a personal, desired for, and loving God.

Is it a person? Praise God, it is a person! It is a wanted person. It is a valued person. It is a person for whom Jesus Himself turns to His disciples and says “do not stop them from coming to Me!”

Logic – that is facts we can gather and everything we can think or know – demands that unborn child is a person. God’s Word clearly shows that and unborn child is seen as a person. Then on what basis do we exclude them from our text and turn a blind eye to the defenseless being murdered? We have no excuse for our inaction.

WHAT SHOULD CHRISTIANS DO?

First off, you can vote Pro-Life. Those of you who know me have probably noticed that I am not really all that politically-minded. My politics are simple – vote for people who are both Pro-Life and proactive about it. By that I mean, candidates that are Pro-Life in their convictions and also have the courage to act on those convictions.

Very little else matters much compared to this issue. Are you overtaxed, undertaxed, big government, little government, happy with the economy, angry with the economy, etc. The real question is where does a politician stand on the moral issues, specifically the killing of children?

We have been blessed by God with the freedom to vote and we ought to embrace that gift and do it in a way that honors Him. That is certainly something we can do to stop abortions.

Secondly, if you know someone who is considering an abortion, lovingly plead with them, beg them, to reconsider. There are other options available. Do not be foolish and pretend that those options are easy. Keeping a child is a difficult decision and it will not be a simple road. Giving a child up for adoption is heartbreaking and agonizing. Do not pretend that it is not.

But you can certainly point out how the easy decision comes with other problems and the right choice is such a blessing. For example, of my three daughters, at least two are alive only because an attempted abortion failed. God worked so miraculously. I would hope that no rational person would look at them now and decide that the world can do without them ... but that is what abortion does.

Having that conversation with someone can be hard, especially when they have not asked for your advice. The easy thing to do is say, “that is not my business.” Do not for a moment think that! It is as much your duty as stopping someone from committing murder in front of you is your duty.

And if they ignore your pleading, your job is not done. That person will be dealing with a great amount of guilt and you need to tell them that forgiveness is found in Jesus Christ alone.

Finally, folks, the absolute greatest tool we have is prayer. If we have learned anything about God and ourselves, I would think that it is that we are unable to do anything, but He is able to do everything. He can and will intervene in situations where we cannot.

- Pray for our nation, because God can turn the hearts of our leaders.
- Pray for those leaders that God will convict them of this truth and give them the courage to follow those convictions.
- Pray for the children because God can protect them through seeming impossible means.
- Pray for the women debating abortion because God can instill in them a love – a natural affection – for that child.

But what we have to do is stop ignoring it. None of us ignored the events of Sept. 11, 2001. Approximately 3,500 lives were snuffed out at the World Trade Center on that day ... and abortion took about that

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Tune in to the

Berea Baptist Broadcast

STATION	TIME	DIAL	WATTS
WCNA, Myrtle, MS.....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.	95.9.....	3,000 FM
WCTT, Corbin, KY.....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.	680.....	5,000 AM
WFTA, Tupelo, MS.....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.	101.9.....	3,000 FM
KARI, Blaine, WA.....	Saturday 10:30 - 11:00 a.m....	550.....	5,000 AM
KPRV, Heavener, OK.....	Sunday 8:30 - 9:00 a.m.	92.5.....	6,000 FM

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same number that day. But it happened again on Sept. 12, and again on Sept. 13, and Sept 14, and every day since – long after the World Trade Center fires were put out.

Perhaps the best way to put it into perspective is a comparison of abortions to live births. While that statistic has been as high as 364 abortions for every 1000 live births the most recent accurate number on that is in 2001 when 246 abortions were performed for every 1000 live births. That is 1 abortion for every 4 live births.

Let us put that into perspective this way. If you remember the school shooting in Columbine, Colo. in 1999 – 12 students and one teacher were shot to death and the entire nation mourned the loss of life. It was a tragic, unnecessary, heartbreaking day. Now, imagine that tomorrow a gunman walks into every schoolhouse in the nation and goes about the room shooting every 5th child.

Do not say such a thing could never happen! It happens every day. We simply can not ignore those who are drawn to their deaths and pretend that we do not know.



The Condition of

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more of His disciples than of Himself: He enters into their feelings---they were to remain behind, poor and despised: “as sheep among wolves;” as passengers in a vessel “tossed by the waves”---He will not leave them “**comfortless.**” On the evening before His crucifixion, and a few moments before His agony, by the gate of the garden of Gethsemane, surrounded with His family, “He lifts up His eyes to Heaven,” and commends them into the hands of His “Father and our Father, His God and our God.”

Do not say, my fellow-Christians, this prayer was for the apostles---it was for them primarily, but not exclusively. Hear His own words: “**Neither pray I for these ALONE, but for THEM ALSO which SHALL BELIEVE on me THROUGH THEIR WORD**” (John 17:20) (emph. WJ). Thus it extends to all the followers of our Lord in every age, in every place. He prays therefore for you, even for you; and this is His language: “**I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil**” (John 17:15).

From these words the following instructions may be derived.

I. It is the Province of God to take us out of the World.

II. This world is a proper situation for the righteous to live in for a season.

III. There is evil in the world, to which they are exposed, and by which they may be injured.

IV. The divine protection is essential to their security.

V. It is encouraging to remember that our Lord and Saviour prays for our preservation.

I. IT IS THE PROVINCE OF GOD TO TAKE US OUT OF THE WORLD.

It is the obvious design of the Scripture to bring the mind into a pious frame, by inducing us to acknowledge God in all our ways; to apprehend Him in every occurrence; to adore Him in the field, as well as in the temple; to hold communion with Him in His works as well as in His Word, in His dispensations as well as in His ordinances. While our minds are perplexed and discomposed by beholding the mass of human affairs, and the perpetual fluctuations of worldly things; this blessed book lends us a principle, which when applied reduces the confusion to order; explains the mystery; and calms the inquirer. It teaches us that nothing occurs by chance; it shows us the Supreme Being superintending the whole, “**seeing the end from the beginning;” “working all things after the counsel of his own will;**” advancing towards the execution of purposes worthy of Himself, with steady, majestic steps; never turning aside; never too precipitate; never too slow. We see Divine Providence fixing “**the bounds of our habitation;**” and presiding over all the circumstances of our birth, and our death. In our appointed time we appear; in the places designed for us we are fixed. When we have finished our course, and ended our work, “**He says, Return, ye children of men**” (Ps. 90:30): and it is not in the power of enemies to accelerate, or of friends to retard the period of our departure. “**Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth! Are not his days also like the days of an hireling?**”---“**His days are determined: the number of his months are with thee: thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass**” (Job 14:5)---“In His hand thy breath is, and His are all thy ways.” “**The righteous and the wise, and their works are in the hand of God**” (Ecc. 9:1). Does He “number the hairs of your head,” and not the years of your pilgrimage? Does “not a sparrow fall to the ground without your heavenly Father?” and are ye not “**of more value than many sparrows**” (Matt. 10:31)?

This world, we have reason to believe, was never designed fully to accomplish the purpose of God in the original creation of man. It was to precede a nobler state; and the mode of transition from glory to glory would have been easy and delightful. But the passage is now become rough and dismaying. “**By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death hath passed upon all men, for that all have**

sinned” (Rom. 5:12). It is not pleasing to human nature, to think of being “taken out of” these bodies in which we have tabernacled; “out of” these houses in which we have lived; “out of” these circles in which we have moved; “out of” this “world,” in which we were born, and to which we have been so long accustomed--to be laid hold of, and detached from all we now enjoy, by the messengers of “**the king of terrors**” (Job 18:14); to be divided; to lie down and putrify; to enter a new and untried world. But irksome as the consideration may be, the Christian cannot banish it from his thoughts; he endeavours, especially in particular circumstances, to render it familiar; and there are things which have a tendency to encourage his mind in the contemplation of it. The enemy is disarmed of his sting. While “walking through the valley of the shadow of death,” God will be with him. The event is entirely under the controlling influence of his heavenly Father. How pleasing is the reflection, “Well, my times are in His hand. On Him depend the occurrences of my history, and the duration of my life. He is best qualified to judge of the scenes through which I am to pass, and of the manner in which I am to leave this world---whether it be sudden, or lingering; by accident, or disease; alone, or surrounded with friends; in youth, or in age. It is the Lord; let Him do what seemeth Him good. Have I been bereaved of beloved relations, and useful connections? My soul hath it still in remembrance---but were they not His? He had a right to do what He would with His own. He came and took them away, not as a thief, but as a proprietor. He employed in the seizure not only power, but wisdom and kindness. What I know not now, I shall know hereafter. Behold, He taketh away; who can hinder Him? Who will say unto Him, What doest thou? I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it. He is the rock, His work is perfect; for all His ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He.”

II. THIS WORLD IS A PROPER SITUATION FOR THE DISCIPLES OF JESUS TO CONTINUE IN FOR A SEASON.

It is probable, that if our weak reason were allowed to speculate concerning the state of the righteous, it would decide on the propriety of raising them to the high places of the earth; of delivering them from all tribulation; of withholding from them no joy---or rather, of calling them away from this region of sin, from this vale of tears, from this miserable exile, to “**sit down with Abraham and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven**” (Matt. 8:11). The Scripture seems to countenance this notion. It says, “**Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest, because it is polluted**” (Mic. 2:10). It commands us “not to be unequally

yoked together with unbelievers.” It asks, “**What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?**” (II Cor. 6:14-15). How perfectly has the Creator arranged every thing in the universe! How wisely has He separated the day and the night, the dry land and the sea, the various classes of beasts and birds! And will He join the living and the dead? Will He mingle error and truth? virtue and vice? Will He confound the pious with the wicked? Yes; this world, so opposite to their heavenly nature, so unsuitable to their desires, so incapable of affording them happiness, while from every quarter it wounds and vexes; forcing from them many a sigh, “**Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech**” (Ps. 120:5)! “**O that I had wings like a dove! for then I would fly away, and be at rest; I would hasten my escape from the stormy wind and tempest**” (Ps. 55:6, 8)---this world is to retain them year after year; and our Saviour does not pray to take them out of it.

First, From their remaining here, the wicked derive innumerable advantages. They have instances of religion before them, which encourage while they condemn. By these they learn that godliness is practicable, and profitable. They see persons of the same passions, of the same age, of the same occupations with themselves, walking in the paths of righteousness; and, much oftener than we imagine, the portion of the righteous forming a contrast with their own unhappy circumstances, leads them to exclaim, “**How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel**” (Num. 24:5). “**Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his**” (Num. 23:10). It is in the very nature of religion to render Christians active in doing good. They are often the means of “saving a soul from death, and of hiding a multitude of sins.” Sometimes a few individuals have changed the moral face of a whole neighborhood; and the language of prophecy has been realized---“**the wilderness and the solitary place shall be made glad for them: and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose**” (Isa. 35:1).

The disorders which prevail in the world are great; but the state of society would be far worse, not to say intolerable, were the righteousness to be withdrawn, and the licentiousness of sinners to be no longer repressed, or counteracted by their rebuke, their example, and their influence. They “**are the salt of the earth;**” they are “**the light of the world**” (Matt 5:13, 14). They are blessings in the families, cities, countries, in which they reside. They have frequently, by their prayers, obtained deliverance for those

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. Is it wrong for us to pray for God's judgment on the wickedness of our nation? –

Mississippi

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Psalm 9:17 declares: **"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."** We have a clear promise from the inspired Word of God that He will indeed judge all nations that forget Him. We have witnessed a clear and definite departure from God, His Word, His laws, and principles in the United States of America. It is legal to exterminate unwanted children while they are in the womb. I fear that soon all 50 states will be forced by the Federal Government to recognize homosexual unions as valid expressions of marriage which is a blasphemous rejection of God's moral order. Evolution is the false scientific model of choice over the Biblical fact that God is the Creator. America is in decline morally, economically, and politically. However, the real problem we face is spiritual. Americans are in the habit of calling evil good and good evil. We have forsaken the true and living God for the false gods of materialism and pleasure. Churches are more interested in entertainment than the prayer meeting and sound preaching. I could go on and on with the list of spiritual and moral ills that have befallen our nation. I am not sure that we need to pray for God to judge the wickedness of our nation. It is pretty evident that the judgments have already begun.

We are to pray according to God's will as revealed in His Word. I pray that God will send a spiritual awakening among the lost of our land, and a spiritual revival among the elect. This is the only hope for our country. I am praying for God to pour out His Spirit upon a dry and thirsty land. I am hoping that we will see a spiritual revolution in our nation marked by a renewed commitment to Christ, His Word, and His commands. Unless this happens I feel as though God's hand of judgment will continue to be upon our country. God did tell Jeremiah to stop praying for Israel on several occasions: **"Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me: for I will not hear thee"** (Jer. 7:16 cf. 11:14; 13:10; 14:11; 18:18-23). Until the Lord leads me

differently I am going to pray for God to call us to repentance and humility as the promise of II Chronicles 7:14 affords: **"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."**

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NO, in fact it is IMPERATIVE for us to pray for God's judgment on the wickedness of our nation! Without the hand of God, our nation is lost! Certainly that hand will not come in commendation for the wicked acts of murder, injustice and abominable fornication and worse! Certainly none will deny that the condemnation of almighty God already abides on this ungodly nation that has repeatedly denied its Creator and Sovereign! Judgment MUST follow condemnation! **"These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren"** (Prov. 6:16-19).

I would like to make a distinction, in case I have misunderstood the question. There is a difference between praying (vindictively) against individual wicked sinners and praying (righteously) against the wickedness that is perpetuated by individuals. The old saying to "hate the sin, but love the sinner" has some merit in this case. Certainly every sinner is worthy of preaching the Gospel unto, without exception- even those guilty of wicked persecution of the Lord's people, whereof Saul of Tarsus is exhibit A! We cannot hate, nor pray for God to destroy any individual without realizing, "...there, but for the grace of God, go I...!"

But the love that we, as Christians, need to have for our fellow Americans, has no right nor prerogative to go beyond mercy's bounds and to countenance the sin that has engulfed our beloved nation! Only God can save the United States

of America! What the beloved reader must understand, is that the desired salvation will only come through the righteous judgment of almighty God! **"In transgressing and lying against the LORD, and departing away from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood. And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey: and the LORD saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgment"** (Isa. 59:13-15). Selah! Think about it! It displeased the Lord that there was no judgment! Truth, equity and righteousness have been disavowed by our country's leaders and voters! And we need to judge ourselves! –or God certainly will! **"For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world"** (I Cor. 11:31-32).

God cannot countenance sin, beloved reader! **"Art thou not from everlasting, O LORD my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die. O LORD, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction. Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he"** (Hab. 1:12-13)? I think we can see from Scripture that God will NOT absolve any country from her promiscuous sins. Every abortion endorsed by this country's voters will be brought before the holy seat of God's righteous judgment! Every gay marriage and every scrap of pornography will be tallied in the balances of perfect judgment. It would be remiss of a thrice holy God to not bring this country into judgment! Therefore the prayers of God's people should be aligned with the perfect will of God!

But I hope that we can understand from the above passages, that this coming judgment is our only hope! That is in large part, WHY we as God's people should pray for God's judgment on the wickedness of our nation! Only by the correcting hand of God, will our nation ever again be able to bring glory and honor to her Creator and Master. But there are degrees of judgment! In Psalm 38:1 David pleads **"O LORD, rebuke me not in thy wrath: neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure."** What we need to pray is for God's judgment to be mingled with mercy! To be judged in measure, not in the fullness that we deserve: **"For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee,**

yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished" (Jer. 30:11). Selah! Think about it!

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I myself have always been the optimist. I suppose that the children of God are, or at least should be, so therefore I try to always look at what I can do to edify rather than tear down. I will admit I have days that I tear down rather than build up, also.

Praying for judgment on our nation, to me, seems to be a bit harsh. We see our great nation being torn down from the inside by those who say what they are doing is for the good of our nation, when, in fact, it is for the destruction of our country. I, being a red blooded American, absolutely hate the idea of what is going on. The youth of our country have been taken and fed, by those under the guise of teachers, propaganda straight from failed policies of our nations enemies.

I would rather pray as Daniel prayed for his nation, that was under bondage at the time he knelt and entreated God. **"And whiles I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God"** (Dan. 9:20) Praying for the forgiveness of sins.

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I believe that "Yes" it is wrong for us to pray for God's judgment on the wickedness of our nation for the following reasons!

"But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you" (Matt. 5:44).

"But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you" (Luke 6:27).

"But love ye your enemies, and do

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. What Scriptures would you refer young people to who are contemplating marriage?

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It is a VERY positive sign that the question assumes one is going to the Bible to find validation and instructions for a good marriage! So many today have forgotten that marriage is an institution of God!

There are three things that potential husbands and wives should be thinking about as they size up future spouses. The first is compatibility. **"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? ...be ye separate, saith the Lord..."** II Cor. 6:14-17). If the person you're considering does not have a personal knowledge of the love and grace of Jesus Christ, you are asking for trouble. Spiritual compatibility is the key to becoming not only one flesh (as Genesis 2:24 says), but also one spirit (I Cor. 6:17). Selah! Think about it!

But social compatibility is also a concern. Varied backgrounds can cause many strains on a marriage that may be avoided if we find someone with the same likes/dislikes, perspectives, morals, and upbringings. A mutual level of understanding and empathy can be achieved in any good marriage, but many unnecessary distractions and hindrances can be avoided with a little foresight and prayer. **"Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken"** (Eccl. 4:9-12). I like to think spiritually, this threefold cord is the marriage couple and Christ Jesus, their Lord. But also, it points to the trinity of faith, hope and love- necessary ingredients of a rock-solid marriage!

That leads to the second focus of contemplation- commitment. **"And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee:**

for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me" (Ruth 1:16-17). **"So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: ...For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. ...Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband"** (Eph. 5:28-33).

True Love is not an emotion. It is a continual commitment to the other; that you will reverence and cherish your soul-mate more than your own life and desires. You will sacrifice everything you have or ever will be, to ensure the joy and security of that which is **"altogether lovely"**... your better half! I Corinthians 7:1-5 tells us that our body is not our own, anymore. I Corinthians 11:3, 7-12 requires submission from the wife to her husband and the husband to our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, while Ephesians 5:21-25 further amplifies those thoughts, correlating them to Christ's sacrificial relationship with His church.

The third consideration of the young couple would be to understand that marriage is under attack in this world. We will have many enemies as we try to serve our Lord in this marvelous institution. Satan successfully drove a wedge between the first married couple in Eden and it brought about the fall of man. He has continued his battle in the guise of modernism and liberalism. Even the US government will entice you with tax breaks if you will just "live together" and forgo the godly blessings of marriage!

FemiNazi's have driven women out of their proper place (in the home rearing the next generation of godly children) with the catchwords of equality and liberty. Beloved, the modern version of those words cannot hold a candle to the equity and contentment found in the keeping of God's Word and order! I Peter 3:1-8, I Timothy 2:8-15 and Proverbs 31:10-31 are excellent examples of how the Christian's marriage and house must be ordered. Contemplate on these things, young people and Selah! Think about it!

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Ephesians 5:22-33 is the best place to study God's Word concerning young couples contemplating marriage. These verses are a starting point for a life long search, not only to guide, but to strengthen a marriage.

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II Corinthians 6:14: **"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."**

Genesis 2:24: **"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."**

Ephesians 5:21-25: **"Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. 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. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it."**

Mark 10:9-11: **"What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same matter. And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery."**

Joshua 24:15: **"And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land**

ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD"

Colossians 3:12-17: **"Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."**

Read Psalms 127 and 128.

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Well the first Scripture I would refer them too would be, (and I am assuming these young people are saved) is II Corinthians 6:14, **"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"** We have way too much of this today and it usually ends in divorce.

The next two verses would be Ecclesiastes 5:4, **"When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed,"** and Ecclesiastes 5:5, **"Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay."** Know what you are saying when making your vows to each other; it is a very serious thing to make a vow before a Holy Sovereign God and not keep it.

Lastly, I know this might sound corny, but I would encourage any young person who is contemplating marriage to read the entire Book of the Song of Solomon at least twice. To me this is how married people should talk to one another (though not many do, if any at all), and if they can not treat and speak to each other as Solomon speaks to his beloved bride, then they have no business getting married, but that is my opinion.

The Song of Solomon is a beautiful love story between a man and woman and is a beautiful love story (in type) how Jesus Christ feels toward, and speaks to, His beloved Bride...His Church! God Bless!

ROGER REED

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among whom they live. They have “stood the breach,” and held back the invading judgment of the Almighty. **“Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah”** (Isa. 1:9). While a father sees his children standing intermixed with his foes, he levels not his arrows: the one is preserved for the sake of the other. When God has secured His people, the wicked become the fair mark of His indignation; the vials of His wrath are poured down; time shall be no longer; the heavens pass away with a great noise; the earth is burned up.

Again: reasons are taken from Christians themselves. **“We know that all things work together for good to them that love God”** (Rom. 8:28): and does not their situation in the world call forth every active, every suffering virtue? Can there be any grandeur of character, where there are no difficulties and dangers? Can there be in triumph where there is no warfare, or a warfare where there is no enemy? when do the righteous feel motives to keep them humble? When they behold in the wicked an image of themselves. When are they urged to gratitude for distinguishing grace? When they are reminded by sinners of what they were **“by nature”** as well **“as others.”** When do they display their compassion, and increase their benevolence? While feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, teaching the ignorant, and endeavouring to rescue their fellow-creatures from perdition. Can they exercise divine patience and forgiveness? Yes, while they have an opportunity to “render good for evil.”

They can discover their holy courage, while bearing the “reproach of the cross,” and enduring **“the defaming of many”** (Jer. 20:10). Here, by the sacrifices they are called to make, and their readiness to leave father or mother, son or daughter, lands or life, for His sake, they demonstrate the supremacy of their love to the Saviour. Here, their sincerity and resolution appear unsuspecting, by not drawing back, or turning aside, when the world would terrify by its frowns, or allure by its smiles. Here we behold the vigour of those principles which bear away in the minds of the godly. In Heaven we shall glorify God. But Heaven is not a state of trial. There sin never enters: and what is it to live innocent where there is no temptation? But to see evil patterns, and not copy them; to breathe pestilential air, and not inhale that infection; to renounce our inclinations, and say, **“Thy will be done”** (Matt. 6:10); to live with our conversation in Heaven, when every thing conspires to bind us down to earth--here the Christian

honours God, and here he gathers glory in a manner the most distinguishing---and all this is peculiar to his residence in the world.

Let him therefore avail himself of the singular opportunities his situation affords; and while he remains here, let him labour to fulfill the design of Heaven in his continuance, both with regard to himself and others. Let him remember; that all rash and eager wishes for death are improper; that it may be **“needful for him to abide”** longer **“in the flesh;”** that of his expediency he must leave God to judge; that His pleasure will be discovered by the event; that he will not be detained a moment longer than is necessary to accomplish some valuable purpose; that, instead of indulging in impatience, it becomes him to say, with Job, **“All the days of my appointed time will I wait until my change come.”** The man in harvest, while bearing **“the burden and heat of the day”** (Matt. 20:12), may occasionally look up to see where the sun is; and may console himself with the reflection, “The evening shades will by-and-by come on, and invite me to an honourable retreat” --- but it does not become him to throw down his implements, and hasten home before he obtains such a discharge.

As Christians are to think of living for a while in the world, it is not unreasonable for them to be affected with its occurrences and changes. Some plead for a kind of abstracted and sublimated devotion, which the circumstances they are placed in by their Creator render equally impracticable and absurd. They are never to notice the affairs of government, or the measures of administration: war, or peace; liberty, or slavery; plenty, or scarcity---all is to be equally indifferent to them; they are to leave these carnal and worldly things to others. But have they not bodies? Have they not families? is religion founded on the ruins of humanity? When a man becomes a Christian, does he cease to be a member of civil society? Allowing that he be not the owner of the ship, but only a passenger in it, has he nothing to awaken his concern in the voyage? If he be only a traveler towards a better country, is he to be told, that because he is at an inn which he is soon to leave, it should not excite any emotion in him, whether it be invaded by robbers, or consumed by flames before the morning? **“In the peace thereof ye shall have peace”** (Jer. 29:7)---and are not Christians to **“provide things honest in the sight of all men”** (Rom. 12:17)? Are they to detach themselves while here from the interests of their fellows-creatures; or to **“rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with them that weep”** (Rom. 12:15)? Is not religion variously affected by public transactions? Can a Christian, for instance, be indifferent to the cause of freedom, even on a pious principle?

Does not civil liberty necessarily include religious? and is it not necessary to the exertions of ministers, and the spreading of the Gospel?

And, Christians, as the world is a station in which you are to reside for a season, religion does not require you to withdraw from society, to relinquish secular business, to live in solitude. It more than justifies your being visible, social, active. **“Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel: but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven”** (Matt. 5:15-16). It becomes you, however, to remember,

III. THAT THERE IS EVIL IN THE WORLD, TO WHICH YOU ARE EXPOSED, AND BY WHICH YOU MAY BE INJURED.

And what is this “evil?” There is the evil of sin, and the evil of suffering. It is not the latter that our Saviour deprecates---**“If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross”** (Matt. 16:24). **“In the world ye shall have tribulation”** (John 16:33). **“Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven”** (Matt. 5:10). Indigence and affliction are generally a soil favourable to the prosperity of religion. **“By the sadness of the countenance, the heart is made better”** (Eccl. 7:2). Security from sin is preferable to immunity from sorrow. It is therefore moral evil from which we should be most anxious to be preserved. And by this you are perpetually endangered while in the world.

The people of the world are enemies to religion. How pernicious are their maxims, their errors, their number, their example, their influence! How ensnaring are their smiles, and how intimidating their frowns! How powerful are the fear of censure, and the love of praise! The things of the world are prejudicial to a life of godliness. Every station, every condition, hides innumerable temptations. It has been questioned, whether prosperity or adversity be the more hazardous. Affluence flatters our pride, and nourishes the passions. It has a tendency to draw off our dependence from Divine Providence. It furnishes us with substitutes for the consolations of the Gospel; and as to its duties, it multiplies diversions, excuses, and hindrances. Many a man has parted with his religion in walking from a cottage to a mansion. **“They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through**

with many sorrows” (I Tim. 6:9-10).

But indigence has its perils; hence the prayer of wisdom has always been, **“...give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the LORD? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain”** (Prov. 30:8-9). Sensible things press upon the body and the body affects the mind. The world has the advantage of neighbourhood and constant intercourse. It presents itself to the eye, the ear, the touch. It corresponds with a party within, which excites us to welcome every proposal it brings. The world does not ask us to deny, but to please ourselves; not to row against the current, but to sit down in the boat, and leave it to the stream. When the world knocks, “the spirit of the world” is ready to open: and when temptations to vanity meet with vain hearts, and temptations to folly meet with foolish hearts, the success is more than probable. In the seduction of mankind, the world has a marvelous diversity of means: every disposition is suited with an object. If a man be not groveling enough to be fond of money, here is honour to allure him: if he spurn sensual gratification, he may pursue “the knowledge which puffeth up,” and as it is said of Joab, that **“he had turned after Adonijah, though he turned not after Absalom”** (I Kings 2:28); so a man who has vanquished one temptation, may be overcome by another, more suitable to his propensity, and more sided by circumstances. O what spoils of truth, of conscience, and of devotion can the world display! In how many has it had the unhappy influence to counteract conviction, and to destroy the most promising beginnings of seriousness! Hence the apostasy of Demas---**“he loved this present world”** (II Tim. 4:10)---**“Felix trembled”** (Acts 24:25), but **“willing to show the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound”** (Acts 24:27).---**“Herod heard John gladly, and did many wonderful things”** (Mark 6:20); but the charms of a beloved Herodias obtained an order for his execution. The young man inquired after eternal life, and our Saviour **“loved him;”** but **“he went away sorrowful, for he was very rich”**---He also that received seed among thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.”

And where the world does not acquire such a predominancy in the soul as to be entirely subversive of religion, it may prevail to such a degree as to be very injurious to it. A real Christian may have too keen a relish for the allowed indulgences of life. He may be too much alive to the opinion of his fellow-worms. He may be too eager to “add house to house, and to join field to field” (Isa. 5:8).

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He may "load himself with thick clay" (Hab. 2:6), and go on heavily. He may "touch the unclean thing," soil "the fine linen which is the righteousness of the saints" (Rev. 19:8), and wear a **"garment spotted by the flesh"** (Jude 1:23). He may spread earth over his affections, and damp their ardour. As the consequence of all this worldly influence, there will be little spirituality in his conversation; little life in ordinances; little pleasure in drawing near to God; a loss of inward peace; corroding care; a dread of affliction; a thorny dying pillow. He will be a stumbling-block to the weak, and a distress to the strong; nor will his religion stand forth prominently enough to be visible and striking **"to them that are without."**

Christians, there are two things which we wish you to remember. The one is, that your greatest danger lies in things lawful; for the proposal of any thing apparently sinful would awaken your fears, and your fears would secure you. **"Every creature of God is good"** (I Tim. 4:4), but if it be not **"sanctified by the word of God and prayer"** (I Tim. 4:5), the blessing may be turned into a curse, and our very "table may become a snare and a trap." We are even bound to love our connections: but love may grow up into idolatry. Extremes are contiguous. The line of separation between lawful and unlawful is a single hair: on this the enemy takes his station, in order that, when he finds us advancing to the verge of permission, to draw us over, and induce us to transgress. The other is, that this evil frequently advances by slow degrees; approaches the heart by imperceptible access; and, by specious pretensions, justifies its continuance there. It assumes a thousand flexible shapes; wears various names; passes under the notion of good breeding, sociability, opportunities of usefulness, "laying up for the children" --- "With her much fair speech she causes him to yield; with the flattery of her lips she forces him---he goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks: till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life" (Prov. 7:21-23).---What is the conclusion of all this? O professors of religion, "love not the world, nor the things of the world." **"Be not conformed to this world"** (Rom. 12:2). Consider it as an enemy. Regard it with caution. Walk as among snares. Be circumspect. Be watchful. And if you would pass through the world with safety, recollect,

IV. THAT THE DIVINE PROTECTION IS ESSENTIAL TO YOUR SECURITY.

The more valuable things are, the more dependent will they be found.

Sheep require more care than wolves; vines, than brambles. A garden demands more attention than a wilderness; and children are reared with far greater solicitude than animal young. Nothing equals the dependence of the Christian: but herein lie all his spiritual resources; for when he "is weak, then he is strong." When in himself he can do nothing, he forms an alliance with Omnipotence, and can do all things.

Be sensible of your inability to sustain and defend yourselves. Bring under your review all those who, possessing every advantage, have drawn back unto perdition. they advanced far, and promised well; but, like a stone urged up the side of a hill, which, when the impelling force is removed, rushes back with greater velocity, and bounds further into the plain below; so these have entered again into the world, and are more distinguished by its views and follies than before. "For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome; the latter end is worse than the beginning" (II Pet. 2:20). Mark the falls of good men themselves, who have been "recovered from the snare of the devil" (II Tim. 2:26). When they went forth, but not **"in the strength of the Lord,"** they were found unequal to the trial, and by bitter experience were convinced of their weakness. When our Saviour had informed the disciples, that "the Shepherd would be smitten, and the sheep scattered abroad," Peter said, "Though all men should be offended because of thee, I will never be offended." When our Lord gave him the premonition, **"Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice"** (Matt. 26:34); he exclaimed, **"Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee"** (Matt. 26:35). He was sincere but self-confident. And what was the consequence? His resolution failed him: he denied his Lord with "oaths and curses." Weigh well the language of One who knows what is in man, and who has said, **"Without me, ye can do nothing"** (John 15:5). Compare your experience with it. And, painful as it will be, call to your remembrance the numerous variations, instabilities, declensions, backslidings of your lives.

Be equally persuaded, also, that the Divine power is as adequate, as it is necessary to your preservation. **"Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint"** (Isa. 40:30). It is His character, and His prerogative, that "He is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy"

(Jude 1:24). His preserved Abijah in the wicked family of Jeroboam. He secured "saints even in Caesar's household." Behold yonder illustrious "multitude standing before the throne, with palms in their hands" (Rev. 7:8). Full of weakness, they passed through a world of danger: their sufficiency was of God. He enabled them "to hold on their way, and to wax stronger and stronger." He "girded them with strength, and made their way perfect." By "Him, they ran through a troop, and leaped over a wall." By Him, they "trod on the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon they trampled under foot." And He is the same. His "hand is not shortened that it cannot save, nor his ear heavy that it cannot hear." "The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants; and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate" (Ps. 34:22).

As the Divine protection is necessary, and adequate to your defense, so it is attainable; and the

Last division of our subject shows us how it is to be obtained---BY PRAYER. **"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you"** (Matt. 7:7). Hence the practice of the saints---"Set a watch, O Lord, upon my lips; keep the door of my mouth." **"Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe"** (Ps. 119:119). **"Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me"** (Ps. 119:133). "Uphold me, according to thy word, that I may live: and let me not be ashamed of my hope" (Ps. 119:116). **"Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil"** (Matt. 6:13).

Christians, however, are sensible of the imperfections of their own performances. They can scarcely call their weak efforts, prayer. "Like a crane, or a swallow, so did I chatter." "Could I see an inspired record of all my prayers---could I see as God does the manner in which I have always addressed Him---The vain thoughts! The numberless distractions! How often I have asked amiss! Sometimes without ardour, sometimes without confidence"---Hence it is a pleasing relief to their minds, to know that their brethren pray for them: that God is daily hearing, from lips more devout than their own, **"Do good, O LORD, unto those that be good, and to them that are upright in their hearts"** (Ps. 125:4). **"Let all those that seek thee, rejoice and be good in thee: let such as love thy salvation, say continually, The LORD be magnified"** (Ps. 40:16). Is my character here described? How pleasing is it to reflect, that I am peculiarly interested in the daily supplications of all the people of God; and that **"the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much"** (James 5:16)!

But their chief consolation is derived from a higher source. **"And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was**

given unto him much incense; that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God, out of the angel's hand" (Rev. 8:4). Thus Jesus perfumes and presents our services; thus He obtains for our supplications audience and acceptance. Whether the intercession of our High Priest in Heaven be verbal, or mental only, it is not necessary for us to determine. We know it is real. We know that "He appears in the presence of God for us." We know that having been "reconciled by his death, we shall be saved by his life." We know that "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7:25).

It may be necessary, however, to caution you not to mistake the nature and design of His intercession. It is not to inform God, as if He were ignorant. It is not to remind Him, as if He were forgetful. It is not to persuade Him, as if He were unkind. The appointment is entirely His own. It sprang from His mercy, and exemplifies His wisdom. What a display have we here of the majesty and holiness of God, that He will not suffer us to approach Him without a Mediator! How powerfully does it convince us of our unworthiness and vileness! How loudly does it preach to us reverence and humility! What becomes of self-righteousness, if we can bring nothing deserving the Divine regards; if our best duties need forgiveness, rather than recompense; if "the iniquity of our most holy things" would be sufficient to destroy all our confidence? But, O how it meets the fears of the returning sinner; and the discouragements of the dejected saint! **"We have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him"** (Eph. 3:12). If this dispensation were not designedly typified, it is beautifully illustrated in the address of God "to Eliphaz, and his two friends" ---"You have not spoken of me the thing that is right. Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks, and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you; for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly."

We conclude by observing, what a view this gives us of our Lord and Saviour. What an infinitely important station does He occupy! What an understanding must He possess, to be accurately acquainted with the diversified circumstances and necessities of all the redeemed! How unparalleled is that love, which knows no variableness; which renders Him, not only in His lowest abasement, but in His highest dignity, and friend of sinners; which induces Him, while surrounded by all the adorations of Heaven, to listen

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to the complaints and petitions of each of His people upon earth; and which never suffers Him for one moment to remit the kindness of His attentions!

Again: what a representation does the subject give us of the happiness of believers! though their Saviour be **"passed into the heavens"** (Heb. 4:14), they know that He has not dropped His concern for them: they know that they "have not an High Priest, who cannot be touched with the feeling of their infirmities."---and what is the inference? **"Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need"** (Heb. 4:16). "Having such an High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near to full assurance of faith." Let us contemplate our glorious Intercessor. Let us remember the dignity of His nature---He "is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person." Let us remember the dearth of His character---"**This**," says the Father, **"is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"** (Matt. 3:17). **"Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession"** (Ps. 2:8). Let us remember the value of His atonement---He is more than an intercessor, He is **"an advocate with the Father"** (I John 2:1); **"he is the propitiation for our sins"** (I John 2:2). He could say, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou hast given me to do, and now, O Father, glorify me." "He entered heaven with his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption for us." His sufferings and death, His obedience and righteousness, all plead our cause; He asks nothing which God had not suspended on a condition which He has already performed. And in consequence of all this, let us remember the certainty of His success---"**I know that thou hearest me always"** (John 11:42).

Come then, Christians, and **"rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory"** (I Pet. 1:8). You have a Friend in court; an elder brother in the palace of the King of kings. In his all-prevailing name you may approach; and while blushing over your poor services, you may be assured that your prayers will be heard, that your strength shall be equal to your day, that your grace shall be crowned with glory, and that "no good thing shall be withholden from you" (Ps. 84:11). While Zechariah was burning incense within, all the people were praying without. O pleasing emblem of Christians, and of "the High Priest of their profession" (Heb. 3:1)! While you are praying in the outer court of this world, He is **"within the veil"** (Lev. 16:12), with **"the blood of**

sprinkling" (Heb. 12:24), and the censer. It was the happiness of the Israelites, while fighting in the plain below, to look up and see Moses pleading with God for them on the hill. Be not dismayed, ye seed of Jacob. **"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). **"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, Nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord"** (Rom. 8:37-39).

(Works of William Jay, Vol. 3, 1861).



Forum #1

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good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil" (Luke 6:35).

"If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink: For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the LORD shall reward thee" (Prov. 25:21-22).

"Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12:17-21).

These should do to prove my point. We are living in the day of grace and we of all people should understand that the wicked of this world will receive their reward (Matt. 6; II Peter 2:9-22). I have come to see that if I am constantly seeking God's judgment on the wicked I am most miserable. Also I have seen others that pray for judgment on those that do them wrong, when they should be praying for the salvation of their souls. I believe that this is one of the meanings behind what Jesus was telling the lawyer in Luke 10:25-28, **"And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said,**

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live."

We should want to see folks saved, not harmed. Those Christians I have seen pray for God's judgment on others, in my opinion, are bitter, unsatisfied, very unhappy, and most of all, very rude, I have seen this many times, not just with Christians but with Baptists as well. I once asked a waitress at a restaurant my wife and I were eating at "who were her worst customers." To my surprise she said, "Christians"! She said they were the most demanding, rude, and gave the least amount for a tip, if they left one at all. Wow! What a testimony to leave on a person that may be dying and going to hell.

And that is the point; we are to evangelize the world, tell folks about the Saviour and praying that He would save them. I am not advocating agreeing with their sin, but our nation is in a terrible spiritual situation. It is become very evil and wicked it needs to be awakened by the truth of God's Word (whether they want to hear it or not), not by praying

God's judgment on it, that will come soon enough. Let the reader be careful that their heart is in the right place, and realize also what this world and our nation is going to be like when the Holy Spirit is removed from the earth when the rapture takes place. You want judgment? Well it is right around the corner because during the tribulation it will be the most hideous and most awful event that our minds can not even comprehend. Be careful what you pray for!

Dear reader, do you have loved ones, friends, and family that do not know the Lord? Then I would encourage you to run to them as fast as you can run and tell them of the things to come, and that without the Lord Jesus Christ they are doomed for all eternity.

One last thought; I love America, and if you are praying for God's judgment on her and there are others who are praying (like me) for God to bless America, what an inconsistency we have as Christians! I would rather we leave that up to Him, for He is the Great Judge over all and He does all things well! God Bless! And God Bless America!

ROGER REED



From the Pen of a Country Preacher

Milburn R. Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)



With Tears

Acts 20:28-38

Today there is so much to weep about and so few tears are being shed by the children of God. Very few realize the importance of tears. Someone has said that tears are a telescope through which we see far into Heaven. Tears are of great price to God. The Psalmist said, **"Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book"** (Psa. 56:8)? God has a bottle and a book for His people's tears, both those for their sins and those for their afflictions.

Tears are an outward expression of an inward feeling. Three kinds of tears are: tears of joy, tears of sadness, and crocodile tears. Perhaps I should explain the latter of these three. Crocodile tears are insincere tears or a hypocritical show of grief from an old belief that crocodiles shed tears while eating their prey. I fear we have many tears of this kind today.

Three occasions of tears are mentioned in Acts 20. First there are tears of personal suffering. **"Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews"** (v. 19). Second there are tears of Pastoral solicitude. **"Therefore watch, and remember, that**

by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears" (v. 31). Third there are tears of sympathy. **"And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him"** (v. 37).

Modern day Christianity has lost its tears. We do not take our religion as wholeheartedly as they did. Many make a joke of their religion. There is entirely too much joke telling in the pulpits today. The Bible is silent as to any authority for telling jokes in the pulpit, but it has much to say about tears. Today it is all jokes and never any tears!

Those who answer the public invitation come too many times with dry eyes because they have made what is called a decision for Christ. In other words, they have believed with their heads and not with their hearts.

I fear that multitudes of our church members have never shed the tears of repentance. Formal worship services and this intellectual preaching has robbed us of Holy Spirit conviction and Bible repentance. We are in dire need of a

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With Tears

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revival of old time religion.

Thousands will watch a TV program and witness the death of some one's pet dog and cry for an hour, but will sleep while some preacher is preaching his heart out about the death of Christ. Some cry long and loud about keeping our emotions out of religion. My beloved friend, if we have any emotions, let us use them in religion, and not in politics or something worse.

Let us see what the infallible Word of God says about tears. The Bible tells us that God takes notice of tears, **"Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the LORD"** (II Kings 20:5). Again we read concerning David praying and weeping. **"Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears: for I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were"** (Ps. 39:12).

Tears were a means of causing Pharaoh's daughter to save Moses. **"And when she had opened it, she saw the child: and, behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, this is one of the Hebrews' children"** (Ex. 2:6).

The soul winner is plainly told he must have tears. **"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy"** (Ps. 126:5). Before we can break the sinners stony heart, we must have our heart broken for them. This verse shows us that we will have to sow in tears before we can reap in joy. This is the divine order. We weep for sinners; then we rejoice when they are converted. We weep before salvation, but we rejoice when the burden is rolled away. We weep in this present life, but we will have all our tears wiped away in Heaven. We can say with David of old, **"Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning"** (Ps. 30:5).

Jeremiah, one of the greatest Old Testament prophets, wished for tears. In Jeremiah 9:1 we read: **"O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people."** Again we read in verse 18 of the same chapter, **"And let them make haste, and take up a wailing for us, that our . . . eyelids gush out with waters."** He wept over conditions. We need to weep over conditions today.

Tears are often a sign of earnestness. **"For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you"** (II Cor. 2:4). This letter soaked in tears was proof of Paul's earnestness.

Tears move the ones looking on to sympathy and compassion. **"Greatly**

desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy" (II Tim. 1:4). Timothy knew what it meant to weep over conditions.

Jesus Christ, the man of sorrow, shed many tears. He shed tears of sympathy at the grave of Lazarus (John 11:35). He shed tears of prophecy over the city of Jerusalem. **"And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it"** (Luke 19:41). Jesus did three things for Jerusalem. He looked upon it. He wept over it. He died for it. He shed tears of compassion in the garden of Gethsemane. **"Who in the days of His flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared"** (Heb. 5:7).

The Bible teaches that the soul that is baptized in the tears of repentance cannot perish. **"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted"** (Matt. 5:4). I do not think that one must sit on the mourners bench in order to be saved, but it has been my experience and the experience of many others to see sinners weep over their sins. Salvation is not in weeping, but in Christ. However, most of us that are saved today had to do a lot of weeping before we were saved. The Bible commands sinners to weep over their sins. **"Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning"** (Joel 2:12). Yes, before one ever is saved he must have a broken heart and a contrite spirit. He must forget physical food and seek Christ more than anything else.

Thousands that saw no need for Christ, and never wept over their sins, and never confessed them to God, will not be too proud to weep in Hell! Yes, there will be weeping in Hell. In Matthew 13:41-42 we read: **"The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."** My friend, it is weep here over your sins and confess them to Christ, or weep in the lake of a literal burning fire for all eternity. Sinner, which will it be?

Do you feel as David did? **"The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow"** (Ps. 116:3). Then do as he did. **"Then called I upon the name of the LORD, O LORD, I beseech thee, deliver my soul"** (Ps. 116:4). If you will, you will be able to say with him, **"Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful"** (Ps. 116:5). Why not do this today?

(This is a sermon delivered by the author on April 8, 1962 on Radio Station KLPW in Union, Missouri.)



- A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS -

By Timothy Hille
of Ashland, Illinois

Chapter Twenty-One – Laws of the Priesthood

This chapter begins a new section which treats the subject of the priesthood. The previous section described the holiness required of the people as God's peculiar possession, separated from the world. This section describes the holiness required of the priests as those who approach unto God with offerings of praise and worship. God's Personal holiness demands holiness in those who worship and serve Him. God set down the qualifications and governing principles of the levitical priesthood. He has set down the qualifications, character, and rules that apply to His churches today, to both pastor and church member. Spiritual position, privileges, and duties involve spiritual and moral responsibilities regarding perfection of character and conduct.

Chapter Outline

- i. Holiness of the common priests: vs. 1-9
 - (a) Holiness in bereavement: vs. 1-6
 - (b) Holiness in marriage: vs. 7-9
- ii. Holiness of the high priest: vs. 10-15
 - (a) Holiness in bereavement: vs. 10-12
 - (b) Holiness in marriage: vs. 13-15
- iii. Physical blemishes, a symbol of spiritual infirmity, disqualifications for priestly service: vs. 16-24

I. VERSES ONE THROUGH SIX.

God here gives these instructions to **"the priests the sons of Aaron"** through Moses, His chosen and empowered mouthpiece. They were **"sons of Aaron,"** and as his sons they were priests to God in Israel, representing and assisting the congregation in their worship by maintaining a testimony of the truth of God's Person, Being, and revelation. Because of their birth they were made priests. Every born-again believer has been introduced into a dual standing of CHILD OF GOD and PRIEST OF GOD (John 1:12; I Pet. 2:9; Rev. 1:5-6). As priests of God, the sons of Aaron must maintain standards of holiness. So those who are children of God by faith in Christ Jesus must maintain a standard of spiritual holiness: separation from sin and that which is not of God, separation to righteousness and that which is of God. **"Abstain from all appearance of evil,"** (I Thess. 5:22). **"Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good,"** (Rom. 12:9).

The commands here given concern defilement **"for the dead."** The priest was not to **"be defiled for the dead**



among his people."

The priests were not to leave their service and duties to attend to the burial of any who died, or come into contact with the bodies of the dead, even though

they were Israelites who had died. The only exceptions were **"for his kin, that is near unto him, that is, for his mother, and for his father, and for his son, and for his daughter, and for his brother, and for his sister a virgin, that is nigh unto him, which hath had no husband."** For these relations a priest might mourn and attend to the burial. All contact with the dead was considered ceremonially defiling, and caused a temporary barring from the services of the tabernacle (Num. 19:11-16). The spiritual principle being set forth is that of sanctification and consecration. Those who are sanctified by the blood of Jesus and consecrated to God's service, as all God's children are, are not to be defiled by too close affections with **"the dead,"** those who are lost and outside of Christ. We see here that natural affections must give place to spiritual principles. Christianity is not to be laid aside when a loved one dies; much rather, at no time is your Christianity and your Christian testimony more important than when those whom you know (and even love) have died (Luke 9:57-62).

"But he shall not defile himself, being a chief man among his people, to profane himself." The God-given office which the priest occupied was to be his first priority, and therefore personal holiness his highest and all-surpassing aim. Oftentimes the reason church members will give for going along with the world instead of God's Word and following fleshly sentiment instead of spiritual precept is because of how they will be perceived by others. That is exactly the reason why we ought not to go along with the world and the flesh, because of how we appear to God and to men. If I go to a funeral service that is held in a heathen church or officiated by a heathen minister, then I am lending my testimony to that service. Someone says, "I'm going to show my respect to the dead person, and my care for the grieving." What about showing your respect for God and the truth, and your love for Jesus Christ who died for you so that you might have eternal life? What about showing respect for the life that God has called you to live in separation from sin and false teaching? Is the dead person any better off from your being at a heathen funeral service? Are those at a heathen funeral service any better

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off spiritually speaking from your being there? Will they know by your presence at a heathen service that you believe that only in and through Jesus Christ a person can be saved from sin, know God, and go to heaven; and that without holiness, **“no man shall see the Lord,”** (Heb. 12:14)? You are a steward before God of your Christian testimony and influence.

“They shall not make baldness upon their head, neither shall they shave off the corner of their beard, nor make any cuttings in their flesh.” The **“sons of Aaron”** were not to follow the practices of the heathen in mourning for the dead. Neither should children of God today. God’s Word tells you who are saved how to deal with life and how to deal with death. Don’t lay aside God’s Word when bereavement and sorrow come because of the death of friends, acquaintances, and kinfolk! Remember that God has saved you and called you with an holy calling. Remember that **“whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s,”** (Rom. 14:8). Because the priests offered **“the offerings of the LORD made by fire, and the bread of their God,”** they were not to profane themselves, but were to be holy. Because we worship and serve the true and living, self-existing, sovereign, eternally unchanging, promise-keeping, soul-saving God, we are to be **“holy in all manner of conversation,”** (I Pet. 1:15).

II. VERSES SEVEN THROUGH NINE.

God here gives commandment concerning the marriages of the priests. God governs the marriages of all His children today, and we ought to follow His will as revealed in His Word in seeking a spouse, marrying, and building a home life. The priests were not to marry any woman who was **“a whore, or profane; neither . . . a woman put away from her husband,”** or who had been divorced. The character of a husband or wife is of the utmost importance, because the character of the one will influence the character of the other; and the character of the one will reflect upon the character of the other (II Cor. 6:14-18). The New Testament gives rules governing the conduct of deacons’ wives, showing that personal holiness and holiness in the home are spiritual qualifications for serving God in this very hour in which we are now living (I Tim. 3:8-12). God has set down rules governing marriage for all His children (Mark 10:6-12). The only reason that the principles and teachings concerning marriage contained in the Bible are so little regarded and respected today is because men are sinners by nature, by practice, and by choice, hating the rule,

authority, and holiness of God.

“Thou shalt sanctify him therefore.”

Not only was the priest to sanctify himself, but he was also to be sanctified in the eyes and hearts of the people. Children of God ought to have a regard for one another’s Christian testimony, and have no desire to place an offence or occasion of stumbling in front of another child of God. Is the pastor set apart in your thinking and behavior toward him? Is your brother or sister in Christ set apart in your eyes and heart? **“For I the LORD, which sanctify you, am holy.”** God has sanctified us, does sanctify us, and will sanctify us. His holy and perfect nature and character are to motivate us to holy behavior as His sons and daughters, and as priests unto Him through Jesus Christ.

A severe regulation is here set down concerning the daughter of a priest. **“And the daughter of any priest, if she profane herself by playing the whore, she profaneth her father: she shall be burnt with fire.”** The conduct of the priest’s children reflected upon the character and office of the priest. This is likewise true with regard to ministers in the church of the living God today (I Tim. 3:2-5). Your home life and public life reflect upon the character of the God whom you serve and the church of which you are a member. Everything associated with JEHOVAH God is truth, righteousness, mercy, and goodness (Jer. 9:24). A priest could be removed for being polluted; and people can be removed from the offices of service and from membership in the church of the living God for reasons of spiritual defilement (Ezra 2:59-62).

III. VERSES TEN THROUGH FIFTEEN.

Related regulations are here given with regard to the high priest, whose office being higher and more significant than that of the common priests, was placed under finer and more distinctive and exceptional restrictions. In the high priest we have a picture and type of our great High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ. Aaron was **“high priest among his brethren.”** Jesus is not ashamed to call us brethren, and is one with us in the purpose of God (Heb. 2:11). Jesus is above us in preferment, office, and honor. Upon the head of the priest alone **“the anointing oil was poured,”** and he alone was **“consecrated to put on the garments”** of that high and distinguished office. Jesus was anointed by God and made an High Priest over the house of God forever by God’s immutable oath (Ps. 45:7; John 3:34; Heb. 3:1; 7:21-28). The office and holiness of Jesus excels all others.

The high priest was not to mourn or defile himself for any who died. He was not to **“uncover his head, nor rend his clothes.”** He was not to express grief in a way that would do any damage to the

office which he held. In all things he was to show that what mattered most was the fact that by God’s grace he had upon him **“the crown of the anointing oil of his God.”** What matters most to you, personal sentiment and feeling, or the fact that God has made you His, distinguished you from the world, sanctified you for His service, and given you of His Holy Spirit? Do you consider the blessings that God has bestowed upon you a crown, a thing of value, and which signifies honor? He who was high priest was not to **“go in to any dead body, nor defile himself for his father, or for his mother.”** Even the closest of earthly relations were not to be regarded more highly than the service of the Lord (Lev. 10:6-7; Deut. 33:8-10). **“Neither shall he go out of the sanctuary, nor profane the sanctuary of his God.”** Many today use family and earthly relations as an excuse for not attending the services of the Lord. All who do so say by their example that they think more of earthly relations than they do of heavenly relations, and that such behavior is acceptable with God. “It is also true that spiritual privileges and sacred duties involve larger responsibilities and demand greater perfection of character and conduct. This is expected of all ministers and professing Christians, that their lives be lived of unblemished virtue and unselfish service.”¹

Next is described the law of the wife of the high priest. Do we regard that God has the right to rule over such things as whom we marry and with whom we associate? “His life is not governed by his own will, tastes, or feelings, but by the Word of God.”² The high priest was to **“take a virgin of his own people to wife.”** His wife was to be a woman of Israel who had never known a man, and whose character was one of good report. His own conduct in marital affairs was to likewise be above reproach morally. **“Neither shall he profane his seed among his people: for I the Lord do sanctify him.”** As the high priest’s sons may be high priest after him, as Eleazar succeeded Aaron, he was to have this commandment in view.

IV. VERSES SIXTEEN THROUGH TWENTY-FOUR.

God now gives instructions concerning physical infirmities which would bar one of Aaron’s descendants from serving in the office of priest. Any descendant of Aaron who had a **“blemish”** was forbidden to **“approach to offer the bread of his God.”** Various physical infirmities are here listed, and these all represent for us today spiritual infirmities and imperfections of character which bar a person from usefulness in the service of the Lord (Tit. 1:6-9; II Tim. 2:20-21). These blemishes were such as would be an hindrance to the priestly office. Would that more Christians recognized that the weights

and sins which do so easily beset them are an hindrance to their Christian testimony and their service to the Lord, making it unapproved in many ways.

A person among the descendants of Aaron having any of the infirmities listed was allowed to **“eat the bread of his God, both of the most holy, and of the holy.”** All the offerings of which the priests were to eat, so, too, could this descendant of Aaron eat: for the offerings of the people were the food of the male children of Aaron unto all generations. Nevertheless, such persons could not **“go in unto the vail, nor come nigh unto the altar.”** To do so was to profane the sanctuary of the Lord. Many Baptists today are giving little heed to God’s requirements of service, and they are profaning the house of God. **“For I the LORD do sanctify them.”** God sanctifies His house, and God sanctifies His people and makes them fit for worshipping and serving Him.

“And Moses told it unto Aaron, and to his sons, and unto all the children of Israel.” That which concerned the priests concerned also the people. That which concerns any part of the service of God concerns every child of God. Moses was faithful to teach the people the commandments which God delivered unto him. **“For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you,”** (I Cor. 11:23), is the principle to be followed in all Christian teaching. Let us be hearing, believing, and obeying the teachings of God’s Word.

NOTES

1. Hille, Harry J. “Outlines on Leviticus,” 1979.
2. Handfuls on Purpose, Series III, by James Smith, 1971.



Drift of the Times

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of progress it is to be feared that we have a zeal without knowledge. While there seems to be progress in many lines of Christian work, there is manifestly a spiritual dearth. What we have gained in activity and zeal, in certain lines, may be more than counterbalanced by a loss of spirituality. We need not deny facts that stare us in the face.

We have some settled opinions as to the mistakes which have led to the present spiritual dearth, and, without itemizing just now, we state that they all grow out of departing from the plain teachings of the Word of God as to the objects to be aimed at and the means to be used in advancing the cause of Christ. The increased activities and zeal, unguided by wisdom and a proper regard for God’s appointed means, have led to a reaction, until now it is hard to promote zeal and activity, except that spasmodic

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and worldly kind which leaves in its wake a worse state of spiritual inactivity. We are to-day reaping the fruits of misguided zeal in the past, and we will never cure the disease by continuing to give, in larger measure, the dose that produced it. As a proof that we are not wild in our reckonings, we ask you, reader, to consider the spiritual condition of your own church.

The following conversation, which is no fable, but which took place recently between a preacher and the clerk of a church, shows up the spiritual life and general Christian activity of that church which, we fear, is about an average church:

Preacher - "How many members has your church?"

Clerk - "About one hundred and seventy-five."

Preacher - "How many attend prayer meeting?"

Clerk - "About twenty-five."

Preacher - "How many attend conference?"

Clerk - "About the same number."

Preacher - "The same persons that attend prayer-meeting?"

Clerk - "Well, yes, generally."

Preacher - "How many can you rely on to help in the church work generally?"

Clerk - "About the same number and the same persons."

Preacher - "Then you mean to say that out of one hundred and seventy-five, you have twenty-five Christians?"

- A smile.

If these members of our churches who cannot be interested in their worship and spiritual life are Christians, then the Lord has failed to accomplish in them His revealed purpose. Can it be that the religion of Jesus Christ has no more power than is manifest in the lives of that class of our membership represented by the one hundred and fifty of the church above referred to? You can interest them in anything connected with the church except the religion of the church. They are full of the spirit of the age, but seem to be utterly void of the spirit of true Christianity. You can interest them in church suppers, picnics, etc.; they will give of their means, and attend popular religious meetings, and even teach in the Sunday-school, in short, they will take part in anything except religion itself.

A prominent pastor, a few years ago, stated that the worldly minded, world-worshipping element of his church had such a power that it was impossible to discipline a member for immoral conduct. An effort to do so would call in a full meeting, and then they would have the reins in their own hands. He said that the real Christian in the church had to "sing low" lest the unconverted

would exclude them. This, however, was an extreme case.

Before leaving this subject we wish to mention one of the causes which has brought about this state of things: A desire to increase numbers, leading to unscriptural methods in revival meetings. Abraham was promised a son; this son was to be born in a legitimate way. Sarah grew restless on account of her barrenness and suggested an illegitimate way of having a child born unto them. But when he was born he was Ishmael, and not Isaac. So God has promised that sons and daughters shall be-born unto Him through instrumentalities of His own appointment. We may become restless over the barrenness of Zion, and, in our zeal for the increase of the Lord's house, adopt means other than God's appointed means, but the result is a crop of Ishmaelites. Hagar, you know, represents the law, and, in keeping with Paul's reference to this allegory, we find that these machine-made Christians are all in bondage, and know nothing of the freedom and inheritance of the saints. Not having learned Christ as the propitiation for their sins, the love of God is not perfected in them, and hence their service is one of bondage, and they are void of that spiritual life which characterizes the true work of grace.

Now, God's way of saving sinners is through preaching the gospel. **"It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe"** (I Cor. 1:21). **"How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how can they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?"** (Rom. 10:14). **"Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"** (Rom. 10:17). This is God's way, and if He has any other way He has not revealed it unto us. Jesus commanded the apostles to PREACH the gospel, and baptize those who believed; so the preparation for baptism comes through preaching on the part of the preacher, and believing on the part of the sinner. Of course the power is of God, but this is the way through which God has been pleased to exercise his power. Take the cases of conversions as given in the New Testament and outside of those which came through the direct call of Christ, they all came through preaching. Not a bit of modern machinery in any of them.

Before this modern revival machinery was introduced, while in many lines of activity, especially in increase of membership, the churches were behind compared with the present; were they not in advance in the matter of spirituality and soundness of faith? Some of us can remember when it meant something to be a Baptist. But God's ways were too slow for this fast age. Others adopted the use of altar services, and the mourners' benches; excitement took the place of

reason; sinners were taught to look to their prayers and penance instead of the blood of Jesus; they were taught to pray to God for the forgiveness of sins, and conclude when they had found a change of feeling that their sins were forgiven, instead of looking to Jesus as a sacrifice for sin and being justified by faith; all these which turned the sinner's eye to his own exercises and feelings as the object of his faith, rather than to the blood of Jesus Christ which cleanses from all sin, seemed to work well and swell the ranks of other churches, and Baptists, not wishing to fall behind in the work, have gradually drifted into the same channels.

Many of our churches are to-day embarrassed because of an ingathering under the influence of a high-pressure revival service in which this machinery was used. Sometimes it takes months, even years, to get over the evil effects of such a meeting. If any pastor will take it upon himself to look into the original personal experience of his members and examine them critically, he will find that the greater part of those who manifest no spiritual life made their professions in

revival meetings of the type mentioned, and that they have no clear understanding of Christ as a Saviour. God's way is not only the best way, it is the only way, and any other way is a failure.

No objection is urged against revivals; nor are those members of our churches who have been brought in through the instrumentality of the gospel preached in revival meetings underrated. We believe in revivals, but in revivals which come through God's appointments. Brother, if you have never tried simply preaching the gospel as a means of bringing sinners to Christ, try it, and note the lasting effects, and be convinced. "But suppose that this fails, what other means must be resorted to?" NONE. If God's plan fails, the failure is far better than any success that may come by adopting any extra means. We are to fish with gospel bait. The Lord has not sent us out giggling.

(Theological and Doctrinal Views of M. T. Martin: Editorials in the Gospel Standard and Standard Expositor, 1892, pp. 13-16), via BaptistHistoryHome.com. Edited.



Apathy or Revolution?

By Matthew Stepp
of Wayne, West Virginia



With the Democratic Party making a plank of their homosexual agenda this past convention by endorsing gay marriage, it made me, as a pastor, do a hard check. Of course, they already had a plank of pro-choice concerning the abomination of abortion, but that has been there for some time already. We have already allowed that to pass without a murmur, and it has become a fact of life to us.

So, before this newest plank becomes another fact of life to us, my question to my congregation was: Should I, as the pastor, exhort the members of the church to leave the Democratic Party, and direct sermons at the evil and iniquity that they are embracing?

I know that there are not many churches any more that preach against real sin. The most any pastors are allowed to preach is against sin in general. Can not get too specific, or it will offend particular members and they (Heaven forbid) might leave. Churches are getting small enough, without the pastor adding to the problem by preaching against immoralities such as adultery, smoking, drinking, immodest dresses and playing golf or mowing the lawns on Sundays. Maybe that is why we are losing the battle?

But does not the church and her pastor have a responsibility to warn their constituency about the wrath of a thrice-holy God? The Bible is full of accounts of God's men standing up and sounding

the alarm when the people get caught up in the sins of the world! Just look at Lot's Sodom and Jeremiah's Judah! And the entire globe in the days of Noah, when God

instructed him to build the ark, because God was going to judge the sinful world!

We could sit back, like we did when abortion came through, and nobody would blink an eye. That is apathy! Not caring enough to act. That is what the Democratic Party wants Christians to do! But if there is to be any hope for our beloved America, then we can not succumb to the sleep of apathy any longer! We MUST start a revolution! We MUST mark them as a party that has crossed the line into ungodliness! We MUST label them as a group of people that do not respect the Word of God, with no intention of humbling themselves to the almighty God, but rather to the almighty political correctness that so pervades our modern society!

Can you IMAGINE the response to our revolution if EVERY REAL CHRISTIAN left the Democratic Party tomorrow? If EVERY REAL CHRISTIAN CANDIDATE left? Whether to join another party, to register as independent, or to start a new MORAL party that would have Godly planks against the abominations of this land? We might actually have some

♦ (Continued on page 219)

THE BIBLE AND THE NEWSPAPER

Readers of the BBB are urged to submit religious news items which they may read in their local paper or some other publication. In sending these please give the name of the publication as well as the date it was printed. We will not be able to print all which are submitted, but we welcome any item you may feel we should read.

Send them to The Berea Baptist Banner, PO Box 39, Mantachie, MS 38855-0039.

OPERATION RESCUE PRODUCES DOCUMENTS IN PLANNED PARENTHOOD CASE

(WNS)--The last of the criminal charges that former Kansas Attorney General Phill Kline filed against a Kansas City-area Planned Parenthood facility were dropped in August because key evidence was reportedly destroyed. But now the pro-life activist group Operation Rescue has posted documents on its website suggesting that the records exist and the abortion giant should still be facing a trial - and the group blames the prosecutor who took over the case after Kline was ousted as Johnson County, Kansas, district attorney in 2008. Operation Rescue filed an ethics complaint in September against current Johnson County District Attorney Steve Howe, a Republican, accusing him of lying to a judge to justify dropping the charges against Planned Parenthood of Kansas and Mid-Missouri. The group says Howe reported records key to the investigation were destroyed when admissible copies of the records were in the custody of the judge who supervised Kline's investigation from 2003 to 2008. Operation Rescue filed the complaint with the Office the Disciplinary Administrator, the state board responsible for investigating cases of attorney misconduct.

FEDS HAND OUT MILLIONS FOR CLIMATE CHANGE RESEARCH WITH POOR OVERSIGHT

(WNS)--A U.S. State Department branch that dispensed \$214 million for climate change programs between 2006 and 2010 has a serious accountability problem. The department's inspector general examined a \$34 million sampling of grants awarded by the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs. Bureau officials often doled out millions for climate change mitigation programs without performing inspections or asking for spending reports, the inspector general found. A grant recipient in Hyderabad, India, for example, received \$1.1 million without ever submitting required financial reports. Another trouble spot involves interagency agreements, in which one branch of government carries out work on behalf of another. Heavy administrative fees and a lack of oversight at the Bureau of Oceans suggest such agreements may be poorly supervised throughout the entire State Department, said the inspector general in a 66-page report.

VIVA LA SAMENESS?

(WNS)--A Rhode Island school district

has banned father-daughter dances and mother-son baseball games because they may violate the state's gender discrimination laws. The ban came after a single mom complained that her daughter wasn't able to attend a dance. The American Civil Liberties Union represented the mother in filing her complaint, which said her child felt left out because she did not have a father to take her to the dance. ACLU lawyer Steven Brown also said the events highlight differences between boys and girls. "I think when schools tell girls 'You love dances' and boys 'You love baseball games,' I think that is going too far," he told a local radio station. "Public schools should not be the business of really encouraging such blatant stereotypes about what girls like and what boys like."

MARYLAND CANDIDATE QUILTS AMID VOTER FRAUD ALLEGATIONS

(WNS)--A Democratic congressional candidate has dropped out of the race after her own party officials alleged she committed voter fraud. Wendy Rosen, who was trying to unseat incumbent Republican Andy Harris in Maryland's 1st Congressional District, issued an apology to her supporters Monday while announcing her withdrawal, but she declined to admit any wrongdoing. Yvette Lewis, head of the Democratic Party in Maryland, wrote a letter to state officials asking them for a full investigation after the party found Rosen voted in both Maryland and Florida for the 2006 general election and the 2008 presidential primaries. Rosen was not expected to defeat Harris, a GOP freshman lawmaker, but the situation helps Republicans highlight the existence of voter fraud and the need for reform. Thirty-seven states have passed some form of voter identification laws, as a wave of state legislatures have approved new statutes since last year. Not all the voter ID laws will be in place by November, and several are caught up in court battles.

ANOTHER SCHOOL FILES SUIT OVER CONTRACEPTIVE MANDATE

(WNS)--A small Christian college in Missouri filed suit against the federal government in September over the mandate requiring employers to provide health insurance coverage for contraceptive drugs. The College of the Ozarks, in Point Lookout, Mo., is the fourteenth Christian school to challenge the mandate in court. The school timed its suit to coincide with the 225th anniversary of the signing of the U.S.

Constitution, school President Jerry C. Davis said in a prepared statement. "The so-called Affordable Care Act is government at its worst," he said. "This is not a partisan issue. It is a constitutional issue, and the College wants its rights respected and enforced, instead of being trampled upon. The Constitution still matters."

ALABAMA WOMAN SUES PLANNED PARENTHOOD

(WNS)--A woman is suing Birmingham's only abortion center for negligent care, misdiagnosis, and for failing to hire trained and licensed employees. Roberta Clark went to the Planned Parenthood of Birmingham on Aug. 20, and after an ultrasound and pelvic exam, was told she was eight weeks and four days along in her pregnancy. Abortion doctor Aqua Don Emmanuel Umoren then performed an abortion. But after 25 days, Clark was still nauseous, bleeding and vomiting. She went to the Princeton Medical Center Emergency Room on Sept. 14, where she was told she had an ectopic pregnancy that was 13 weeks along -- putting her life in danger. Dana Cody, executive director of the Life Legal Defense Foundation (LLDF), said Planned Parenthood records show an abortion was completed at the clinic -- despite the fact that Clark's uterus was empty before she went to the clinic, and no fetal remains were found in the aborted tissue.

GREEN IPO ABANDONED

(WNS)--A British electric vehicle company that had received \$32-million in U.S. taxpayer funds has abandoned plans for an initial public offering. Smith Electric Vehicles had hoped to raise \$76 million -- down from an earlier plan to raise \$125 million. However, CEO Bryan Hansel said, "We were unable to complete a transaction at a valuation or size that would be in the best interests of our company and its existing shareholders." The survival of the business is now in doubt. It has lost nearly \$100-million in the last three years and in public filings has disclosed it is running short of cash. Paul Chesser, associate fellow for the National Legal and Policy Center and a critic of government funds for speculative "green energy" projects, said the fate of Smith Electric Vehicles is typical of government backed start-ups. The money creates "a phony market for products nobody wants unless they are almost free," he said. Worse, he says, other investors are duped into believing that "the future was bright because government money made the business look legitimate. It's an economy fitting for Mr. Rogers, in his Neighborhood of Make-Believe."

MEGACHURCH MESS IN TULSA

(WNS)--A sex scandal is rocking Victory Christian Center in Tulsa, Okla. Tulsa police allege employees at Victory Christian waited two weeks to report the rape of a 13-year-old girl by a church employee on church property. Police have charged five employees, including the son and daughter-in-law of the church's pastor Sharon Daugherty, with failing to

report the alleged assault, a misdemeanor. A former employee, Chris Denman, faces various felony sex crime charges. Since the story broke in local media, at least three other victims have come forward. Victory Christian claims 17,000 members, and Sharon Daugherty's television broadcasts are carried globally by Trinity Broadcasting Network, among other Christian networks.

ABORTION RATE DROPS IN OHIO

(WNS)--A report released Oct. 1 by the Ohio Department of Health shows the Buckeye State currently is experiencing the most significant annual decline in abortions in more than a decade. According to the report, the number of surgical abortions has decreased 12 percent since last year, from 28,123 in 2010 to 24,764 in 2011. Meanwhile, chemical abortions dropped a whopping 79 percent, down to 1,234, over the same period. "Any time you have reduction in the amount of abortions, that's good," said Phil Burress, president of Citizens for Community Values. "The fact that we still had 24,000-plus abortions in Ohio last year is still a great concern." Abortion activists attributed the drop to fewer unintended pregnancies and new pro-life legislation, according to *The Columbus Dispatch*. A 2004 Ohio law restricts the use of mifepristone, also known as RU-486, which can induce abortion. Burress said the decline could be related to abstinence-education program in schools and sidewalk counselors who pray with women and girls outside clinics before their scheduled abortions. He said it could also be related to technological advances, which help people understand "that it's a baby and not a blob of tissue."

CALIFORNIA GOVERNOR SIGNS CONTROVERSIAL BILLS

(WNS)--Calif. Gov. Jerry Brown signed a law this week allowing clergy to opt out of performing same-sex wedding ceremonies without being punished by the state. Though same-sex marriage is illegal in California under Prop. 8 -- the constitutional amendment approved by voters four years ago defining marriage as the union of one man and one woman -- the legislation is a pre-emptive strike by gay activists who hope the U.S. Supreme Court may rule the amendment unconstitutional in the near future. The court has not yet said it will take the case. Under the legislation, championed by state Sen. Mark Leno (D-San Francisco), churches won't lose their tax-exempt status if they don't perform same-sex ceremonies. Brown also signed into law Sunday a bill requiring foster parents and other caregivers to undergo training focused on sensitivity and cultural competency for kids struggling with same-sex attractions and gender identity.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE APPEALS HERCULES INDUSTRIES DECISION

(WNS)--The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) on Sept. 25 appealed a court order

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Apathy or Revolution

(Continued from page 217) ♦

influence, then! But we have to do it as a PEOPLE! In a voting block of God's people!

One or two will not do it. One or two hundred will not do it. One or two thousand would actually start doing it, though, would it? Then others would join! Others would awaken to the revolution! We can make a difference!

But it will not happen, unless we do it one by one. Unless you and I do it! Actually, I have already done it. I am now an independent voter- registered with neither the Democratic Party, nor the Republican. I have joined the revolution- what about you?



Bible & the Newspaper

(Continued from page 218) ♦

giving a Colorado business a temporary reprieve from complying with a federal mandate to cover contraceptives and potential abortion-inducing drugs through its insurance plan. The U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado issued the order in July, giving the Catholic family that owns Hercules Industries — a heating, ventilation and air-conditioning manufacturer in Denver — a reprieve from complying until the lawsuit is decided. The Obama administration is seeking to lift the order, which would mean the Newland family would have to offer the insurance this year. Since Aug. 1, many secular businesses nationwide have been required to offer the insurance to employees when their next enrollment period begins. Most faith-based groups, including Catholic hospitals, universities, and nonprofit ministries, must adhere by August 2013, but many remain unsure whether the so-called "safe harbor" extension applies to them. Businesses could face hefty fines for not complying.

SWING VOTERS DISMAYED BY OBAMA'S ABORTION RECORD

(WNS)--The Susan B. Anthony List (SBA List) released poll data Sept. 26 showing that 54 percent of swing voters say they're less likely to vote for President Obama after learning he opposes laws protecting babies who are born alive in abortion clinics. The poll, conducted by the polling company inc./WomenTrend, shows 69 percent of swing voters also reject the new federal mandate requiring business owners to cover contraceptives and potential abortion-inducing drugs under their insurance plans.

ILLINOIS COURT AFFIRMS PHARMACISTS' CONSCIENCE RIGHTS

(WNS)--An Illinois appellate court ruled Sept. 21 that the state may not punish

pharmacists for refusing to sell possible abortion-inducing drugs in violation of their religious convictions. "The decision is a great victory for religious freedom," said Mark Rienzi, senior counsel for The Becket Fund for Religious Liberties, which has represented the pharmacists since 2005. "The government shouldn't kick business owners out of the market just because it dislikes their religious beliefs."

CALIFORNIA PROHIBITS REPARATIVE THERAPY FOR HOMOSEXUALS

(WNS)--Gov. Jerry Brown has signed legislation prohibiting a form of therapy that helps children avoid homosexual behavior. It's the first law of this kind in the nation. The new law could mean that Christian counselors who uphold biblical standards of sexual behavior with their clients could be subject to sanction. The conservative Pacific Justice Institute said it will file a suit to challenge the new law.

ORGANIZATION UNCOVERS POSSIBLE VOTER FRAUD

(WNS)--A national voter fraud watchdog group said in early October it discovered at least 31 cases of absentee ballot fraud in New York and Florida. The group, True The Vote, said these 31 cases are "just the tip of the iceberg." These 31 cases identify people who True the Vote says voted in two states — Florida and New Jersey -- in the same federal election, which is a felony. Logan Churchwell, a spokesman for the group, told FoxNews.com that the organization accessed Florida's complete voter registration roll and cross-referenced it against 10 percent of New York's list. It identified more than 1,700 people with voter registrations in both states. Of that number, 31 people allegedly voted in both states during the same federal election cycle. "This is further evidence of just how susceptible our election system is to voter fraud," the group's president, Catherine Engelbrecht, said in a statement.

THE UPSIDE OF NAGGING

(WNS)--It's long been known that married people, on average, do better than unmarried people in just about every important measure of physical, social, and psychological health. Why? You might be able to credit your nagging spouse. "Social control" is the term sociologists use to refer to the activity of one person influencing and directing the behavior of someone else," said Glenn Stanton of Focus on the Family. "All cultures and people need this. In the early years of life, it's called parenting. But in later years, it is still needed. In terms of everyday adult domestic relationships, the old fashioned term is 'nagging.' And it does keep us healthier. Essentially it involves someone who loves us reminding us of things like 'eat your vegetables,' 'get a good night's sleep,' 'don't drive so fast,'...and 'how many donuts have you had today?'" These may not always be welcomed questions in our lives,

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**The Rantings
and Ravings
of
Brother
Ritechus
N.
Dignation
by Joseph Harris**



The Monster Tongue

There's a heap of folks with a tongue problem. Some of them have got tongues longer than a yardstick and faster than a rabbit runnin' out of a pea patch. Some need to repent and dedicate their tongues to the Lord instead of the Devil, but the altar ain't long enough to put their tongues on. A tongue out of control can do you more damage than being locked up in the corn crib with a rabid squirrel. The tongue can be used to build up or it can be used to destroy.

The opposite of a controlled tongue is a tongue out of control and loose tongues have been the cause of many a church fight which ended up with somebody leaving and quittin' church altogether. Tongue wagers hurt feelin's, cause division, destroy marriages, and even get preachers run off.

Notice, God put this varmint in prison behind the ivory bars of our teeth, then covered them with the muscles of our lips, in order to try and keep this monster contained. Yet, Brother James says the tongue no man can tame. But we can control it. Anything out of control is dangerous. Water under control washes, cools, and hydrates, but water out of control washes whole houses and towns away. Fire under control is helpful as it warms, lights and cooks, but fire out of control can destroy homes, property and lives.

The uncontrolled tongue is far worse than flood or fire. Brother James deals with this in his book and lays it out pretty plain. He says the tongue is a world full of iniquity and is set on fire of hell. Sister long tongue and Brother Gus gossip can do more damage in 3 minutes than 10 preachers can undo in 30 years. Tale toters, backbiters, slanderers, and gossipers should be dealt with and not tolerated, yet should be disciplined in love.

The next time somebody in your church starts talking to you about someone in a destructive way, just turn around and walk off. It takes two to gossip: a tongue to wag and an ear to hear. They can't spread gossip if there's not a willin' ear to listen.



BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 9-1-2012 to 9-30-2012

Beginning Balance\$5,240.89

RECEIPTS:

Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS225.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY (2 months) 200.00
..... 425.00
TOTAL 5,665.89

EXPENDITURES:

Radio Time 335.00
Tape Production 195.00
Postage 5.35
TOTAL EXPENDITURES \$535.35
..... \$5,130.54
Interest +.04
..... 5,130.58
Less Corbin, KY des.-1,043.72
ENDING BALANCE\$4,086.86

CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT

Beginning Balance\$1,203.72

RECEIPTS:

.....0.00
TOTAL 1,203.72

EXPENDITURES:

WCTT160.00
ENDING BALANCE\$1,043.72



BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 9-1-2012 to 9-30-2012

Beginning Balance\$1,517.09

RECEIPTS:

Amazing Grace B. C., Stockdale, TX50.00
B. C. of Brimfield, Brinfield, IL 50.00
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS300.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL60.00
Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX 50.00
Bible Believer's B. C., Naples, ID 50.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV313.45
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL 25.00
Faith M. B. C., Lynn, AR 37.50
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY 200.00
Grace B. C., Winston-Salem, NC50.00
Grace M. B. C., Marion, IL50.00
Grace M. B. C., Tulsa, OK35.00
Grinter Heights B. C., Kansas City, KS 500.00
Harold Flynn, Craigsville, WV 50.00
Indore B. C., Indore, WV 100.00
Leroy Bullard, Albuquerque, NM100.00
The Lord's Church, Goose Creek, SC 50.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH100.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN50.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL100.00
Portland B. C., Plumerville, AR50.00
Southside B. C., Fulton, MS 25.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Silsbee, TX 30.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA 25.00
Subscriptions60.00
Anonymous \$1,300.00
Sub Total\$3,910.95
TOTAL\$5,428.04

EXPENDITURES:

Printing 550.00
Postage 861.28
Wages 2,300.00
FICA 175.96
Total Expenditures \$3,887.24
ENDING BALANCE \$1,540.80

Bible & the Newspaper

(Continued from page 219) ✦

but they do make us healthier. So why don't cohabiting unmarried people experience the same health benefits? According to Stanton, "Family members (children, parents and spouse) are...motivated to insert themselves into our business and habits because they love and are tied to us in the deepest ways humans can be linked."

U.S. BIRTH RATES FALL

(WNS)--U.S. births fell for the fourth year in a row in 2011, the government reported this week. The fall has slowed down a bit, though, probably because the recession is coming to an end. Americans typically have more children in robust economic times. "It may be that the effect of the recession is slowly coming to an end," said Carl Haub, a senior demographer with the Population Reference Bureau, a Washington, D.C.-based research organization. Falling births is a relatively new phenomenon in this country. Births had been on the rise since the late 1990s and hit an all-time high of more than 4.3 million in 2007. But fewer than 4 million births were counted last year — the lowest number since 1998. Birth rates for teen moms have been falling since 1991 and are at historic lows. Last year the drop was 8 percent, to about 330,000 teen births. That is the lowest number since 1946.

UNIVERSITY SUSPENDS OFFICIAL FOR SUPPORTING MARRIAGE

(WNS)--One of the 160,000 Marylanders who signed a petition to overturn the state's same-sex marriage law may lose her job as chief diversity officer at Gallaudet University for participating in an "inappropriate legislative initiative." Gallaudet University President T. Alan Hurwitz placed a statement on the University's Facebook page Wednesday indicating he placed Dr. Angela McCaskill on paid administrative leave immediately. McCaskill signed the petition in July. "It recently came to my attention that Dr. McCaskill has participated in a legislative initiative some feel is inappropriate for an individual serving as Chief Diversity Officer," Hurwitz wrote. Because of the petitioners' efforts, voters in Maryland will have the opportunity to repeal the law creating same-sex marriage. A "No" vote on Question 6 would repeal the law. Senior Counsel at the American Freedom Law Center Robert Muise said all Americans have the right to sign petitions.

FEDERAL JUDGES DELAY IMPLEMENTING SOUTH CAROLINA VOTER ID LAW UNTIL 2013

(WNS)--A federal appeals court panel decided Oct. 10 to uphold but delay enforcement of a South Carolina law requiring people to produce a government-issued photo ID before casting a vote. The three-judge panel agreed unanimously

that given the short amount of time before Election Day, the voter ID law may have "discriminatory effects" if implemented this year. The law will take effect in 2013. The decision in the South Carolina case comes just a week after a Pennsylvania state judge halted that state's voter ID law. Alabama, Kansas, Mississippi, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and Wisconsin all passed new voter ID laws in their 2011 or 2012 legislative sessions, according to the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University's School of Law.

INTERNATIONAL BRIEFS SCOTTISH CHURCH LEADER: DON'T FORCE CHURCH ON CHILDREN

(WNS)--The Moderator of the Church of Scotland has warned parents not to "force" church on their children. According to the newspaper "The Scotsman," the Rt. Rev. Albert Bogle "believes it may be counter-productive for the iPod generation to have to sit on pews and be made to listen to ministers rabbiting on." It's no surprise that the 63-year-old minister's stand won praise from the National Secular Society. On the other hand, Rev. David Robertson, of St Peter's Free Church in Dundee, said the problem in Scotland is not ministers "rabbiting on," but a "famine" in preaching and hearing "the word of the Lord." The Church of Scotland, once dominant in Scottish life, now claims less than 10 percent of the population as adherents and regular attenders. Officially, membership stands at about a half-million, down by more than half since the 1960s.

FRANCE SET TO BAN WORDS 'MOTHER' AND 'FATHER' ON OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS UNDER PLANS TO LEGALIZE GAY MARRIAGE

Fox News recently reported that France is set to ban the words "mother" and "father" from all official documents under new plans to legalize gay marriage and give equal adoption rights to homosexual and heterosexual couples.

Under the proposed law, only the word "parents" would be used in marriage ceremonies for all heterosexual and same-sex couples, a move that has sparked widespread

outrage, The Telegraph reports.

Changes to the civil code would mean swapping all references to "mothers and fathers," in legal documents, with the word "parents."

The law will be presented to France's President Francois Hollande's cabinet for approval on October 31. Hollande has pledged to legalize gay marriage.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Silsbee, TX and Pastor Jose' Serrano would like to announce their upcoming 27th Annual Bible Conference on October 19th thru 21st, 2012.

Service time is Friday at 7:00 p.m. with a meal provided at 5:00 p.m. Lunch and dinner will be provided on the 20th and dinner on the 21st.

For more information contact Pastor Serrano at (409) 385-9344 or Email pastor@sovereigngracebaptists.org.

The New Testament Baptist Church of Bristol, TN would like to announce a series of special services from October 29th thru November 3rd.

Elder Paul Jackson will be speaking Monday the 29th thru Friday November 2nd. Service times are 7:00 pm nightly.

Elders Rob Jefferies, David Collier, Victor Brooks, and Frank McClanahan are secheduled to speak Saturday, November 3rd. Service time is 10:00 am with lunch provided.

Everyone is invited to attend. For more information contact Pastor Lewis Kiger at (423) 391-7349.

The Amazing Grace Baptist Church of Stockdale, Texas is in need of a pastor. The church believes in preaching and teaching the doctrines of grace and the Lord's church. Any interested brother my contact Bro. Charles Reddin at (830) 401-0310, if there is no answer please leave a message.

The Landmark Baptist Church of Collinsville, IL is in need of a pastor.

Any interested Elders may call (618) 288-4236 for more information.

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

The Liverpool Independent Baptist Church of Liverpool, New York (north of Syracuse) is searching for a sovereign grace pastor. The church believes in the doctrines of grace, the local church, and is pre-trib and pre-mil. Interested brethren should contact Bro. Greg Sigworth at (315) 677-3819.

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Galena, OH is in need of a pastor. Any interested candidates possessing the qualifications and traits concerning the office as found in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 are asked to contact either of the following: Bro. Randy Coffey at (614) 871-2406 or email recoffeypot@aol.com, or Bro. Joe Vass at (614) 846-8699 or email jamijoe@wowway.com.

The Bethel Bible Baptist Church, PO Box 85, Mansfield, LA is in need of a pastor. Any interested Elder should call Connie McMellon at 318-872-1647.

The Glade Creek Baptist Church, Summersville, WV, is in need of a pastor. This church believes and preaches the doctrines of grace and church truth. Any interested Elder should call Bro. Rodney Perkins at (304) 742-3050 or Bro. Allen Frame at (304) 742-5775.

The Grace Missionary Baptist Church of Marion, IL is in need of a replacement pastor. Elder Raymond T. Ellis is the current pastor, but due to his age, is needing to resign. The church believes and preaches the doctrines of grace and the local church. Any interested Elder may contact Elder Ellis at (618) 983-8697 or Bro. Gary Ratley at (618) 841-0228.

The Twinbrook Hills Baptist Church of Hamilton, OH is prayerfully seeking a pastor. Organized in 1938, the church holds to historic Baptist truths, including the Doctrines of Grace. Please visit the church's website at <http://twinbrook.net> to view the Church Constitution and other items that describe our beliefs and show what the church is doing today. Please contact Bro. Chris Willis at Elohimfirst@gmail.com for more information.

Any church that is without a pastor, please feel free to send your information in regards to the pastoral position for publication in these announcements.

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