

The Berea Baptist Banner

XVIV, Number 10

Mantachie, Mississippi, October 5, 1999

Whole Number 247

Putting God Back in the Public Square

By Roy S. Moore, Circuit Judge, 16th Judicial District, Etowah County, Alabama

Twice in recent years the Honorable Roy S. Moore has been sued for displaying the Ten Commandments in his courtroom. He discussed his case in a student-sponsored lecture on the Hillsdale campus in early 1999.

Judge Moore's remarks are based in part on his article that appears in the Summer 1999 issue of the Cumberland Law Review.

In his first official act, President George Washington did something that would be unthinkable today. He prayed in public! Specifically, during his inaugural address he made "fervent supplications to that Almighty Being who rules over the universe, who presides in the councils of nations, and whose providential aids can supply every human defect, that His benediction may consecrate to the

liberties and happiness of the people of the United States a Government instituted by themselves for these essential purposes. . . . No people can be bound to acknowledge and adore the Invisible Hand which conducts the affairs of men more than the people of the United States. Every step by which they have advanced to the character of an independent nation seems to have been distinguished by some token of providential



Roy Moore

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A Letter from the Past

By Elvis Gregory (& Clarence Savage)

(1933 - 1981)

Editor's comment: I printed in the April 10, 1976 issue of *The Baptist Examiner* a letter from a brother who expressed doubts about one church organizing another church. He asked readers of TBE to respond to him, if he were in error. Many did. The Pinehaven Baptist Church, Highway 69 South, Columbus, Miss., and Pastor Elvis Gregory were among those who responded. This response was written by Elder Clarence Savage who at that time was Adult Sunday School teacher of the church. It was typed by Bro. Gregory and sent to me. It is signed: "Pinehaven Baptist Church, Elvis Gregory, Pastor." Hence I assume the whole church at that time personally approved of this letter. It shows what the Pinehaven Baptist Church believed in 1976, and what most of the other churches believed about church organization in the South at that



Elvis Gregory

time. I think of many who preached in the Bible conferences at Pinehaven during the 1970s and who had a least convinced Bro. Gregory that they believed the same about church organization; otherwise, he would not have allowed them to preach in his church. If He were alive today, I wonder what Bro. Elvis Gregory would say about what some of these same men's present stand is on the church. At least one man, whose name I could call had a mis-

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The Fruit of the Spirit is Faith

By Tom Ross

South Point, Ohio



Tom Ross

So often when we think of the meaning of the word faith we associate it with a sincere belief or confidence in some testimony, truth, or promise. Yet faith is much more than merely believing or acknowledging something to be true. Faith is not passive or apathetic. Rather, genuine faith properly exercised always results in action. For example, if a man is diagnosed with a dangerous disease and is told by a doctor in whose veracity and skill he has entire faith, that a certain remedy will restore him to health he will take that remedy. In this in-

stance, the man not only believed what the doctor said, he had supreme confidence in his prescribed remedy which prompted him to act. Faith goes

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Brief Catechism of Bible Doctrine

By James Petigru Boyce

Part 2

(1827 - 1888)

ELECTION

1. What name is given to those whom God effectually calls to salvation?

They are called the Elect or the

chosen ones of God.

2. Why are they so called?

Because God, before the foundation of the world, chose them unto salvation through Christ Jesus.

3. Did God make this choice because He foresaw that these persons would be pious and good people?

He did not; for the goodness and piety of any are due to the influences of the Spirit.

4. Was it, then, because He foresaw that they would believe?

On the contrary, it is through His



J. P. Boyce

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The Servant of the Lord

By Milburn Cockrell

Mantachie, Mississippi

O LORD, truly I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds" (Ps. 116:16).

The psalmist was not a make-believe servant of the Lord. He asserts: "I am thy servant," not was or will be. Jehovah had loosed him from the bonds of death (Ps. 116:8). Every person that is redeemed from a state of slavery under sin and Satan serves a better Master whose yoke is easy and

whose burden is light. A person freed from bondage is bound to serve His Master all the days of his life.

The Hebrew word (*ebed*) translated "servant" means "doer, tiller, or slave." In the New Testament the Greek word (*doulos*) means "servant" or "bond slave." A servant is one who serves the Lord.


CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE

The eternal Son of God was cho-

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"THOU HAST GIVEN A BANNER TO THEM THAT FEAR THEE, THAT IT MAY BE DISPLAYED BECAUSE OF THE TRUTH" (PSALMS 60:4).

Cockrell's



Corner

(The views expressed in this column are strictly those of the editor of this paper. They do not necessarily represent the views of supporters or readers.)

Two Movements

“For at the window of my house I looked through my casement, And beheld. . . .” (Prov. 7:6-7).

In my ministry of 42 years I have beheld two great movements among Sovereign Grace, Landmark, Independent Baptists. One is a reaction to the other in some respects. These two movements have some things in common and some things in contrast. I want to briefly discuss these.

The priesthood of the church movement started in the 1960s in California. It then spread to North Carolina, and from there to Ohio and Mississippi. After this it spread to many other states and places.

Some of its teachings are as follows: God's priesthood on earth is limited to a certain type of Baptist churches, and this sort of church continued Christ's priestly work on earth. You enter this church-priesthood by water baptism. The Holy Spirit is received after baptism in water, and no one has the Holy Spirit unless he is baptized in water. Union with Christ is union with a Baptist church. Baptists only will be in the first resurrection as those in it are said to be priests (Rev. 20:5-6). Extreme priesthood men taught there is no sin but a doctrinal sin and that a child of God can commit the unpardonable sin. Hence some of these brethren contended that you are not saved unless you heard the gospel in a Baptist Church by a Baptist preacher.

I opposed this movement among our people as an extremely right-winged movement which I thought made a god out of the Baptist church. My reasons for opposing it were written in my book, *Sacerdotalism and the Baptists*, published in 1979. (Our bookstore has a few copies left which sell for \$2.95 each.)

In this book I predicted this move-

ment would have “a disastrous effect upon Landmark Baptist churches” (p. 64). I have lived to see this come to pass. This movement brought a division which time has not yet healed. I also predicted that it could lead to a “false cult.” I have lived to see some who are in this movement deny a literal Lord's Supper, a literal resurrection, and a literal return of Jesus Christ. Both predictions have come to pass.

I also predicted that their extreme views of the church would cause “an over-reaction on the part of their brethren who oppose them” (p. 64). This prediction has also come to pass to my sorrow, and the latter end is worse than the beginning. The neo-Landmark movement is the reaction that I predicted.

The priesthood of the church doctrines is on the decline. We seldom hear much about it any more. Priesthood men separated from us or joined other groups of Baptists. We have weathered this storm, but the neo-Landmark storm is raging.

I opposed the priesthood of the church movement because I thought it was unscriptural, and to date I have no “new light” on this teaching. It was and remains an extremely right-winged movement which took the teaching of the local church too far. The neo-Landmark movement makes almost any religious society a gospel church. It is an extreme left-winged movement which denies church authority in baptism, church organization, and ordination. Many in this movement have circumstantial theology, meaning there is a problem with their baptism, or church organization, or ordination.

I have opposed neo-Landmarkism because I believe it to be unscriptural. Again I have written a book, *Scriptural Church Organization*, to expose this movement. The book sells for \$4.95 in our bookstore. This book sold over 750 copies within the first month of its publication. Leaders in the neo-Landmark movement have denounced this book as abominable heresy.

The neo-Landmark movement started with questioning things about church authority. At first I did not take it seriously as I thought they were saying about what I believed in a different way. It was not long until I had a rude awakening. I began to hear that three baptized members (excluded or otherwise) could form a church without a mother church or missionary present. There is a baptismal link between churches, but no church link. This can only be true if baptism is NOT a church ordinance. Also surely a chain link of baptisms is no easier to prove from history than a chain link

of churches. Then followed some other things: Chain-link church succession was suddenly heresy. The Great Commission was not given to the church. Acts 13:1-4 has nothing to do with a church sending out missionaries or a church ordaining ministers. Baptism is kingdom ordinance, not a church ordinance. God only knows what will come next. This movement is just beginning, and it will no doubt send forth yet a number of new doctrines.

I made some predictions about the priesthood of the church movement, and now I will make some about the neo-Landmark movement. First, I would predict it will become a rather large movement in that it will encompass apostate Landmarkers, Reformed Baptists, Sovereign Grace Southern Baptists, and Primitive Baptists. Since almost anything is a church according to them, the movement is very ecumenical in nature, and it will produce a large fellowship.

Second, I predict it will result in preacher authority (instead of church authority) for baptism, church organization, ordination, sending out missionaries, etc. Churches in the movement will be subjected to pastor dictatorship, for some of the pastors already practice this. This rule of preachers will smell of Catholicism.

Third, the predominating view of eschatology will be some where between post-trib and amillennialism.

Fourth, when the smoke clears the neo-Landmark movement will view Baptists as a Reformation sect which originated in 1641. Weak views of church succession (the spiritual kinship theory) always ends up here.

In a very few years you will know if a wise man or a fool made these predictions.

What is ahead? No one can be sure, but I see some trends developing. I see about three groups forming. First, there is the neo-Landmarkers. These bind themselves into bundles by the internet, Bible Conferences, meetings, etc. Many of these have a problem with their baptism, ordination, or church organization. Circumstantial theology binds them together.

Second, there is another group who still believe what they always have about baptism, church succession, and church organization. These believe their position is founded upon Scripture, and they feel no need to go after new light. These have no problem with their baptism, ordination, or church organization. These must sooner or later separate from the neo-Landmarkers, for there is surely a doctrinal difference. You have church authority in baptism, ordination, and church organization versus preacher authority (some of these would say

you need no authority of any kind except direct authority from Heaven) in baptism, ordination, and church organization. You have church authority in sending out missionaries versus preacher authority in sending out missionaries. One has a link chain of churches while the others have a link chain of baptisms, or, as some believe, no link chain of any kind.

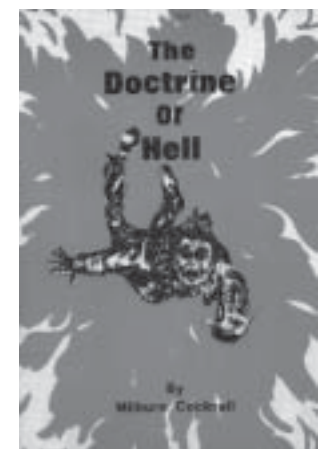
There is also a third group. These are halted between the two ideas. They are uncertain what they believe. They believe in peaceful co-existence with both groups. Some of these may go one way or the other as time passes. It is not possible to sit on the fence very long. Living in a liberal theological age, I predict the majority will jump off on the left-hand side of the fence.

Both the priesthood of church movement and the neo-Landmark movement have been put forth and popularized in the main by what we might call the “intellectuals.” Priesthood men years ago complained that some of us could not see their new teaching because “we lacked the mental capacity to understand the deep things of the Word of God.” Now I am hearing from the neo-Landmarkers that their opponents are “poor, ignorant country preachers who have not studied Baptist history nor been to theological schools.”

To my utter surprise, some who were in the forefront of the priesthood movement now occupy the same position in the neo-Landmark movement. In my opinion these have made an 180 degree turn, or gone from one extreme to another. I would call these brethren “jumping jack” preachers.

Thank God for “poor, ignorant” Baptist preachers who are content to preach Christ and to keep to the old paths. Evidently these do not have the “intelligence” to put forth some new hypothesis to divide our people.

BACK IN PRINT!



\$1.50

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Servant of the Lord

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with a cross (Matt. 16:24; Rom. 8:17).

HOW TO SERVE

First, we are to serve faithfully: **"His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord"** (Matt. 25:21). Let us not be idle or inactive. Let us be true to our Master's interests. The Lord does not require that His servants be popular or successful, but He does require that they be found faithful (I Cor. 4:2; Rev. 17:14). A faithful servant will be made a ruler.

Second, we are required to serve continually. King Darius said to Daniel: **"Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee"** (Dan. 6:16, 20). There is no vacation or holiday in serving God. There is never a time to slack off a bit or quit. It is incumbent upon us to serve Christ **"in holiness and righteousness. . . all the days of our life"** (Luke 1:75). As the fire never went out on the altar of burnt offering, so Christians ought to continually engage in the service of Christ.

Third, we are to serve acceptably: **"Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear"** (Heb. 12:28). The service here is not the service of a bondsman, but the willing service of a worshipper (*latreuo*). Service without reverence for God's majesty and hatred of sin is not acceptable.

Fourth, we are commanded to serve the Lord with fear and rejoicing: **"Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling"** (Ps. 2:11). **"With fear"** means let reverence and humility be mingled with your service. There must be holy fear mixed with a Christian's joy. Fear without joy is torment, and joy without fear is presumption.

OUR SERVICE NEVER CEASES

Truly we are to serve our Lord all the days of our life on earth. Many Scriptures command this. Death only ends our service to our God so far as this life is concerned. When we cease to serve the Lord in His temple below (His church, Eph. 2:21), we then go to serve Him in the temple above: **"Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple. . ."** (Rev. 7:15). The disembodied state is not a state of inactivity. **"Day and night"** denotes the constancy and uninterrupted of the service of the

departed saints. This is an allusion to the priests and Levites who served day and night. In the present state we are incapable of this continual worship, but when the spirit is separated from the body there is no weariness in our service in this never-ending sabbath. No coldness of feeling, no deadness of soul, no lack of love, no languishing of affection, and no distress of soul. What a day!

The chief characteristic of the millennium is that His servants serve Him: **"Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him"** (Ps. 72:11). **". . . all dominions shall serve and obey him"** (Dan. 7:27). The confusion of tongues of Babel will be reversed so as to permit universal service to earth's rightful King: **"For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent"** (Zeph. 3:9).

What will be the employment of the saints in the ages to come (Eph. 2:7)? The chief characteristic of the eternal state is service: **"And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him"** (Rev. 22:3). Much time will be given to fellowship and testimony, for singing and playing the harps of gold. But there shall be much time spent in service to God and the Lamb without cessation, without flaw, and without one legal thought. What better way to spend eternity? There is no higher privilege on earth or in Heaven than serving God.

THE BLESSINGS PROMISED TO HIS SERVANTS

First, we have been given authority in His church to serve Him while He is away in Heaven: **"For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch"** (Mark 13:34). We must not show we are unworthy of the trust Christ reposed on us. We must not say of any work which needs to be done. **"This is no business of mine."** No task must be too small or too large. His servants must not abuse this authority. We must do everything well which is to be done in His house.

Second, we are promised divine deliverance in time of trouble. King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, **"servants of the most high God"** (Dan. 2:26), cast into a burning furnace for refusing to worship his golden idol. But they came out unharmed and without the smell of smoke in their clothing. The king then declared: **"Blessed be the God of**

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God" (Dan. 3:28).

Third, we shall be blessed of God. **"Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing"** (Luke 12:43). The Lord's "blessed" carries a benediction through eternity. Honors of earth become dim at the grave.

Fourth, the Lord will take vengeance on those who shed the blood of His servants: **"Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is their God? let him be known among the heathen in our sight by the revenging of the blood of thy servants which is shed"** (Ps. 79:10). **"For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand"** (Rev. 19:2). Those who have intoxicated themselves with the blood of the Lord's servants shall have blood to drink.

CONCLUSION

1. The servant is never above his Lord (Matt. 20:24-25). When we have done our best we can only say: **"We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do"** (Luke 17:10). Eliphaz asked: **"Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself? Is it any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous? or is it gain to him, that thou makest thy ways perfect?"** (Job 22:2-3).

2. Nature serves the most High: **"For all are thy servants"** (Ps. 119:91). The angels of Heaven are **"servants"** of God (Job 4:18; Ps. 103:20-21). Only man says: **"It is vain to serve God"** (Mal. 3:14). Nature and the elect angels serve and honor God more than mankind. Thank God for the few men and women who still spend their happiest hours in serving Christ. Who ever repented of serving the Lord too well?

3. The greatest privilege a man can have on earth is to be a servant of God and others. Half-hearted service will not do. Some people's service is like the Pharisee's prayer, the traitor's kiss, the sacrifice of Cain, the feast of Jezebel, the oblations of Ananias, and the tears of Esau.

4. We cannot escape service of some sort. Some lord will have rule over us. Romans 6:16 says: **"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey;**

whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" Has Christ loosed you from the bond of sin and self? Then **"serve the LORD with gladness"** (Ps. 100:2).

GLEANINGS



A CHRISTIAN MAN'S LIFE

A CHRISTIAN man's life is laid in the loom of time to a pattern which he does not see, but God does; and his heart is a shuttle. On one side of the loom is sorrow, and on the other is joy; and the shuttle, stuck alternately by each, flies back and forth, carrying the thread, which is white or black, as the pattern needs; and, in the end, when God shall lift up the finished garment, and all its changing hues shall glance out, it will then appear that the deep and dark colors were as needful to beauty as the bright and high colors.

HUMILITY

The only true independence is in humility; for the humble man exacts nothing, and cannot be mortified—expects nothing, and cannot be disappointed. Humility is also a healing virtue; it will cicatrize a thousand wounds, which pride would keep forever open. But humility is not the virtue of a fool; since it is not consequent upon any comparison between ourselves and others, but between what we are and what we ought to be—which no man ever was.

BASIS OF GODLINESS

True faith and a godly life cannot be separated one from another, any more than the foundation can be separated from the building, or the root from the branches, the fire from the heat, the water from the moisture, the sun from the light. In a word, they are as two twins, who are born together, live together, and die together. However, in the hour and power of darkness and in the vehemency of temptation, we may and do fail very often. Therefore, where true faith is not, there can be no godly life.

Richard Roger

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choice that they are led to believe.

5. What, then, was the ground of that choice?

His own sovereign will.

6. How may we know if we be of the Elect of God?

Only by perceiving that the Holy Spirit has led us to repentance and faith and loving obedience to God.

7. Ought we not diligently to watch for such assurance of our calling and election?

Yes, and besides this we ought to pray earnestly to God to give His Spirit thus to work in us.

REGENERATION AND SANCTIFICATION

1. What is the first work that the Spirit accomplishes in those who are saved?

The work of Regeneration.

2. What is meant by our Regeneration?

Our being born again.

3. What does the Spirit do in the act of Regeneration?

He gives us a new heart, inclined to love and practice holiness.

4. How does Regeneration affect the mind?

It enlightens the mind to understand savingly the Word of God.

5. Is Regeneration necessary to salvation?

Yes; "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God."

6. Are we made perfectly holy in Regeneration?

No, this is only attained in our perfect Sanctification.

7. What is meant by our Sanctification?

It means our being made holy or free from sin.

8. Is such perfection attained in this life?

It is not.

9. What, then, is the Sanctification which we have experienced?

It is a change produced by the influences of the Spirit, by which we gradually increase in the love and practice of holiness.

REPENTANCE AND FAITH

1. What is Repentance?

It is sorrow for sin, accompanied by a determination, with the help of God, to sin no longer.

2. Do we truly repent every time we are sorry for sin?

No; our sorrow may be from wrong motives.

3. Suppose our sorrow arises merely from the fear of detection or punishment?

In that event, it is not true repentance.

4. What kind of sorrow, then, is

involved in true repentance?

A sorrow which makes us hate sin because it is sin, and because it is wrong to commit it.

5. What is Faith?

It is believing what the Bible tells us about Jesus, and trusting our salvation in His hands.

6. Is this belief an act of the mind only?

No; it is with the whole heart, so that we are led to love and obey Christ.

7. Are there many who believe the Bible who do not exercise faith?

Yes; the greater part of those who have the Bible believe it with the mind, but do not trust with the heart also.

JUSTIFICATION

1. What is Justification?

It is an act of God, by which He fully acquits us of all sin.

2. Is it based upon any works of our own?

It is not; by our own works we could never secure it.

3. Is it not, however, intimately connected with some act of ours?

Yes, with the exercise of faith.

4. Is it due to our faith in Christ?

It is not; that faith becomes the instrument only, not the cause of our justification.

5. To what, then, is it due?

Simply to the merits and sufferings of Christ, which are accounted by God as ours.

6. What do the Scriptures mean when they say that we are justified by faith?

In part, they are teaching that our justification is not by works.

7. What else do they mean?

They also speak thus, because in the act of faith the believer takes hold of the meritorious work of Christ, which is the true ground of justification.

8. Why does the Apostle James say that we are justified by works and not by faith only?

He refers to the fact that every one that has true faith also performs good works.

GOOD WORKS

1. Has not God offered life and happiness upon the performance of good works?

He has.

2. Have any of mankind ever been justified in that way?

None have been thus justified.

3. Why is this?

Because, having a sinful nature, no man can perform good works in an acceptable manner.

4. Since, then, we are saved by faith alone, does God still require good works?

He does, and gives us grace to help us do them.

5. Are they to be performed with any hope of attaining salvation?

They are not; for we can never perfectly perform them in this life.

6. From what motive then?

From a spirit of love and obedience.

7. What, then, is the position of works in God's way of justification?

They are the fruits and evidence of a change of heart and of love to God.

8. With what motive should we let men see our good works?

With the hope that thus they may be led to glorify God.

ASSURANCE AND PERSEVERANCE

1. What is meant by assurance of salvation?

It is an undoubting conviction of our acceptance in Christ.

2. Do all the people of God attain it?

It is not attained by all.

3. Is not assurance an essential of saving faith?

It is not; doubts and fears assail believers sometimes to the end of life.

4. Is it not desirable to attain this grace?

It is not only very desirable, but we are expressly commanded to seek for it.

5. Do any in whom the work of grace has begun ever finally fall?

They do not.

6. How do we know this?

We learn it from the Scriptures; moreover, salvation is the work of God, who cannot fail in what He undertakes.

7. Do not such persons sometimes fall into grievous sin?

They do; and years may elapse before they are finally rescued therefrom.

8. Can a child of God be contented in this state?

No; the renewed nature God has given him must be disturbed at the presence of sin.

9. What is his plain duty when he finds himself in this condition?

Still to trust in his Saviour, praying to Him for pardon and for help to avoid sin.

THE FUTURE LIFE

1. What do the Scriptures teach about the immortality of the soul?

They teach that the soul will never die, but will live forever.

2. Do not our bodies die?

They do, and after death return to dust.

3. Will these bodies ever be raised to life again?

They will, at the judgment-day.

4. What is the judgment-day?

It is the day God has appointed in which to judge the world.

5. By whom will He do this?

By His Son, Jesus Christ.

6. What will be done with the wicked?

He will send them away into everlasting punishment.

7. Into what place will He send them?

Into Hell, the place of torment.

8. What will He do for the righteous?

He will give them life everlasting.

9. Where will they live?

In Heaven with Jesus—the home of all the good.

10. Who alone of mankind will be the righteous?

Those who have attained to the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus.

(To be continued)

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agency."

If that were not enough, Washington added, "We ought to be no less persuaded that the propitious smiles of Heaven can never be expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right which Heaven itself has ordained."

Two hundred years later few government officials are bold enough to make earnest professions of faith. It seems that politicians can do just about anything in public but pray, unless it is obligatory (during say, an annual prayer breakfast at the White House). They can survive scandal and immoral conduct, but they suffer ostracism and worse once they are labeled members of the "Religious Right."

Even the American justice system, which is firmly rooted in the Judeo-Christian tradition, has developed a bias against public worship and the public acknowledgment of God that ought to give the most militant atheist cause for concern. If judges can deny Christians and Jews the right to express their beliefs in the public square, they can surely deny secular humanists (devout believers of a different sort) the same right.

In California, creches and crosses have been removed from downtown Christmas and Easter displays.

In Kansas, city hall monuments featuring religious symbols have been torn down.

In Rhode Island, high school graduation invocations and benedictions have been banned.

In Alabama, students have been prohibited by federal court order from praying, from distributing religious materials, and from even discussing anything of a devotional or inspirational nature with their classmates and

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teachers.

And in Ohio, an appellate court has overturned the sentence of a man convicted of raping an eight-year-old child ten times. Why? Because the judge who pronounced the sentence quoted from the 18th chapter of Matthew: "But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

In the courtroom in which I preside, the public display of the Ten Commandments and voluntary clergy-led prayer prior to jury organizational sessions have sparked not only a national controversy but also an epic legal battle. In 1995, I was sued in federal court by the ACLU and the Alabama Freethought Association. Just prior to that case being dismissed for lack of standing (the ACLU and Alabama Freethought Association failed to show that they had been or were about to be injured), a separate lawsuit was filed in Alabama state court requesting a ruling on whether the First Amendment to the United States Constitution prohibits the display of the Ten Commandments and voluntary prayer in the courtroom. A state circuit court judge presiding in Montgomery County, Alabama, held that the practices in Etowah County were unconstitutional under the First Amendment's "Establishment Clause," which reads, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion. . . ." It would appear that the circuit court judge and others were not impressed when the members of the U. S. House of Representatives and the U. S. Senate passed a resolution stating that

"(1) the Ten Commandments are a declaration of fundamental principles that are the cornerstones of a fair and just society; and

(2) the public display, including display in government offices and courthouses, of the Ten Commandments should be permitted."

The state circuit court's ruling was appealed to the Alabama Supreme Court and, appropriately, was set aside by the Alabama Supreme Court in 1998. Nevertheless, federal constitutional issues regarding public worship and the public acknowledgment of God remain unresolved.

CHURCH AND STATE

In a 1997 law review article, Brian T. Collidge expressed the opinion of many in the legal profession when he claimed that the mere display of the Ten Commandments in the court-

room is a "dangerous" practice. Although Collidge concedes that the Commandments reflect universal teachings that are beneficial to a civil society, they make explicit references to God, and, in his view, this is an unconstitutional breach of the "wall of separation between church and state."

This now famous "wall of separation" phrase does not appear in the Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, or any other official American document, yet millions of Americans have been led to believe that it does and that, in the words found in a 1947 Supreme Court decision, "[t]he wall must be kept high and impregnable."

The phrase is actually mentioned for the first time in a letter President Thomas Jefferson wrote in 1802 in reply to an inquiry from the Danbury Baptist Association. Jefferson said,

"Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between man and his God; that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legislative powers of the government reach actions only, and not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of

the whole American people which declared that their legislature should make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, thus building a wall of separation between church and state."

But did Jefferson mean that the government should in no way support religion? To find the answer we must go back more than one hundred years before he wrote to the Danbury Baptist Association. Jefferson was strongly influenced by John Locke, a well-known English philosopher, who published "A Letter Concerning Toleration" in 1689 in which he clearly defined the proper church-state relationship. Locke stated that "[t]he magistrate has no power to enforce by law, either in his own Church, or much less in another, the use of any rites or forms of worship by the force of his laws."

Herein, lies the true meaning of separation between church and state as the concept was understood by Jefferson and the other founding fathers: Government may never dictate one's form of worship or articles of faith. Not all public worship of God must be halted; on the contrary, free-

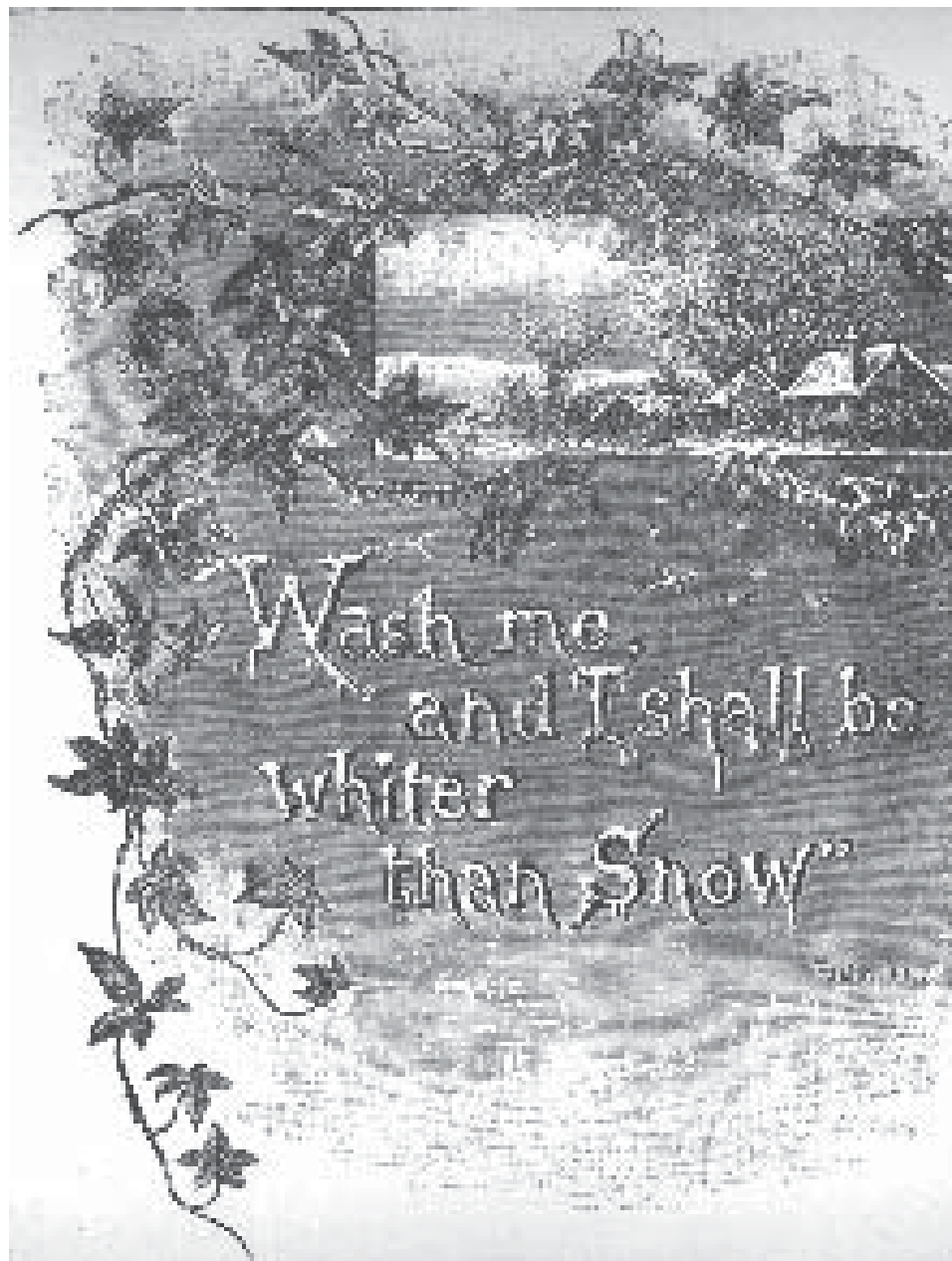
dom to engage in such worship was the very reason for creating a doctrine of separation between church and state.

Two days after he wrote to the Danbury Baptist Association, Jefferson attended a church service conducted by John Leland, a prominent Baptist minister, in the halls of the House of Representatives. Throughout his presidency, he attended similar services, which were often held in the north wing of the Capitol. From 1807 to 1857 church services were held in a variety of government buildings where Congress, the Supreme Court, the War Office, and the Treasury were headquartered.

Obviously neither Jefferson nor any other officials in the early Republic understood separation between church and state to mean that the federal government was precluded from recognizing the necessity of public worship or from permitting active support of opportunities for such worship. Indeed, they plainly recognized that the duty of civil government was to encourage public professions of faith. Perhaps this is why John Jay, the first chief justice of the Supreme Court, specifically authorized the opening of jury sessions over which he presided with voluntary prayer led by local clergy of the Christian faith.

Many believe that James Madison, as chief architect of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, led the fight to keep religion out of politics. In truth, he was more interested in protecting religion from politics. In 1785, two years before the Constitutional Convention, he wrote a *Memorial and Remonstrance* opposing a Virginia bill to establish a provision for teachers of the Christian religion. He stated that man's first duty is to God, and that "religion, or the duty which we owe to our Creator, and the manner of discharging it," was a right and a duty "precedent both in order of time and degree of obligation, to the claims of a civil society. Before any man can be considered as a member of civil society, he must be considered as a subject of the Governor of the Universe."

Madison championed the First Amendment's Establishment Clause with one overriding purpose to keep one sect from gaining an advantage over another through political patronage. This is a far cry from denying public worship or the public acknowledgment of God. Madison also made sure that the Establishment Clause was followed by the "Free Exercise Clause," so that the First Amendment would read, in relevant part, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or *prohibiting the free exercise thereof. . . .*"



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Putting God Back in

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Both Jefferson and Madison would have agreed with United States Supreme Court Justice Joseph Story's definitive *Commentaries on the Constitution of the United States (1833)* in which he posed the question of whether any free government could endure it if failed to provide for public worship. They would have concluded, as did Justice Story, that it could not. Justice Story explained that "[t]he promulgation of the great doctrines of religion, the being, and attributes, and providence of one Almighty God; the responsibility to him for all our actions, founded on moral freedom and accountability; a future state of rewards and punishments; the cultivation of all the personal, social, and benevolent virtues; these never can be a matter of indifference in any well ordered community. It is, indeed, difficult to conceive, how any civilized society can well exist without them."

HISTORICAL PRECEDENT

When the federal legislature met in 1789, one of its first actions was to appoint chaplains in both houses of Congress. (Congress still recognizes God by appointing and paying chaplains who open each session with a prayer—even the recent session devoted to the impeachment proceedings against President Clinton.)

On the very day that Congress approved the wording of the First Amendment, its members resolved to request of President Washington a day of public thanksgiving and prayer for the peaceful manner in which the Constitution was formed.

A month earlier, Congress passed the Northwest Ordinance, one of the most important documents in our history. Article III of the Ordinance declared, "Religion, morality, and knowledge, being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged."

Every president of the United States (with only one possible exception) has been administered the oath of office with his hand on the Bible, ending with the words "so help me God."

The Supreme Court begins every proceeding with the ringing proclamation, "God save the United States and this Honorable Court."

Throughout our history, the executive and legislative branches have decreed national days of fasting and prayer.

Public offices and public schools close in observance of religious holidays.

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United States currency bears our national motto, "In God We Trust."

Also by law, the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag affirms that we are "one nation under God." Congress would not even allow a comma to be placed after the word "nation" in order to reflect the basic idea that ours is a "nation founded on a belief in God."

It is ludicrous and illogical to believe that it is constitutionally permissible for all three branches of the federal government to acknowledge God openly and publicly on a regular basis, and yet at the same time accept the notion that the federal government can strictly prohibit the states from doing the very same thing. Have we become so ignorant of our nations' history that we have forgotten the reason for the adoption of the Bill of Rights? It was meant to restrict the federal government's power over the states, not to restrict the states from doing what the federal government can do.

It is no wonder that our present Supreme Court Chief Justice William Rehnquist observed in a 1985 dissenting opinion that "the wall of separation between church and state is a metaphor based upon bad history, a metaphor which has proved useless as a guide to judging. It should be frankly and explicitly abandoned."

Rehnquist added that "the greatest injury of the 'wall' notion is its mischievous diversion of judges from the actual intention of the drafters of the Bill of Rights." He is right. The doctrine of separation between church and state has been abused, twisted, and taken out of context in recent court decisions in order to prevent the public worship and acknowledgment of God.

FALSE NEUTRALITY

The Pharisees demanded of Jesus, "Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?" He asked them to produce a coin and tell him whose image was inscribed on its face. When they replied, "Caesar's," Jesus gave His answer: "Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's."

We have to render an awful lot to Caesar these days, but we do not and should not surrender our freedom of conscience. The state can't tell us how we ought to think or what we ought to believe. As Jefferson testified, "Almighty God hath created the mind free."

But in the latter half of the 20th century the state is trying to take by force the unalienable rights freely given to us by God, declared in the Declaration of Independence to be "self evident." Caesar is trying to tell us when, where, and how we can profess our faith.

In 1962 the Supreme Court outlawed a simple, 22-word, nondenominational prayer devised by the New York Board of Regents and used in the New York public schools: "Almighty God, we acknowledge our dependence upon thee, and we beg thy blessings upon us, our parents, our teachers, and our country."

A year later the Court issued another ruling declaring that reading the Bible and reciting the Lord's Prayer in Pennsylvania and Maryland public schools was unconstitutional, thus outlawing "Without the citation of a single case" practices that had existed in American schools for over 170 years. Writing for the majority, Justice Tom C. Clark asserted, "In the relationship between man and religion, the state is firmly committed to a position of neutrality." Justice Potter Stewart pointed out in his lone dissent that this was false neutrality indeed, designed to stifle public profession of faith. Justice Stewart also noted, "We err in the first place if we do not recognize, as a matter of history and a matter of the imperatives of our free society, that religion and government must necessarily interact in countless ways."

Both decisions represented a major turning point in our history. Judges were no longer interested in the "original intent" of the founders or in legal precedents (which they unapologetically and arrogantly failed to cite). They were eager to embrace the new doctrine of "judicial activism," which would allow them the opportunity to use their power to re-

shape society according to the attitudes and whims of the changing times.

Since the 1960s judicial activists have made a concerted effort to banish God from the public square. They have done this by deliberately destroying the distinction between "religion" and "religious activity." These terms may sound similar, but in fact they are very different. Religious activities may include many actions that would not themselves constitute religion. For example, prayer and Bible reading might be characterized as religious activities, but they do not constitute religion, and they are not limited to any specific sect or even to religious people. One may read the New Testament to gain wisdom, and school students may pray before a big exam. Neither activity was intended to be, is, or should be, proscribed by the First Amendment, even if practiced in public.

Sadly, however, it seems that the judicial activists are winning the war. Consider the 1997 case in Dekalb County, Alabama. There, a federal district court determined that a student's brief prayer during a high school graduation ceremony was a violation of the First Amendment because it allegedly coerced unwilling citizens to participate in religious activity. We have evidently forgotten that nothing in the Constitution guarantees that an individual won't have to see and hear things that are disagreeable or offensive to him. We have also failed to realize that peer pressure and public opinion are not the types of coercion against which the framers were seeking to safeguard.

No student should ever be forced by law to participate in prayer or in other religious activity. But to outlaw the public acknowledgment of God simply because another student might have to witness it is as illogical as abandoning a school mascot or motto because it might not be every student's favorite or because some might not believe in "school spirit."

In this context, Justice Joseph Story is again worth quoting. He said: "[t]he duty of supporting religion, and especially the Christian religion, is very different from the right to force the consciences of other men, or to punish them for worshipping God in the manner, which, they believe their accountability to him requires." Even more to the point, one of the most famous Supreme Court justices, William O. Douglas, once wrote that forbidding public worship discriminates in favor of "those who believe in no religion over those who do believe."

DISASTROUS CONSEQUENCES

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Putting God Back in

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October 1997—Pearl, Mississippi; December 1997—Paducah, Kentucky; March 1998—Jonesboro, Arkansas; April 1998—Edinborough, Pennsylvania; May 1998—Fayetteville, Tennessee; April 1999—Littleton, Colorado. These dates and places—these outbreaks of mass violence and needless loss of young lives—serve as a cruel reminder of something gone wrong, desperately wrong, in a nation founded upon faith in God and a respect for His eternal commandments.

Liberal commentators in the media, academe, and the justice system deride the notion that restoring prayer and posting the Ten Commandments can help stem the tide of violence and bloodshed. They prefer secular solutions, especially ones that involve more federal spending and regulation. In effect, they favor more concertina wire, metal detectors, and armed security guards instead of the simple and effective teaching of moral absolutes.

Yes, teaching moral absolutes is out of the question. *"We don't want to trample on the civil rights of students."* *"We don't want to teach that one creed or one code of conduct or one lifestyle is better than another."*

When will they understand that secular solutions will never solve spiritual problems?

Tragically, as in the days of the Roman Empire, we too have become accustomed to "bread and circuses." With our stomachs full and our minds preoccupied with the pleasures of this world, we fail to seriously ponder the reason for the tragedies that are regularly occurring before our very eyes. We rarely contemplate the significance of the judiciary's usurpation of power and suppression of religious

liberty. When and if we do, we are too often afraid to take a stand—ashamed of our faith in God, afraid to hazard the notion of putting God back into the public square.

We must not wait for more violence, for a total breakdown of our schools and our communities. We must not be silent while every vestige of God is removed from our public life and while every public display of faith is annihilated. The time has come to recover the valiant courage of our forefathers, who understood that faith and freedom are inseparable and that they are worth fighting for.

In the words of that great Christian and patriot, Patrick Henry,

"We must fight! I repeat it, sir, we must fight!! An appeal to arms and to the God of Hosts is all that is left us! . . . Why stand we here idle? What is it that the gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!"

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The Fruit of the Spirit

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beyond mere belief to sincere confidence.

The fruit of spiritual faith as produced by the indwelling Holy Spirit will cause a man not only to believe the truth, but also to live truthfully. Saving faith produces faithfulness in conversation and conduct. If a believer is full of faith it means that he not only believes God's Word, but also lives according to the precepts and principles of God's Word. Because his life is governed by the veracity of God's Word we can be sure that such an individual will be faithful, dependable, reliable, trustworthy, and loyal. When we say that God is faithful we mean that His Word is truthful, that His promises are trustworthy, that He is reliable at all times, and that we can place supreme confidence in Him as a person. Because we are the children of God we are to resemble Him in all these respects. I Timothy 6:11 commands: **"But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness."** As the people of God our lives are to exhibit a pattern of faithfulness.

I like what George Bethune wrote concerning the fruit of faith:

"It is rather what is usually ex-

pressed by veracity, honesty, fidelity, or the observance of truth in all our assertions, promises, and engagements. The supposition of our truth induces others to put faith in us, and the keeping or fulfillment of that truth is the fruit of the Spirit which is here called 'Faith'. . . The truth or faithfulness here insisted upon, intends, primarily, truth and faithfulness toward God in our Christian profession; but our duty to God necessarily includes those duties to our fellow men which He has enjoined, and the apostle is here speaking of the fruits of the Spirit, or of those graces which prove the Spirit of God to be dwelling in the Christian."¹

FAITHFULNESS INVOLVES ABSOLUTE HONESTY

1. The individual who is faithful will be careful to be absolutely honest in his speech and personal affairs. His words can be counted on as trustworthy and reliable. When he makes a promise you can be confident that he will stick to his word and faithfully carry out his intentions. It is sad, but true, that there are very few individuals in our world today who exhibit faithfulness in their speech. Psalms 12:1-2 declares: **"Help, LORD; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men. They speak vanity every one with his neighbour: with flattering lips, and with a double heart do they speak."** How these verses ring true in our day when so many people are deceptive, insincere, and unfaithful in their speech! Proverbs 20:6-7 states: **"Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find? The just man walketh in his integrity: his children are blessed after him."** We need righteous men and women of integrity whose words can be counted on as faithful and true.

2. To be absolutely honest in your speech and deportment means that you strive to be free of all lying, exaggeration, and flattery. Jesus Christ is our supreme example of faithfulness regarding absolute honesty. He never spoke deceitfully or dishonestly. I Peter 2:22 says of Christ: **"Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth."** Jesus spoke only words of truth with no admixture of error. He always meant what He said. He did not say one thing and do another. Proverbs 12:22 declares: **"Lying lips are abomination to the LORD: but they that deal truly are his delight."** As you examine the words that flow from your mouth on a day to day basis can you say that you are endeavoring to be absolutely honest and faithful in your speech? Or are you prone to exaggerate the facts or add a little spice to the stories you tell? Do

you find yourself telling what many people refer to as "little white lies" in order to save yourself or others from some sort of embarrassment? Are you guilty of flattering others by telling them what they want to hear rather than what you really believe the truth to be? These are all instances where we are prone to fail in the area of absolute honesty. May God give each of us grace to obey Ephesians 4:25 and 29 which state: **"Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another. . . Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers."**

3. Faithfulness regarding absolute honesty means that you are endeavoring to be sincere in your motives, words, and actions before God and man. Such an individual strives to be free of all deception, corruption, and hypocrisy as I Timothy 1:5 states: **"Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned."** A faithful man who is marked by integrity will not be guilty of trying to convince others that he is something he is not. A hypocrite is someone whose inward desires are not in harmony with their outward actions. Hypocrites profess to be something that in reality they are not. The often are marked by acting one way around the ungodly and another way when in the company of Christians. They are skillful in the art of deception, careful to fit in with whoever they are with at the present moment. They go to church on Sunday professing themselves to be spiritual, and then live like the devil throughout the week. May God deliver us from every form of hypocrisy in our lives. May we be like Daniel of whom it was said: **"Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him"** (Dan. 6:4). Daniel was a man of integrity, purity, and conviction. He always spoke and acted in a manner that was consistent with his profession of faith in Jehovah. May God enable each of us as believers to serve Him with a clear conscience free from the guilt of deception and hypocrisy by taking heed to the admonitions contained in Hebrews 10:22-23: **"Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed**

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The Fruit of the Spirit

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with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)."

4. In order to be faithful and absolutely honest before God you must consistently search your heart and sincerely strive to purge from your life those things that are inconsistent with your Christian profession. We all need to regularly examine our motives, speech, and behavior in the light of God's Word and His standard of holiness if we are to abound in the fruit of faithfulness. It is impossible to be faithful if we are dishonest and deceitful in our dealings with God and man. May writer and reader alike sincerely pray the prayer found in Psalms 139:23-24 which states: "**Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.**" This is the sure road to a faithful testimony marked by absolute honesty!

FAITHFULNESS INVOLVES DEPENDABILITY

1. When we reflect upon the faithfulness of God in relationship to His principles, promises, and attributes we come to the settled conclusion that He can be depended upon in every circumstance of our lives. Whether we are sick or healthy, poor or wealthy, happy or sad, afflicted or chastened God remains steadfast and unwavering in His care for our souls. The Holy Spirit's inward work of sanctification, which includes forming the fruit of faithfulness, involves conforming us to the image and likeness of Jesus Christ who is God. Psalms 125:1 declares: "**They that trust in the LORD shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever.**" Those who have trusted the Lord in truth, should in time begin to resemble Him in the area of faithfulness involving dependability. I know that being as dependable as God is impossible for even the most spiritual of saints, but it is a worthy goal that each of us should shoot for as we endeavor to serve our Lord. To be dependable means that you are worthy of trust and reliable.

2. Faithfulness involving dependability definitely should be manifested in our service to God. As others view your spiritual life can they conclude that you are faithful and dependable when it comes to the pursuit of spiritual excellence? I Corinthians 15:58 declares: "**Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the**

work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." Dependable Christians are very much in need in our day of unfaithfulness. Dear saint of God can others depend upon you to do right no matter where you are? Can others depend upon you to be at church unless you are providentially hindered? Do others see in your life a dogged determination to serve the Lord no matter what it costs? If the answer is yes, then you are a faithful and dependable pillar in the house of God. Revelation 3:12 states: "**Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out. . .**" I realize this verse applies to future rewards, but every child of God should desire to be a pillar in the house of God right now. A pillar is sturdy, dependable, and reliable. Pillars are not blown about by every new doctrine that comes along, rather they are firmly grounded in the truth and can be depended upon to earnestly contend for the faith. Pillars do not easily crumble or topple when the first strong wind of trouble or opposition begins to blow. On the contrary, pillars are usually the last thing standing, faithfully doing their part until the end. Pillars exist to provide stability to a structure by faithfully supporting the rest of the building. Oh that God would be pleased to raise up more spiritual "**pillars**" in the house of God that can be depended upon to remain faithful to the truth by supporting the Lord's church!

3. Faithfulness involving dependability should manifest itself in our homes. Every husband and father should provide an example of dependability to the rest of his family. The man of the house should be dependable enough to work in order to provide for the needs of his family. There are some dads who spend their paycheck on frivolous pursuits, grown up toys, and general wickedness, neglecting the basic needs of their family. All such men cannot be counted upon by their family to be dependable. I am convinced that if more husbands and fathers were devoted to the spiritual and physical welfare of their homes they would be more dependable. Oh that God would transform "deadbeat dads" into dependable dads by the power of His Spirit!

Every saved wife and mother should cultivate a testimony of faithfulness and dependability regarding her responsibilities in the home. A faithful, hard-working, wife and mother is one of the most important and valuable aspects of a successful home. Proverbs 31:10-12 says of the virtuous and dependable woman: "**Who can find a virtuous woman?**

for her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life."

Even children can be taught to be dependable and trustworthy by the example of their parents, discipline, and perseverance. Lazy, indolent, stubborn children soon grow up to be undependable teens and grown ups because the fruit of faithfulness was not demonstrated or insisted upon in the home. Proverbs 29:15 declares: "**The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame.**"

Think how strong our homes would be if everyone would strive to exemplify the fruit of faithfulness and dependability! Instead many homes are swiftly deteriorating or falling apart due to unfaithfulness.

4. Christian employees should manifest the fruit of faithfulness and dependability as they labor on the job. Their employers should be able to depend upon them being on time, alert, and ready to work hard. Christian employees should strive to be the most dependable, diligent, and productive workers where they are employed. Fellow workers should be able to see your faithful example of dependability. Dependability on the job requires you to labor for the wage you agreed upon without complaining. To be dependable and faithful on the job means that you will strive to fulfill your responsibilities to the best of your ability every day that you labor.

It means that you won't "call in sick" unless you are really sick. It means that you will not try to find ways in which to get out of work, but rather seek ways in which to make your company more profitable. Ecclesiastes 9:10 commands: "**Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might. . .**" One of the greatest curses of professing Christianity is those who say that they are Christians but who are as lazy as four o'clock while they are on the job.

I agree with what Jerry Bridges wrote:

"Few things are more vexing than relying on someone who is not dependable. Solomon observed: "**As vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes, so is the sluggard to them that send him**" (Proverbs 10:26). Though the term *sluggard* refers to a habitually lazy person, it is his unfaithfulness that makes him exasperating. We may be indifferent about a lazy person's habits if we do not have to rely on him. But if we are dependent upon his actions in any way, we see his slothful habits as unfaithfulness."²

5. Overall, this fruit of faithfulness involving dependability will only abound in those who are devoted, diligent, determined, and committed to fulfilling their responsibilities. It is sad, but true, that these words and traits are fast becoming archaic in our modern day society. Many people, even professing Christians, are content to be committed only when it is convenient. Those who lack faithful-

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F u n n y b o n e

"... A time to laugh..." (Eccl. 3:4).

As President Bill Clinton is getting off the helicopter in front of the White House, he has a baby pig under each arm. The Marine guard snaps to attention and says, "Nice pigs, sir."

The President replies, "These are not pigs. These are authentic Razorback Hogs. I got one for Hillary, and I got one for Chelsea."

The Marine again snaps to attention and says, "Nice trade, sir."

Bill Tightwad said to his wife Jane, "I know you are having a lot of trouble with the baby, but keep in mind, 'the hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world.'"

Jane then said, "How about taking over the world for a few hours while I go shopping."

This big-wheel Russian is riding along when he sees a peasant kneeling in the middle of a field praying.

He stops the car, stomps over, and says, "Aha! You waste your time like this instead of plowing and planting for the Party!"

"But Commissar, I'm praying for the Party!"

"Praying for the Party! Huh! And years ago, you probably prayed for the Czar!"

"I did, Commissar."

"Well. . . look what happened to him!"

The peasant said, "Right!"

An airliner flew into a violent thunderstorm and was soon swaying and bumping around the sky. One very nervous lady happened to be sitting next to Pastor Brown and turned to him for comfort. "Can't you do something?" she demanded forcefully.

"I'm sorry, Ma'am," said Pastor Brown gently. "I'm in sales, not management."

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

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What is the difference between the church and the kingdom? Is there any difference? --- Tennessee



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I became convinced long ago that most of the religious world looks upon the church and the kingdom as one and the same, and I do not labor under the delusion that all will accept what I believe on the subject. Some Baptists who are highly respected hold the view that the church and kingdom are the same, but this has never been this writer's view.

Earlier this year the writers who serve on the Forum gave their views on the kingdoms mentioned in Scripture, and I will not try to rehash what any of us stated in our answers. But I believe that I am safe in saying that none of the writers hold the view that the church and the kingdom are the same thing.

In this answer I will seek to give a simple, and perhaps a brief list of things which show a difference.

1. Christ is set forth in Scripture as King over the kingdom, but is never referred to as King of the church.

2. All the saved from Adam who ever lived are a part of the kingdom, but the Bible does not identify all the saved with the church.

3. The kingdom is universal, including all the saved. The church is local, containing a membership from a certain geographical location.

4. The church is able to come together in one place (I Cor. 11:20), but the Bible never speaks of the kingdom being assembled in one particular place before the second coming of Christ.

5. Such expressions as "**The church at Corinth**"—"the church that was at Antioch"—"unto the church of the Thessalonians"—"the church of Ephesus"—etc., reveal that a church can and does exist, as a separate entity. We do not read of the kingdom at Antioch or of the kingdom at Corinth, etc.

6. When the Scripture speaks of "the body of Christ," "the house of God," "the bride of Christ," etc., it is always used in connection with the

church—never the kingdom.

7. The Bible speaks of believers being added to the church (Acts 2:41, 47), but it never speaks of believers being added to the kingdom. We are added to the church. We are born into the kingdom (John 3:3, 5). All who believe in "church salvation" are forced to teach that the church and kingdom are one.

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A church by definition is an assembly of baptized believers who have covenanted together to carry out the Great Commission and worship the Lord. Entrance into the church is through scriptural baptism as Acts 2:41 declares: "**Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.**" A church of the Lord Jesus Christ is visible organism (body) that is located in a specific place.

The kingdom, on the other hand, is much broader in nature, taking in all professing Christians. Entrance into the kingdom of God is through the Spirit's work of regeneration as John 3:5 declares: "**Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.**" Colossians 1:13 states: "**Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.**" There is a *spiritual* kingdom in which Christ reigns *within* the hearts of the elect *presently* the world over, and there is also mention of a *future literal* kingdom when Christ will *physically* reign *with* His people on the earth for 1000 years. Thus, there are different applications of the kingdom depending on the context of Scripture. There are even places where Christ includes false professors as well as genuine believers as part of the kingdom (Matt. 13:24-30).

The false professors will ultimately be purged from the kingdom and punished in the furnace of fire.

There is a definite distinction between the church and the kingdom. The church is visible and local in nature, the kingdom may be spiritual and universal in nature. The church is entered into strictly by scriptural baptism, the kingdom is entered into through the new birth. Thus an individual may be regenerated by the Spirit and part of the kingdom of God, but not scripturally baptized so he would not be a member of the Lord's church.

For a more detailed explanation of the difference between the church, the kingdom, and the family of God I highly recommend a tract written by H. B. Taylor currently being published by the Bryan Station Baptist Church, 3175 Briar Hill Rd., Lexington, KY 40516.

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I believe that the Bible makes a pointed difference in the family of God, the kingdom of God, and the church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I have a tract by H. Boyce Taylor, a former pastor of the First Baptist Church in Murray, Ky., for several years. I'm sure the truth that Bro. Taylor preached about the Lord's church would be offensive to that church now. What I submit to in the answer to this question will basically be what is in that little tract.

The family of God includes all the children of God in Heaven and on earth (Eph. 3:15). Paul said in Galatians 3:26 that believers are the children of God.

The family of God is larger than the kingdom of God, or the church of God, for the family of God contains all believers of all ages, including the Old Testament saints who believed in the coming and atonement of Christ (Acts 10:43; Rom. 4:16).

One gets into the family of God by

being born into it, the same as in the kingdom of God (John 3:3-5).

The real kingdom of God (the spiritual kingdom) includes all the saved on earth at any time. The real kingdom of God contains all those in whom the Lord reigns in their heart. The Lord is the King and the believers are His domain. This all comes about by the new birth, (being born from above or regenerated) by the Holy Spirit (John 3:3-5; Matt. 11:11; Luke 16:16; Rom. 14:17; Col. 1:13; John 18:36).

There is a kingdom of God as we see it today that is made up of all who profess to have been born again, but some have only professed to be saved but do not really possess the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:9, 14). I believe it is this kingdom that is spoken of in Matthew 13:24-43.

There is also a future kingdom (Luke 19:11-27; Acts 1:6; Daniel 2:44). This is the kingdom that Christ will set up after the Battle of Armageddon which will last for a thousand years. This is future.

The real spiritual kingdom of God is composed of only those who have been translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's Son (John 3:3-5; Rom. 8:9).

The church of God is never referred to in the Scripture other than in the sense of an assembly. The local visible church is the only kind God has on earth today. The family and kingdom is not a local assembly and not all visible. When a person is born again he is received into the family of God and the kingdom of God forever (John 1:12-13). The relationship is forever, but they are not yet in the church of God, but are fit subjects for church membership. Church membership is not something one gets at the time of the new birth or regeneration, but a blessing that can follow by the Lord's leadership (Acts 2:47; I Cor. 12:13, 18). Baptism has nothing to do with entering the family or kingdom of God, but is essential for church membership. One must be baptized into a church (I Cor. 12:13). The Bible knows nothing about being baptized into anything but the local church. The body Paul was referring to in I Corinthians 12:13 was the church at Corinth (I Cor. 12:27).

The very words used in the Greek to designate the family, kingdom, and church of God shows there is a definite difference in the three.

1. The family of God (*patria*) meaning an ancestry or lineage, signifying a relationship of a whole family, referring to God as our ancestor and father and we His children by birth.

2. The kingdom of God (*basileia*) meaning the realm of a king, refer-

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit questions on any Bible topic

The Berea Baptist Banner

PO Box 39

Mantachie, Mississippi 38855

Did the churches of the New Testament have a plurality of elders? Should all New Testament churches today have a plurality of elders? --- Kentucky



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The word "elder" appears frequently in Scripture, and the context determines the meaning. At times it refers simply to an older person. In study of the O. T. we find that elders held authority in the family, tribe, and nation. We read of elders in the time of Moses (Exod. 3:16; 4:29; 12:21). There were elders during the periods of the judges and the monarchy. In the Maccabean period members of the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem were called elders.

In the N.T. the word can refer to an older person, but it generally refers to leaders in Jewish synagogues or leaders in N. T. churches. Paul and Barnabas appointed elders in the churches they organized on their first missionary journey (Acts 14:23). On his third missionary journey Paul met with the Ephesian elders at Miletus (Acts 20:17).

Some religious groups including Presbyterians and the followers of the teachings of Alexander Campbell, a founder of the Disciples of Christ Church, hold to a form of church government where elders are given a place of prominence. The Presbyterians have an ecclesiastical government by presbyters or presbyteries. The followers of Campbell have men called "elders" holding authority.

Most scholars agree that elders and bishops were the same office or work. The great majority of Baptists believe that Christian elders and bishops are ministers. Sovereign Grace Landmark Baptists generally refer to their preachers and pastors as Elders. No one familiar with biblical teaching would deny that N. T. churches, in most cases, had more than one elder within their membership. However, this does not mean that a plurality of elders (preachers) got together and made policy for the local church. Each church was responsible to follow the commands of the Head of the church, Jesus Christ. An Elder, Bishop, or

Pastor (whichever title is used), is entrusted with a very important office, and has leadership authority which does not include the lording of themselves over God's heritage (I Pet. 5:1-3). In Revelation 2 and 3 the message was to the entire church under consideration (Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 29; Rev. 3:6, 13, 22). The angel (minister) of each church was to deliver the message, but each church was responsible to hear what the Spirit was saying. In other words the buck stops with the entire church, not just with certain individuals by whatever name they may be called.

There is nothing wrong with a church having more than one elder in the membership, many churches have more than one elder within the body. But this doesn't mean that this elder rules the church. Some churches are small in number and have only one elder, the pastor. But this does not disqualify them from being a church. The churches organized by Paul and Barnabas were churches before elders were set in them.

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To answer the first question I looked up several references in my Cruden's Concordance, and it appears to me that in most instances where the word elders is used, Scripture indicates that there were a plurality of elders within the churches. The churches at Antioch and Judea had a plurality of elders as evidenced by what is recorded in Acts 11:30: **"Which they also did, and sent it to the elders (Judea elders v. 29) by the hands of Barnabas and Saul (Antioch elders)."** The churches that Paul and Barnabas organized out of the Antioch church located in Lystra, Idonium and Antioch had a plurality of elders as evidenced by Acts 14:23: **"And when they had ordained them elders in every church. . ."** When Paul and Barnabas came to Jerusalem they were received by the

apostles and elders of the church at Jerusalem (Acts 15:4), so the Jerusalem church had a plurality of elders (cf. 15:6; 16:4). We know that the church of Ephesians had a plurality of elders as evidenced by Acts 20:17 which states: **"And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church."** When Paul wrote to instruct the young preacher named Titus he stated: **"For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee."**

There are several churches mentioned in the New Testament (Corinth, Rome, Colosse, Thessalonica, Pergamos, Smyrna, etc.) where there is no Scripture stating specifically that there were a plurality of elders in these churches. In these churches there may or may not have been a plurality of elders, but we have no real way to determine if there was only one or more than one. Because of the silence of Scripture it would not be absolutely accurate to assume that there were a plurality of elders in every single church, so it is difficult to make a blanket assumption that all churches had a plurality of elders.

To answer the second question, I believe that only the individual, autonomous, independent churches of the Lord Jesus Christ have the right to determine for themselves, according to the leadership of the Holy Spirit, whether or not a plurality of elders is necessary in their specific assembly. In many Baptist churches with several members the membership votes to have an assistant Pastor to help the Pastor, which would naturally imply a need for a plurality of elders. However, if a church only has 20 members and it does not see a need for any more elders than the Pastor, that is strictly up to them as an Independent Baptist Church. In some Baptist churches there may be only one man who is called to preach and qualified to be an elder. In such cases you certainly wouldn't ordain an unqualified man just so you can have a plurality of elders.

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There appears to have been in some New Testament churches a plurality of elders as can be seen in Acts 20:17, Phil. 1:1, and Titus 1:5. There is no absolute certainty that this means all the churches of the New Testament had more than one pastor. There is no absolute proof that I know of that proves that any church had more than one pastor. There is evidence that the number of elders was the same in those churches that possibly had more than one elder. The only purpose or reason for the churches that may have had a plurality of elders would be the extra ordinary size or circumstances of the church that would make it impossible for one pastor to fulfill all pastoral duties. We must remember that the church at Jerusalem became so large it was necessary to select deacons to help in the physical and material needs even though the apostles were in the church.

There may be a need in some cases today where a church membership is so large as other needs arise that the pastor needs a helper to carry on all the pastoral duties, such as the pastor's age or health, but this is not an established Biblical practice.

It may be that in some churches the deacons were also elders as in the church at Jerusalem (Phil. 1:1; Acts 2). In that church two deacons, Stephen and Phillip, were both deacons and preachers.

The idea of a ruling elder being one that ruled over other elders is a false idea. The ruling elder was simply a pastor overseeing his flock (I Tim. 5:17), not a superintendent over other pastors (Acts 20:28).

GARNER SMITH

Forum

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ring to those ruled by a king.

3. The church of God (*ekklesia*) meaning a called out assembly, Acts 19:39.

From these definitions we can easily see that there is definitely a difference between the family, kingdom, and church. Those in the church of our Lord are in the family, and kingdom of God, but may not be in the church. You have to be born into the family and kingdom before you can ever be baptized into one of the Lord's true churches. GARNER SMITH

The Fruit of the Spirit

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ness usually are also undependable, and those who are unfaithful are that way because of disobedience to God.

John Sanderson observed:

"If we probe a bit deeper, we see that 'unfaithfulness' is very close to 'disobedience', for the man who disobeys God has cast himself loose from the only solid support a man can have, and his direction in life will be controlled by the shifting winds of circumstances and of his whimsical desire. . . The man who is not controlled by God has no settled reason to keep his word or discharge his obligations."³

May God place a burden upon the writer and reader alike to desire to have the Spirit of God make each of us abound in the fruit of faithfulness involving dependability. May God burn the truth of I Corinthians 4:2 upon each of our hearts: **"Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful."** May dependability and faithfulness be found in each of us as we serve our Lord, His church, our homes, and our employers. Dear child of God, can your testimony be depended upon? If not, why not?

FAITHFULNESS INVOLVES LOYALTY

1. When the Holy Spirit works the grace of faithfulness into the heart of a believer He makes the individual loyal to Christ, His church, and His family. Loyalty may be defined as being faithful to one's allegiance, as to a sovereign, government or state; faithful to one's oath, commitments, or obligations. When you examine the lives of the saints who are mentioned in the Hall of Faith (Hebrews 11), you will find that each one was characterized by unswerving loyalty to God and His cause regardless of the cost or consequences. When the whole world was engaging in wickedness, Enoch manifested his loyalty by faithfully walking with God (Heb. 11:5-6). As Noah built the ark the world mocked him for his efforts, yet he remained faithful and loyal to the command of God (Heb. 11:7). Moses displayed his loyalty to God by separating himself from the wickedness of Egypt even through it cost him a high ranking position, possessions, and prestige (Heb. 11:24-27). These men were loyal to God in spite of difficulty and danger. They remained loyal to the cause of God even when it was unpopular to do so. They were loyal and faithful to God because His approval meant more to them than all the popularity, prestige, and possessions the world had to offer. This

kind of loyalty is a rare quality in our present world which makes it even more valuable to the testimony of true believers.

George Bethune rightly said:

"The man, therefore, who would be faithful to his God will mark his course through life by His holy Word, not swept about by the eddies of human opinion, but steering by the fixed and bright stars of heavenly truth, which shine in a luster undimmed, and in orbits uninfluenced by the mists and attractions of earthly interests and prejudice. . . The faithful man looks for the judgment of God alone, and the judgment of men is valuable to him only when it coincides with the divine."⁴

2. Believers initially express their loyalty to Christ and His work by submitting to His example and command by being Scripturally baptized by immersion in water through the authority of the Lord's kind of church. Baptism is a public, outward expression of loyalty stating symbolically that a believer is dead to his old way of life, that he has been buried with Christ, and is raised to walk with Christ in newness of life and serve Him until He returns (Rom. 6:4-16). In essence, baptism is a solemn vow to loyally serve the Lord Jesus Christ and commit your life to His cause. Originally baptism was considered to be a badge of allegiance that identified new believers with the Lord Jesus Christ and His church. In the early churches new believers were often ostracized by family and friends immediately after they expressed their loyalty to Christ by being baptized. Through the ages faithful Baptists who remained loyal to Christ by preserving the purity of baptism regarding its mode, purpose, and authority were tortured, butchered, and martyred by Catholics and Protestants alike. In our day of lukewarmness and compromise, many who wear the name Baptist have forgotten what their forefathers endured to preserve the purity and purpose of scriptural baptism. Oh that God would raise up a holy band of Baptists today who would remain loyal and true to Christ and His commands by faithfully fulfilling their baptismal vows.

3. When the Holy Spirit develops the fruit of faithfulness and loyalty in the believer's life, the individual will be prompted to follow the example and commands of the Lord Jesus Christ. As the Holy Spirit moves us to mediate upon the life of the Lord Jesus Christ we will soon find that His was a life of unswerving loyalty to His Father's will. Not once did even the thought of treason ever cross the Saviour's mind. Each step He took was marked by a holy resolution to remain loyal to His Father's purpose which

enabled Him to confidently proclaim: **". . . I do always those things that please him"** (John 8:29). Even in the face of public humiliation immeasurable suffering, and the bearing of the wrath of God in the stead of His elect, our Saviour was **". . . obedient unto death, even the death of the cross"** (Phil. 2:8). In light of our Saviour's example should not every believer be compelled to remain loyal and true to our loving Lord and His cause? It sickens me to think how little resolve there is in our lives to be steadfast and loyal to our Lord. We need more believers like those described in Revelation 14:4b and 12-13: **". . . These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. . . Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."** Are we leaving a legacy of loyalty for those who come after us?

4. This fruit of faithfulness involving loyalty will extend to our relationships with family and friends. A man who is loyal to Christ will also be loyal to his family and friends. Think of how many relationships that have been damaged or ruined because loyalty was lacking. True friends and family are those who may be counted on to stick with you through thick and thin, through good times and bad. Proverbs 17:17 declares: **"A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity."**

I agree with the observation of Jerry Bridges who wrote:

"There is no such person as a 'fair weather friend.' If a person's loyalty doesn't insure his faithfulness to another in times of stress then he really isn't a friend. He is simply using the other person to satisfy some of his own social needs."⁵

Perhaps one of the greatest examples of loyalty in friendship was that expressed by Jonathan to David. Even though Jonathan knew that his father, King Saul despised and hated David, he would not renounce his friendship. Jonathan's friendship and loyalty to David eventually cost him Israel's throne, but Jonathan remained faithful to his friend regardless of the cost. It is rare indeed to find such exhibitions of loyalty and friendship in our world today even among family members. May God enable us to remain true and loyal to our family and friends.

5. If there was ever a man who lived a life of faithfulness and loyalty to Christ it was Paul the apostle. Even though his entire Christian life was marked by suffering, hardships, persecutions, and difficulty on every hand, he remained loyal to his Master. A catalog of calamities endured by the apostle is listed in II Corinthians 11:24-28: **"Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, on cold and nakedness, Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches."** By comparison, how little have we suffered for the cause of Christ! How quick we are to give in and give up when the going gets tough! Oh, that God would put in our hearts the faithfulness and loyalty that governed the life of the apostle Paul. when faced with the prospect of death because of his allegiance to Christ Paul said: **"but none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. . . then Paul, answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus"** (Acts 20:24; 21:13). It was this kind of loyalty that enabled the apostle to say with a clear conscience at the end of his life: **"For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness. . ."** (II Tim. 4:6-8). Dear saint of God will you be able to make the same confession at the end of your days?

May God help each of us to abound in the fruit of faithfulness involving absolute honesty, dependability, and loyalty. If we have truly been graced by the Spirit with the gift of faith, then our lives should be marked by faithfulness. May each of us resolve to obey the Saviour's admonition and rejoice in the promise included in it

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GLEANNINGS



A BIT OF HISTORY

During the course of World War II, many people gained fame in one way or another. One man was Butch O'Hare. He was a fighter pilot assigned to an aircraft in the Pacific. One time his entire squadron was assigned to fly a particular mission. After he was airborne, he looked at his fuel gauge and realized that someone had forgotten to top off his fuel tank. Because of this, he would not have enough to complete his mission and get back to his ship. His flight leader told him to leave formation and return.

As he was returning to the mother ship, he could see a squadron of Japanese Zeroes heading toward the fleet to attack. And with all the fighter planes gone, the fleet was almost defenseless. His was the only opportunity to distract and divert them. Single-handedly, he dove into the formation of Japanese planes and attacked them. He dove at them, and shot until all his ammunition was gone, then he would dive an try to clip a wing or tail or anything that would make the enemy planes unfit to fly. He did anything he could to keep them from reaching the American ships. Finally, the Japanese squadron took off in another direction, and Butch O'Hare and his fighter, both badly shot up, limped back to the carrier.

The American fighter planes were rigged with cameras, so that as they flew and fought, pictures were taken so pilots could learn more about the terrain, enemy maneuvers, etc. He told his story, but not until the film from the camera on his plane was developed, did they realize the extent he really went to, to protect his fleet. He was recognized as a hero and given one of the nations highest military honors. The O'Hare Airport in Chicago was also named after him.

Prior to this time in Chicago, there was a man named Easy Eddie. He was working for a man you've all heard about, Al Capone. Al Capone wasn't famous for anything heroic, but he was notorious for the murders he'd committed and the illegal things he'd done. Easy Eddie was Al Capone's lawyer and he was very good. In fact, because of his skill, he was able to

keep Al Capone out of jail. To show his appreciation, Al Capone paid him very well. He not only earned big money, he would get extra things, like a residence that filled an entire Chicago city block. The house was fenced, and he had live-in help and all of the conveniences of the day.

Easy Eddie had a son. He loved his son and gave him all the best things while he was growing up: clothes, cars, and a good education. And because he loved his son he tried to teach him right from wrong. But one thing he couldn't give his son was a good name, and a good example. Easy Eddie decided that this was much more important than all the riches he had given him. So, he went to the authorities in order to rectify the wrong he had done. In order to tell the truth, it meant he must testify against Al Capone, and he knew that Al Capone would do his best to have him killed. But he wanted most of all to try to be an example and to do the best he could to give back to his son a good name. So he testified. Within the year, he was shot and killed on a lonely street in Chicago.

This sounds like two unrelated stories. But—Butch O'Hare was Easy Eddie's son.

(Sent by Bro. Jim Turner)



The Fruit of the Spirit

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when He said: ". . . **Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life**" (Rev. 2:10).

FOOTNOTES

1. Bethune, George, *The Fruit of the Spirit* (Swengel, PA, Reiner Publications, first printed in 1839 by Harrison Hall) pp. 137, 139-140.
2. Bridges, Jerry, *The Practice of Godliness* (Colorado Springs, CO, NAVPRESS, 1985) p. 183.
3. Ibid., p. 183.
4. Op. cit., p. 153.
5. Bridges, Jerry, *The Practice of Godliness* (Colorado Springs, CO, NAVPRESS, 1985) p. 185.

A Letter from the Past

Continued from page 181

sion and received some missionary support from the church about the time this letter was written, is now one of the ring leaders of the neo-Landmark movement. How the mighty have fallen!

In 1976 our Baptist people were more in unity on the church and fellowship was richer. No one can doubt what the Pinehaven Baptist Church and Pastor Elvis Gregory practiced as to church orga-

nization. The record speaks for itself as many know. The editor of this paper still believes and practices what Bro. Gregory contended for. I have obtained no "new light." A great many cannot say this.

I am printing the article just as it was written and typed except for changing some misspelled words which Pastor Gregory asked me to change.

The article was never printed due to its length. At the time I did not think it was necessary as nearly all our people were agreed on how a church should be started. A kind Providence has preserved this letter until this day. I am printing it in its entirety for two reasons. First, to show how far some have apostatized from their original position. Second, to demonstrate to the younger generation how strong our people were on church organization in 1976.

Pinehaven Baptist Church
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April 12, 1976

Dear Brother S. . . .

In reply to your letter to the editor of THE BAPTIST EXAMINER, dated April 10, 1976, the following Holy Scriptures from the Authorized King James Version of the Bible are presented for your consideration, regarding the perpetuation of church authority.

The Scriptural answer to your very important question: "What Scriptural necessity do we find that requires the perpetuation of church authority only by the direct transference of that authority from one church by consent of her membership to another?" is based primarily on Matt. 16:18, 19; 18:18; Jn. 20:23; Acts 8:5-25; 10:34-48; 11:22-26; I Cor. 5:1-13; and Rev. 3:7-13 where "**the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace**" is emphasized as in Eph. 4:1-7 and I Cor. 12:12-25. In the "**one body**," there should be no schism as in I Cor. 12:25 or Matt. 16:18 which is the ONE true church as in I Tim. 3:15 which "the true church" of Matt. 18:17; Acts 2:47 and at least 15 other places in the Book of Acts, three places in the Book of Romans and at least 50 other places in the New Testament from I Cor. 1:2 to Rev. 3:14, making a total of 70 times that "the church" appears in the Word of God where "**the whole church**" appears in three times (Acts 15:22; Rom. 16:23; I Cor. 14:23) where "**every church**" appears twice (Acts 14:23; I Cor. 4:17) where "**no church**" appears in Phil. 4:15, where "**a glorious church**" appears in Eph. 5:27 and "**church of the firstborn**" appears in Heb. 12:23, making a total of 113 times "church" and "churches" appear in the Bible. This is not taking into account the number of times that "body" and other references are made

or used to refer to "the church" and "the churches" proving the tremendous importance attached to "the churches" of the New Testament. As a matter of fact, the entire New Testament is written primarily to churches as in Rev. 22:16; 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22, so that to cause any kind of division, schism or disunity in the "one body" of Eph. 4:4 is contrary to all Scriptural commands instructions and admonitions making it mandatory for "the whole church" to be considered in all matters relating to authority because all authority and power is given to the Head of "the church" as in Matt. 28:18-20; Eph. 1:22, 23; 5:23 and Col. 1:18, so that for 2 or 3 members of "one body" to assume authority apart from consideration of the remainder of that particular body is tantamount to a schism or division of that particular body.

In this connection let us now consider the scriptural meaning of Matthew 18:19, 20. Matthew 18:19 refers primarily to the authorized scriptural procedure of two members of a particular church asking GOD THE FATHER through the remainder of that particular body in the form of a motion being seconded by the other, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, for godly authority in a particular matter under that church's jurisdiction as in Acts 1:15-26. On any other basis scriptural church authority is being ignored and thereby passed and the command of I Cor. 14:40 flaunted, when two or three or any portion (minority or majority) of that particular body acting without a scripturally authorized meeting of any portion of "the whole church" as in Acts 15:22 where the word "whole" does not mean every member of that particular church or even a majority necessarily of that church, but only the scripturally authorized majority of those who are properly assembled in scripturally authorized church capacity as proven by Matt. 18:20, which states that "**where two or three are gathered together in my name**" which means any portion of a particular body properly assembled in true church capacity, because "**in my name**" means according to the instructions or commands of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ as "the head" of "his body" which is the "whole church" as in Eph. 1:22, 23; 5:23 and Col. 1:18, according to the pattern set forth in Acts 1:15-26. It should be noted here that any "secret" assembly politically motivated is not a scripturally authorized meeting of a true church, but must be motivated by LOVE "**endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace**" as in Eph. 4:1-3; and only to

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How the Clinton-Kosovo War Got Started

By G. Russell Evans

Norfolk, Virginia

President Clinton has no authority to commit us to war, and he can argue that he didn't. NATO did and that's worse. The order to commence firing was given on March 23rd by NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana.

How many mothers and fathers know that this Spanish Marxist gave the order to Supreme Allied Commander Europe General Wesley Clark to send their sons and daughters into battle in the undeclared and illegal war against Yugoslavia? NATO's goal, said Solana, is "to support the political aims of the international community." He means the New World Order.

ONLY CONGRESS CAN DECLARE WAR

The U.S. Constitution carefully provides (Art. I, Sec. 8) that only the Congress can place us in a state of war. Not the president. Not NATO. Without question, the savage bombing of Yugoslavia is war.

Our Founding Fathers wisely understood that the Executive would be more prone to initiate war and therefore, only the legislature could be trusted to declare war.

Our Congress had no role in NATO's "political aims." The American people, through their Congress, were shut out in the decision to go to war even though the House and Senate had approved resolutions to support our military.

It has been discovered that General Clark received authorization for this war from NATO last October and "did not need new permissions from politicians and diplomats." Indeed, on the day the bombing began the White House admitted that authority to take America to war had been surrendered to NATO's Secretary-General, a foreign national.

RECKLESS VIOLATIONS

In making war on a sovereign nation, the United States has recklessly violated not only our own Constitution but also the NATO Charter and the UN Charter, as follows: NATO guarantees "territorial integrity and security" to members. Yugoslavia's Milosevic, though cruelly oppressing the Kosovars, has not threatened any NATO members. The UN prohibits interference in the "domestic jurisdiction." Suppression of Kosovo Albanians, though barbaric, is within Yugoslavia's "jurisdiction."

A weird, dangerous and illegal war has been joined: NATO declared war. General Clark is making war. President

Clinton is *selling* war to Americans. And Congress is *rubber-stamping* war and *paying* the bill so far \$6 billion and rising! Nothing in history can match this!

FAR-FLUNG REACTIONS

When asked why we decided to rescue the Kosovars when Africans were in much greater peril—30 times greater in Sudan and 400 times greater in Rwanda—Secretary of Defense William Chen shocked senators of the Armed Forces Committee by saying, in effect, that our culture came from Europeans. A bad answer. A worse policy.

When a veteran Marine Corps officer, with three sons in the war, asked Senators Dianne Feinstein and Robert Torricelli how many sons they were willing to send, he got no answer—only gobbledy gook. Larry King let it pass, always a savior for liberals on his TV show.

Ms. Feinstein called for a Marshal Plan after the devastation is complete—to be named the Feinstein Plan no doubt.

Colonel David Hackworth, highly decorated veteran, says, "25 days in Iraq failed and ten months in Kosovo will fail." He said Clinton has violated all the principles of war—chief of which are the objective, simplicity and morale.

A SOLUTION

As guest on a recent radio talk show, I was asked for my solution. I say: Obey our Constitution and honor the NATO and UN Charters—none of which authorize the Clinton-Kosovo War. Send humanitarian aid. Commence hard negotiations and urge Russia to use her influence with her cousins, the Serbs.

We made a mistake. We should get out. Two wrongs do not make a right. With ground war, we'll soon be in a quagmire, followed by thousands of America's treasure in body bags—all caused by an illegal war, involving no national interests of America. This is a European problem; let them do their own policing!

President Clinton wants this war: to be a hero, to gain a decent legacy and to prove he's a winning Commander-in-Chief—although a draft-dodger himself when he had a chance to fight in another illegal war: the Vietnam War.

A timid Congress, just as with the impeachment, is allowing an ambitious president to get away with blatant violations of our Constitution and national sovereignty. Abraham Lin-

coln warned about an imperial president, adding, "Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to treat a man's character, give him power." Just as with Lincoln himself, his wisdom is also for the ages.

(Captain Evans is author of *Death Knell of the Panama Canal?*, available on the Internet at Amazon.com.)

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the glory of God "in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." Eph. 3:21.

On the other hand, where two or more agree to gather together without the above godly authority a door is opened wide for all forms and kinds of heresy, "**doctrines of men**" as in Col. 2:22, 23, and "**doctrines of devils**" as in I Tim. 4:1; without any leadership of the Holy Spirit as in John 14:16, 17, 26 and 16:13-15; without the prayer and authority of "**my church**" of Matt. 16:18 as in Phil. 1:19, 20; Eph. 6:18 and II Cor. 1:11, and without any disciplinary authority vested primarily by the Holy Spirit only in true churches as in I Peter 4:17, which violates Matt. 16:19; 18:18; John 20:23; I Cor. 5:4, 5 and II Cor. 2:1-11, so that all you can have on that kind of assumed basis is a man-made association, board, convention, council and such like instead of an authorized scripturally organized true church without any authoritative disciplinary connection whatever with "**my church**" of Matt. 16:18. Hence, the only way to preserve purity in "the churches of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is to scripturally, meticulously and orderly guard, protect and honour the ordained church authority as in Matt. 16:19 and I Pet. 4:17 and correlated holy scriptures, because on any other basis two or three "**which cause divisions and offenses contrary to sound doctrine**" as in Rom. 16:17 could easily organize a heretical church under the token name of a sound church in opposition to Matt. 16:19; 18:18; John 20:23; Acts 8:5-25; 10:34-48; 13:1-4; 15:1-41; 19:1-7; I Tim. 6:5; II Tim. 3:1-5; Titus 3:9-11; II Thess. 3:6, 14 and II John 9-11, making it impossible for true churches to effectively discipline, exclude and correct any "leaven," false doctrine, malice and wickedness that might arise in any true church and does arise from time to time in true churches as in Matt. 18:17; I Cor. 5:13 and Rev. 2:1 to 3:22; therefore, a disregard for and loss of this godly ordained disciplinary authority encourages apostasy, heresy, false doctrine,

false teaching, false prophets, "grievous wolves," and all kinds of "leaven" and the like, so let us never be careless, loose, lax and unconcerned about godly ordained church authority, administered by the Holy Spirit, which is next to the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ as in Matt. 28:18-20; Luke 24:49; John 20:22; Acts 1:8; 2:1-47; 5:1-11; 8:5-25; 10:34-41; 19:1-7; I Cor. 11:3; Eph. 1:22, 23; 5:23; Col. 1:18; Rev. 19:7-9 and 21:9 to 22:5 and correlated holy scriptures. Just the same as the human body is next to the head of that body and just the same as the wife is next to the husband in authority in the human family, so that there exists only one kind of authority in the home, i.e. the same authority applies to all members or children of a particular family whether they are at "the swimming hole" or at the dinner table; just the same as the same authority applies to all phases of church operation whether it be baptism or propagating "the bread of life" by begetting new churches of like faith and order, making scriptural ordained church authority the greatest SUBJECTIVE AUTHORITY on earth today superseding all civil authority as in Rom. 13:1-14, where putting "**on the Lord Jesus Christ**" as in verse 14 is equivalent to being a faithful member of one of the true churches on earth today which is "**my church**" of Matt. 16:18 as proven by Rom. 14:1 where the only ordained "body" that can "**receive**" one who is weak in the faith is "**the church**" of Acts 2:47, so let us never be ignorant or confused regarding the godly order of church authority which is of infinite divine origin and of majestic eternal importance.

The perpetuation of scriptural church authority is accomplished here upon earth by the ADMINISTRATIVE SUBJECTIVE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT in the personal absence of our Head and the Head of the church, the Lord Jesus Christ, John 16:7. This is seen in Acts 8:5-25; 10:34-48. As the authority to baptize is administered and perpetuated only by the work of the Holy Spirit without which work the Spirit of truth "cannot abide with" any other kind of assembly as in John 14:16, 17 and therefore any other kind of assembly without the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit cannot be "**the pillar and ground of the truth**" as in I Tim. 3:15 regardless of the name attached to that kind of assembly being in the same condition as all assemblies that never had a "candlestick" or after the candlestick is removed as in Rev. 2:5, which is equivalent to saying that the Holy Spirit does not "abide" in such an assembly since the word "candle-

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stick" here means: "a portable lamp or other illuminator (lit. or fig.); a lamp stand (lit. or fig.); candle light; (light); white, (Strong's, G 3087, 88, 22), which can only mean in this case the Holy Spirit, so that without the abiding presence of the Spirit or **"the Spirit of truth"** in an assembly there can be no spiritual illumination or SUBJECTIVE light (wisdom) from above and that assembly cannot be clothed with **"white raiment"** as in Rev. 3:18 and 19:7, 8; therefore, let us never forget the infinite importance of scriptural church authority vested primarily in **"the Holy Spirit"** on earth today as He **"abides"** in **"my church"** of Matt. 16:18 proving again that without scriptural Holy Spirit authority no assembly can know the **"spirit of trust"** protecting and guarding itself against **"leaven"** as in Matt. 13:33; 16:6; Mark 8:15; Luke 12:1; 13:20; I Cor. 5:6-8 and Gal. 5:9; against the spirit of antichrist as in I John 2:22 and 4:1-4; heresies, schisms, divisions, false prophets, false doctrines, **"goats,"** **"wolves"** and such like as in Gal. 5:19-21; Acts 20:29-31; Matt. 25:31-46; I Cor. 5:6-8 and Gal. 5:9.

It should be noted here that it is no longer necessary or needful for **"my Church"** to **"speak with tongues"** as in Acts 2:4; 10:46 and 19:6 because we now have **"the written standard"** or **"the holy scriptures"** as in II Tim. 3:14-17 along with the **"Revealer"** who is **"the Holy Spirit"** as in I Cor. 2:9-16 to make known the seven primary unities of Eph. 4:1-7 as follows: 1) One body, as to kind; 2) one Spirit of truth, as administrator of the one body; 3) one hope of your calling; 4) one Lord, as the head of the one body; 5) one faith as the work of God, John 6:29; 6) one baptism as an outward picture or symbol of an inward divine work; and 7) one God and Father of all eternal work as in Eccl. 3:14 and I Cor. 12:6). The result is that man is but a recipient of His SOVEREIGN GRACE characterizing every true assembly of **"my church"** or **"one body"** where the one **"Spirit of Truth"** abides as Comforter as in John 14:16, 17—Teacher as in John 14:26—Witness as in John 15:26, 27—and Administrator (reprover and guide) as in John 16:1-16 so that so called modernistic pentecostal charismatics of our day are denying our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by denying every primary basic doctrine of the holy scriptures including the seven primary phases of **"eternal salvation"** as follows: 1) Election; 2) Conception; 3) Predestination; 4) Regeneration; 5) Justification; 6) Sanctification; and 7) Glorifi-

cation; involving three primary phases of SOVEREIGN GRACE as follows: 1) Common grace; 2) Objective grace; 3) Subjective grace, for without a clear scriptural understanding of these primary, basic, fundamental and foundational phases of **"sound doctrine"** as in I Tim. 1:10; II Tim. 4:3; Titus 1:9 and 2:1, it is absolutely impossible to be **"sound in the faith"** as in Titus 1:13-16 and 2:2: **"earnestly contending for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints"** as in Jude 3; and **"putting on the whole armour of God"** and in Eph. 6:10-18, so that without scriptural church authority vested primarily in the Holy Spirit on earth today perpetuated directly from **"one body"** to another **"one body"** and with only assumed authority by a group of individuals regardless of size and intentions separated from **"one body"** and **"one Spirit"** which are indivisible and undivided in spiritual and scriptural authority, no such group can perpetuate scriptural church authority any more than a child can be born without the unity and union of sperm and ovum. Just the same as there must be a union of the Holy Spirit and a group of baptized believers typifying a virgin before a new **"body"** of **"my church"** can be begotten of like faith and order as in Acts 8:5-25; 10:34-48 and 11:22-26; just the same as there had to be a union between the Holy Ghost and the virgin Mary before the beloved Son of God could become Jesus, the Son of Man, as in Matt. 1:18-25 which means that the Holy Spirit must be united with every virgin group of baptized believers before they can become a true church of our Lord, meaning that the Holy Spirit only does His divine work of propagating true churches and church authority among faithful virgins, i.e., from **"one body"** of **"my church"** to a group of virgin baptized believers in perpetuating church authority and church succession according to the scriptural pattern of procedure recorded in Acts 8:5-25; 10:34-48 and 11:22-26 which procedure is consistent with all other scriptures including all the missionary works of Paul, none of which was performed except by direct perpetuated church authority always direct from the church of which he was a member to many different groups of baptized believers being led by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, we see scriptural church authority perpetuated in the organizing of new churches as well as the ordaining **"elders in every church"** as in Acts 14:23; reporting back to his home church at the end of his missionary journey as in Acts 14:26-28, so that there is no scriptural sup-

port anywhere for the assumed, unscriptural procedure presented in next to the last paragraph of your letter appearing in the April 10, 1976 issue of THE BAPTIST EXAMINER.

Much more could be written along this particular view but ample scriptural proof has been presented to fully establish perpetual church authority **"to be direct from an established scriptural church to another group of baptized believers as members of that **"one body"** by means of ordained ambassadors, messengers, evangelists, preachers and/or missionaries under the direction, administration, power and authority of the Holy Spirit as recorded in Acts 13:1-5 as a scriptural standard of procedure conclusively proving with supporting scriptures with no established alterations, or alternatives that the church which was at Antioch under the administrative authority of the Holy Spirit ordained two missionaries and **"sent them away"** to preach **"the word of God"** under direct Holy Ghost and church authority resulting in establishing many scriptural churches, so let us never add to or take from this scripturally established standard procedure of perpetuating Holy Spirit and church authority as repeated in Acts 15:40, 41 with similar abundantly successful results; whereas, on the other hand, Barnabas and Mark altered this established scriptural procedure without Holy Spirit and church authority resulting in a blank record of accomplishments which conclusively proves the infinite importance of Holy Spirit and direct church authority.**

Another irrefutable proof of the absolute necessity of **"link chain"** connection of direct church authority is Acts 8:1-25 where Philip the evangelist was ordained and scripturally authorized by the original church (which our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ personally established here upon this earth which was baptized with the Holy Ghost at Jerusalem as in Acts 1:8 and 2:1-13) to preach Christ unto the people of **"the city of Samaria"** as in Acts 8:5, then baptize them that **"believed"** not before but after **"they believed"** as in verse 12, then **"my church"** of Matt. 16:18 at Jerusalem scripturally authorized **"Peter and John"** as in Acts 8:14 to scripturally organize baptized believers (who were at that time all members of the church at Jerusalem being baptized under the direct authority of that church) into a daughter church of like faith and order as in verses 15-17 and John 14:16, 17 as proven by the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit as seen in the same passages, after which that newly scripturally organized church was authorized to administer discipline to one of her members, Simon as in verses 18-24; I Peter 4:17;

and Matt. 16:19, emphasizing the eternal and tremendous importance of the perpetuation of church authority only by the direct transference of that authority from one church by divine approval of her membership, being led by the Holy Spirit, to another group of baptized believers, in this case the perpetuation of Holy Spirit and church authority at Jerusalem by the direct transference of that authority by vote of approval of her membership through **"the apostles"** to organize a group of believers into another church of like faith and order which is the holy way to preserve the purity of **"my church"** of Matt. 16:18 because **"like begets like"** as in Gen. 1:11, 12, 21-25, without which purity is lost along with the removal of the Holy Spirit just the same as church authority is lost when divine begetting is eliminated; for examples when plants are crossed, when animals are crossed and when races of people are crossed, the original characteristics are lost just the same as the original characteristics of the church of like faith and order of our Lord loses her characteristics of purity in like faith and order (including the seven unities of primary characteristics as recorded in Eph. 4:4-6) when crossed or mixed with impurity, iniquity, falsehood, false doctrine, malice, wickedness, etc., resulting in removal of **"the candlestick"** and Holy Spirit **"out of his place, except those repent"** as in Rev. 2:5 after which removal she is an unscriptural and a false church even though her name remains the same as in Rev. 3:1 and from henceforth is unable to beget a true church regardless of the name or outward identification; by the same principles true church authority is lost in the absence of the Holy Spirit by unscriptural crossing, division, disunity, schism and failing to purge out **"the old leaven"** as well as inscriptural organizational procedures, the main one of which is assumed false authority and unscriptural participation instead of perfect scriptural authority coming directly from the **"whole"** true church.

A prime example of assumed false and unscriptural church authority is recorded for our edification in Acts 15:36-41 where **"Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus"** without **"being recommended by the grace of God"** as in verse 40 which is equivalent to saying that Barnabas and Mark left Antioch without Holy Spirit and church authority as Paul and Silas did in verse 40 and as Barnabas and Saul did in Acts 13:1-40 and 14:26, 27 even though Barnabas must have been a member of the church at Antioch as in Acts 11:25-30; 12:25; 13:1-5; 14:26-28 and

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tributed gospel tracts and talked with students about alternatives to abortion. When police asked the protesters to leave, they promptly obeyed; no arrests or citations were issued.

However, an obscure and little-used legal maneuver permitted prosecutors to obtain a three-court grand jury indictment against Keyes. Keyes was acquitted of failure to obtain a permit and disorderly conduct, but was found guilty of trespass.

"And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely" (Acts 16:23).

BAPTISTS DENIED RIGHT TO BUILD CHURCH IN ROMANIA

ORADEA, Romania (EP)—In a move reminiscent of Romania's Communist past, the Greek Orthodox Church is allegedly working to deny the religious rights of evangelical believers in Marginea, Romania.

Emmanuel Baptist Church of Oradea, the largest Baptist church in Europe with 5,000 in regular Sunday attendance, has worked to establish an outreach ministry in Marginea, a village with a population of 1,000.

In 1998 the church purchased one acre of land to construct a building for the 36 worshippers who had been meeting in private homes. Building permits were obtained from local and state governments to begin construction of a church building. As materials arrived and the foundation was poured, opposition arose from the Greek Orthodox establishment.

The Greek Orthodox Church filed suit with the local tribunal to obtain a cease and desist order against Emmanuel Baptist. Although the local court did not have jurisdiction, it issued an order to stop the construction of the new church.

The cease and desist order was presented to church leaders, but Peter Vidu, coordinating pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church, refused to sign or accept the order. Vidu says, "We will continue to build because we have not broken any Romanian law. The awful thing is that the Orthodox Church is using the judicial system to legalize their persecution."

Experts fear that the combination of Romania's political climate combined with the age-old tensions between the Orthodox Church and other denominations might result in ethnic and religious violence.

Pastor Peter Vidu shares this concern by saying, "This may be the rebirth of religious persecution in Romania, not from the Communists but from the Greek Orthodox Church. They used to persecute the Protestants and especially Baptists, in the days before Communism. The Communist authorities demolished churches.

Now the Orthodox priests want to stop the Baptists from building churches." The Baptist denomination is officially recognized by the state of Romania with the legal right of assembly to worship.

Vidu concludes, "One of the biggest dangers today in Romania is intolerance—ethnic, political, and religious. What we are experiencing is the beginning of religious cleansing."

"All these are the beginning of sorrows" (Matt. 24:8).

LUTHERANS AND CATHOLICS TO SIGN JOINT DECLARATION

HANOVER, Germany (EP)—The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and the Vatican will sign a joint declaration on the doctrine of justification on Oct. 31, in Augsburg, Germany, according to a report from Lutheran World Information. The joint declaration is the result of more than three decades of dialogue between Lutherans and Roman Catholics. The signing will be the first time that such a declaration has been recognized officially and jointly by the respective church bodies. The date of the signing is significant because on Oct. 31, 1517, Martin Luther posted his 95 theses against the Vatican. Lutherans consider Oct. 31 the birthday of the Reformation. Augsburg is important to the Lutheran tradition because in 1530 Emperor Charles V assembled a conference of Luther's followers to draft the Augsburg Confession, a founding document of the Lutheran Church. On the basis of responses from its member churches, the LWF Council affirmed the Joint Declaration on June 16, 1998. On June 25, the Roman Catholic Church gave the document its support.

DENVER, Colo. (EP)—With a two-thirds vote, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) approved full communion with the U.S. Episcopal Church during the ELCA's Aug. 16-22 churchwide assembly.

HONG KONG, China (EP)—Churches and Christian publishers continue to operate in Hong Kong without molestation from the government. Since 1997, Chinese rule over Hong Kong has caused no significant changes in the freedom of religious activity, according to a report from Compass Direct. However, certain incidents suggest that the government is keeping an eye on Christian organizations. Churches and individuals involved in missions to mainland China have come under government scrutiny. Government officials have asked Christian publishers to drop controversial titles. Requests for ministries to accept new personnel for the purposes of government monitoring have been made by officials. Sources conclude that the government is looking to stop outside support to house churches in mainland China.

BELGRADE, Yugoslavia (EP)—Kosovar refugees are returning to their homes now that a sense of security has been established by NATO peacekeeping forces. The dominant religion of the returning refugees is Islam, but the refugees also include 60,000 Catholics and several hundred evangelicals. A priority among returning Christians is to see if their faith communities have survived the recent upheaval. Pastors and church elders are attempting to find out what happened to church members during the conflict. Many buildings used by Christians as churches have been damaged, but not destroyed. Equipment and furniture within the buildings has disappeared. Compass Direct reports that atrocities are still continuing in the region, including violence by the Kosovo Liberation Force (KLA) against Serbian Orthodox clergy. Many Serbian churches have been destroyed. As ethnic Albanians return, Kosovo Serbs flee to the north towards Serbia.

BERLIN, Germany (EP)—Seven of every 10 people in Germany's capital are not associated with a church of any kind. This is the conclusion of Protestant Bishop Wolfgang Huber, reports Idea News Service. Huber declared Berlin to be "the world's most atheistic capital." One percent of church members cancel their memberships each year. Church cancellations reached a record in 1994 when almost 23,000 members canceled their membership status with Berlin area churches. Declining church numbers are being blamed for financial problems within Berlin area churches as well.

LONGMONT, Colo. (EP)—A Colorado man linked to a cult that once prostituted its female members received the 1999 "Parent of the Year Award," an honor created by Congress in 1994. Questions about Zack Prendergast's involvement with the Children of God cult led him to return the award. Former members of the cult said Prendergast and his wife are members of the group, which has been linked to child pornography in South America and to the use of "hookers for Jesus." The non-profit organization which selects the annual winner, the National Parents Day Foundation, reportedly has ties to Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church. The foundation shares office space with one of Moon's organizations and receives most of its funding from Moon's enterprises.

HARARE, Zimbabwe (EP)—The World Council of Churches released figures on Aug. 27 stating last year's assembly was the largest ever held in the organization's 50-year history. The WCC's eighth assembly, held in December of 1998, boasted almost 5,000 participants, including representatives from 330 different churches. According to the Ecumeni-

cal News Service the assembly almost didn't take place because of civil unrest in Harare. Participants were disappointed that many churches from Zimbabwe did not attend the assembly. The main issues discussed during the event were human rights, globalization and issues confronting African churches. Still, despite many requests from Zimbabwe groups, the WCC did not raise the issue of human rights abuses by the Zimbabwe government. Future WCC assemblies are in jeopardy since the organization faces a \$200,000 budget deficit for 1999. Officials blame the deficit on a dramatic decrease in funds from WCC member churches. If no new sources of income are found for fiscal year 2000, the executive committee has authorized large cuts in the WCC budget.

HAVANA, Cuba (EP)—Christian missionaries report that the government of Cuba is exercising an unusual measure of tolerance towards public religious displays and religious freedom in general. In the past, the Cuban officials enforced strict laws on Bible distribution, public religious ceremonies, and street witnessing. The summer of 1999 has been a period of unprecedented freedom for Cuban Christians. The government has relaxed several rules barring religious freedom, allowing the construction of new church buildings, and allowing Christian organizations to import Bibles. The most obvious demonstration of a rebirth of religious freedom in Cuba was the outdoor rally sponsored by evangelical churches on June 20 at Revolution Square in Havana. The event was attended by nearly 100,000 persons, including government officials and President Fidel Castro.

HA GIANG, Vietnam (EP)—A classified document distributed by the Communist party of Vietnam reveals the government's campaign to suppress Christianity, especially among the northern Hmong population. Several thousand copies of the document have been copied and distributed to officials at different levels of government. The 42-page document refers to Christians as thieves and drug users, characterizes Christianity as an illegal religion, and distorts or misinterprets many Christian doctrines. The document is aimed at discouraging new converts, specifically in Hmong communities where Christianity is expanding.

BOGOTA, Colombia (EP)—As the 40-year-old civil war continues in Colombia, Christians and their churches face a new threat: Satanic cults reportedly have carried out attacks against Christians and churches in Colombia. In the past, rebel armies have targeted Christians since many participate in public peace demonstrations. Satanic cults have joined the violence by fighting rebel groups for ter-

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ritory and attacking churches.

VANCOUVER, British Columbia, Canada (EP)—Radio personality Bob Larson staged fake exorcisms during a recent series of meetings in British Columbia, according to the *B. C. Christian News*. The paper reported that one Vancouver conference participant was able to correctly predict when a “demon” would manifest itself during the conference, after hearing two young men plan the incident before the meeting. The paper suggests that the exorcisms were not real spiritual battles, but were in fact orchestrated by Larson. The charges mirror those made in a May television news report by KCBT-TV, a Texas NBC affiliate, which interviewed a number of people who admitted to having been “exorcised” by Larson more than once in different cities.

PHOENIX, Ariz. (EP)—Three top officers of the Baptist Foundation of Arizona resigned in response to charges that the agency violated state law by failing to adequately disclose its financial condition to potential investors. Trustees of the agency, which is connected with the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention, temporarily froze invested funds, paying only interest and IRA distributions. State officials accepted the Phoenix-based foundation’s offer to stop selling investment products. The *Arizona Republic* reported that foundation officials set up two affiliate corporations to get around rules forbidding it from investing funds from IRA custodial accounts in its own investment products. An estimated 13,000 people have invested \$483 million, and authorities say the investments have not made money. As a result, the foundation reportedly does not have enough money to cover people’s investments.

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP)—The Pentagon revised its “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy on homosexuals in the military Aug. 13. The changes came in response to charges that military officials have failed to prevent harassment of homosexuals and have aggressively investigated suspected cases of homosexual activity involving members of the armed forces. Under the new guidelines all military personnel will be required to undergo sensitivity training, including information on the military’s non-harassment policy toward homosexuals. The guidelines also restrict the power of military officials to conduct investigations or dismiss troops for homosexual conduct. Under the “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy, homosexuals can remain in the military as long as they are quiet about their homosexuality and do not engage in homosexual activ-

ity.

VALLEY FORGE, Pa. (EP)—The June expulsion of four American Baptist churches over homosexuality is being appealed, and the expulsion has been suspended pending that appeal. Four California churches were removed from the denomination after deciding to become “welcoming and affirming” toward homosexuals.

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. (EP)—J. Bryan Hehir is the new head of the Harvard Divinity School. He is the first Roman Catholic chosen for the post. His predecessor, Lutheran minister Ronald Thiemann, was forced out after thousands of pornographic images were discovered on his university computer. Hehir, who will assume the title of Chair of the Divinity School, has been acting as Thiemann’s successor since his resignation.

PROVIDENCE, R. I. (EP)—As lawsuits across the nation challenge the Boy Scouts of America policy which excludes homosexuals, a Rhode Island chapter of the organization has announced a new policy on homosexuality similar to the military’s “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy. The Narragansett Council of the Scouts said its new policy has the approval of the national organization. The statement reaffirms the group’s conviction that homosexuality is “inconsistent” with the Scout oath, which requires members to be “morally straight.” However, the statement suggests that Scouts who are quietly homosexual may not be expelled. It says only that the organization “does not accept those who openly self-identify as homosexuals.”

Mississippians may average less income than their neighbors, but they are more willing to share what they have than any other state in the Union. According to a 50 state “generosity index” compiled

by the Boston-based Ellis L. Phillips Foundation, Mississippi has ranked first to second in the index since 1993. This year we are the nation’s top (Adapted from *Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal*, 8-11-99).

“Put simply, the agreement signed by Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak, and witnessed by Egypt’s president and American secretary of state, is a piece of theater designed to make the true intention of Israel’s enemies: “complete domination of all the land they continued to regard as Palestine (Cal Thomas, *Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal*, 8/11/99).

America’s Russian policy is a total failure! We have always imagined that the cure for all ills is money (the god of Washington and most Americans). President Bush (a one-worlder) in the critical years followed the now famous policy of American presidents—“Help thine enemy.” President Clinton (who never met a Communist he did not like) has done likewise. Our pro-communist press cheered when Russian state firms became “privatized” and issued “shares,” even though most of these shares were secured by former communist managers or criminals. This is why privatization became known in Russia as “grab-it-ization.” The Clinton administration continues to endorse international loans to the Kremlin even as evidence of high-level official Russian corruption mounts. What really happened in Russia? Even before the reforms got started top communist and KGB officials were already stealing billions in state funds and sending them abroad. Most of the money loaned or given to Russia has gone into the hands of the communists and criminals who have put it in Swiss bank accounts. The Russian people are worse off now than they have ever been. Economic output has plummeted, while poverty and corruption have soared. The new Prime Minister, 46-year-old Vladimir Putin, was head of Russia’s Federal Security Service

(FSB), the domestic successor organ to Russia KGB. The communists have never lost control of Russia. They did a brief disappearing act to get money from the West to prop up their failed economy. The Russian bear, as predicted by the Prophet Ezekiel (Ezek. 38-39), will yet march against Israel.

National Council of Churches Gen. Sec’y Joan Brown Campbell, at an outdoor rally in Havana with Fidel Castro on the front row, said: “It is on behalf of Jesus the liberator that we work against this embargo (against Communist Cuba).” She added, “We ask you to forgive the suffering that has come to you by the actions of the United States” (7-5 *Chr. News*), the NCC co-sponsored, along with the Baptist World Alliance and other liberal Protestant and Catholic entities (6-28 CN), an Ash Wednesday litany service (that had no mention of Christ) at the UN chapel in New York (*Calvary Contender*, 8-1-99).

“John Kennedy, Jr. was the Sun God. . .” (Jonathan Alter “Dateline NBC,” July 23, 1999).

In 1954, the unemployment rate for black teenage males ages 16-17 was below that of their white counterparts: 13.4% versus 14%. Beginning in 1956, when the minimum wage was raised from 75 cents to \$1, unemployment rates for the two groups began to diverge. By 1960, the unemployment rate for black teenage males was up to 22.7%, while the white rate stood at 14.6%. Ever since that time when the minimum wage was raised the number of unemployed black teenagers increased. By 1981, the unemployment rate for black teenage males averaged 40.7—four times its early 1950s level, when the minimum wage was much lower and its coverage less extensive (Adapted from *Human Events* 8-6-99).

The U.S. defense budget is lower in

Continued on page 199



Above is a picture of the preachers who attended the recent “Voice in the Wilderness Bible Conference” at Bender Run Baptist Church, Gassaway, W. Va., where Elder Mark Minney is pastor.

Bible & the Newspaper

Continued from page 198

nominal dollars than it was ten years ago (about \$300 billion FY '89 to \$70 billion in FY '99), so it is not surprising that we have half as many troops overseas. But despite this stripped-down military, the United States has used force 57 times in the 1990s, according to the Center for Defense Information and the Congressional Research Service, more than we did during the entire Cold War. And the troops we have deployed are moving further and further from home. Compared to 1989, we have one-third the number of troops in this hemisphere, half as many in Western Europe, fewer in East Asia, but three times as many in Africa and the Mideast, and countries more in Eastern Europe (*Human Events* 8-13-99).

An analysis of Massachusetts test scores by two Suffolk University economists reports that schools that spend more on administrative expenses consistently report poorer test scores. The study analyzed the test scores of every 4th, 8th, and 12th grader who took the Massachusetts Educational Assessment Program. The study is dismissed by the Massachusetts Teachers Association who claim that the reason many districts have high per-pupil costs is because their students are so disadvantaged and they need more support services (*Capital Comments*, 8-99).

The Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center has reached the conclusion that there is a connection between breast cancer and abortion. Studies were conducted in the United States, Japan, Denmark, Italy, and Russia. The study showed that women who had one or two abortions before a full-term pregnancy doubled their risk, while women who had three or more abortions tripled their risk. Dr. Janet Dailing, who is pro-choice and a researcher for the Fred Hutchinson Center, stated, "I would have loved to have found no association between breast cancer and abortions, but our research is rock solid, and our date is accurate. It's not a matter of believing, it's a matter of what is" (*ibid.*).

The Clinton Administration recently awarded the homosexual bar, Stonewall Inn, a coveted place on the National Register of Historic Places in New York City. In 1969, the bar was the site of riots when the police attempted to enforce liquor licensing laws. The riots continued for four days, and many homosexuals view this event as a turning point for their movement. In a speech by John Bery, assistant secretary for the Department of the Interior, the riots were likened to the Boston Tea Party, the Declaration of Independence, and the Battle of Gettysburg. The request for the placement was made by the Gay, Lesbian or Bisexual Employees,

a federally-sponsored organization with a branch at the U.S. Department of the Interior (*ibid.*).

FBF President Rod Bell writes in the May-June *Frontline*: "The 20th century will be known in church history as 'The Age of Change.' It will be known as an era when (1) Biblical thinking was changed to psychological thinking, (2) Christ-centeredness was changed to self-centeredness, (3) the needs of others were changed to our own personal needs, (4) mental attitudes changed to become feelings, (5) humility and favor with God were changed to self-esteem, (6) sacrifice and service were changed for a 'health-and-welfare Christianity,' and (7) faithfulness and loyalty changed to convenience. The end result in the church has been an acceptance—no, an embracing of the world's philosophy" (*Calvary Contender*, 8-15-99).

Robert Schuller long ago bid good-bye to Paul's teaching on sin and no longer wants to be called a "Christian" because it cuts him off from Hindus and Muslims (6-99 *The Discerner*). He does not preach that Christ is the only way to Heaven and that Christianity is the only saving faith (7-19 *C. News*). Editor's comment: I will be happy to respect the wishes of Mr. Schuller. I never thought he was a real Christian, and therefore I shall have no problem doing what he requested.

Over the years Ted Turner (who's wife is Hanoi Jane MRC) has made outrageously flattering comments about communist nations such as Cuba, the Soviet Union, and China (9-98 *R. Digest*). He has praised Fidel Castro, and after a duck-hunting trip, pronounced him a "great guy." He became an ardent cheerleader for then-top Communist Mikhail Gorbachev. He has supported and defended the Red Chinese communists (*ibid.*).

On CNN's Crossfire with Jerry Falwell, Tony Campolo refused to say Jesus is the only way to Heaven. He said, "I am not convinced that Jesus only lives in Christians" (*ibid.*).

Americans use guns to defend against criminal attacks two million times a year. Usually, the gun is never fired, but 1,400 to 3,200 criminals are killed by civilians annually.

Laws do little to stop or control incidents like that in Littleton. We have had guns in this country for a long time, but not until recently have we had schoolyard massacres (*Straight Talk*, 8-8-99).

More details about the Public Broadcasting Systems' donor list-swapping further confirms what conservatives have always known: PBS exists to serve a liberal audience, not the taxpayers at large who pay 15% of the PBS bill. A partial

check of member stations showed that at least 28 had swapped fundraising lists with overwhelming liberal political groups, including the Democratic Party, Handgun Control, Planned Parenthood and Zero Population Growth. These swaps mean PBS, by its own actions, has revealed its strong left-wing bias (*Human Events*, 7-30-99).

Several prominent Southern Baptists recently endorsed an inerrancy-based edition of the Revised Standard Version (1971) to be published as the English Standard Version (7-22 *Ala. Baptist*). It will be "more literal than the NIV" and "more readable than the NASB." Jerry Falwell is listed as one of "Southern Baptists on the new ESV's 51-member advisory council." It also includes: SBC Pres. Paige Patterson, Carl Henry, and Timothy George. Wayne Grudem and J. I. Packer are on an oversight committee (*Calvary Contender*, 9-1-99).

Pat Robertson is spending \$7 million to advertise *The Book*, a contemporary "thought for thought" English Bible version. He says, "We want to make Bible reading cool in America." Promo ads will use rock music stars (*ibid.*).

Researchers at Mississippi State, the University of Texas at Austin, and Drew University began a recent study of domestic violence expecting to document a linkage between conservative religious beliefs and wife-battering. But the data—drawn from a national-probability sample of 2,420 women and 2,242 men—proved surprisingly recalcitrant. "Contrary to our first hypothesis," the researchers admit, "we find no evidence. . . that men or women from Conservative Protestant denominations, or those who embrace conservative beliefs about the Bible, are particularly likely to commit violence against their partners" (*The Family in America*, 7-99).

BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 7-31-99 to 8-31-99

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Beginning Balance | \$ 2,976.91 |
| RECEIPTS: | |
| Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS | 100.00 |
| Grace B.C., Corbin, KY | 100.00 |
| Livingstone B. C., Barboursville, WV | 277.13 |
| Oakvale B. C., Danese, WV | 50.00 |
| Berea B.C., Westpoint, TN | 165.00 |
| | 692.13 |
| TOTAL RECEIPTS | 3,669.04 |

| | |
|--------------------------|------------|
| EXPENDITURES: | |
| Radio Time | 935.00 |
| Postage | 16.30 |
| Tapes | 55.73 |
| Supplies | 312.94 |
| Total Expenditures | 1,319.97 |
| Sub Total | 2,349.07 |
| Bank Charge | - 2.20 |
| ENDING BALANCE | \$2,346.87 |

CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT

| | |
|--------------------------|----------|
| Beginning Balance | \$518.32 |
| RECEIPTS | |
| Total | 518.32 |
| EXPENDITURES: | |
| WYWY | 175.00 |
| Total Expenditures | 175.00 |
| ENDING BALANCE | \$343.32 |

BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 7-31-99 to 8-31-99

| | |
|--|------------|
| Beginning Balance | \$2,287.30 |
| RECEIPTS: | |
| Grace B. C., Corbin, KY | 60.00 |
| Big Creek B. C., Wayne WV | 300.00 |
| Central Avenue B. C., Tampa, FL | 25.00 |
| Sovereign Grace B. C., Silsbee, TX | 30.00 |
| Sovereign Grace B. C., Fulton, MS | 100.00 |
| Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY | 125.00 |
| Portland B. C., Plumerville, AR | 50.00 |
| Berea B.C., Mansfield, OH | 50.00 |
| The Lord's C. at Bev. Hills, Goose Creek, SC | 50.00 |
| Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS | 200.00 |
| Victory B. C., Courtland, VA | 100.00 |
| Sovereign Grace B. C., Columbus, MS | 50.00 |
| Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL | 50.00 |
| Morris St B. C., Hobbs, NM | 50.00 |
| Mt Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH | 100.00 |
| Temple B. Mission, Bristol, TN | 35.00 |
| Indore B. C., Indore, WV | 100.00 |
| Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL | 100.00 |
| South Park M. B. C., Seattie, WA | 25.00 |
| Faith B. C., Sefner, FL | 50.00 |
| New Testament B. C., Bristol, TN | 10.00 |
| Sovereign Grace B. C., Warren, OH | 25.00 |
| Grace B.C., Tusla, OK | 45.00 |
| New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN | 50.00 |
| Berea B. C., Stonington, IL | 60.00 |
| Grace B. Mission, Marion, IL | 25.00 |
| Ocoonita M. B. C., Keoke, VA | 40.00 |
| Hillcrest B. C., Winston-Salem, NC | 25.00 |
| J. B. Wild, Flint, MI | 20.00 |
| Grace B.C., Georgetown, KY | 41.00 |
| Berea B.C., West Point, TN | 50.00 |
| Jack Farmer, Mobile, AL | 25.00 |
| B. C. of Brimfield, Brimfield, IL | 21.30 |
| Leroy Bullard, Albuquerque, NM | 50.00 |
| Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX | 15.00 |
| Landmark M. B. C., Moncks Corner, SC | 25.00 |
| William P. Beathe, Sr. | 3.00 |
| Philadelphia B. C., Aztec, NM | 25.00 |
| Wendel Beall, Cedarville, WV | 12.00 |
| Meadow Branch B. C., Millport, AL | 200.00 |
| Letson Farrell, Long Beach, MS | 125.00 |
| Joseph Jurzec, Lake-in-the-Hills, IL | 25.00 |
| Philadelphia B.C., Birmingham, AL | 100.00 |
| Bob Belanger, Goose Creek, SC | 424.55 |
| Jean Ruley, Sebring, FL | 15.00 |
| Nell Williams, Cullman, AL | 35.55 |
| Sovereign Grace B. C., Wake Forest, NC | 100.00 |
| W. I. Patrick, Clem, WV | 13.00 |
| Anonymous | 458.55 |
| Subscriptions | 128.00 |
| Dividing Checks | 297.90 |
| Sub Total | \$4,139.85 |
| TOTAL | \$6,427.15 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| EXPENDITURES: | |
| Wages: | |
| Milburn Cockrell | 425.00 |
| Sharon Cockrell | 800.00 |
| Marsha Kiser | 225.00 |
| Christopher Cockrell | 300.00 |
| Derek Cockrell | 200.00 |
| Total Wages | 1,950.00 |
| Postage | 799.11 |
| Printing | 537.14 |
| FICA taxes | 151.09 |
| Dividing checks | 297.90 |
| Supplies (envelopes, stationary, labels, etc.) | 806.83 |
| Total Expenditure | 4,542.07 |
| | 1,885.08 |
| Bank charge | -10.48 |
| Canadian check charge | -1.75 |
| ENDING BALANCE | \$1,872.85 |

New Books on Sovereign Grace

| | |
|---|----------------|
| A Price for A People | |
| Tom Wells | \$6.99 |
| No Condemnation in Christ Jesus | |
| Octavius Winslow | \$9.50 |
| Saved by Grace | |
| Ronald Cammenga & Ronald Hanko | \$13.25 |
| Wonders of Grace | \$4.95 |
| Calvin's Calvinism | |
| Henery Cole | \$17.95 |
| Whosoever Will | |
| Herman Hoeksema | \$7.25 |
| Grace | |
| Christopher Love (1618-1651) | \$22.95 |
| Southern Baptist and Election | |
| Robert B. Selph | \$6.00 |
| Calvinism: Pure & Mixed | |



World Scene

By G. Russell Evans - Norfolk, Virginia

Revisiting the Nixon Legacy



The Richard Nixon family has reasons to revere the former president—and history may yet judge him well despite the excesses and stupidity of the Watergate burglary of June 1972.

The recent media hoopla at the 25th anniversary of Nixon's resignation replayed the mistakes prime time and in living color: illegal use of FBI files and tax returns, and, of course, the tapes with the salty language and Nixon's voice: "Break in and take them out."

NIXON'S PLUSES

The media scorned him then and many still do. That's why we seldom see anything about his pluses, e.g., his astute handling of foreign affairs, his skillful opening to China, arms control, ending the Vietnam War and promoting civil rights. Let's be fair!

President Nixon's misuse of power was probably no worse than others of recent memory: Lyndon Johnson's administration was marred by personal corruption and the Kennedy and Clinton White Houses by immorality and reckless security risks—most of it soft-pedaled by sympathetic media.

Indeed, it was the media, the legal establishment and a hostile Congress that did Nixon in. They wanted him eliminated and Watergate was their golden opportunity.

Two major experiences prove Nixon's grit and character, despite the Watergate disgrace. (1) He conceded the 1960 presidential election to Kennedy although irrefutable evidence of fraud in Cook County, Ill., the Richard Daley stronghold, justified challenge. Nixon "lost" by 100,000 votes out of 68.8 million; he refused to throw the country into turmoil. (2) He resigned the presidency in 1974 to avoid subjecting the country to a protracted impeachment process.

He was putting America's interests first, not political gain. This is political character, a commodity in short supply in Washington.

THE DOUBLE STANDARD

So, let us compare the double standard used today vis-a-vis Nixon and Clinton with the prestigious American Bar Association (ABA) calling the shots.

Last Monday in Atlanta, President Clinton was keynote speaker at the ABA convention, invited by long-time friend and ABA president Philip Anderson. There we had the nation's

chief law enforcement officer, already impeached and convicted of lying and obstructing justice, a kind of role model of the organization which promises "to promote justice and uphold the honor of the profession of law." What justice? What honor?

The ABA goes on: Increase respect for the law, achieve the highest standards of ethical conduct, stimulate conduct for high moral ground.

JUDGE WRIGHT FINED CLINTON

Are they serious—or is partisan politics supreme? Everyone knows that Judge Susan Webber Wright fined Clinton \$90,000 for "giving false, misleading and evasive answers" in her court. The ABA honor was a cloak of respectability for Clinton, designed to divert attention. It was also improper ABA interference in the disbarment case filed by Judge Wright against Clinton for "professional misconduct."

Richard Nixon received quite different treatment in 1974: Nixon was disbarred without any court conviction of misconduct, but on media allegations. Clinton had been convicted.

In August 1973, an ABA resolution condemned Nixon for his role in Watergate and demanded "vigorous disciplinary action"—all without any court conviction and, of course, no invitation to address the ABA.

In the Clinton case, the ABA issued no resolution condemning "conduct involving dishonesty, deceit and misrepresentation—prejudicial to the administration of justice"—all of which Judge Wright found Clinton guilty.

Instead, Clinton became guest of honor of the American Bar Association—and the Nixon legacy reinforced in appreciation of a president who could admit mistakes and step down like a man with grace and an honorable future of writings and consultations with world leaders. We need to "think on these things" (Phil. 4:8).

(Capt. Evans lives in Norfolk, Va. His columns are distributed by the Americanism Educational League.)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The East Side Baptist Church, 311 Fifth Street, Benton, Ark., and Pastor Stephen G. Raines will have a Bible Conference Oct. 16, 1999. Its theme is "What God Has Taught Me." Speakers on the program are as follows: Elders Paul Brown, H. R. Coleman, David Phelps, and Earl Smith. A noon meal will be served. For more information contact Pastor Raines (501) 776-8537.

The Berea Baptist Church, Collinwood, Tenn., and Pastor Ray W. Sexton will have special services Oct. 11-15. The speaker is Elder Garner Smith, Clarksville, Tenn.

The Rogers Grove Baptist Church, Monticello, Ky., and Pastor Wendell P. Furlong will conduct special services Oct. 24-29. The Editor will speak on prophetic themes each service. For more information contact Pastor Furlong (606) 561-8637.

The Grace Baptist Church, 5512 Old Jacksonville Highway, Tyler, Texas, and Pastor Dan W. Cozart will have a Bible Conference Nov. 7-9. Speakers are Elders Wayne Camp, Dan Defoor, Forrest Keener, Barnwell Anderson, and Brian Mullins. For more information call (903) 561-7664.

The Salem Missionary Baptist Church,

Willow Hill, Ill., and Pastor Billy Holbrook will host a "Focus on Singles" Conference Oct. 14-17. For more information contact Pastor Holbrook, 2923 E. 1050th Ave., Oblong, IL 62449, or call (618) 592-3806.

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, 3484 F M 92, Silsbee, TX 77656 and Pastor Walter Herin will host a Bible Conference Oct. 15-17. For more information contact Pastor Herin at (409) 385-9344.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

It has come to my attention that Larry K. Gay, Centralia, Washington, has printed a booklet, *Galatians 1:6-9: Defining a Perverted Gospel*. It has printed in the front an endorsement by some of our preachers, including myself. I was not told my comments would be printed in the front as an endorsement, and in my opinion, my comments were secured with great subtlety. I told the writer I did not agree with all that he had said. The essence of the booklet is that those who do not understand and teach eternal security and unconditional election preach the same gospel as Sovereign Grace Baptists. I DO NOT believe this. Hence I hereby repudiate my endorsement of the booklet.

Milburn Cockrell, editor

New Books on Sovereign Grace

- W. G. T. Shedd \$10.95
The Cross and the Covenants
- R. B. C. Howell \$16.00
Freedom of the Will
- Jonathan Edwards \$27.95
Christ Alone Exalted (4 volumes)
- Tobias Crisp (no discount) \$41.95
Doctrine of the Atonement
- J. A. Haldane \$17.95

Books from our Bookstore

We currently have no new catalog except what we are printing in the BBB. Keep book adds for future use. Books are listed at retail price, but on orders of \$20 or more you make take a 20% discount. Payment must accompany all orders. So books are marked "no discount" and none are given on these books. Mississippi residents please add 7% for sales tax. All books are sent US Mail.

On orders of \$1 to \$20 add \$2.50. On orders of \$21 to \$100 add 12%. On orders of \$100 or more we pay the postage.

Coming in the next issue . . .

- Dead Flies and A Little Folly* by Todd Bryant
- The Fruit of the Spirit is Meekness* by Tom Ross
- The First Resurrection* by Milburn Cockrell

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