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BAPTIST ELDER MILBURN RICHARD COCKRELL PASSES

By Curtis Pugh

Berzovia, Romania

"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, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." (2 Timothy 4:6-8)

After preaching the Word of God for more than 45 years, my pastor, Elder Milburn R. Cockrell departed from this life on September 14th for the presence of the Lord. Less than a month before his departure he preached from the above text at the Voice In The Wilderness Bible Conference held annually in West Virginia. Brother Cockrell fought a good fight and kept the faith. Having finished the course God had set for him he is no longer with us because God took him.

Born on a cotton farm near Mantachie, Mississippi on January 24, 1941, to Ershel and Onita Cockrell, he was converted in 1956. Shortly afterward he was baptized and

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Milburn Cockrell

The Triumph of Faith

By Milburn Cockrell

(1941 - 2002)

"Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him" (Job 13:15).

Here is a precious jewel of grace, fully set in the purest gold of choice words. Behold in this text unstagging faith, unwavering confidence in God, even in the face of death. Here is the highest expression of piety. The boldness of Job's faith rises to its highest pitch in this passage of Scripture.

THE MEANING OF THE WORD "SLAY"

The word "slay" is a rendering of the Hebrew word (*qatal*) which means "to kill." It refers to physical death. There is no reference to punishment in the hereafter, or the second death (the eternal separation of the soul from God). There is a sense in which God can destroy both body and soul in Hell, but that is not the thought in my text. The idea is that God had it in His power to take away Job's natural existence in this world. He could increase Job's pains and sorrows until he could no longer bear them. His life would be forfeited.

The Lord is presented here as the Slayer of a trusting

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The Christian's Footprints

By A. J. Gordon

(1836 - 1895)

"Make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way" (Heb. 12:13).

This exhortation follows another -- **"Wherefore**

lift up the hands that hang down and the feeble knees." It requires strong knees to enable us to take firm steps and make a straight path. If one is weak-kneed, he will be jostled and turned aside by every sturdy and resolute man he meets; and therefore for a Christian to make headway through a world full of wrong-headed and perverse characters it demands the utmost vigor to step. And both these requirements--the strong knees



A. J. Gordon

and straight path--are preceded by another--**"Wherefore seeing we are compassed about by so great a cloud of witnesses. . .let us run**

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An Election of Particular Persons

By Benjamin Keach

(1640 - 1704)

THE GRAND DOCTRINE OPENED

That all the saints of God, or sheep of Jesus Christ, shall be saved, and none of them shall so fall away as eternally to



Benjamin Keach

perish.

The truth of this point I shall prove by divers arguments and scriptures.

And my first argument shall be taken from eternal election, which dependeth

wholly upon the absolute sovereignty of God, who hath power over all His creatures, and may do with His own as it seemeth good in His eternal wisdom, and good pleasure of His will.

I shall premise one or two things before I proceed to confirm this argument.

1. That God set up Jesus Christ as Mediator from everlasting, as the

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A High Degree of Spiritual Growth is Possible

By Milburn Cockrell

(1941 - 2002)

"...I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

Christ came to communicate spiritual life to those dead in trespasses and sins. He not only gave to them everlasting life, but He also secured for His sheep a suitable and sufficient provision for all their needs. Christ gives back more than sin took away. His provisions are so plentiful that each redeemed soul can be blessed

and happy. Christ wants His sheep to enjoy a life of usefulness and productivity--an abundant life. We must not allow a thief to disturb and destroy this life in all its fullness (Ps. 36:8). Too many churches and Christians are satisfied with a low type of spiritual vitality.

A BLAMELESS LIFE

In Luke 1:6 it is written of Zacharias and Elisabeth: **"And they were both**

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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).

The Berea Baptist Banner

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A High Degree

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righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless."

These words can mean no less than that the parents of John the Baptist obeyed the moral and ceremonial laws in Israel in the sight of God. Matthew Henry says on this verse: "They were universal in their obedience; not that they never did in any thing come short of their duty, but it was their constant care and endeavor to come up to it....Herein they were not sinless, yet they were blameless; nobody could charge them with any open scandalous sins" (*Com.*, Vol. V, p. 577).

Compared to others in their day, they were blameless in the sight of God. This man and woman had attained to a very high degree of spiritual advancement. They had not attained sinful perfection, but they had reached a very high spiritual plain. This state of blamelessness is required in pastors (I Tim. 3:2; Tit. 1:7) and deacons (I Tim. 3:10).

But the requirement does not stop there. It is demanded of all church members: **"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world"** (Phil. 2:15). Like Daniel the prophet (Dan. 6:5), we must live without blame before men. There must be nothing in our lives that gives occasion for scandal.

Very few are preaching that church members ought to attain to this very advanced stage of Christian character. The Scriptures teach we need to desire to be blameless at the coming of Jesus Christ: **"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ"** (I Thess. 5:23). This is not justification, for that is certain, and there is no need to pray about it. Here Paul speaks of progressive sanctification. He wanted the Thessalonians be blameless, not faultless. We will not be faultless until we are completely conformed to the image of Christ (Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:22). It is our concern to be blameless in this present life: **"Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless"** (II Pet. 3:14).

I fear some have preached on total depravity until most church members have lost sight of the need of a blameless life. Any person who even dares to mention spiritual growth or maturity is branded "an Arminian heretic." Why are we so afraid of a blameless life of which the Scriptures speak? Oh, that we were more alarmed about the evils of a sinful life, for this is what grieves God.

A CONSCIENCE VOID OF OFFENSE

In Acts 24:16 the Apostle Paul said: **"And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offense toward God, and toward man"** (Acts 24:16). This verse is ignored or explained away by many Baptists. Instead, men are told they do not need to do anything to improve their spiritual condition in this present evil world. This is antinomianism, pure and simple. It is contrary to the teachings of the Bible. Such foolishness is killing churches, and it has greatly suspended spiritual growth among church members.

The Apostle Paul had a lofty aim: To have always a conscience void of offense. **"Void of offense"** is a single word in the Greek, suggesting two ideas. First, it means that Paul did not



Palms and Willows

by Milburn Cockrell

Upon the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles, the Israelites had to bring the boughs and branches of certain trees into the presence of the Lord, and rejoice before him seven days. Two parts of the tree-world are specifically mentioned, namely: "Palm trees. . .and willows of the brooks" (Lev. 23:40). These trees are emblematic of the various experiences confronting us in our earthly pilgrimage.

Palm trees symbolize triumph, gladness, renown and success (Ps. 92:12). All that is best and brightest in life can be likened unto them. On the other hand, willows are emblematic of badness, loss, disappointment and death (Ps. 137:2). We sometimes call them "the weeping willows." Willows are the reverse to all palms may indicate.

No matter who we are—rich or poor, wise or unwise, saved or lost—our life is a mixture of palm trees growing in the sun, and drooping willows of the brook. There is a time to laugh and a time to weep. Our smiles and our sighs, our triumphs and trials, our pleasures and pains, are providently intermingled (Eccl. 3). Our feast days are often followed by fast days; one day we are pierced, the next we are praised.

The Israelites had to bring both palms and willows before the Lord in the spirit of praise. The lesson here for us is that we must bless God for the things we do not like as well as for the things we do like (Eph. 5:20; II Cor. 12:9-10).

Job had his home burned, sons slain, possessions plundered, and was smitten with a loathsome disease, yet he said, "What? Shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord and shall we not receive evil? . . . Though He slay me yet will I trust him" (Job 2:10; 13:15). Shortly, Job learned that the greatest of all Gardeners is able to transform willows into beneficial palms (Job 42:10-16).

It is blessed to realize that in Heaven nothing but palms will ever grow. When John was granted the vision of Heaven, he noticed that the saints were clothed in white and had palms in their hands. There will be no weeping willows in Heaven (Rev. 7:9).

(Note: This is the first published article the editor had. It was published in "The Baptist Examiner" April 22, 1967.)



deliberately do anything to cause others to stumble. His conscience did not condemn him for mistreating others. As Job said: **"My heart shall not reproach me so long as I live"** (Job 27:6). Paul did not want other people to blame him for any wrong he had done to them. Second, it means that Paul did not go around habitually practicing sin. He did not live in known sin. He engaged in no scandalous conduct. He wrote to the Corinthians: **"I know nothing against myself"** (I Cor. 4:4 literal Greek).

This was not an easy thing to do. Hence he says: **"I exercise myself."**


The verb in the original means any kind of hard work. It especially was used of athletic training and moral discipline. This was not only Paul's constant and habitual practice, but this was his methodical and systematic effort each day of his life. His constant consciousness of doing right extended to both God and man. The greatest work any man can do is with his moral self. Spiritual growth requires self-discipline and earnest endeavor. Paul desired to live free of blame, and so should we.

A FULL-GROWN MAN

According to Hebrew 5:14, a

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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.)

“HE BEING DEAD YET SPEAKETH”

If this is ever printed, I will already be with the Lord. I wanted it printed to prevent some preachers who are better politicians than pastors from misusing me or anything which I have written. My church will try to continue to carry on the work the best they can. If for any reason they cannot, they may give it to another church and pastor who will keep to the old paths I would hope.

To be forewarned is to be forearmed. There are among us a few preachers who might print some of my articles in their papers to lead people to believe they were my friends. In truth, these men never cared for me personally, and they cared much less for the doctrines I spent my life preaching and teaching. Beware of such men. They will lead you only into error by their fair speech and deceiving words. These men should be marked and avoided as the Scripture enjoins (Rom. 16:17-18).

Please be patient with the man who may follow me. It took me many years to get to where I am as I write this (5-29-02). He, too, will need time to develop. Once I was given a job very much like he will now have. I refer to when I took over *The Baptist Examiner* in 1975. A whole gang of would-be editors tried to tar and feather me. Others showed little compassion, but by God's help the work continued. Please be kind to him, a thing I did not in the main receive in 1975.

I thank you for all your support and friendship over the years. Great confidence was placed in me by the brethren over the years. I have not knowingly ever done anything to be unworthy of this trust. Our records have always been open to any supporter without any advance notice. This should ever be the case. An informed people are a working

people.

Remember the things I taught you while I was still among you. Preach Christ and keep to the old landmarks of the Word of God. We shall meet again in Heaven never to be separated. The grace of God be with you all!

Milburn Cockrell

May 29, 2002

THE SINS OF THE TRIBULATION

“And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts” (Rev. 9:20-21).

“**And the rest of the men**” means those who survive the judgments of the seals and trumpets. By the middle of the seven-year tribulation period over half of the population of the earth will have died. Some will be killed by the early wars of Antichrist (Rev. 6:3-4). Many tribulation saints will be murdered by the Antichrist (Rev. 6:9-11; 13:7; 20:4), but none of the 144,000 Israelites (Rev. 7:1-8). Others will meet death by earthquakes (Rev. 6:12-17; 16:18-20), and others by famine and disease (Rev. 6:7-8). Other people will die under the third trumpet of poisoned water (Rev. 8:11-12). Under the Sixth Trumpet one-third of earth's population will perish (Rev. 9:15). Of these terrible tribulation days Jesus said: **“And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened”** (Matt. 24:22).

In Revelation 9:20-21 is seen an awful picture of human depravity. Even after five months of torment by the demon-locust (Rev. 9:1-12) and many deaths for thirteen months at the hands of a demon-controlled army of 200 million, the inhabitants of the earth remain impenitent. No amount of human suffering can bring men to repentance. Only the goodness of God leads men to repentance (Rom. 2:4). How sad the plight of men on earth in the tribulation days. They prefer demons to deity, stones to the Savior, and mammon to the Master!

In these verses we see a picture of the sins which keep men from repentance. The first two sins are

against God, and the last four are against man. First, men are no longer atheists, humanists, socialists, or communists. They are open Satanists. They **“worship devils”** or “demons” (Rev. 9:20). Contrary to the teaching of postmillennialists, this age will not end in a great revival, consisting of a converted world by the preaching of the gospel. Instead the world will experience a revival of Devil worship (I Tim. 4:1; II Tim. 3:13; I Cor. 10:20).

Second, the earth dwellers will worship **“idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood”** (Rev. 9:20). To our surprise, the idols are the worst kinds. They are not the sun, the moon, and the stars, which God made. Rather, they worship man-made gods, or **“the work of their own hands”** (Deut. 4:28; 31:29; Ps. 115; 4-7; 135:15; Jer. 1:16; 25:6-7,14; Acts 17: 29). Most likely, these are little images of the Antichrist (Rev. 13:14-15; 19:20). There will not only be an idol of Antichrist in the tribulation temple (Dan. 9:27; Matt. 24:15; II Thess. 2:4), but the people will make and worship little images of the son of Satan.

Despite scientific training and advancements in education, people are turning more and more to the occultism, astrology, and spiritism. Even professed Christians have idols around their neck, on the dashboards of their cars, in their yards, and in their church buildings. Rome gets rich over the sale of these images. This is all leading up to the time of the worship of the Beast: **“. . .and all the world wondered after the beast”** (Rev. 13:3).

It seems there is a cycle. First, there is the rejection of the true God. This is followed by idolatry, and then comes moral decay and crime of many sorts.

The next sin is **“murders”** (v. 21). Behind the sin of murder is Satan, the first murderer (John 8:44). In the tribulation period murder will become a way of life, the normal way to settle problems. Murders of all kinds will become so common that the news media will not bother to even report them. Not all murders today are being committed by gangsters, but by fathers and mothers, by college kids, and even children.

The next sin mentioned is **“sorceries”** or druggings. In the Greek it is *pharmakeia*, the source of our words “pharmacy” and “pharmaceutical.” Stupefying and hallucinating drugs have been associated with sorcery and witchcraft for ages. But sorceries will be one of the sins of commercial Babylon (Rev. 18:21). Drugs weaken the mind and make people more available for demon control. We can expect to see

an increase in the dope habit and all kinds of enchantment by drugs.

Then there is **“fornication.”** This is a broad term used in the Bible to include all kinds of sexual impurity. The religious restraints of sexual freedom have been removed so that adultery, fornication, sodomy, lesbianism, and other forms of sexual perversion have become commonplace. The debasement of marriage will be complete—divorce will be the norm—the family unit a thing of the past—the rearing of children will become the work of the state. Some already teach that it “takes a village” to raise a child. When I see the decline of the family in our day, I shudder to think of what is ahead for the world in the seven-year tribulation period.

The last sin is **“thefts.”** Like Satan, men will be thieves. This includes all kinds of government stealing, church stealing, corporate stealing, and individual stealing. Honesty and integrity will become rare, and theft will be approved. I fear these awful times are very near.

The repetition of the preposition “of” after the verb “repent” reveals that true repentance demands total deliverance out of society that pollutes by these sins. Bible repentance is a change of mind which leads to a change of conduct.

(Note: This is the last article the editor wrote before his death.)

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by Milburn Cockrell

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A High Degree

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Christian can reach **“full age,”** or become a full-grown man in a moral sense. He can take the strong meat of the Word. His growth is such that he can become a teacher of others (Heb. 5:12-13), for he is skillful in the Word of righteousness and able to distinguish between good and evil doctrines. The expression **“full age”** means “mature, a condition acquired by rigorous gymnastical training.” Thus it is possible for a believer to become a full-grown man in the spiritual realm. Like in the natural world, a babe can become a man.

“Full age” in the Greek can be translated “perfect.” This perfection is in a comparative sense. Compared to others of his generation who are babes, he is a full-grown man. It means the same as the words in Ephesians 4:13: **“...unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of Christ.”** Other Scriptures speak of this. Our Lord said: **Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect** (Matt. 5:48). II Timothy 3:17 tells us that there is enough knowledge in the Bible to make us **“perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”** **“Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you”** (I Cor. 13:11). **“Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you”** (Phil. 3:15; cf. Heb. 13:20-21).

THE SPIRIT-FILLED CHRISTIAN

In Ephesians 5:18 it is written: **“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.”** This verse contains a double command, a negative, **“Be not drunk with wine,”** and a positive, **“Be filled with the Spirit.”** It is a sin for a Christian to be drunk

with wine, and it is also a sin for him to fail to be filled with the Holy Spirit. **“Be filled with the Spirit”** means to be under the influence and guidance of the Spirit, as a drunken man is under the influence and guidance of wine. To be filled with the Spirit remains a continual challenge to every child of God. The Bible commands and God expects us to live a Spirit-filled life. Any believer whose life is not controlled by the Holy Spirit is guilty of breaking one of the simplest and plainest commandments of God.

There is no such thing as permanent filling. The Greek verb in Ephesians 5:18 refers to a continuous action, and it could be translated: “Be continually filled with the Spirit.” Since our capacity is ever increasing and our need recurring, we must repeatedly be filled with the Spirit (Acts 2:4; 4:31). Prayer is helpful in this (Luke 11:13; Acts 1:4; 2:4; 4:31). The filling of the Spirit is not the same as baptism in the Spirit, nor is it the same as the gift of tongues. The baptism of the Spirit and the gift of tongues has long ago ceased, but the filling of the Spirit remains.

There are two negative commands which must be obeyed to be filled with the Spirit. We must not grieve the Spirit (Eph. 4:30) nor are we to quench Him (I Thess. 5:19). In addition to this we must be led of the Spirit; we must walk in the Spirit (Gal. 5:16,25; Rom. 8:1). **“If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit”** (Gal. 5:25). It is certainly possible to experience such a self-surrender to God and infilling of the Spirit that a person is freed from bondage to many sinful habits and appetites and enabled to have constant victory over the flesh: **“This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh”** (Gal. 5:16).

The effects of Spirit filling are numerous. First, there is the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23). Second, there is courage in the Christian life (Acts 4:31). Third, there is reaching the masses with the gospel (Acts 2:41;

4:4; 17:6). Fourth, there is persecution from the God-hating world (Acts 2:13; 4:3,17; 5:18,40, etc.).

In the days of the New Testament churches the infilling of the Spirit was a common experience, the normal condition of true Christians. Today it is abnormal to be a Spirit-filled child of God, but it ought not so to be. God deliver us from powerless churches and powerless preachers. The sooner we return to obedience to the New Testament command in Ephesians 5:18, the sooner we can enjoy the New Testament blessings, but not till then. The Spirit-filled Christian is one who has grown to spiritual maturity. He is no babe in Christ.

“RIVERS OF LIVING WATER”

Jesus told the Samaritan woman: **“Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life”** c: (John 4:13-14). The water, which Christ gives, is figurative language. The water, which Christ promised the woman, was the indwelling Holy Spirit, the source of spiritual life (Rom. 8:2). This living water makes the soul, not a cistern for holding water poured into it from without, but a fountain springing up and flowing forth within us, ever fresh, ever living. The Holy Spirit has entered into the life, or the soul of the believer, and is an abiding, unending source of spiritual peace, strength, and hope. This spiritual fountain is satisfying to the soul of a man, and it is of such a nature that it shall never be dried up in this life or the life to come. It will flow to all eternity and be swallowed up **“into everlasting life.”**

It is written in John 7:37-39 these words: **“In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified.)”**

It is plain that the water mentioned here is a figurative expression referring to the indwelling Spirit. The word **“belly”** points to the inner man, the heart, or soul (Prov. 20:27). **“Rivers”** express abundance or full supply. The indwelling Spirit is not a tricklet, or a babbling brook, or a stream, or even a river, but **“rivers.”** There is flowing out from a Spirit-filled man rivers of living water. He sends forth mighty rivers of holy

influence. His work, word, and example are a source of blessing to other people. His heart is so filled with the Holy Spirit that he overflows to others. The thing before us is promised to every believer. Jesus said: **“He that believeth on me...out of his belly shall flow rivers of living waters.”**

The believer today does not need a Pentecost in his life. He has Pentecost in him in the person of the indwelling Holy Spirit. He has already received the promise of the Spirit fully and totally. All he needs to do is to yield to the Spirit and thus to enjoy the filling of the Spirit. The believer needs only to be **“led of the Spirit”** (Gal. 5:18), to mind **“the things of the Spirit”** (Rom. 8:5), to **“live in the Spirit”** (Gal. 5:25), to **“walk in the Spirit”** (Gal. 5:25), and to **“be filled with the Spirit”** (Eph. 5:18).

The filling of the Spirit has been experienced by some, and may be had by all who meet the conditions laid down in the Bible. To be filled with anything means that all our faculties are pervaded by it, engaged in it, or under its influence (Acts 3:10; 5:17; 13:42,45). When a believer fully yields to the indwelling Spirit he is Spirit-filled. The surrendered will, the yielded body, the emptied heart, are the great prerequisites of this infilling. The problem before the Christian is one of adjustment to the end that the Spirit's work in the heart and life may be unhindered (Acts 5:32).

Each child of God must seek to grow as much as possible while he lives on this earth. The filling of the Spirit is absolutely necessary to spiritual maturity. Hence **“be filled with the Spirit.”**

THREE STAGES OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH

In I John 2:13 it is written: **“I write unto you fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father.”** The careful readers will discover in this verse three different stages in Christian experience: **“little children,”** **“young men,”** and **“fathers.”** Here are varying statures of grace to which Christians grow on this earth.

First, there is **“little children.”** These are little ones in age as concerning the Christian life. These have newly come to faith in Christ. They know God as their heavenly Father, and they know their sins are forgiven because of the infinite merit of Jesus Christ. They have a right relation to God, but they have little

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WFTA, Tupelo, MS	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.	101.9	3,000 FM
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WVSA, Vernon, AL	Sunday 7:00 - 7:30 a.m.	1380	1,000 AM
WLZA, Starkville, MS	Sunday 1:00 - 1:30 p.m.	710	2,500 AM
WCNA, Myrtle, MS	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.	95.9	3,000 FM
WCTT, Corbin, KY	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.	680	5,000 AM
KARI, Blaine, WA	Saturday 10:30 - 11:00 a.m. ..	550	5,000 AM
KORE, Springfield, OR	Sunday 8:00 - 8:30 a.m.	1050	5,000 AM
WDBS, Sutton, WV	Sunday 6:30 - 7:00 a.m.	97.1	50,000 FM
DXRA, Davao City, Philippines	Sunday 8:15 - 8:45 a.m.	783 Khz ...	10,000 AM
DWSS, Manila, Philippines .	Sunday 5:30 - 6:00 p.m.	1494	16,000 AM

A High Degree

Continued from page 424

experience. They need the help of the young men and the fathers.

Second, there is **“young men.”** These are young in Christian experience, and they are not fully matured in the grace of Christ. They have encountered the enemy and experienced some victories over Satan. These glory in their strength in the battle against many antichrists. These hold the Sword of the Spirit and stand ready for the good fight of faith, having their feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. They do not fear duty or difficulties. They are like young men in the prime of life. On them the strain of church life rests.

Third, there are **“fathers.”** These have reached spiritual maturity; they have attained the apex of moral growth. These have come to see the glory of Christ over the years in His Word, and they knew the whole course of human experience is bounded up in Him. They have advanced in the faith to the point they have brought others to it (I Cor. 4:15). They are famous for their knowledge and experience.

The goal of every Christian should be to be a spiritual father. We do not have to remain babes in Christ all our lives on this earth. Nor should we be content to be merely young men. We must strive hard to become fathers in our experience. Which of these three are you?

Christian's Footprints

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with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.” On the cross, Christ was the author of our faith: at His coming, He will be the finisher of our faith; and between these two lies the whole Christian race. These two facts, therefore, need to be definitely fixed in our creed and in our conviction. The carpenter takes but two points in drawing his mark, and stretching his cord between these he snaps it, and makes a line as straight as a sunbeam. Starting from the cross, where we get forgiveness of sin, we are to set our face steadfastly toward the crown, where we shall attain perfection, and thus are we to press on, hearing God saying to us, “Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from

evil.”

There are two principle lessons suggested by this subject:

I. *The Christian's correct walk:* **“Make straight paths for your feet.”**

The meaning is, “Make straight tracks with your feet.” So many Christians go through the world without making any tracks at all! They step so softly, and glide so quietly along that they leave no real definite impression of any sort. And I don't know but this is the most serious question after all—not, first, whether our steps are crooked or straight, but whether they are firm and decisive, and leave a deep indenture on society. The heavier a person is, the deeper his tracks, I suppose. If you are decided and thorough-going, whether as a worldly man or a Christian, you will make your mark; and those who follow after you will see that somebody has been this way before. But, alas! how many soft-stepping, easy-going Christians there are in the world. They are believers; but they bear no clear testimony, set no strong examples, and do no distinctive work for God.

We have been taught by one of our household poets that

*“We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time.”*

But what those footprints shall be is the serious question. There is one track of beasts, and another of birds, and another of fishes; and if you will go into any geological museum, you will find specimens of each of these in the rocks which have been brought there from the strata of the earth. “These tracks were made probably centuries before the creation of man,” said a geologist to me the other day, as he was showing me his cabinet. And I did not have to ask which they were—the tracks of birds or of quadrupeds: it was evident enough without inquiry. And if, in the future, somebody should find your footprints in the strata of this nineteenth century, don't let them have to ask the question whether they were the tracks of a worldling or a Christian. “He left a half a million when he died,” it will be said of one: but that will not determine what he was. “He occupied the highest social position,” it will be said of another: but I cannot tell by that his character. “He was a man of great learning,” it will be said of still another: but all this settles nothing as to his character. This active, cultured, money-making age will be trampled over with such footmarks as these, but they won't tell the decisive story as to what we were for god and for

humanity. “He turned many to righteousness,” it will be said of another. Ah! that is a Christian's track! “He toiled with all his might to destroy the works of the devil.” Yes: that is the footprint of a servant of God. “He gave his goods to feed the poor,” it will be said of yet another. Yes: that is sign and signature of a true disciple. Oh, that the Lord would inspire us with a holy ambition to make our mark on our generation! But more than that—to stamp the marks of our Lord Jesus Christ in every step and impression of our influence. And in order to this we must have what the Scripture enjoins, **“Having your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.”** O ye bare-footed moralists, thinking to stand in the presence of God in the unsandalled feet of impenitence and unbelief come back to your Father, and accept His reconciliation and His “Bring forth the best robe and put it on him, and shoes on his feet,” before you can expect to leave the deepest footprints of a Christian example.

When God revealed Himself to Moses in the burning bush, He said, **“Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.”** The ground on which we come to Him is no less holy, and the requirements of His law are no less stringent today; but, through the weakness of the flesh, man has been found unable to come to God, hence God has come out to him, while he was yet a great way off, and shod his feet with **“the preparation of the gospel of peace.”** **“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God.”** With this firm assurance we move on, not hoping for peace at the end, but having it now; not striving to keep the peace with God, but having the peace of God which passeth understanding, to keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. It is this assurance of an accomplished and present peace with God that gives us a firm footing and a steady tread. The Christian life is no trial-trip to Heaven now; it requires no retreating upon bewildered footsteps; it is as sure of its goal as it is of its starting-point. Feet shod with conjecture, tracking an experiment, running in the way of some unexplored perhaps, these can leave no track for sin-blinded and truant souls to walk in. God help us, if we know not whom we believe or whither we are going, to sit down and wait till we do, rather than be blind leaders of the blind! **“He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness,”** says Jesus, and we may add assuredly that such an one will not lead others into darkness.

But, how shall we make straight

paths for our feet? “Take the Bible for your compass,” it will be answered. True advice! And yet, do you know that if a ship's pilot should happen to have considerable metal about his person, or if he should chance to carry a strong magnet in his pocket, it might so affect his compass as to turn the ship out of its course? I believe the Scripture is the guide, and the infallible guide, of the Christian; but I know that if a Christian has some private prejudice or personal prepossession, he may so deflect the compass of Holy Scriptures as to make it lead him entirely out of the way. There are Christians who have an appetite for wine, and who are running straight upon the rocks where they will be wrecked in body, soul, and estate, and who are yet steering all the time by these two texts—that at the marriage in Cana of Galilee, Jesus turned water into wine; and that Paul exhorted Timothy to take a little wine for his stomach's sake. The Word is **“a lamp unto our feet”** indeed; but when we put a porcelain shade over the lamp, tinted and painted according to our own fancy, the consequence will be that we shall be walking in our own light instead of the light of God. And therefore, I want to impress this lesson upon you all—that you might seek the aid of God's Spirit to interpret God's word for you. The Bible is God's Word, and the Spirit of God's mind; and only God's mind can fully understand God's Word. Hear Paul's strong language on this point: **“For what man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man that is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.”**

There is one example which I can hold up to you without the fear that any of you will be led astray by it. I mean the example of Christ. He never swerved a single iota, or stepped aside a single inch. Straight as the path of a sunbeam was His journey from the footstool to the throne. I do not say that He struck out a new path; I think He rather corrected and perfected the path which all the saints that went before Him had trod. **“Enoch had this testimony, that he pleased God.”** Christ said, **“I do always the things that please the Father.”** And in that word “always” we find the superiority of Christ to Enoch—that His obedience was perfect and entire, wanting nothing. The example of Christ—I fear we do not emphasize it enough as the true and infallible guide for His disciples. It does not touch even a minute particular of life, indeed, but it touches all the salient points. I remember once, when a boy, of being in a trackless forest without a

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Christian's Footprints

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guide and, though I had a compass, without the knowledge to use it. But there were blazed trees which told me the way—here and there, at wide distances, the marks which some one had made by an axe, and by these signs I could pick my course. Our Lord has gone through the wilderness before us, blazing the trees at every step. He has left His mark upon every great and principal duty, He has left His footprints through all the bewildering mazes of life. He has thus made a way for us to follow.

"Fair, solitary path! whose blessed shades

*The old white prophets planted first, and drest,
Leaving for us, whose goodness quickly fades,*

A shelter all the way, and bowers to rest."

II. *The Christian's helpful influence:*
"Make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way."

Ah, how tenderly the Lord cares for the lame ones! You are strong, and have no need to be afraid of rough places; but perchance there is a weak and crippled brother coming after you, who will stumble and fall where you tread firmly. Think of him, and set accordingly. A father, climbing up a steep and precipitous cliff at a summer watering-place, says, that to his astonishment he heard his little boy calling out behind him, "Take a safe path, father, for I am coming after you." What was safe for the strong nerves and sturdy strength of the father might be exceeding perilous for the weak and unpracticed step of the child. Therefore the father must **"make straight paths for his feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way."** It is a lesson running through all life and conduct. It may be safe for you, who have a strong will and great self-restraint, to drink wine; but there are scores who are watching you, to whom it would be a deadly peril. They are lame through some hereditary appetite or weak through some constitutional flaw, and if they were to follow you, they would certainly be turned out of the way. Therefore it is not a question of your own feet, which may be strong and steady, but of your footprints, which may be way-marks to destruction, luring the weak unto death. Let us remember that we cannot obliterate our own footsteps. We may change our life, but the footprints of our example are behind us—a far-reaching ladder, on which souls will climb to Heaven, or descend to ruin, when we have ceased to be.

Now, observe how the principle of

our text runs all through Scripture. Disputations in regard to doctrine there will be. **"But,"** says Paul, **"him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputation."**

Drop your arguments, however important; put aside discussion, however vital, if by these things you are likely to bewilder and perplex a weak brother and prevent him from entering the kingdom of Heaven. There are scores of poor souls who know just enough to believe in Christ and be saved, but who would stumble and fall if you were to try to lead them over the lofty track of theological arguments which Jonathan Edwards and John Calvin traversed. But Jesus Christ's way is a very easy and simple way; and if any of you are confused about the doctrine of predestination, or the doctrine of the Trinity, He will not require you to go through these mazes of doctrine before admitting you to Heaven. Cry, as David did, n: **"Teach me Thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies,"** and the Lord will hear you. I believe in theology for theologians. There is a kind of mental exhilaration in watching a trained mind threading some subtle line of reasoning, as Blondin walked the rope which spanned the Niagara; but most of us would grow dizzy and fall in attempting to walk this line, and God does not require it. We are saved by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, not by knowing the theology of Calvin or Edwards. And so I am sure that the Lord wants us to preach the Gospel to make straight paths—to set forth the way of life simply and plainly, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way.

Personal liberty, too, there must be in the Church. In the Corinthian Church there was a controversy about eating meats offered to idols, and Paul considered the scruples of those who refrained from meat to be ridiculous, since an idol is nothing at all. But while there was liberty on this point, he tenderly adds: **"But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling-block**

to them that are weak." On account of weakness of conscience, one man's meat is another man's poison, and one man's liberty another man's bondage, and hence the apostle sums up his observations by saying: **"Wherefore if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no meat while the world stands, lest I make my brother to offend."** **"Offences must need come,"** said Jesus, **"but woe unto that man by whom they come."** It is for us who are strong to remove offences as fast as they come—ay! to turn them into occasions of blessing. And we can do it. **"Charity covers a multitude of sins."** The sharp, irritating grain of sand which gets into the oyster's shell would destroy its life if left there as it is; but they tell us that the little creature secretes a white fluid, which it throws over this foreign substance, which covers and coats it, little by little, till the grain of sand becomes a pearl. So let us treat offences whereby many might be made to stumble. To be sure, we have liberty to do otherwise. "I have a right to be indignant at the treatment I have received from my brother," you say; "I have reason to be angry at this slight of my neighbor," you exclaim. Yes; but take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling-block to "them that are weak." Throw the charity of Christ over the offence, and so turn it into a pearl for the crown of your graces. Blessed is the man who knows how to transform an offence into a beatitude, and a root of bitterness into a tree of life, so that many may be blessed thereby, instead of many being defiled.

And now how powerfully does my text plead for consistent Christian examples on the part of the disciples of Christ. The larger part of mankind follows a few leaders as unthinkingly as the flock follows the wether. Manners are contagious, conduct is the beacon by which most are guided. Therefore be sure that your example is salutary.

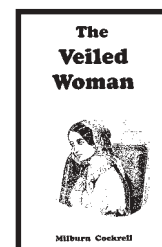
And remember that you cannot exert a Christian influence except as you are yourself personally a Christian. Every shadow is the shadow of something, and a Christian example is only possible as the image and reflection of a Christian character. For a merchant to attempt to exert a religious influence over his clerks, while he is neither religious nor prayerful nor believing: for a parent to try to set a pious example before his family, while he himself is undevout and worldly—this were like attempting to cast a shadow without a substance, to give it body and outline. Influence lives happily or unhappily, when the person who casts it is gone, like the image retained on

the photographer's plate after his subject has left the room. But tell me, who has produced sun pictures without a face or form to cast them? And tell me, who has exerted a Christian influence or left behind him a Christian example without himself, being a Christian? O men of the world and men of society, women of culture and women of position, there are lame feet straying out of the paths of virtue and stumbling on the dark mountains of sin, which may be led back into the paths of righteousness and purity. But it will take a strong and sturdy example to influence them. It will have to be an example magnetic with Christ like sympathy, and firm and uncompromising with divine holiness and self-denial. No atom-character, floating on the currents of worldliness and self-indulgence, will arrest a wreck that may perchance be drifting down. **"Be ye therefore steadfast unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord"**—steadfast and unmovable, even if you cause a foam in the stream that passes by your seeming religious stubbornness and eccentricity. For you are called, not only to make straight paths, but to be yourself a rock, on which bruised and footsore and sliding feet may rest and find a solid support. And the Lord give you strength to be what you are required to be!

(Pulpit Treasury, Feb. 1887).

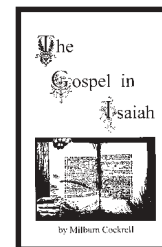
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Baptism for Remission

By Rosco Brong

(1908 - 1985)

BELIEVERS WITH SINS ALREADY REMITTED ARE COMMANDED TO BE BAPTIZED

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:38).

For more than a thousand years before Alexander Campbell mismated the Baptist doctrine of believers’ immersion with the Catholic doctrine of so-called baptismal regeneration, most of the heretics of Christendom were perverting this text and a few others in supposed support of the delusion that remission of sins may be obtained through the waters of baptism, or through the waters of pouring or sprinkling as substitutes for baptism.

The idea did not originate with Campbell: he was wise enough to recognize that Baptists were right in their insistence on immersion of believers; but with his Presbyterian background he was foolish enough to stay with the Catholic tradition that baptism (or, for most Catholics in recent centuries, affusion) is necessary to salvation.

THE PROBLEM

Were it not for this widespread heresy of long standing, comparatively few readers would misunderstand our text, or other texts that have been given a perverted interpretation by advocates of baptismal regeneration; and any such misunderstanding would be quickly cleared up as the reader examined the text in light of context. But when readers bring preconceived heresies to their reading, it is harder for them to see the simple truth.

Surely, it is obvious enough to any open mind that if this text teaches the Catholic-Campbellite doctrine that baptism is a condition precedent to the remission of sins, then the Bible is in hopeless contradiction with itself and we have no reliable textbook from which to derive Christian doctrine. If the Bible is a book of contradictions, we have no reasonable ground of any Christian faith. This is the problem raised by the contradictory doctrines of various Christian or so-called Christian sects: are they really Biblical contradictions, or merely contradictions of interpretation?

LANGUAGE INTERPRETATION

Judicial interpretation and (mostly) misinterpretation of the United States Constitution, exhibiting staggering contradictions in less than 200 years, may serve as an example of how lawyers, political and religious, can twist and befog language that was clear enough before it got hid behind their interpretations.

Baptists, at least old-fashioned Baptists, believe that the Bible is God’s guidebook for His people, written to make His way so clear that **“the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein”** (Isa. 35:8).

Most controversial point in Acts 2:38 is a prepositional phrase, **“for the remission of sins,”** as it reads in the King James version, or “unto the remission of your sins,” as in the American Standard version. Either reading involves interpretation by the translators and requires further interpretation in English.

First then, it is debatable whether this phrase modifies only the verb “repent,” only the verb “be baptized,” or both—not to mention one or two other possible syntactical interpretations. I merely note the difficulty: we need not worry about it; we can get the truth clearly enough from other texts.

As to the preposition “for” or “unto” (Greek *eis*), again the meaning is ambiguous. “For” can mean “in order to,” as when a man works “for” pay that he expects to receive later; but it can also mean “because of,” as when he receives pay “for” work already done. Likewise “unto” may have either a past or future reference, relating either an addition to something already had or an attainment to something else.

Properly translating in contextual agreement with New Testament language and teaching, Acts 2:38 may be read as follows: **“And Peter said to them, Repent ye, and each of you be baptized upon the name of Jesus Christ because of remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”**

WHY “BECAUSE OF”?

“Because of” is not the most usual translation of the Greek preposition



Rosco Brong

eis. Many prepositions, Greek and English, are used to express various relationships. For example, look up the words “to,” “in,” “on,” and “for” in a large English dictionary. This has been an instructive exercise even for some college students.

Young’s concordance lists a dozen different translations of *eis* in the King James version, then adds “etc.” The good English bishops, whose creed teaches baptismal regeneration, avoided the translation “because of,” but it fits excellently in several passages.

Three times in Matthew 10:41, 42 *eis* is rendered “in”—**“in the name.”** Obviously this means **“because of the name”**; in fact it is so explained in Mark 9:41, though there the preposition used is *en*.

Ninevites “repented at (*eis*) the preaching of Jonas” (Matt. 11:41); that is, of course, because of the preaching of Jonas.

“Wherefore didst thou doubt?” asked Jesus in Matthew 14:31. “Wherefore,” meaning “why,” is the King James rendering of two Greek words, *eis ti*, which could be translated literally, “Because of what?”

So it is evident that “because of” is a legitimate translation of *eis* if it can be justified from context, and the New Testament context makes this the best possible translation in Acts 2:38.

JOHN’S BAPTISM

From John 1:40-42 and Acts 1:20-22 it is clear that Peter was thoroughly familiar with the baptism and doctrine of John the Baptist. There is no reason to imagine that the apostle would suddenly announce a new and revolutionary doctrine of baptism, and especially in such ambiguous language.

John’s baptism manifestly was not announced as a means of obtaining remission of sins. On the contrary, John demanded that candidates for his baptism whose sincerity he doubted bring forth **“fruits worthy of repentance”** (Luke 3:8). He baptized **“in water unto (*eis*) repentance”** (Matt. 3:11); that is, because of repentance already exercised and proved by worthy fruits, as appears in the preceding verses.

Mark tells us that John preached **“the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins”** (1:4). This means that the baptism was the result of repentance. If we relate **“for (*eis*) the remission of sins”** to the word “repentance,” then “for” may mean “in order to”; if we relate the phrase to the word “baptism,” then “for” must mean “because of” to harmonize with context.

No honest reader, surely, will accuse the first Baptist of being a

ritualist. Peter had learned of John through Andrew to follow Jesus (John 1:35-42), and we can be sure that they have the same doctrine of baptism.

CHRIST’S BAPTISM

John’s baptism was Christ’s baptism. This truth is so important that it is recorded in all four gospels (Matt. 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21, 22; John 1:29-34). To say that John’s baptism was not Christian baptism is to say that Christ did not have Christian baptism. How ridiculous can you get?

When Christ received baptism from John the Baptist, He demonstrated once for all that baptism is not in order to the remission of sins, since Christ had no sins to be remitted. But **“thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness”** (Matt. 3:15). That is, baptism is a picture of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ; and in that death, burial and resurrection all righteousness is fulfilled.

APOSTOLIC AGREEMENT

Moreover, the apostles continued the practice of baptism according to the original order, for we read, **“Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John (though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples)”** (John 4:1-2). That is, it was through the ministry of His disciples that He **“made and baptized more disciples than John.”** Notice: they made disciples first, and then they baptized them. This is always the scriptural order.

Read I Corinthians 1:12-17 to see how completely the apostle Paul subordinated the ordinance of baptism to the preaching of the gospel. Though baptism symbolizes the gospel, it is in itself no part of the gospel, as appears in the words **“Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel.”**

Paul likewise identified his baptism with that of John the Baptist when he found at Ephesus a dozen disciples who claimed, no doubt sincerely, that they had John’s baptism, but who had never heard John’s message. Of course, a mere form of baptism, administered by unauthorized persons who lack the scriptural message conveyed in true baptism, is of no value. When Paul informed these imperfectly taught disciples of John’s true message, they proved their faith by being baptized **“in the name,”** that is, by the authority, **“of the Lord Jesus”** (See Acts 19:1-7).

LET PETER INTERPRET

If there are readers who might imagine that Peter’s doctrine of baptism could have been different from that of John the Baptist, Jesus, and Paul, it would seem to be worth

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The Campbellite Church

By J. A. Shackelford

The Campbellites themselves date their origin as an ecclesiastical body to the year 1827, but their true origin is shown to be nearly twenty years earlier.

They first called themselves Reformers, then Disciples of Christ, and next Christians, but are now, many of them, dissatisfied with that name. The world has given them the name Campbellite, from Alexander Campbell, their founder, and as it is the only name to distinguish them from *all* other denominations, it will likely adhere to them. There is no reproach in a name, provided one's principles are right.

This sect originated as follows: About the year 1811, Alexander Campbell, with his father, Thomas Campbell, and a number of others, left the Presbyterian church and formed themselves into an independent church. This church, which was called Brush Run, and located in Virginia, practiced sprinkling for baptism, both for adults and infants.

Two days after the organization of the church the Lord's Supper was administered, and it was observed that two of its members refused to partake. On inquiry the reason was found in the fact that they had never been baptized, and furthermore they were not willing to accept sprinkling for baptism, but demanded immersion. A discussion of two months followed, at the end of which time Thomas Campbell immersed three of the members.

The inconsistency of Mr. Campbell in immersing without having been immersed himself, was apparent to all, and a discussion arose in regard to the validity of these baptisms.

This discussion ended in Thomas and Alexander Campbell's decision to be immersed. Accordingly on the 12th of June, 1812, they were baptized by Matthias Luce, a Baptist minister. Four days after this, Thomas Campbell immersed thirteen other members of his church.

The immersion of the Campbells by Mr. Luce seems to have been without any authority from any church.

This, in brief, is the history of the origin of the first Campbellite church. For these facts the reader is referred to "Memoirs of Alexander Campbell," vol. I, by Robert Richardson.

Mr. Campbell's church became associated with the Red Stone

Association of Baptists in Virginia, in 1813, and continued in this association for a time, when dissatisfaction arose in regard to their doctrinal views, upon the part of the association. Upon this Mr. Campbell's church dismissed about thirty of its members, including Alexander Campbell, to Wellsburg, Virginia, where they were constituted as a new church, and were admitted into the Mahoning Baptist Association of Ohio. About the year 1827, this association withdrew from Mr. Campbell's church.

From this simple statement of facts we learn:

First. That Alexander Campbell with a number of other disaffected Presbyterians organized themselves into a church.

Second. Becoming dissatisfied with their baptism, Mr. Campbell applied to a Mr. Luce, a Baptist preacher, and was baptized by him.

Third. That Alexander Campbell and his father baptized the rest of their members.

Fourth. That Mr. Campbell's church attached itself to a Baptist association, which, after a time, withdrew fellowship from the same. This was about the year 1827. Hence they date their origin to that time.

Fifth. That Mr. Campbell never was a member of a Baptist church.

It follows, therefore, that if the Baptist churches were not true churches at the time Mr. Campbell was baptized, that he had only apostate baptism, for he was baptized by a Baptist preacher. If Baptist churches were true churches at that time, they are still the true churches of Christ, and Mr. Campbell and his followers departed from the faith. Here is a dilemma, and they are impaled upon either horn they take.

The Campbellite churches are independent one of another, but Mr. Campbell brought with him an Episcopal feature which is seen running through the whole of their churches.

Their ministers seem to be independent of their churches, going ahead of them and administering baptism and the Lord's Supper without the authority of any church. While their churches are independent, of each other, their ministers are independent of them, thus maintaining this Episcopal feature.

(*A Compendium of Baptist History*, pp. 313-316, 1892 edition).

Baptism for Remission

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while to find out whether Peter himself stated his doctrine any more clearly on other occasions.

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out," said Peter, with no mention of baptism, in Acts 3:19. But if he had considered baptism to be necessary to salvation, his language here would have been criminally misleading.

Again, to the household of Cornelius, Peter declared concerning Christ: **"To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins"** (Acts 10:43). Either Peter was a true apostle or he was not; and if he told the truth to Cornelius, then his language in Acts 2:38 must not be misinterpreted so as to contradict his plain statement here.

With no reference to baptism, Peter affirms explicitly that the new birth is by virtue of **"the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,"** and that it is **"not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God"** (I Pet. 1:3, 23).

Peter's only mention of baptism in his two epistles is in I Peter 3:21, and there he is careful to declare that baptism is NOT a **"putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer"** (or, asking) **"of a good conscience toward God."**

Common honesty demands that we let Peter interpret himself, and thus it becomes perfectly clear that in Acts 2:38 he was commanding each of his hearers who repented, and no others, to be baptized because of remission of sins—remission already obtained through repentance (which in a scriptural sense includes faith). That this was his meaning, and that he was so understood, is obvious also in verse 41, where we read that only **"they that gladly received his word were baptized."**

CHRIST'S COMMISSION

Alexander Campbell felt free to "restore" a "primitive Christianity" far removed from the faith once for all delivered to the saints—far removed from true New Testament Christianity. But true Christians must recognize Christ and Christ alone as our Lord, as the Author and Finisher of our faith (Heb. 12:2).

Never did the Lord Jesus condition His salvation upon the outward act of baptism. His commission to His church was first to make disciples, then to baptize them, and finally to teach them to observe all His commandments (Matt. 28:18-20). In

Mark 16:16 He assumes that true believers will generally be baptized, but according to Jesus the damning failure of sinners is not failure to be baptized, but failure to believe the gospel. So He taught always. **"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God"** (John 3:18).

Election of Particular

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Head and Spring of our election; therefore it is said, **"We were chosen in him before the foundation of the world"** (Eph. 1:4). It was the only act of love and free grace of the Father, therefore not to be ascribed to the merits of Jesus Christ: For though Christ hath merited our salvation, yet He did not procure or merit our election; for Christ Himself was the fruit of this eternal blessing and privilege, it being then the sole act of God's sovereign grace and love. It follows,

2. That all the ways which were ordered in the wisdom of God, for the accomplishing the ends of election, are of the father's appointment also; for whatsoever Christ hath done in working out of our Redemption, it was according to the purpose and determinate counsel of His own will and sovereign goodness. Jesus Christ was first chosen, or elected, by the Father, as Head and Mediator, and only Foundation to bear up the whole building, which the Almighty designed to raise: The Father's love, did precede Christ's glorious mission; therefore He was only of the Father's designation; **"Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last days"** (I Pet. 1:20). Christ was first chosen as the Well-head of grace and glory, and then others were chosen in Him, by and through whom they should be redeemed and raised to a state of grace and holiness here, and to eternal happiness in Heaven hereafter: **"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren"** (Rom. 8:29). To the image of His Son, that is, to Christ's likeness as Mediator, and taking our nature; not to Christ barely considered as God, for as Christ is God. Now this Conformity being absolutely designed in election, Christ, in the contrivance and intention of the Father, was the first

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THE SAINTS IN CAESAR'S HOUSEHOLD

Phil. 4:22

Paul wrote this epistle from Rome during his imprisonment about A.D. 61 (1:7,13-14). He is sending this letter to thank the Philippian church for a missionary offering brought by Epaphroditus (4:10,18). The apostle sits in all the rude discomforts of a Roman prison, writing this letter, chained to a Roman soldier. My text is a part of his closing remarks.

I. THEIR NAME—"SAINTS."

1. A saint is a believer in Jesus Christ (Acts 26:18). He is a person consecrated to God. He is a saintly person (Acts 20:32; I Cor. 1:2).
2. They did not call themselves such; Paul said they were such by inspiration.
3. This is a prophecy of personal character—what God expects us to be. We are saints only in Christ in the strict sense of the word.
4. Rome once had saints in Caesar's household. Now Rome has many sinners around the so-called chair of St. Peter.
5. There were other saints in Rome (Rom. 1:7) in addition to these of Caesar's household.
6. Though Paul was imprisoned by the emperor's command, yet while in Rome Paul converted some of Caesar's household (1:12-14). God's power overrules evil for good.

II. THEIR ABODE—"CAESAR'S HOUSEHOLD."

1. Who was this Caesar?
 - (1) Nero, a monster of iniquity, a man described as "half beast and half devil." He was a clown, a sensualist, a murderer, a hater of Christians, etc. He set Rome on fire and fiddled while it burned, then blamed it on the Christians.
 - (2) His presence poisoned the very atmosphere of the Imperial Palace, making it a moral garbage dump, a cesspool of sin.
2. Nevertheless, there were saints there in this most unlikely place.
 - (1) God's elect are found in the strangest of places sometimes.
 - (2) The gospel is for men and women in every place.
 - A. It makes no distinctions between poor and rich, noble and ignoble, learned and unlearned, bond and free. It knows them only as sinners.
 - B. In the early churches slaves like Onesimus, business women like Lydia, fishermen like Peter, physicians like Luke, lawyers like Zenas, soldiers like Cornelius, and saints in Caesar's household.
 - (3) God may be served in difficult circumstances.
 - A. It would have been hard to be a saint in Nero's household.
 - B. These saints did not withdraw from this wicked household because it was a dangerous place to be.
 - C. A Christian nobleman in a corrupt court, or a servant in a pagan family.
 - D. Noah and Lot were righteous in an ungodly world. Joseph kept his integrity in Egypt. Obadiah was faithful to God in Ahab's household—Daniel in the court of Babylon, and Nehemiah in the Persian Palace.
 - E. Jonathan Edwards says: "The grace of God can live where neither you nor I can."
3. It is harder to be a saint in some places than others.
4. What is meant by Caesar's household?
 - (1) It could have included some in the emperor's own family.
 - (2) It could have included the Praetorian guard, courtiers, servants, secretaries, gardeners, teachers, artists, librarians, architects, economists, senators, and slaves.

III. THEIR DANGER.

1. There was a moral danger.
 - (1) This household had agents of murder and bitter cruelties. There were con artists of all kinds. Probably traitors and spies.
 - (2) It is possible to be a Christian in a royal court as in a slum. Character may be independent of circumstances.
 - (3) This was the most corrupt household in the world, and the last place on earth you expect to find a saint.
 - (4) The catacombs of Rome convey the record of this sainthood in its original purity.
 - (5) Let no man say it is impossible to live a pure life in any circumstance.
2. There were spiritual dangers.
 - (1) This was a carnal and materialistic atmosphere.
 - (2) A good place to ruin your Christian testimony.
3. There were physical dangers.
 - (1) Life was cheap. On the least pretext people were executed.
 - (2) Killing Christians was the order of the day. Paul died at the hands of Nero.

CONCLUSION.

1. Christ was crucified some 30 years before this time, yet His influence had touched Caesar's household!
2. If saints could be found in Caesar's household, where shall they not be found?
3. Little did the Roman saints realize that their salutations would be preserved for the edifying of the churches across the centuries. Kind words never die.
4. We do not face so much a persecuting world as we do a tempting world.
5. To stand against the sneers of the world is hard, but to stand against its allurements is more difficult still.
6. Are you a saint of any household?

(Note: This outline was written by Milburn Cockrell but he was called home before being able to preach from it. He always enjoyed sharing his outlines with young preachers and many others. We hope, as the Lord permits, to make all of his outlines available.)

Election of Particular

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Exemplar and Copy of it, or the main Center, to which all must be brought that were given unto Him; the Father setting Him up, and electing Him as Head of all that should be saved, or as the glorious Bridegroom, and therefore it was requisite He should be consulted about those who were to be the members of His body, and His own blessed spouse for ever: And since Christ was also to suffer and undergo such pain and sorrow in the purchasing and redeeming of them, it was necessary He should not only freely assent and consent in the choice of them, but also be certain of the obtaining and securing them all to and for Himself for ever, and not run the hazard of enjoying or not enjoying of them; which must follow He did, if the doctrines of some men of dark minds were true.

To proceed, it may not be amiss to consider what is contained in the bowels of my first argument, *viz.* that there is a peculiar people, or some certain persons (as personally considered) of the lost children of the first *Adam*, who are elected or chosen of God, in Christ, from all eternity, of His own sovereign grace and good pleasure, ordained unto everlasting life; and that this decree of election doth prevent their final falling, or make it impossible that any of them should ever so *apostatize* as eternally to perish.

The Argument being thus fairly stated, it calls upon me to do two things.

First, To prove that there is such a *particular* and *personal* election of a *peculiar* people of the *lost sons* of *Adam*.

Secondly, To show how this prevents their *final falling*, and makes it *impossible* that any of them should ever so *apostatize* as eternally to perish.

A little to open the first of these.

1. I say of *peculiar persons*, which denotes it belonging to them only and to none else; others are passed by, or not afforded by any such divine act of grace the like privilege: they are God's *jewels*, or His *peculiar treasure*, though until called and cleansed (Mal. 3:17), their inward filth and pollution purged away, they cannot be delighted in by Him, or be loved with a *love of complacency*; though from eternity God did love all His, with a love of *good Will*, purpose of grace and of *benevolence*.

I say *personally* elected; that is, the objects of this grace, or of this election were singled out and pitched upon by name; not with respect had to such or such qualifications foreseen in

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

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The Berea Baptist Banner

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With regard to Acts 8:23-40, particularly verses 36-39, did the Holy Spirit authorize Phillip to preach and baptize, or was the church authorized to preach and baptize? --- Illinois



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Phillip was an ordained deacon (Acts 6:5-6) of the church at Jerusalem who obviously was also a gifted preacher whose ministry was attended with and validated by some remarkable signs (Acts 9:5-8). I have no doubt that Phillip was authorized and sent by the Jerusalem church to preach and baptize (Rom. 10:14-15). This is God's way of doing things decently and in order through His New Testament church (I Cor. 14:40).

When the church sets a man apart to preach, baptize, and do mission work it is because the Holy Spirit has already called the man to the work. The church and the Spirit, working in harmony together, validate that calling through ordination and authorization. There is never a conflict of interest here as far as I can see. The Holy Spirit inspired the writers of Acts 13:1-3 and Romans 10:14-15. The Spirit is not going to contradict the pattern and principle He has set forth in these verses by working outside or apart from the church that He is the administrator of! For the life of me I cannot understand why any true minister of the Gospel would even think of doing mission work apart from the official authorization and validation granted by a mother church!

If, as some contend, Phillip was authorized directly by the Holy Spirit to preach and baptize apart from the authority of the Jerusalem church I have a few questions and observations. First, what was the purpose of Phillip's ordination in the first place? Was it a mere formality? Secondly, if the Holy Spirit was operating apart from the church instead of with the church, are we to suppose that He speaks directly to men today as well? Are we prepared to accept the extra biblical revelations claimed by the Charismatics, Mormons, etc. as valid because the Spirit supposedly spoke directly to

them as well? Thirdly, why would the Holy Spirit direct a man to do something that would appear to contradict other Scriptures and teachings that He inspired?

I realize that church authority is under attack in our day. It should not surprise us in the least. Our entire society and culture has been bombarded with propaganda that urges people to cast off all forms of authority in order to do as they please. This teaching has now penetrated our churches. Just as it has ruined the order of the home and society at large, it will not be long before it will ruin many churches as well. As for me, I have chosen to stand firm upon the tried and true principles laid out in the Holy Scriptures. I am not relying on men or history to determine the way in which we ought to do mission work or start a church. I have a clear pattern set forth in Scripture for the way in which God wants His work to be done (Acts 11:22-26; 13:1-3; Rom. 10:14-15; I Cor. 14:40). I will simply follow the pattern and leave the arguing to the naysayers.

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Phillip was one of the seven men chosen by the church at Jerusalem to serve tables. He also is said to be an evangelist (Acts 21:8). In Acts chapter eight, we see that Phillip had gone down to the city of Samaria preaching Christ. Many believed ". . . **Phillip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women**" (Acts 8:12). As an evangelist and a member of the church at Jerusalem, Phillip had church authority. One must believe that he baptized into the body of Christ which was the church at Jerusalem (I Cor. 12:13; Acts 2:41). The church at Samaria did not come into existence until the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had

received the Word of God and sent unto them Peter and John (Acts 8:14-17).

The authority to preach and baptize was given by the Lord, not by the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:18-20). The Spirit calls men to service and to a place of service, but the church must give them authority and send them to work (Acts 13:1-3).

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Since God said in I Cor. 12:28 that He set first in the Lord's church the apostles this would declare the apostles to be the first church. That being the case, the book of the Acts of the Apostles is in actuality the acts of the first churches of the New Testament.

Jesus established the fact that He gave His kind of church, the first church at Jerusalem and her descendants, the authority to carry out His work, make disciples, baptize disciples, and teach them to observe all His commands, on the earth in His absence (Matt. 28:18-20). Therefore the acts of the apostles were carried on under the authority of the New Testament church.

In Acts 8:1 it states that when great persecution came upon the first church and they were scattered abroad to carry out the Lord's commission as declared in Acts 1:6-8 that the apostles remained in Jerusalem (Acts 8:1) to oversee the work of the church.

When Phillip went to Samaria to preach and souls were saved (Acts 8:5-8) the apostles at Jerusalem heard about the results of Phillip's preaching, the church sent Peter and John to investigate and ascertain if all was proper and to show the church's approval of Phillip's work. This shows beyond doubt that Phillip was serving under the watch care and authority of the church at Jerusalem. They showed their approval of Phillip's preaching

and baptizing.

I believe if we follow the pattern set forth, very simply, in the New Testament Scriptures of the authority or succession of churches it is obvious that Phillip was authorized by the Jerusalem church, having been called and sent by the Holy Spirit, to preach and baptize. To see Phillip operating under his own authority one would have to have the rose colored glasses of Joseph Smith.

The only ones (I) know that have a problem doing mission work under the authority of a church are those who have done so without church authority or are pastoring a church started without church authority. It is strange to me having been a Baptist pastor for forty seven years that only after some Baptists begin to accept the Anabaptist Kinship theory, or the English Separatist Descent theory begin to show up in Sovereign Grace Independent Baptist churches. I am indeed a Baptist Successionist and became such as a result of studying the Bible and church history coming out of the universal church theory.

GARNER SMITH



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It is my position that no conflict should exist between the authority of the Holy Spirit and the authority of a true church. In Acts chapter 2 we see the Holy Spirit empowering the Lord's church with authority to preach and to baptize in all nations. Thus, true churches have the Holy Spirit as their Administrator.

It seems as though this is a clear doctrine in Acts 13 when the Holy Spirit instructed the Church at Antioch to separate Barnabas and Saul for the work which He had called them to do (v. 2). There is no conflict between the call of the Holy Spirit and the responsibility of the church in this matter. It was made known to the church that they had authority to do what the Spirit of God commands.

When great persecution came upon the church at Jerusalem (Acts 8:1), they were scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, and went every where preaching the Word (v. 4). The number included Phillip the deacon. What Phillip and the others did was not in violation of what the Holy Spirit empowered the church to do.

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One has told me that only home-made wine can be used in the Lord's Supper, and that store-bought wine will not do. What is the difference between home-made and store-bought wine? Which is used by your church? -- Ohio



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As far as I can tell, there is no difference at all between home made and store bought wine except maybe for taste, texture, and color. Wine is wine whether you make it at home or buy it from a store. Either would suffice to symbolically represent the Lord's blood in the observation of the Lord's Supper.

Our church uses home made wine that tastes terrible. For this I am thankful! Our church covenant forbids social drinking and lousy tasting wine serves to discourage its use!

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In order to represent the blood of our Lord, wine must be used in the Lord's Supper. Wine is made by allowing grape juice to ferment. In fermentation, yeast (leaven) acts on the sugars in grape juice converting them to alcohol and carbon dioxide.

"From the grape's natural sugar content is produced, after fermentation, wine with an alcohol content of 10 percent or slightly higher. Wines with less alcohol are unstable and subject to bacterial spoilage" (*Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia*).

Leaven is used in the New Testament to represent evil or sin (I Cor. 5:6-8). The wine, which contains no leaven, represents the blood of Christ who was without sin (Matt. 26:28; I Pet. 2:22). There is no way that we can find a wine that is as pure (free from impurities) as the blood of Christ. I believe that we should do the

best that we can to use a wine that is free from leaven and has sufficient alcohol to prevent it from spoilage.

The church in Tulsa uses a Kosher wine made from concord grapes that is produced by Manischewitz Wine Co. in Naples NJ. This wine is produced under strict supervision by the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America. We have a bottle of this wine that we have been using for about three years. I keep this wine in a cabinet in my office. It has never been placed in a refrigerator or preserved in any way and is still as good as it was the day it was purchased.

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Among our Baptists people there exists different views on the drink element to be used in the Lord's Supper. Some say that grape juice is the element, while some of us believe wine to be the proper thing to use.

I suppose that both camps would have some who would define what constitutes real grape juice or real wine. If we look for things to debate on this issue we could take all of our time up in doing this. I, too, have heard of brethren who contend for the use of home-made wine as opposed to the use of commercially-made wine. The only purpose that I can see in this is that some may believe by making the wine themselves they would be able to keep out contamination. This could be a possibility, while on the other hand it might contribute to contaminates.

The churches I have pastored use what is called store-bought wine. We use a kosher wine. Kosher is defined as being fit or allowed to be eaten or used according to the dietary or ceremonial laws of Judaism (*Random House Webster's College Dictionary*). We believe that Christ used a kosher wine when instituting His Supper.

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I am not a wine maker so I do not know much about making or using wine. I have been told that homemade wine has nothing added to it in the process of fermentation giving the theory that it would be more pure than store bought wine.

My conclusion is that if it is a wine that has been processed correctly and has completed the process of fermentation it is pure having all impurities fermented out of it.

Homemade wine may have less alcohol content in it than store bought wine but both are purified by fermentation.

Our church uses store bought wine. We use Mogan David, kosher, Passover wine bought from a Super Market.

This is especially processed to ferment and keep out impurities. It will not rot but only gets stronger when exposed to the air.

GARNER SMITH

its administrator (the Holy Spirit), and when one is sent forth by the church to preach and baptize they are not released from the guidance and direction of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit, by the Word of God, is still in the business of instructing the Lord's churches to do what He has authorized them to do.

JIMMIE B. DAVIS

Election of Particular

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them, they being repenting, believing, and holy persons, but chosen in Christ, the Head of Election, that they should believe, should repent, and "should be holy and without blame before him in love" (Eph. 1:4). They are chosen that they may be holy; not because they were holy, or God foresaw they would be Holy.

I say, they "were ordained to everlasting life." Now to predestinate, decree, or ordain, denotes the same thing, and signifies the absolute purpose of God to bring them into a state of grace here, through Jesus Christ, and to eternal glory and happiness hereafter: Hence it is said, "As many as were ordained to eternal life, believed," or appointed; and He that ordered or ordained the end, ordained the means also, and so prepared them for everlasting life.

They were "chosen in Christ"; in the Mediator, in their blessed Head, that they standing might be secured through their union with Him, and His righteousness being imputed to them, according to God's eternal purpose.

2. And further, to make good the first part of what I have laid down, viz. That there is such a particular election; what lies more clear in the Word of God, and the election of *Jacob*, I shall here first mention, as a full proof of what I say; "For the children not yet born, neither having done only good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth" (Rom. 9:11). Here the apostle designedly or on purpose confirms, not only the doctrine of *personal election*, but also that of Preterition, of a passing by, or rejection of the other; and all resulting from the eternal purpose and good pleasure of God's will; "As it is written, **Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated**" (Rom. 9:13). The main scope of *Paul* in this place is to show, that God hath not cast off all Israel, that is, those who are the true Israel, or such who are the children of the promise, or that do belong to Christ according to the

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When a church follows the leading and authority of the Holy Spirit in separating and sending out men, they send them out with the authority to do the work of the ministry, including preaching and baptizing. I cannot read anything else into the record given in the book of Acts, especially in chapter 13.

The instruction given to Philip did not infringe upon the authority of the church. When Philip went forth preaching and baptizing he was engaged in a work already authorized by the Spirit and given to the only institution (the church) which has been empowered to go into all the world preaching the gospel and baptizing those who believe it. The church is not without the authority of

Election of Particular

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election of grace; see 5, 6, 7, 8 verses: therefore they that run the love of God and election here spoken of, to the posterity of *Jacob*, and reprobation to the posterity of *Esau*, and will not have it to be understood of their particular persons, do palpably abuse the sacred text and drift of the Holy Ghost.

Now that all men may know that election doth run to, or take hold of particular persons, and that not for any foreseen faith or holiness in them, *Paul* saith, **“The children being not yet born, neither having done good or evil.”** And therefore adds, not of works, that is, of foreseen worthiness or desert in *Jacob*, but **“that the purpose of God, according to election might stand,”** (that is, stand firm as an act of God’s sovereign love and grace only) and abide a blessed truth against all the opposition and cavils of cloudy minds.

I might have mentioned *Abraham*, *Isaac*, *Moses*, *David*, and others; also *Jeremiah* of whom God says, **“Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee”** (Jer. 1:5); that is, I knew thee to be one of them that I had chosen and given to my Son, or one of mine elect ones; **“and I sanctified and ordained thee a prophet.”**

Moreover, in the New Testament that our Saviour calls His disciples by name and tells them, that **“he knew whom he had chosen,”** (John 13:18) excluding *Judas*; He must therefore intend their eternal election, for as I said before, *Judas* was chosen to the Apostleship: also *Paul* by name. Jesus Christ declares (to *Ananias*) was **“a chosen vessel.”** not only as an Apostle, but one also comprehended in the election of grace. Do but observe the Nature of his conversion, and what he was before and when called by the special grace of God.

Moreover of this number and sort, were those that the Lord speaks of in *Elias’s time which Paul mentions*, **“I have reserved to my self seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal”** (Rom. 11:4). Though it is a certain number put for an uncertain as to us, yet all their particular persons were chosen, and known to God; **“Even so at this present time also there is a Remnant according to the election of grace”** (Rom. 11:5). God had some particular persons then whom He had from everlasting elected, and so He hath now; **“According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love”**: Us, as such and such particular

persons, not such of such and such qualification, *viz.* as being believers, obedient and holy persons; No, no, but that they might believe, *etc.* election will produce faith: it is, because they are elected that they do believe.” **“But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you”** (John 10:26) that is, not such as were ordained to believe, and ordained to eternal life. **“And as many as were ordained unto eternal life believed”** (Acts 13:48). As it was hinted before, Christ hath elect persons, or sheep, that yet believe not. **“I have much people (saith he to Paul) in this city”** (Acts 18:10).

Unto these testimonies I shall add one or two more; as that of *Paul*, touching the saints at Thessalonica. **“Knowing, brethren beloved, your election: For our Gospel came not to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost,”** *etc.* By the evident operations of God’s Spirit, the apostle knew they were elected: We cannot know our election, but by special vocation, or as it is manifest in the fruits and effects of it. There is a knowledge of things, (as our annotators note on this place) ἁ πύριον, when we argue from the cause to the effect: So ἁ ποτὴ πύριον, when we argue from the effect to the cause. Now what is election, but a choosing some out of others? Thus the angels that stand were *elected*, and the rest were left to the power they had, or passed by, or reprobated (I Tim. 5:21). Peter also confirms the doctrine of personal election, calling the persons to whom he wrote his epistle, **“Elect according to the foreknowledge of God,”** or His eternal purpose; and therefore were separated unto God by special grace, or effectual calling; **“through sanctification of the Spirit to obedience,”** *etc.* The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are concerned in our salvation; the *Father elects*, this is principally ascribed to the *first Person* in the Godhead; the *Son purchaseth*, He redeems; and the *Holy Spirit renews*, calls, and sanctifies. Now the purchase of the Son extends no further than the election of the Father; nor the sanctification of the Spirit, further than the purchase or redemption of the Son: Sanctification here, takes in the whole work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration and actual holiness, to the final fitting and making the soul meet for the eternal inheritance.

So much shall serve to prove that there is an election of particular persons.

Object. But may be some will Object, If this be so, what need any man concern himself about his salvation, as to seek it or labor after it: for if he be elected, he shall be

saved; but if not, let him do what he can, he cannot be saved, he cannot frustrate God’s decree, nor alter the thing that is gone out of his mouth?

Answer. I answer, All mankind are under the strongest obligation imaginable to God, as He is their Creator, and they His creatures; as He is their only Lord and Supreme Governor, they are bound to fear Him, and obey His laws, let Him do what He will with them. Is not that a base and sordid principle in a servant or subject, to do nothing but for mere self-profit and advantage?

2. *Paul* was certain of a crown of life, yet knew it was his duty to press towards **“the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus,”** and **“to keep down his body”** (Phil. 3:14). He strove as strenuously against sin, as if salvation could be merited by so doing; so that his election took him not off from a diligent care in use of means, in order to his attaining to eternal happiness.

3. God hath as well ordained the means, as the end, as I newly told you; both are appointed of God, and equally under His absolute decree: Men are not elected to salvation, but also to sanctification and holiness.

4. “We are not to look upon the decree of God (as a Reverend minister well observes) for a rule of life, but the Word of the gospel; **“secret things belong to God,”** *etc.* The decree can neither be a rule of life, nor ground of hope, but the precept and the promise, *etc.* He that leads an ungodly life, and pursues His filthy lusts, may assure himself, so living and dying, he shall be damned for ever: He that believes not in Christ, but rejects Him, and despiseth all the offers of His grace to the end of his life, no decree can save him; therefore if he will go on in sin presumptuously, let him take what will follow. On the other hand, he that doth believe in Christ, and conforms to the holy gospel, need not doubt of salvation. Men ought to endeavor to believe and repent, and close with Christ upon a peradventure: **“If God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth”** (II Tim. 2:25).

5. Because God hath absolutely determined the time of my life, and how long thou shalt live: And there is a time thou canst not pass; Wilt thou therefore forbear eating, or use of physician, to preserve thy life, and say, If I eat not, I shall live my appointed time? What signify means or medicines, I will take no physician, no potion? for if the time is come God hath set in His eternal decree, I shall die, nothing can save my life: Would not all think you were under a fearful

temptation and delusion of the Devil?

6. Did not God absolutely tell *Paul*, that He had given him the lives of all that were with him in the ship, and that none of them should perish? Yet he said, **“Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved”** (Acts 27:31). Whosoever therefore that doth neglect the means God hath appointed, in order to the obtaining the end, let it be what it will, doth but tempt God, and comply with the Devil, let his pretence be what it will.

7. No decree of God necessitates men to sin: for though the free grace of God is the absolute cause of election; and no foreseen faith or holiness; yet foreseen wickedness, unbelief and disobedience, is the procuring cause of the reprobation (Jude 4) and of the damnation of them that perish: **“O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thine help”** (Hos. 13:9).

8. Were any ever damned that did what they could in the use of all means under the light of the gospel, to be saved? Brethren, God (may justly and) will condemn men for their not improving their **“one talent.”** Nor will it be a good plea for such to say, **“I knew thou wert an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown,”** (Matt. 25:24) *etc.* Thus some men seem to charge God, “I am not elected.” There is an election of grace, of special and distinguishing grace, and man hath no power in his own will; and God doth not give me power to believe, and will He damn me? Doth he expect to *reap where he hath not sown, and gather where he hath not strawed?* Such shall have no excuse, as our Savior shows, at the great day. The Lord of that Servant shows the fault lay in his own *Sloth and wickedness*; and his dread of his Lord’s severity, (as our a\Annotators note) was but a frivolous pretence and unreasonable excuse; for if he had feared any such thing, he should have done what he could; he should have put out his money to the exchange, and then he should have received his own with increase. Thus God may as justly another day reply upon those who think to excuse their lewd and wicked lives, their unbelief and contempt of His Word, from their not being elected, and not having power of themselves to believe and repent, not receiving His efficacious grace; *O ye wicked and slothful wretches.* May he not say, did ye suspect or fear you were not elected? Why did you not then give all diligence to attend upon the Means, and to make your calling sure, as all they do that are elected? Do you plead the power of your own wills, to repent one while, and that you wanted power at another time,

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Election of Particular

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and that I gave you not my special grace? but had you not power to keep from *Taverns* and *Alehouses*, to keep from *lying, stealing, swearing*, and other profane deeds of darkness? Had you not power to read, to hear my Word, to pray? If you had done your uttermost in improving of the talent I gave you, would I have been wanting to you? but since you did not that, why should I trust you with more? Brethren, are these men's eyes evil, because God's eye is God? Is He unjust in giving effectual grace to some, because He doth not bestow it upon all? Had He not took hold of a few, the whole lump of mankind would have destroyed themselves, and none would have been saved. Was God unjust in electing some of the Angels, because He passed by others of them?

9. In the day of judgment, God will be just, and all men's mouths shall be stopped: This you may assure your selves of, **"He will be justified when he judges, and clear when he condemns"** (Ps. 51:4). He that *had not on the wedding-garment was speechless*. God will not then proceed with men upon election and reprobation, but upon their believing, or not believing: **"He will render to every man according to their works"** (Rom. 2:6). All men's mouths shall be stopped, and every man's conscience witness against him. Alas, men do not act or exercise that human faith in respect of the report of the gospel, which they do in respect of other matters and things that are made known to them, or do not bring forth the fruit of such an historical faith, but so much to this objection.

(*A Golden Mine Opened*, pp. 169-175, 1694 edition).

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servant. This is a hard thing for the carnal mind to accept. Many faithful servants of God have died, but it was not at the hands of God in the strict sense of the word. Righteous Abel was slain, not by God, but by his angry brother, Cain. Naboth was put to death, not by God, but by King Ahab and his wife, Jezebel (I Kings 21). Zechariah, the priest, was murdered, not by God, but the wicked hand of King Joash (II Chron. 24:21). John the Baptist was beheaded, not by God, but by King Herod (Mark 6:27). Stephen was stoned, not by God, but by the Sanhedrin (Acts 7:58).

James, the brother of John, was slain, not by God, but by Herod (Acts 12:2). Antipas was put to death, not by God, but by the servants of Satan (Rev. 2:13). Some fifty million Anabaptists died during the Dark Ages, not by God, but by the scarlet whore (Rev. 5:9-11; 7:9; 17:9). As a general rule, God does not slay His trusting servants.

But there are exceptions to this general rule. For the sin of smiting the rock twice instead of once Moses died at the hands of God (Num. 20:2-13; Deut. 34:5-6). God took the lives of a whole generation of Israelites in the wilderness because of their unbelief (Heb. 3). God slew some of the members of the Corinthian church for their abuse of the Lord's Supper (I Cor. 11:30-31). I John 5:16 makes it plain that a truly saved person can so sin that God will kill him (I Cor. 5:5). John says: **"If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it."**

In a broad sense of the word, death is always at the hand of God. In Deuteronomy 32:39 Jehovah says: **"I kill, and I make alive."** In Hannah's song of praise she said: **"The LORD killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up"** (I Sam. 2:6). The psalmist said: **"...unto GOD the Lord belong the issues from death"** (Ps. 68:20). Job himself said: **"For I know that thou wilt bring me to death, and to the house appointed for all living"** (Job 30:23). The keys of death are not in the hands of men, but in the hands of Jesus Christ (Rev. 1:18).

THE MEANING OF THE WORD "TRUST"

The Hebrew word (*yachal*) rendered "trust" in Job 13:15 means "to expect, to wait with hope." It signifies waiting on one with the expectation of aid or help. Hence it means to hope. The expectation and hope of Job was in God in life or death. He would cling to God at all hazards. Sooner or later, God would vindicate him. If not here, then in the hereafter.

It is as if Job was saying, "I know God has slain my cattle, my servants, and my children. He has slain the compassion of my wife and the confidence of my friends. He has taken away my health. Soon He may take my natural life as well. Death will not rob me of my hope in God. Jehovah may slay my body, but not my faith." Job knew it was not in God to slay faith, for faith is the gift of God. He also knew that neither evil men

nor angels could do it.

Job would trust God all the way to the grave. If God destroys my body, I know He will save my soul. Right after saying: **"Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him,"** he goes on to add: **"He also shall be my salvation"** (Job 13:16). All would be well with Job in the hereafter, for he had faith in a coming Redeemer: **"For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet without my flesh, I shall see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me"** (Job 19:25-27—the Hebrew can read as I have translated it in verse 26). The patriarch not only believed in the hereafter, but he also believed in a future resurrection: **"If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands"** (Job 14:14-15).

The unsaved do not have this triumphant confidence in God. They are strangers to the faith of God's elect. The psalmist speaks of a man **"that made not God his strength"** (Ps. 52:7). Many trust in their own resources, not in God. Finance is their faith. Paul described the lost as **"having no hope"** (Eph. 2:12; I Thess. 4:13). They have no hope in Christ, no hope in the covenant of grace, no hope of a future resurrection and inheritance. Any person who does not hope in the Redeemer is a fool: **"He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool..."** (Prov. 28:26). He is a fool under the curse of God: **"Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD"** (Jer. 17:5).

STRONG CONFIDENCE

The patriarch was determined that no amount of hardships should prevent him from confiding in God's mercy and salvation. Job is saying though God take away my possessions and family, I will not lose faith in Him. Though my friends are physicians of no value, I will keep my confidence in God. If I have nothing but a dunghill and a broken potsherd with which to scrape myself, I will trust in the Lord. Job not only had triumphant faith, but he also openly declared he had such faith to others. See here how the many trials upon the human heart require a great amount of faith.

Job does not say, "If God prospers me and give me good health, I will trust in Him." In prosperity there is

little room or need of faith. But when the sky is dark and overspread, and the clouds return after the rain, faith does not come easy. When we are stripped, bereaved, and abandoned, faith in God must remain firm and steadfast. Real faith trusts in God in foul and fair weather. **"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof"** (Ps. 46:1-3).

Often when trouble befalls others, we go to them and try to encourage their faith. We remind them of the sweet promises of God in the Bible. If they refuse to be comforted, we are inclined to reprove them. We tell them God is only waiting to be gracious. But when we come into the same condition ourselves, we are unable to follow the advice we have given to others. We do not seem to be willing to take courage from the great and precious promises of God we used to strengthen others. We, who have instructed the weak hearts of others, faint when we are touched with trouble. Perhaps some person should say to us: **"Physician, heal thyself"** (Luke 4:23). We would also do well to remember Proverbs 24:10: **"If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small."**

Let us not be too critical of people in affliction. Rather, let us pray that their faith fail not, and that the trial will make their faith stronger. **"Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed"** (Heb. 12:12-13). God may be pleased to use bodily pain for the spiritual edification of the suffering believer. Behind a frowning providence God often hides a smiling face. We can also be certain of the words of Hebrews 12:11: **"Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."**

In our trials and tribulations in this world we must never presume nor despair. We must not despair, for God is our Helper. We must never presume, for God has the power to slay us. I cannot despair, for I have a God to go to in time of trouble. I can lay my head at night upon the pillow of Omnipotence. While I cling to

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God and keep my faith in Him, it will be fine day or night, whether it rains, hails, or the sun shines. **“But mine eyes are unto thee, O GOD the Lord: in thee is my trust; leave not my soul destitute”** (Ps. 141:8).

THE WORTH OF TRUST

Pure trust in God is the highest expression of faith. It is to wholly commit yourself to His sovereign goodness and loving-kindness. Let God govern; let Him hasten; let Him delay; let Him accelerate; let Him retard. Let us fear neither men nor angels, but let us trust in God's good pleasure. Whether in sunshine or shadow, in honor or dishonor, never lose your confidence in Almighty God. **“What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee”** (Ps. 56:3).

To trust in God is a high honor done to God, and it brings blessing upon us. **“They that trust in the LORD shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever”** (Ps. 125:1). **“Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.... Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in Him; and he shall bring it to pass”** (Ps. 37:3,5). We can never trust God too much, nor creatures too little. **“It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes”** (Ps. 118:8-9). We can trust in a God that does as He pleases and Who will do whatever He has promised.

Faith is the remedy before a remedy in all kinds of evils. In the life of a true believer there are times when the heavens seem as brass. His joy in God is interrupted, the testimony of the Spirit is suspended, and the light of God's countenance is eclipsed. He seems to walk in darkness and fear grips his soul. It is then he must trust in the mercy, wisdom, power, and goodness of God. **“Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God”** (Isa. 50:10). In times of darkness let us stay upon the covenant promises of God and hope in them. Even though we are ready to sink in despair, we will find enough in God to stay ourselves upon.

The mountains and the perpetual hills (Hab. 3:16) may be shaken by an earthquake, but God's covenant promises are never broken by the shock of any event on earth. **“For the**

mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee” (Isa. 54:10). We can trust a God who made an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure.

DON'T QUESTION GOD

We must trust God for every thing temporal and spiritual. **“Trust in him at all times...”** (Ps. 62:8). **“Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths”** (Prov. 3:5-6). We must never doubt God, or question His dealings with us. We can set no limits on God's actions. Let Him do what seems to Him good. Even when we come to dark chapters in the book of Divine providence, we must not let our faith waver. God cannot err. His actions are always wise and holy. He does all things right.

“There is a story, in Swedish history, of a king who was mad with rage; and, in his madness, sent for one of his prisoners to be brought before him. Then the king drew his dagger, and passed it through the arm of his victim; and the poor wounded man just drew the dagger out, kissed it, and gave it back to the brutal hand which had smitten him. Now, hating such loyalty, as I do, yet how one wonders at the passionate beauty of that deed! Marveling that the man could worship such a creature, yet how perfect was his loyalty to him! That man might have written, *Though Thou slay me, yet will I trust in Thee.* It was the king's dagger that struck him, and he was the king's subject, so he just drew out the dagger, kissed the bloody blade, and gave it back” (*The Authentic Gospel* by G. Dawson, p. 269).

“Forty-three years ago, four men were left to starve on a southern isle, whither they had gone in hope of preaching the Gospel to some of the lowest savages which the earth contains. Three of them slowly died of hunger; the fourth, Captain Allan Gardiner, survived them in a prolongation of agony. When the winter was over a ship touched on that bleak shore, and his remains were found near the entrance of the cave which had given rude shelter. Can you imagine a lot more lonely or horrible? Here was a noble and holy man, filled with the burning and the sole desire to make known the love of Jesus Christ to the miserable Fuegians, and God allowed him to starve to death in lonely anguish on a desert isle. And did his faith fail in that extremity of horror? Not for one

moment. At the entrance of the cave, in red paint, he had painted a rude hand pointing downward, and under it the words, ‘My soul, trust thou still upon God.’ The diary containing his last words, is written with the sunshine of joy and peace in God. The very last words which Allen Gardiner wrote in his diary were these: ‘I know not how to thank my gracious God for His marvelous loving kindness’” (*The Great Texts of the Bible*, Vol. 3, pp. 47-48).

Many a dear saint has departed this world with the words of Job 13:15: **“Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.”** The hymn writer, Electroress Louise Henriette von Oranien (1667) chose for her funeral oration Job 13:15. A near relative of my wife died some months ago. As her spirit was departing this world, she several times repeated: **“Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.”**

When I come to face the valley of the shadow of death may God give me the courage to say with my last breath, “Oh, Jesus, your mercy and grace have never failed me. I have found You ever present in all my extremities. Slay me, yet I will trust in Thee.”

There is much in God's moral government over the world that is unfathomable to the carnal mind. If a man wants to stumble at God's ways, he can easily find some stumbling stones. The godly man sees difficulties in God's providence as well as the infidel. Yet he has such a deep and abiding love for God that he cannot believe Him guilty of unkindness, much less unjust. He believes God's wisdom overrules all for his good and God's glory.

THE GLORY OF THIS TRUTH

First, the worse thing that God can do for any person is to leave him alone. It would be far better for the Lord to slay me than to leave me to die in my sins. Better to be in the hands of God in death than alive and in the hands of Satan.

Second, faith has its sure reward. It brings peace of mind to man in this troubled world. In a storm the Blue Bird finds his house and the Robin his nest. The dove in Noah's day returned to the ark for rest. When human comforts afford no rest for a troubled heart, it can find its rest in God. Holy confidence in God shall not lose its reward.

Third, the slaying of the old man is the very condition in which faith is born. In regeneration we pass from death unto life (John 5:24). By faith we see our old man dying with Christ at Calvary. **“Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord”**

(Rom. 6:11).

Fourth, faith in God in suffering proves we are not hypocrites (Job 13:15-16). What hypocrite would trust a God who would slay him? Job proved he was no mercenary. He was a disinterested servant of God. Holy trust in God shuts the Devil's mouth and makes him a liar. Triumphant faith puts the Devil to shame.

Fifth, faith may have many fiery trials. It may be severely assaulted, and sometimes appear to tremble, but it can never be overthrown. Christ told Peter: **ra:”But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not...”** (Luke 22:32). John tells us: **“For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith”** (I John 5:4).

CONCLUSION

1. Though possessions vanish, though friend prove untrue, though our health may be gone, though we sink into the valley of death, yet we must never lose faith in our God. **“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me”** (Ps. 23:4).

2. Though the waves of trouble roll over our heads, we must believe that God always does right. He must ever be the object of our affection and praise. **“Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stall: Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation”** (Hab. 3:17-18).

3. In our dying hour we must trust in the Lord who will slay us.

4. Christ trusted in God even though the Father poured out His soul unto death. When Christ was dying upon the cross His enemies said of Him: **“He trusted in God”** (Matt. 27:43). When Christ had finished the work of redemption He committed His spirit to the Father: **“Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit”** (Luke 23:46). Although forsaken of God in His darkest hour, our Lord never lost faith in His God.

5. Sinner, I have declared to you a God you can trust in with certainty. You should say, “Though I go to Hell I will trust in Jesus Christ. I will cling to Him with such might that if I go to Hell He will go with me. If I hold Him fast, Hell will be no Hell, if He is there with me. He is my only hope of eternal salvation.”





Readers of the BBB are urged to submit religious news items which they may read in their local paper or some other publication. In sending these please give the name of the publication as well as the date it was printed. We will not be able to print all which are submitted, but we welcome any item you may feel we should read. Send them to The Berea Baptist Banner, PO Box 39, Mantachie, MS 38855-0039.

CC

IT'S ONLY MONEY

The federal government keeps billions of dollars—much of it taxes collected by the IRS—in back accounts that draw no interest. Banks turn around and invest much of these deposits in U.S. treasury bills, on which the government frequently pays more than 9 percent interest. Incredibly, the government is paying the banks to borrow back its own money. (*Spotlight via. Straight Talk 8/02*).

ABORTION, DEATH RATE ARE LINKED IN NEW STUDY

Scientists continue to research and churn out studies on the health consequences of abortion, but their mixed results have historically served mainly as fodder in the highly emotional debate.

The August issue of the British Medical Journal reports that women who have abortions are more likely to die in the years following the procedure than women who give birth.

Researchers examined death records linked to payments for births and abortions for approximately 73,000 low-income California women. Those who had abortions were almost twice as likely to die in the following two years.

“During the first four years, higher rates of death from suicide and heightened risk-taking behavior were the most pronounced area of difference,” said the study’s lead author, Dr. David C. Reardon. He is the director of the Elliot Institute, which studies the aftereffects of abortion on women.

Though this is not the first study to contradict the prevailing view that abortion can be safer for a woman than giving birth, it did yield a surprising finding. Of women who had abortions, the heightened death rate remained over a period of eight years—a 154 percent higher risk of death from suicide, an 82 percent higher risk of death from accidents and a 44 percent higher risk of death from natural causes.

The bulk of research on the topic—like a study published in the Aug. 20 issue of the American Journal of Orthopsychiatry—has focused on the mental health aftereffects of abortion, such as the reported tendency toward depression, self-destructive behavior and other emotional problems aggravated by the abortion experience.

Statistician Iain Murray of the

nonpartisan, Washington-based Statistical Assessment Service insists studies linking abortion and mortality rate are based on faulty science. “Statistics are used in the [abortion] debate like stolen lightning,” said Mr. Murray, a conservative who called the study in the British Medical Journal more evidence of “scaremongering” coming from the pro-life movement.

His complaint is that Dr. Reardon and his research team did not take into account marital status. “The single biggest predictor of a woman suffering violence is her marital status.”

“If the researchers had found that a married woman who had had an abortion was more likely to die than a married woman who had not, or, more significantly, an unmarried woman who had not, then that would be something worth paying attention to. As it is, this study is not a particularly useful contribution to the debate,” Mr. Murray said. (*National Weekly Edition* September 16-22, 2002)

ENRON-STYLE GOVERNMENT: The supposed national economic success during Bill Clinton’s last two years as President may have been a total fabrication by government bureaucrats, according to statistics buried in a new Commerce Department report. Columnist Robert Novak revealed last week that the report shows major discrepancies between the federal government’s economic figures announced during the run-up to the 2000 elections and the new, revised figures in the report. For the four quarters of 1999, the Clinton Commerce Department wrongly overestimated corporate profits by a substantial 11, 12, 15 and 18%. Even more striking are the discrepancies for the four quarters of election year 2000, which were inflated by 23, 26, 30 and 28%. (*Human Events*, Aug. 12, 2002).

NORTH KOREA TOPS GROUP'S PERSECUTION LIST

For the first time, North Korea has replaced Saudi Arabia as the country where Christians are most severely persecuted, according to Open Doors’ “World Watch List” released last month. The World Watch List, released twice each year, ranks countries according to the level of persecution Christians face for following Jesus Christ. For years, Saudi

Arabia had held the top spot on the list. But reports have grown of oppression in North Korea. Observers claim the communist dictatorship of Kim Jong II is intent on eradicating all belief systems other than the worship of Kim himself and his deceased father, Kim II Sung. (*Western Recorder*, Sept. 17, 2002).

911 DIDN'T IMPROVE AMERICANS' SPIRITUALITY

VENTURA, Calif. (ABP)—Last year’s terrorist attacks had no lasting impact on America’s religious practices, according to pollster George Barna.

About half of Americans surveyed by the Barna Research Group said their faith was important in helping them deal with events of Sept. 11.

One fourth of all adults said it was the “single most important resource” they have relied on, and 23 percent said their faith was “one of several important resources” that helped them deal with the tragedy.

Church attendance spiked for several weeks after Sept. 11, but it was a short-lived revival. By November, attendance levels were no different than before the attacks.

The Barna Research Group found little or no change in the last year over the percentage of Americans who read their Bible regularly (41 percent), attended church (43 percent), or pray (83 percent). The percentage of unchurched Americans remained constant at 33 percent.

Some theorized that the attacks might serve as a spiritual wake-up call for Americans, leading to a religious revival. But Barna said he found no statistically significant change in religious practice in the past 12 months.

Just 12 percent of Americans said the terrorist attacks had any impact on their religious faith.

“I was among those who fully expected to see an intense spiritual reaction to the terrorist attacks,” said Barna, an evangelical Christian. “The fact that we saw no lasting impact from the most significant act of war against our country on our own soil says something about the spiritual complacency of the American public.” (*Western Recorder*, Sept. 10, 2002).

GLEANINGS HERE AND THERE

PARIS, France (EP)—Could Europe again be awash in anti-Semitism? The Religious Liberty Conference of the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) says anti-Semitic attacks are on the rise on the European continent. Attacks have been reported from the Ukraine to England; France leads the statistics with over 350 attacks this year alone. Elizabeth Kendal, moderator of the conference wrote, “The World Jewish Congress charges that while the majority of violent anti-Semitic attacks in Europe have been perpetrated by Muslims, it is Europe’s social and intellectual elites that have made Jews and

the Jewish state the targets of an intense campaign of public vilification and demonizing. The WJC insist that these elites have helped create the present climate where anti-Semitism—cloaked of course behind a self-righteous indignation over Israeli policy—is somehow acceptable and even justifiable. Once again Europe is facing a moral testing and the way this issue of rising anti-Semitism is handled will certainly direct the future of the continent that some 50 years ago said, ‘Never again!’”

LEIPZIG, Germany (EP)—Europe will become a post-Christian society within the next 30 years, reports Idea News Agency. Idea quoted Paul Rajashekar, dean of Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, as saying that the decline of Christianity in Europe is mainly due to the devaluation of the Bible within Western culture. Rajashekar estimated that by 2025, less than one-fifth of the world’s Christians will live in Europe. In contrast, the growth of Christianity in the Southern Hemisphere, notably in Africa, reflects the acceptance the people there have toward the Bible as the Word of God, said Rajashekar. He estimated that within 30 years, half of the world’s Christians will live in Latin America and Africa—an increase of over 30 percent since the turn of the 20th century.

PRESIDENT BUSH NOT AFRAID TO MAKE FAITH PART OF HIS PUBLIC MOTIVATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP)—George Bush is the most publicly faith-embracing president the nation has had in several generations. The *Christian Science Monitor* reported that half way through this administration, “Bush’s religious beliefs are emerging as a central influence in his policy and politics, inextricably linked to everything from the war on terrorism to the November elections.”

The *Monitor* noted that while invoking the name of God is something presidents have done since the founding of the nation, President Bush has outdone most in making his faith in God public. Part of this was thrust on him as a result of the 9-11 terrorist attacks—a horrific episode in our national history that caused even the most jaded to turn their minds (if not their hearts) toward God.

But for Bush, whose morning regimen includes Bible reading and prayer, “faith extends beyond the national catharsis of the moment,” reported the *Monitor*. “By his own admission, his religious views shape much of who he is and, by extension, experts say, some of his most important decision making.”

Marshall Wittman, former legislative director for the Christian Coalition, pointed out that Bush has given faith a significant role in public debate. Wittman told the *Monitor* that Bush is “perhaps the

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first modern president who actually sees policy applications" for his beliefs.

Some of the issues have given Bush the opportunity to demonstrate how faith in God can guide a leader's stand. One is Bush's position on human embryo stem-cell research, which he came to with the help of scientific experts and Christian leaders whom he respected. Bush finally decided to allow federal funding for research only on existing lines of stem cells. The *Monitor* quoted Richard Land, president of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission for the Southern Baptist Convention, as saying of Bush, "I don't think there's any question that his faith was absolutely determinative in his decision making." Land himself consulted with the Bush administration on the stem-cell issue.

But Bush has also used his presidency to promote his own faith agenda. His "White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives," which seeks to increase the role of faith groups in providing welfare and other services using government money, is one example, part of what Bush sees as the role of "compassionate conservatives."

On no other front has Bush's expression of faith in God been greater than in the war on terrorism since the 9-11 attacks. Conservative Christians have responded to his leadership, noted the *Monitor*. "Many religious conservatives have publicly said it's providential that Bush is president at this moment and, given his past comments about divine plans superseding human ones, it's possible he shares this opinion," reported the paper.

It is certain that Bush has responded to the warmth and support of evangelical Christians, as in this comment he made at an Hispanic prayer breakfast in May, "I often tell people that if you want to respond to what has happened to our country, you can do so with prayer, but, as importantly, you can do so by loving your neighbor like you'd like to be loved yourself."

White House spokesman Air Fleischer told the *Monitor*, "Faith influences the president in that it helps make up his character and his judgments, and his policy decisions are based on his character and his judgments."

Conservative Christian commentator Gary Bauer said that he is certain Bush's view of the war has been informed by his faith. The *Monitor* quoted Bauer as saying, "Many people will point to his faith-based initiative as evidence of how faith has influenced policy, but I think I would point to the war on terrorism and the fact that he's most comfortable talking about the war in terms of good and evil." According to Bauer, Bush's words are

"very consistent with an evangelical worldview," along with his deep conviction that the nation is blessed and protected by God.

PLEDGE FATHER FILES SUIT TO BRING END TO CONGRESSIONAL CHAPLAINS

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP)—Michael Newdow, the California doctor who sued to remove the words "under God" from the Pledge of Allegiance, has filed a suit to prohibit U. S. House and Senate chaplains from ministering to members of Congress. The *Washington Post* reported that Newdow filed a lawsuit in federal district court challenging the constitutionality of taxpayer-funded chaplain programs. He named all of Congress and James M. Eagen III, chief administrator of Congress, as defendants.

Newdow told the *Post*, "If congressmen want to go to church, [then they should] walk down the block like other Americans do and go to church. Don't get my government engaged in it. There are some people who don't love God Almighty."

The *Post* reported that Newdow is on "a crusade to take God out of government. He wants the words 'In God We Trust' off money, presidents to quit talking about God at their inaugurations, and members of Congress to be prohibited from offering resolutions in the House and Senate talking about God."

Newdow, who says he "absolutely denies the existence of any Supreme Being," said he applied for the positions of House and Senate chaplains, but was turned down.

The *Post* noted that Congress has retained paid chaplains since 1789. They earn as much as \$147,000 per year to lead prayers, offer spiritual counsel to members, and perform other religious tasks.

AUSTRALIA'S PARLIAMENT REJECTS AMENDMENT TO PRESERVE TRADITIONAL DEFINITION OF MARRIAGE

SIDNEY, Australia (EP)—The upper house of the New South Wales Parliament of Australia recently rejected amendments to the Miscellaneous Acts Amendment (Relationships) Bill 2002 which were written to preserve the traditional definition of marriage.

According to Mark Payne of that country's Anglican Church, the Church is concerned that the government intends to redefine the term "spouse" to include partners to all de facto relationships and same sex relationships, as well as the traditional meaning of male and female married persons.

"We can only conclude that it is intended to undermine the traditional understanding of the marriage relationship," said Payne. "This has occurred without any community consultation or debate about the significance of this redefinition. Our

concern is that this legislation is the first step to change by stealth the community understanding of the marriage relationship, and ultimately to erode marriage so that it is generally seen as equal to de facto relationships and same-sex unions."

Payne said that the goal of the Miscellaneous Acts Amendment is to give partners to de facto and same-sex relationships similar rights to those of married couples. The Anglican Church is not opposed to the bill, said Payne, but opposed to the government attempting to classify same-sex and heterosexual unions as the same.

"In conjunction with our Roman Catholic colleagues, the Anglican Church suggested to the Attorney General and the Shadow Attorney General that the term 'spouse' be given the traditional meaning in the legislation, and that another term be used to describe parties in a de facto relationship," Payne said. Unfortunately our suggestion was not adopted."

LOS ANGELES (EP)—A court of appeals has ruled that government agencies in California are not permitted to open their meetings with sectarian prayer. Using such invocations as the name of Jesus at the beginning of government meetings violates the constitutional separation of church and state, the court said. The ruling does not prohibit clergy or others from offering general invocations. The ruling came after two men—a Jew and a Christian—sued the city of Burbank over the issue. "Religion doesn't belong in City Hall—it belongs in the churches, mosques and synagogues," said attorney Roger Diamond, who represented the men. The invocation that prompted the lawsuit was offered by a Mormon minister at a November 1999 City Council meeting. The minister concluded his prayer, "We are grateful, heavenly father, for all that thou hast poured out on us, and we express our gratitude and our love in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen."

PRESIDENT SIGNS BILL PROTECTING BABIES WHO SURVIVE ABORTIONS

PITTSBURGH (EP)—President Bush signed the "Born Alive Infants Protection Act" August 5. The bill, which was passed by unanimous consent in the Senate on July 18 and by a voice vote in the House of Representatives in March, stipulates that every infant born alive is guaranteed full rights under federal law, even if the birth was the result of an incomplete abortion.

The new law defines the term "born alive" as "the complete expulsion or extraction from his or her mother of [a human being], at any stage of development, who after such expulsion or extraction breathes or has a beating heart, pulsation of the umbilical cord, or

definite movement of voluntary muscles, regardless of whether the umbilical cord has been cut, and regardless of whether the expulsion or extraction occurs as a result of natural or induced labor, cesarean section, or induced abortion." The legislation does not address the issue of partial-birth abortions, in which a baby is partially delivered from the mother before being killed by the abortionist.

"The issue of abortion divides Americans, no question about it," Bush noted. "Yet today we stand on common ground. The Born Alive Infants Protection Act establishes a principle in American law and American conscience: There is no right to destroy a child who has been born alive. A child who is born has intrinsic worth and must have the full protection of our laws."

Bush explained that the law he was signing "assures that every infant born alive, including an infant who survives an abortion procedure, is considered a person under federal law."

One baby to live through an abortion was Gianna Jessen, now a young woman who travels the country telling her story and speaking out on pro-life issues. In 1977, Jessen survived an attempted saline abortion, a horrific procedure that both poisons the pre-born baby, as well as burns her body with a concentrated salt solution. Jessen was in attendance at the signing of the legislation, as was Jill Stanek, a nurse who exposed the abortion clinic practice of allowing infants to die who were born as the result of faulty abortion procedures.

"Today, through sonograms and other technology, we can clearly see that unborn children are members of the human family as well," said Bush. "They reflect our image, and they are created in God's own image. The Born-Alive Infants Protection Act is a step toward the day when every child is welcomed in life and protected in law."

Rep. Steve Chabot (R-Ohio), chairman of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, introduced the bill after Congress received reports that babies born as the result of botched abortions were being allowed to die. During debate on the floor of the House, Chabot said, "According to eyewitness accounts, live-birth abortions are being performed on healthy infants as late as the 23rd week of pregnancy and beyond, that suffer from non-fatal deformities resulting in live-born premature infants who are simply allowed to die, sometimes without the provision of warmth or nutrition."

Chabot said that his subcommittee was told horror stories about "a living infant who was found in a soiled utility closet, another who was found naked on the edge of a sink, and another infant who... was wrapped in a disposable towel and thrown in the trash, only to be later found after falling out of the towel and onto the floor."

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The National Abortion rights League (NARAL), which had opposed the bill when it was originally introduced in 2000 by then-Rep. Charles Canady (R-Fla.), calling it an assault on the "basic tenets of *Roe v. Wade*," did not oppose it this time, saying that its passage would not undermine 1973 *Roe v. Wade* ruling.

Similarly, some pro-abortion congressmen supported the bill, including Rep. Jerrold Nadler (D-N.Y.). Nadler discounted the eyewitness accounts of babies left to die, saying during floor debate, "I support the bill simply to put at rest the fevered apprehensions about nonexistent threats. . . . It is a harmless bill. It is a bill that does nothing, but is harmless."

But Kenneth Connor, president of Family Research Council, a Washington, D.C.-based public policy organization, argued that passage of the bill was a key move in pro-life efforts "to roll back the abortion-on-demand regime created by the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision. The law makes it clear that a woman's right to an abortion does not guarantee the right to a dead baby. A child who survives an abortion and manages to be born will be protected—even if his or her birth was not intended or desired."

Connor said that the same logic that led to the passage of the Born Alive Infants Protection Act should be employed to ban partial birth abortion. Such a bill has passed the House, but has limited chances of passage in the Senate. "The only difference between the Born Alive Act and the effort to ban partial birth abortion is a matter of inches," said Connor. "If a baby deserves the full protection of the law at the instant of her birth, how can we deny those same protection at the very moment she emerges into the world? Surely 'location' ought not to be dispositive of the issue of personhood. Objectively, it's the same baby. Only the baby's location has changed."

Connor pointed out that abortion advocates "worry that any limitations on abortion will ultimately erode abortion rights. They're right. They oppose any legal recognition of the personhood of the unborn at any stage of development through viability and at the very instant of birth. With today's presidential action, that position will be much harder to defend."

SCHOOL VOUCHER LAW FALLS IN FLORIDA RULING

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (EP)—A state circuit judge in Florida has shot down that state's school voucher law, ruling that the state constitution forbids the use of tax money to send children to religious schools. The ruling by State Circuit Judge P. Kevin Davey, which came with only a few weeks until school starts in the state,

left 46 students attending private schools under the program wondering if they will be forced to return to public schools. Prior to the ruling, state education officials had said that the parents of several hundred children had notified the state they planned to use the vouchers for the 2002-03 school year.

Gov. Jeb Bush promised that the state will appeal the ruling and try to prevent it from effecting the plans of those families wishing to use vouchers this year. "It's not fair to the parents who make these decisions," Bush said. "They think it's the best choice for their children, and then to have that yanked out." Gov. Bush had pointed to the 1999 law as one of his administration's major accomplishments. Under the law, students attending public schools that earn a failing grade two years out of four are eligible for vouchers to attend private schools, including religious institutions.

Davey's decision comes a little over a month after the U. S. Supreme Court ruled that vouchers funded with tax dollars do not constitute a violation of the separation of church and state. In the June 27 decision, the High Court justices upheld an Ohio voucher law, ruling that state money could be spent on religious schools if parents were free to choose among a variety of private school options, both religious and secular.

Davey, however, contended that Florida's constitution gives a "clear and unambiguous" prohibition of the channeling of public money to churches or other "sectarian institutions." In his decision he wrote, "While this court recognizes and empathizes with the . . . purpose of this legislation—to enhance the educational opportunity of children caught in the snare of substandard schools—such a purpose does not grant this court authority to abandon the clear mandate of the people as enunciated in the constitution."

The 1999 law was challenged by a coalition of groups and individuals, including the Florida Education Association, the Florida PTA, and the Florida League of Women Voters.

In the first three years of the program, 46 students at two failing Pensacola elementary schools had opted to use vouchers at five private schools. For the upcoming school year nearly 9,000 students from 10 substandard public schools throughout the state were eligible for vouchers, and at least 350 students were in line to use the vouchers at private institutions.

Barry Lynn, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, said that Davey's decision "shows that the battle over vouchers is far from over. I expect to see similar decisions against vouchers in state courts around the country." Similar voucher programs are currently underway in Cleveland, Ohio and

Milwaukee, Wis.

NATION'S "GODLESS AMERICANS" PLAN MARCH ON WASHINGTON, D. C.

WASHINGTON, D. C. (EP)—Americans who think there is too much focus on God and faith in America, particularly since Sept. 11 of last year, are planning a Nov. 2 "Godless Americans March on Washington." Over 70 atheist, secularist, and humanist individuals and organizations across the nation are planning to participate in the event at the Mall in the nation's capital. Included will be such groups as the Council for Secular Humanism, African Americans for Humanism, American Atheists, and the Atheist Alliance International.

Ellen Johnson, chair of the task force coordinating the event, said, "Just about every other political or social 'cause' group, from women to African Americans to the Promise Keepers, has taken a stand there, on the Mall, in our nation's capital. They've demanded 'a place at the tale,' a role in public policy decision making a voice in the great discussion called democracy. This march is for us—not the religious folks who happen to agree with us, on some occasions, with the idea of church-state separation. This is about our rights as Godless Americans."

Cybercast News Service (CNS) quoted Katherine Bourdonnay of the Council for Secular Humanism as saying, "We are participating in this march to reclaim the American nation as a secular nation because we feel it's being moved more and more to a religious nation." She declared that America "was founded as a secular nation with a distinct separation of church and state."

But Ray Sharp of the American Family Association said that the nation has actually moved from its Godly roots to an increasingly Godless tilt—a shift that does not reflect the true sentiments of a majority of Americans. Quoting James Madison's famous declaration that religious faith is the "basis and foundation of government," he said that government and religion "have always been intertwined since the founding of this nation, especially when you look at the many, many quotes from our Founding Fathers in which they relied on God for the establishment of our nation."

Sharp said that the increase in focus on spiritual things among Americans since Sept. 11 is due to the "recognition that Christianity is well entwined in our nation as a whole, and as well in our government. You can't separate the two."

A survey by the American Religious Identification Survey found that approximately 13 percent of the American population identify themselves as atheists—a total of about 30 million people.

DEATH PENALTY OVERTURNED FOR KILLER WHO BECAME A CHRISTIAN

LOS ANGELES, Calif. (EP)—A federal appeals court set aside the death penalty of an Orange County Calif. man convicted of the 1980 murder of a Garden Grove woman. The court ruled Aug. 1 that the judge in the case wrongly encouraged the jury not to consider William Charles Payton's conversion to Christianity before it recommended that he receive the death penalty.

Payton, now 43, was convicted 22 years ago of the rape and murder of 21-year-old Pamela Montgomery, and in March 1982 he was sentenced to death. The *Orange County Register* reported that Payton's attorneys argued that his conversion to Christianity made life without parole a more appropriate sentence than death, since he would likely help other inmates find faith, too.

"The prosecutor incorrectly told the jury that by law it should ignore the conversion, the 9th U. S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled," reported the *Register*. "The trial judge allowed the attorneys to argue what the law said about the matter instead of telling the jury the correct interpretation of the law, the justices wrote."

In its 6-5 decision, the appeals court ruled that the trial judge "not only failed to correct a critical misstatement of the law, but also effectively instructed the jury to consider the prosecutor's erroneous legal position." The appeals court noted that the U. S. Constitution requires that when a jury is deciding a death penalty case, it must weigh all relevant evidence, including the convict's behavior while he is in jail.

In 1992, the California Supreme Court ruled that Payton had received a fair trial, in spite of the remarks by the prosecutor to the jury. In June 1999, a U. S. District Court Judge overturned Payton's death sentence, ruling that the prosecutor's remarks prevented Payton from getting a fair trial. But in 2001, the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals reinstated Payton's death sentence.

According to the *Register*, "Lorraine Rhoads of Huntington Beach, a juror at Payton's 1982 trial, has said that she and other jurors did consider Payton's religious conversion when deciding on whether to recommend the death penalty, and reasoned that if he had found God then he was ready to go to Heaven."

JURY RULES STATE UNLAWFULLY REPRIMANDED BIBLE READING EMPLOYEES

ST. PAUL, Minn. (EP)—A federal jury ruled Aug. 1 that officials of the Minnesota Department of Corrections acted unlawfully when they reprimanded two correctional employees for reading their Bibles during state-mandated training sessions on diversity and homosexuality.

The nine-person jury in the U. S. District Court in St. Paul took three days

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to determine that the state's corrections department had discriminated against the employees based on their religious beliefs, and had also violated the free speech and equal protection guaranteed to them by the Second Amendment to the U. S. Constitution. The jury awarded the employees more than \$78,000, including \$60,000 for punitive damages.

DALLAS, (EP)—The American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ) filed suit August 1 against the independent school district of Highland Park, a Dallas suburb, over a policy which prohibits employees from sending e-mail messages containing religious content. The suit was filed on behalf of LaDonna DeVore, who had sent an April 30 message throughout the school district's e-mail system concerning President Bush's national day of prayer proclamation. According to the suit, district officials threatened to suspend DeVore's e-mail privileges if she used the system to send any more religious messages, which they called "inappropriate." The school district policy, which allows employees to e-mail both work-related and private messages but bans "religious worship" or "proselytizing," is unconstitutional because it unfairly singles out religious content, argued Stuart J. Roth, senior counsel for ACLJ.

SAN FRANCISCO (EP)—The mother of the eight-year-old girl used by her father to ban the Pledge of Allegiance because of its use of the words "under God" has filed a court motion asking that the girl be removed from the case. "I do not wish for my daughter, for the rest of her life to be known as 'the atheist child who hated the pledge,'" the girl's mother, Sandra Banning, said in filing the motion Aug. 5 with the U. S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit in San Francisco. "It is therefore imperative that the court allow the [case] to go forward, if at all, without my daughter as a party." Following the Ninth Circuit Court's June 26 decision against the pledge, Banning publicly acknowledged that she and her daughter are members of a Calvary Chapel evangelical church in Elk Grove, Calif. She said that unlike the girl's atheist father, who filed the suit to ban the Pledge, she and her daughter are Christians and the girl has no objection to reciting the pledge.

MORMONS HAD FASTEST CHURCH GROWTH OVER LAST DECADE, FOLLOWED BY EVANGELICAL DENOMINATIONS

NASHVILLE (EP)—The latest census of U. S. religions, conducted every ten years by a Roman Catholic research

group, found that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormons) and evangelical denominations experienced healthy growth over the last decade, while mainline Protestant denominations suffered some reverses. The survey was conducted by the Glenmary Research Center in Nashville, Tenn., a Catholic organization that coordinates the study with analysts from several faiths. Around 150 faiths participated in the research, sending membership estimates to Glenmary analysts.

According to Glenmary's "Religious Congregations and Membership" study for the year 2000, the Mormon church experienced the most rapid growth over the last ten years, with the Assemblies of God not far behind.

The Roman Catholic Church also experienced solid increases, even while its numbers shifted geographically. The study found that there are now more Catholics in the West than in the traditionally Catholic Midwest, and Catholic numbers in the South grew faster than in the Northeast. Clifford Grammich, who collected Catholic data for the study, told the Associated Press, "that has a lot to do with the growth of the Hispanic population in the United States. How well the church has been holding onto Hispanic Catholics, a study like this can't determine."

For the first time Islam was included in the survey, which found about 1.6 million practicing Muslims throughout the nation. The survey found millions fewer Muslims than have other surveys, and researchers said the lower numbers represented only those Muslims who were actively pursuing their faith in a Mosque, not the total American Muslim population. Estimates of the total number of Muslims nationwide range from 2 million to 6 million.

The census found that the ten largest denominations are: 1) Roman Catholic (62,035,042 adherents); 2) Southern Baptist Convention (19,881,467); 3) United Methodist Church (10,350,629); 4) Jewish (6,141,325); 5) Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (5,113,418); 6) Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (4,224,026); 7) Presbyterian Church, USA (3,141,566); 8) Assemblies of God (2,561,998); 9) Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (2,521,062); 10) Episcopal Church (2,314,756).

WASHINGTON, D. C. (EP)—An annual survey of the most bizarre and politically correct college courses in the nation has uncovered some classics to add to the curriculum of the outlandish. The survey, conducted by Young America's Foundation, found the following courses being taught in the nation's public and private institutions: "Cultural History of Rap" (UCLA); "Philosophy and Star Trek" (Georgetown University); "Seeing

Queerly: Queer Theory, Film, and Video" (Brown University); "Language and Sexual Diversity" (University of Minnesota); "Black Feminism" (University of Missouri); and "Ecofeminism" (University of Florida). Rick Parsons, author of the study, told the *Washington Times* that many colleges and universities no longer require courses in such foundational liberal arts subjects as American history or Western civilization. "We're not saying that these courses should be banned," he told the *Times*. "The point here is that by offering these kinds of courses, the universities are taking away resources from traditional courses that could be taught, like American history."

MONTPELIER, Vt. (EP)—Sen. Patrick Leahy (R-Vt.) suggested that the deaths from West Nile virus, a mosquito-borne infection that has claimed the lives of more than 40 people in the U.S. this year, could be the result of a biological weapons testing program. "I think we have to ask ourselves: Is it coincidence that we're seeing such an increase in West Nile virus, or is it something that's being tested as a biological weapon against us?" said Leahy during an appearance on a Vermont radio program. "There are some people, credibly, who feel it is a test of our defenses and is a biological weapon." In a statement issued by his office after he made the comments, Leahy said no specific evidence exists that the West Nile outbreak has been linked to terrorist activity.

LAHORE, Pakistan (EP)—Security officials with the Pakistani government have recommended that church leaders take action to protect themselves from terrorist attacks by Muslim militants. Two terrorists attacks in August on Christian institutions—one on the Murree Christian School and the other at a Christian hospital—have led the government to advise Christians to arm themselves. One Pakistani Christian told *Compass News Service*, "It's their way of saying, 'We cannot protect you. You will have to protect yourselves.'" *Compass* reported that less than five percent of Pakistan's population are Christians. Churches and institutions that are identified as either Christian or Western are now targets of terrorists and the government claims that it lacks the manpower to protect them. The government has suggested that each institution should "get gun licenses, hire and train guards, and instruct its congregation and staff on how to respond in case of attack," reported *Compass*. Said one pastor, "They are almost forcing us to go and buy guns. . . . Before, it was very difficult for a Christian to even get a gun license, but now every church can get up to four."

EAST LANSING, Mich.—Jessie

Jackson on Sept. 15 told about 600 Michigan State University students that America's democracy was 37 years old, not 200-plus, and that "democracy as we know it did not begin in Philadelphia, where a bunch of white men wrote the laws."

"These men's wives were not allowed [to vote], these laws were made at a time when only white men had the right to vote," Mr. Jackson said, noting that the Voting Rights Act of 1965 was the commencement of "true democracy."

Speaking at the Jack Breslin Student Events center, Mr. Jackson also used his platform at what organizers called a "Rally for Peace" to continue his criticism of Republican leaders, focusing on President Bush.

SURVEY CONCLUDES RELIGIOUS YOUTH LESS LIKELY TO BE AT RISK

Forget detention. The best way to keep teenagers out of trouble may be to send them to church, a study shows.

The report, released last week by the National Study of Youth and Religion, compared the religious belief and behaviors of 2,478 12th-graders. Researchers asked seniors how often they attended religious services, how much importance they gave religion, how many years they had participated in religious youth groups and what their religious preference was.

"The report demonstrates that religion among U.S. 12-th-graders is positively related to participation in constructive youth activities," says Christian Smith, the principal investigator in the study. "Those who participate in religious activities seem to be less likely to be involved in many delinquent and risk behaviors."

Mr. Smith's team of researchers analyzed data from *Monitoring the Future*, a survey administered yearly to a nationally representative group of students in eighth, 10th and 12th grades.

The report said 61 percent of non-churchgoing seniors had used illegal drugs in the previous 12 months. Among students who frequently attended religious services, the number dropped to 39 percent. Frequent churchgoers also were less likely to sell drugs or have drugs offered to them.

Alcohol and tobacco use also was lower among religious youths. Of those who reported going to church at least once a week, 11.9 percent said they smoked regularly, compared with 30.1 percent among non-churchgoers.

Almost half of those who attend services weekly say they never have been drunk, while about 28 percent of those who never go to church make the same claim. Seniors who rate religion as "very important" in their lives are less than half as likely to intoxicate themselves as those who say religion is not important.

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Religious seniors are more likely to stay on the straight and narrow in other areas as well.

They are less likely to be involved in theft and violence, are less likely to get speeding tickets and don't skip school or receive suspensions as frequently as other youths. They don't argue with their parents as much, and they are 10 percent to 14 percent more likely to exercise regularly or play sports.

Of the 30 different behaviors examined, all but one related significantly to religion. The differences remained even when researchers controlled for race, education, place of residence and other variables.

The report, prepared by researchers at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, examines data collected in 1996. It is part of a four-year study seeking to understand the influence of religion and spirituality on American teens (*The Washington Times*).

BOUGHT WITH YOUR MONEY

Karl Marx said "spend them to death." What better way for Communism to win? Or for the misguided egalitarians dedicated to redistributing all the wealth and making us all "equal?" Or for the fools obsessed with a "new world order" with one citizenship, one nation, one debt, one army, one church, and one firing squad? If we are to remain free, and solvent, we-the-people must rebel and throw Big Brother off our backs. The men of old were brave and bold and bared their necks to axes; the men today do as they're told and meekly pay their taxes." (*Straight Talk*, Sept. 19, 2002)

"Phony earnings, inflated revenues, conflicted Wall Street analysts, directors asleep at the switch—this isn't just a few bad apples we're talking about here. This, my friends, is a systemic breakdown. Nearly every known check on corporate behavior—moral, regulatory, you name it—fell by the wayside, replaced by the stupendous greed that marked the end of the bubble. And that has created a crisis of investor confidence the likes of which hasn't been seen since—well, since the Great Depression." (*Fortune* via *Straight Talk*, Sept. 19, 2002).

Americans gamble \$600 billion a year on lotteries, casinos, horse racing, and bingo, more than they spend on groceries.

52% of the nation's workforce now get paid directly or indirectly by government! (Congressional records). (*Straight Talk*, Sept. 19, 2002).

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received into the membership of the New Hope Baptist Church, Dorsey, Mississippi. Later he joined the First Baptist Church of Mantachie. He made known his call to preach in a revival meeting at the Bethel Baptist Church of Dorsey. The First Baptist Church of Mantachie licensed him to preach at age 16 and he preached his first sermon on March 24, 1957. I believe his first sermon was on the ruinous effects of sin based on the account of the prodigal son. His home church, The First Baptist Church of Mantachie, ordained him on February 27, 1960, the same year he graduated from the Mantachie High School.

His first pastorate was the Big Oak Baptist Church, Dorsey, Mississippi. While there he married Sheron Burcham on June 7, 1960. Brother and Sister Cockrell were blessed with four children, Gayle, Marsha, Christopher, and Derek. Sister Cockrell and the children all reside near Mantachie as does his mother, Sis. Onita Cockrell.

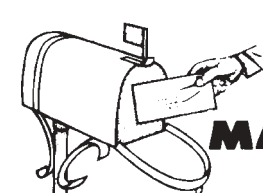
Brother Cockrell pastored Big Oak Baptist Church in Dorsey, Mississippi from 1960 to 1961; Bethel Baptist Church in Saint Clair, Missouri from 1961 to 1965; Emmanuel Baptist Church in Tupelo, Mississippi from 1967 to 1969; First Baptist Church of Henleyfield, Mississippi from 1967 to 1969; Union Grove Baptist Church in Tilden, Mississippi from 1969 to 1975; Calvary Baptist Church of Ashland, Kentucky from 1975 to 1980; Berea Baptist Church of South Point, Ohio from 1980 to 1989; and Berea Baptist Church of Mantachie, Mississippi from 1989 till his death in 2002.

After serving as pastor in many different states, Bro. Cockrell returned to Mantachie and began the pastorate of the Berea Baptist Church in 1989. Having preached for 40 years on various radio broadcasts, at the time of his death the Berea Baptist Broadcast is being aired on 9 stations in the United States and 2 stations in the Philippines. He was a prolific writer and has contributed articles to many Baptist papers. He was editor of *The Baptist Examiner* from 1975 till 1980. He founded and edited *The Berea Baptist Banner*, which, at this time has an international circulation. He edited and published three different editions of *The Berea Baptist Hymnal*. As an author he has left us with many tracts and 19 different books as well as 8 volumes of outline studies. He also left several books prepared for future publication. The funeral service was held at the

McNeece-Morris Funeral Home in Mantachie on September 17, 2002. The singing of the hymn "Beautiful" was lead by Brother Roy Dennison of South Point, Ohio. Elder Bill Mitchell of Williamsburg, Kentucky read the obituary. The congregation sang another hymn titled "Amazing Grace." Elder Roy Mitchell of Corbin, Kentucky then preached the funeral sermon and the graveside service was conducted by Elder Jimmie Davis of Fulton, Mississippi. Pallbearers were Elder Steve Martin of Westpoint, Tennessee, Elder Billy Holbrook of Oblong, Illinois, Elder Garner Smith of Clarksville, Tennessee, Elder Doyal Thomas of Hartselle, Alabama, Elder John Massie of Wayne, West Virginia, Elder Steve Cornett of Brownsburg, Indiana, and Brother Jerry Stanley of Fulton, Mississippi.

Brother Cockrell was greatly loved by his family and his church as well as a host of Brothers and Sisters in Christ around the world. Ever a promoter of foreign and home missions, he was a faithful husband, father, pastor and friend to all those who love the truth. He was a stalwart for the Word of God, standing firm for Biblical truth and practice. He is now and shall be greatly missed.

PERSONAL LETTERS



**FROM
THE
MAILBOX**

ABOUT THE EDITOR

It was sad news indeed that reached our home that Brother Milburn Cockrell had passed away. His course here on earth is finished, and his troubles are over. His life has been lived for the honor and glory of the Lord, as evidenced by a devoted ministry for the cause of Christ for about 45 years. His rest is now glorious, and it will have no end. He loved the Lord Jesus Christ dearly, and his work of faith and labor of love for the Lord proved this beyond any shadow of doubt. He traveled far and wide in his ministry, proclaiming faithfully the great love of Christ for sinners, how He died for sinners, and the full picture of the glorious gospel of Christ. By inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Brother Milburn declared the whole counsel of God, with fervency and joy of heart. He preached the sovereignty of God, full and complete, the Holy Spirit bearing witness, and Jesus Christ displaying the total perfections of His Father. As it was with the Apostle Paul the center of his joy was Jesus Christ and Him

crucified.

Brother Milburn was a man of many endeavors for the Lord. He held countless meetings for churches of like faith and order over much of America. In addition to the work and care of his own flock at Mantachie, he was a very active participant in many, many Bible conferences. This required much travel and much time away from home, and his close-knit beloved family. Wherever he went, he preached the Word of God, in spirit and truth, striving always to please God and not man. He loved the Word and proclaimed it faithfully, no comprise. He will be richly rewarded on high for his extensive efforts to spread the gospel.

Another of his works for the Lord was the publication of this Berea Baptist Banner, which he edited. This paper is the best, in the opinion of many that rolls off the presses anywhere in the United States. Many chores required in the publication of this paper were incumbent upon him, in revolving order, month after month. At this point, we would like to say with heart-felt sincerity that our wishes supported by our prayers are: The Paper must go on! We believe that God will provide the means and way for this to be so. All things are possible with God.

I remember well an incident several years ago, while I was teacher of the adult class at Grace Baptist Church at Ceredo, WV. One Sunday morning the Cockrell family attended our Sunday School class, and I (not knowing the name for the paper he would edit) taught that particular day from Psalms 60:4, "Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth." These words appear at the bottom of the front page of the Berea Baptist Banner. The time of this incident was about 1980, when Brother Cockrell came to the church at Ceredo for membership and authority to organize a church at Cannonsburg, KY. My wife and I believe this is a prime example of the Lord using one of His servants to inspire another, to His own honor and glory; and for our mutual rejoicing. How good and sweet are the memories of our fellowship. My wife and I were members of the Berea Baptist Church at South Point, OH from 1984-89. It was a sad parting for us when he returned to Mantachie in 1989, where he finished his earthly course.

Brother Roy Dennison and I traveled to Mantachie on Monday, September 16th to be a part of the visitation that night; and to attend the funeral on Tuesday, the 17th. It was a

Continued on page 440

Personal Letters

Continued from page 439

very heart-touching service, and the Lord was highly exalted by each speaker. In conclusion, let me say that Brother Cockrell had a very prosperous and successful ministry for the Lord. I fully believe that he knew what it was to abide in Christ and the unspeakable joy that the power of His presence brought to him. His race is now run, his course is now finished, and his seat is now empty. He will be greatly missed by us and by many others. May the Lord comfort the Cockrell family and give each one grace and strength to continue on in the work of the ministry.

Elder John H. Massie
Wayne, WV

COUNTRY PREACHER

I believe in my heart that Bro. Milburn was one of the greatest men of God that ever lived in our time. I would like to tell you why I believe this, and history will bear me out on this; whatever history we have left.

Bro. Milburn wanted to reach as many lost souls as he possibly could on this earth, while he lived, with the Gospel truth of Jesus Christ. He believed in the Chain Link Succession of the Lord's kind of Church. The churches he pastored birthed several churches. He helped ordain several people whom he believed to be God called. He did everything the right way, the Bible way, the way God instructed.

He loved God's truth and never wavered from it. He contended for the faith, and he could not be intimidated. I believe God renewed him and strengthened him every day.

A man needs courage for all of this, and God gave him that courage. Indeed God provided Bro. Milburn with everything he needed to do His work. And Bro. Milburn was the hardest working preacher that I have ever met. A tireless worker for the Lord, he was always studying. Over the years he compiled a wonderful reference library to aid him in his studies. He did not want to err in his preaching, or writing, and as best as I can tell he never did. I am sure many others can bear witness to what I have written.

C. D. S.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Bible Believers Baptist Church, Naples, ID, has called Elder Leroy Pack to be their Pastor. Bro. Pack has accepted the call and moved on the field July 26, 2001. His phone is (208

Notice about the Banner

Many people have called and e-mailed wanting to know the status of the *Banner* and the works here, and wanting to know if things will continue or cease. Those who have called have expressed the need and a desire to see the work continue. We fill as most do that this work is a great work and that the Lord has blessed it. As the Lord provides and makes it possible the *Banner* will continue. Before the editors death, we had been looking at making some changes due to the increase in postage, but nothing has been decided at present. The *Banner* will continue through the end of the year as it is now. Also, the bookstore and other works will continue. Please be in prayer for the church here, and continue praying that the Lord will send another servant to continue His work.

267-4215 and e-mail is
landbpack@mymailstation.com.

The Harvest Missionary Baptist Church, N. Main St., Monticello, KY 42633 began services Sept. 1, 2002, under the authority of Hebron Baptist Church, Salvisa, KY and Pastor George Ed Dye. The new pastor is Elder Wendell P. Furlong.

Services are Sunday at 9:45 a.m. S.S.; 11:00 a.m. worship service, and mid-week Thursday at 6:30 p.m.

BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 7-31-2002 to 8-31-2002

Beginning Balance	\$3,471.68
RECEIPTS:	
A. D. Richardson, Cedarville, WV	100.00
B.C. of Brimfield, Brimfield, IL	24.60
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	200.00
Berea B. C., Westpoint, TN	50.00
Berea M. B. C., Mansfield, OH	50.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL	60.00
Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX	30.00
Bethesda B. C., Tarpon Springs, FL	50.00
Bible B. C., Sullivan, IL	30.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne WV	300.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	125.00
Cedar Grove B. C., Millport, AL	50.00
Central Avenue B. C., Tampa, FL	25.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL	20.00
Dwight Brooks, New Boston, MI	15.00
Edward Clark, Paducah, KY	8.00
Eve Knowles, Scarborough, ME	200.00
Faith B. C., Clarksville, TN	100.00
Faith M. B. C., Lynn, AR	25.00
Gail Knowles, Scarborough, ME	20.00

George W. Martin, McLeansboro., IL	50.00
Gerald Price, Johnson City, TN	25.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
Grace B. M., Marion, IL	25.00
Grace M. B. C., Tulsa, OK	35.00
Helen J. Sturm, Ashland, KY	100.00
Indore B. C., Indore, WV	100.00
John Otis, Agra, KS	100.00
Joseph Jurzec, Lake-in-the-Hills, IL	25.00
Kenneth Weedon, Mabank, TX	53.80
Landmark M. B. C., Moncks Corner, SC	25.00
Landmark S. G. B. C., Ft. Worth, TX	50.00
Larry Ricklefs, Skagway, AK	14.16
Leroy Bullard, Albuquerque, NM	100.00
Letson Farrell, Long Beach, MS	120.00
Meadow Branch B. C., Millport, AL	50.00
Morris St. B. C., Hobbs, NM	300.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH	100.00
New Testament B. C., Bristol, TN	10.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN	50.00
Ocoonita M. B. C., Keokee, VA	40.00
Philadelphia B. C., Aztec, NM	25.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL	50.00
Portland B. C., Plumerville, AR	100.00
Solid Rock B. C., Kenedy, TX	20.00
South Park B. C., Seattle, WA	25.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Columbus, MS	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Fulton, MS	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Galena, OH	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Raleigh, NC	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Silsbee, TX	30.00
The Lord's Church, Goose Creek, SC	100.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA	200.00
Wendell Beall, Cedarville, WV	80.00
Subscriptions	227.00
Anonymous	4.00
Sub Total	\$4,441.56
TOTAL	\$7,913.24

EXPENDITURES:	
Wages	2,375.00
Printing	502.00
Postage	926.14
FICA taxes	181.70
Dividing checks	225.00
Total Expenditures	4,209.84
.....	3,703.40
Bank charge	-19.68
ENDING DEFICIT	\$3,683.72

Coming in the next issue . . .

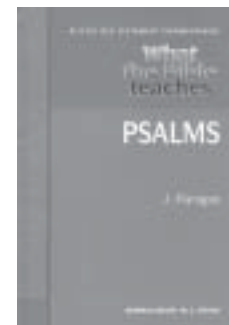
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Slow Growth by Milburn Cockrell
The Fall and Recovery of Man by Christmas Evans

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What the Bible Teaches Bible Commentaries

This is a series of commentaries for serious Bible students. The style is expository and practical without the cryptic jargon that encumbers so many otherwise fine commentaries. All the books in each volume have an introduction, an outline, a bibliography, and a careful verse-by-verse exposition. The writers are different, and therefore some books are better than others. They are premillennial but off on the church question. The Editor thought so much of these that he purchased one of the first sets for himself. Although not infallible, they are in my honest opinion some of the best to come out in many years. Volumes are sold separately, and there is no discount on the set from the publishers. I would buy the one on Acts last as it is the poorest in the set. These are hardcover books of 300 to 500 pages.



Volume 1 (Gal., Eph., Phil., Col., and Phile.)	\$24.99
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Volume 4 (1, 2 Cor.)	\$24.99
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Volume 6 (John)	\$24.99
Volume 7 (Luke)	\$24.99
Volume 8 (Hebrews)	\$24.99
Volume 9 (Acts, James)	\$24.99
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Volume 12 (Genesis)	\$29.99
Volume 13 (Psalms)	\$32.95

For postage on the first add \$2.50 and .50 for each additional book after this. If you buy the whole set, we will ship them to you free. Order from our Bookstore.

BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 7-31-2002 to 8-31-2002

Beginning Balance

Beginning Balance	\$702.03
RECEIPTS	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	100.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	125.00
Berea B. C., West Point, TN	132.00
John Otis, Agra, KS	200.00
Calvary I. B. C., Everson, WA	400.00
Dividing Checks	400.00
.....	1,457.00
TOTAL	2,159.03

EXPENDITURES:	
Radio Time	1022.00
Dividing checks	400.00
Postage	30.60
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	1,452.60
.....	706.43
Bank charge	- 10.00
BALANCE	\$696.43

CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT

Beginning Balance	\$813.32
RECEIPTS	
Total	813.32
EXPENDITURES:	
WCTT	200.00
Total Expenditures	200.00
ENDING BALANCE	\$613.32