

The Berea Baptist Banner

"Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth" Ps. 60:4

After the Election

By Roger Reed
of Mansfield, Ohio

I Samuel 8:1-22

It is amazing to me the more I read the Scripture in the Old Testament the more I see America in them. And the things that are happening now in America are what happened with Israel of old. I think about the Campbellites and other religions that do not use the Old Testament and we can only feel sorry for them because they miss out on the blessings that are found there.

Such it is with this text of Scripture in I Samuel chapter eight. The president has now been in his second



term for less than a year, and has all but destroyed this country. He is a liar, a cheat, and a deceiver of all mankind. He does not care about this country, all that concerns him is the power that he has to do and go anywhere he wants.

It saddens me to think that some of our Baptist people actually voted for him just because of the Democratic Party. It just gives me a sick feeling in our stomach every time I think that there are people in our churches

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The Kingdom that is God's

By Paul Stepp
of Indore, West Virginia

"Then said Samuel to the people, Come, and let us go to Gilgal, and renew the kingdom there" (I Sam. 11:14).

I want to talk about the "kingdom of God." And I want us to consider how important this kingdom is, and how integral it should be in the lives of those that are the children of God. I want us to have a desire to draw nearer unto God, and, in a sense, **"renew the kingdom"** of God in our lives. I want to plant a desire in your hearts that the "kingdom of God" would be renewed in your lives,



and that His place would be a place of honor, prestige, and worship – not just on Sunday mornings, but all week long and all your livelong days.

I want to give you three main thoughts to consider. Firstly, I hope that you will realize, during the course of this message that the "kingdom of God" is the place where God rules; or, that the "kingdom of God" implies that there is both a King and subjects. The subjects ought to love and worship their King.

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The Wizard of the Wind

By Milburn R. Cockrell
(1941 – 2002)

"For I know that the LORD is great, and that our LORD is above all gods. Whatsoever the LORD pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places. He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings for the rain; he bringeth the wind out of his treasuries" (Ps. 135:5-7).

Mark the words carefully: **"He bringeth the wind out of his treasuries."** This truth is stated two other times in the Bible (Jer. 10:13; 51:16). As a monarch is master of the contents of his own treasuries, so the God of Heaven directs and controls



the winds of earth. No monarch would permit his treasuries to be spent without taking note of it. Even so, the Lord does not permit the wind to be wasted or squandered without a purpose. The sovereign God treasures up the wind to be used when there is an occasion for it. How vast are the treasuries of the God of Heaven (Job 38:22)!

Consider especially the words **"he bringeth the wind."** The high and lofty One is the Wizard of the winds. He can send a fresh breeze at 19 to 24 miles an hour which is not harmful.

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Pastoral Authority

By Tom Ross
of South Point, Ohio

"These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee" (Titus 2:15).

In this verse Paul makes it clear that true ministers of the Gospel who are called and appointed to pastor and feed a particular flock of God's elect are vested not only with certain responsibilities, but also with Divine authority to carry them out. The Greek word for authority in our text is *epitago* which refers to something that is in its proper order or place. The pastor has been called of God to lead the church in spiritual things which necessarily calls for a measure of authority in his preaching and



teaching. Every God called pastor is responsible to accurately proclaim the truth of Scripture with humility and compassion.

He also has been called to present Bible truths with authority, commanding God's people to hear, believe, and obey God's Word. Pastors must ever be careful not to misuse or abuse the authority of their office by attempting to go beyond the authority of the Scriptures, or beyond the authority that Christ has vested within the church. With that said, the Pastor and the church he has been

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In this life repentance is never too late.
On the other hand, it is never too soon.

"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them" (Ecclesiastes 12:1).

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1. To honor God and to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. To preach the gospel to lost sinners.
3. To spread the whole counsel of God's Word.
4. To encourage God's preachers and to strengthen His churches in the most holy faith.
5. To motivate God's children to a closer fellowship around His Word.
6. To inform people of world events in light of Bible prophecy.
7. To condemn and expose error wherever it may rear its ugly head.
8. To stimulate Christian growth in grace.
9. To make the Devil and his demons as mad as possible.

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After the Election

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that would even consider a man like this for the office of President, **"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap"** (Gal. 6:7). And that is what is happening; they are being deceived in believing a lie.

But they wanted him and now they are going to get what they deserve, just like Israel when they wanted a king. Like Israel, what will be the cost? Will this be the end of America as we know it? I would like you, dear reader, to consider some things as I point out the heartache the Prophet Samuel went through when they asked for their king.

Israel wanted a king, and how did that turn out? I will let the reader go and find out the outcome, but if you have studied at all about this king, you already know what he did for Israel. I can assure you that it was not a good experience for them.

"And it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges over Israel. Now the name of his firstborn was Joel; and the name of his second, Abiah: they were judges in Beersheba. And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment" (I Sam. 8:1-3).

You can see by the first three verses that Samuel was old and his sons were judges over Israel. And just like our children today they were not walking in the proper way of God. Our children say we are too strict and old fashioned, and that we should put aside our worship to God in order to do secular things on Sunday. Both of our grandsons wrestle and my son asked me last year if they were to go to State (which they were close to doing), would we come and watch them, but it is on Sunday, and we said no. Well that made my son mad and he said, "see, that is why we can not agree on how you believe." I will tell you, dear reader, my wife and I miss a lot of games, wrestling, softball, and soccer, all because they are on Sunday! We will not compromise the worship of the Lord for secular activities, and neither should you!

That is the reason sports on Sunday have become so popular, Christian people have failed to serve God on Sunday first and we have set a bad example for our children. I have no problem going to a game on Sunday as long as it does not interfere with church services.

Joel and Abiah were not following their father Samuel's example, they just went out and did their own thing, and read what it says in verse 3, they **"turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment."** In other words they cheated, lied, and had poor judgment. Sound like anyone you know, ah, maybe the President of the U.S.?

Many of our sons and daughters are doing the very same things today. They do not want to work, they either want moms and dads to support them or they want to start out at the top, not willing to start at the bottom. They want money, but do not want to earn it. But, sorry to say, their parents are to blame. Maybe that is why the government is saying they are not our children and parents need a third person to be put in a controlling position because parents do not know how to raise children today. **"And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord"** (Eph. 6:4). **"Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward"** (Ps. 127:3). Children are not ours to begin with—they are the Lord's and He has lent them to us to bring up **"in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."**

"Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah, And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations" (I Sam. 8:4-5).

I guess people must think when we get old we are no longer useful, so how old is too old? It is true that most, if not all, our children do not walk in our ways (there are a few exceptions). But as we can see here they did not like the way it had been, they now want a king. They act like God no longer is able to take care of them and they want something new and exciting, **"Thus saith the LORD,**

Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein" (Jer. 6:16).

"But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the LORD" (I Sam. 8:6).

It really displeases preachers (at least it does me) when people want to change the decorum that God has laid out for us, thinking there is some better way to improve on His work and the way He wants things done. You cannot improve on perfection! Why, after all these years, does Israel need a king? Why, if America is the greatest nation in the world, do we need a change? What is there to be changed? Well, we are about to find out.

"And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee. Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and shew them the manner of the king that shall reign over them" (I Sam. 8:7-9).

Nevertheless, (as you can see by verses 7-9) God instructs Samuel to listen to what the people had to say, reminding Samuel that it is not you they have a problem with but Me! The people were using Samuel's old age and his son's attitudes as an excuse but in reality it was God who they were rejecting all along. We preach the Word of Truth and the people will get mad at the preacher, but it is God who they are really mad at. Dear reader, be kinder to your pastor for he is looking out for your wellbeing, **"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you"** (Heb.

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Hymn Histories and Scriptures



By
Nathaniel
Hille
of
Caldwell, Kansas

Revive Us Again

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord” (Col. 3:16).

There are some hymns that belong with their melody. William MacKay’s “We Praise Thee O God” (more commonly known as “Revive Us Again”) is one of those songs. I, personally, could not imagine this hymn being sung to any other melody than the one composed by John Jenkins Husband. I was unable to find much about this Husband in my research. Husband grew up in Plymouth, where he served as clerk at Surrey Chapel. He immigrated to America in 1809. Where he taught music in Philadelphia and worked as the clerk at St. Paul’s Protestant Episcopal Church. Husband is most known for his composing of the music for MacKay’s hymn: “We Praise Thee O God.” Whenever the pianist begins the introduction for this hymn, we are preparing to sing one of those great hymns of Zion.

While I have sung this hymn in various numbers of Baptist Congregations under diverse circumstances, I was not familiar with the “hymn history” behind its composition until very recently. I pray that you will find this story of God’s providence as glorious unto His name as I did...no wonder MacKay’s heart, once being converted did burst forth with Praise for His God and Savior in this hymn originally titled: “We Praise Thee O God.” MacKay had left his godly mother’s home to practice medicine as an unregenerate man. But things would not remain the same.

Our history comes from MacKay’s own words:

“My dear mother had been a godly, holy woman, quite often telling me of the Savior, and many times I saw her on bended knee in prayer for my soul’s salvation. But nothing had made a deep impression on me. The older I grew, the more wicked I became...”

One day a seriously injured man was brought into the hospital. His case seemed hopeless, he seemed to realize his condition for he was fully conscious and asked me how much time he had left to live. I gave him my opinion in as cautious a manner as I could.

“Have you any relatives whom we could notify?” I asked.

The patient shook his head. He had only one wish, it was to see his landlady because he owed her a small sum of money and also wished to bid her farewell. He also requested that his landlady send him “The Book...”

I went to see him on my regular visits at least once a day. What struck me most was the quiet, almost happy expression constantly on his face... After the man died, some things about his affairs were to be done in my presence.

“What shall we do with this?” the nurse asked holding a book in her hand.

“What kind of book is it?” I asked.

“The Bible of the poor man...As long as he was able to read it, he did so, and when he was unable to do so anymore, he kept it under his bed cover.”

I took the Bible and—could I trust my eyes? It was my own Bible! The Bible which my mother had given me when I left my parent’s home, and which later, when short of money, I sold for a small amount. My name was still in it, written in my mother’s hand...

With a deep sense of shame I looked upon the precious Book. It had given comfort and refreshing to the unfortunate man in his last hours. It had been a guide to him into eternal life, so that he had been enabled to die in peace and happiness. And this book, the last gift to me from my mother, I had actually sold for a ridiculous price...

Be it sufficient to say that the regained possession of my Bible was

the cause of my conversion.”

What a marvelous story of God’s Sovereignty and Providence. I read that MacKay was particularly impressed with the Scripture: **“O LORD, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O LORD, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy”** (Hab. 3:2). Others have attributed this hymn to the words found in Psalms 85:6-7, **“Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee? Shew us thy mercy, O LORD, and grant us thy salvation.”** Other verses of the Bible that include the word “revive” and have been thought to be the inspiration for this hymn include Psalms 138:7, **“Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me.”** As well as, Isaiah 57:15, **“For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.”** However, it appears that MacKay attributed it to the first verse (Hab.3:2).

MacKay resigned from the practice of medicine and became a minister. He was the minister at Prospect Presbyterian Church in Hull and died in 1885. It is interesting to me that MacKay makes note in his testimony of his godly mother’s prayers and how that even in his unregenerate state he remembered the testimony and prayers of his mother. Furthermore, his mother never saw MacKay, in this life as a born-again child of God, yet she would see her prayers’ answered and know her labors were not in vain in the life to come. Let the story of this hymn “Revive Us Again” be in our testimony of our Savior and prayers to our God that our lost loved ones might be saved. **“I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that**

myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh” (Rom. 9:1-3). **“Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved”** (Rom. 10:1). Let the mother’s hearts be revived in prayer to God that their children might be saved and rehearsing to the children of their own salvation from on High. Let the fathers teach the children diligently (Deut. 6:7) that salvation is solely and wholly by faith in the finished work of Christ Jesus at Calvary. Let us father’s return to bended knee and prostrated before God seeking the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances. O, that we may be revived in this way!

Finally, I was unable to find how the words and music came together seeing as Husband died before MacKay was even born. Perhaps, it is God’s providence that brought the two together even as MacKay was reunited with the Bible his mother had given him, of which was used as the basis for the words to this hymn. Oh, that when we sing this hymn, it might truly be from a broken spirit and contrite heart, that we may truly say unto the Lord: *“Revive Us Again.”* Amen. Maran-atha!



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After the Election

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13:17).

God also instructs the prophet to protest against them seriously and show them what kind of king they will get. Just like Baptist preachers have been preaching about the last two elections. The sad thing is, Israel did not listen and neither did America and many of our Baptist people.

“And Samuel told all the words of the LORD unto the people that asked of him a king” (I Sam. 8:10).

As we see in the above verses Samuel did not hold back, and did as God commanded and told those who asked for a king exactly what kind of king God would give them!

The following verses I would like to lump together, and expound on them as a whole so the reader will get the full meaning of what Samuel is saying here and what the president of this country is doing.

“And he said, This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: He will take your sons, and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and some shall run before his chariots” (I Sam. 8:11). **“And he will appoint him captains over thousands, and captains over fifties; and will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots”** (I Sam. 8:12). **“And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers”** (I Sam. 13). **“And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your oliveyards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants”** (I Sam. 8:14).

Dear reader, this king, as with this president, has taken our military and appointed them to do his bidding; basically our sons will be working for him. I think we got a glimpse of this when we saw a United States Marine holding an umbrella over his unworthy head! I do not know how that made you feel but it infuriated me! Am I over reacting? NO, no way, no how, that is just the tip of the iceberg. Wait and see what else will develop. This president has no limitations and neither did King Saul

as you will continue to see!

Saul had full control of Israel's army. Our president has full control of our brave men and women in the military and they will rise or fall at his command, forget our Constitution. If he so chooses, he will have them attack the very people they have sworn to protect, that would be us folks! Selah! Saul did pretty much what he wanted to do and so far this current president is doing the same.

The daughters of Israel were taken and made to work for the king as cooks and bakers that did not benefit anyone but the king. Look at the millions of dollars that are spent at the White House to feed the president and his select group of friends, and how many of our daughters are working for him.

Samuel is warning them that this king will take control of the people and their sons will be under his rule and work for him in his field. This president and administration is working hard to take over the agriculture in America and pushing the smaller farmer out of the way. Before long, all we will be buying are fruits and vegetables from the government. Our sons will be working for the establishment under his rule, and the people of this country are too blinded to see it coming. In verse 12 **“ear his ground”** means to plow his fields. Samuel told them their fields would be given to the king's servants. Have all the illegal aliens in this country become this president's servants?

I believe before long the government will own all the farming land in America just as Samuel said that the king would here. Just picture it, dear reader, all the prime land in our country owned and controlled by the president and the government.

“And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants” (I Sam. 8:15).

Did any of you ever think that we would be taxed like we are in this country? We have truly come full circle. We left England to have freedom of religion (which is under attack by this president and this administration) and to get away from taxation without representation. Where is our representation now,

where did it go, for we surely do not have any? And look, Samuel said the king would **“give it to his officers, and to his servants.”** Are any of the government officials doing without? They have the best pensions and the best health care around.

“And he will take your menservants, and your maidservants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work” (I Sam. 8:16).

This president has done nothing but talk about how he is going to create jobs for everyone. The only jobs I see being created are government run jobs. Just like in Samuel's day, everything we own will be working to benefit the king. If this president had his way he would have the title king instead of president. There are people who think he is the king. Over half the people in this country are fully under the control of this government. They are getting some kind of government help, free food in the form of food stamps, free phones, free housing, free clothing, and pay no taxes. But it is not free, you and I are flipping the bill, we pay our taxes, should not everyone?

They do not know it because they have been blinded, **“And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient”** (Rom. 1:28). But they are slaves of the government who own and rule them.

“And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the LORD will not hear you in that day” (I Sam. 8:18).

Here Samuel points out to them, you are going to cry and whine because of the things that have happened to you under the rule of this king **“and the LORD will not hear you in that day.”** Even some of the liberals are starting to cry out because of what the president is doing.

You know, the Lord has always been honest with the people, you do right and He will bless, you do wrong and He will curse (Leviticus 26)!

“Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us; That we also may be like all the nations; and that our

king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles” (I Sam. 8:19-20).

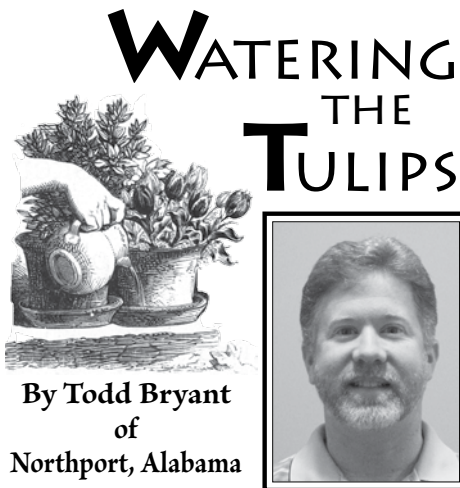
After all Samuel spoke to the people, all the words of the Lord in verse 19-20, they could care less, they were bent on getting a king. They wanted to be like all the other nations who had kings. The thing they did not understand is that God had a king for them and would have revealed Him to them in His time. But they were a wicked people and wanted what they wanted and they thought that their king would give it to them, **“Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD”** (Ps. 27:14). **“Wait on the LORD, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it”** (Ps. 37:34). **“Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the LORD, and he shall save thee”** (Pro. 20:22).

Jesus Christ is the only true King, there is no other. He was the one promised to Abraham by God, but the people could not and would not wait, they had to have one now. By not waiting on the Lord, the people lost out on many wonderful blessings and received nothing but grief and heartache for years, until God raised up David to be their king and even he brought heartache to God's people. Only the true King can bring peace and true blessings to the world.

“And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he rehearsed them in the ears of the LORD” (I Sam. 8:21). **“And the LORD said to Samuel, Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king. And Samuel said unto the men of Israel, Go ye every man unto his city”** (I Sam. 8:22).

So now Samuel tells all to God of what the people wanted, and God replies **“make them a king”!** Samuel, we are sure, was very grieved by this news and sends the people away. It was bad enough when this current president was elected by the people the first time, but the second time grieved me sorely, did it you? I have always respected the office of the President of the United States of America, but this man that holds

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By Todd Bryant
of
Northport, Alabama

Self Seeking and Salvation

“But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work” (James 3:14-16).

One needs only turn on the evening newscast to find proof that this text is true. Whether we would like to admit it or not, America has created a self-seeking, self-glorifying, self-gratifying society. Humanism is the underlying problem in our country (and our world too, of course) and it has bred all kinds of evil. The promotion of self in spite of any repercussions for others will produce headlines in the newspaper (or Yahoo! as it is today) like we are currently seeing.

This attitude pervades modern thinking and it has even spread into modern day Christendom. “Become a Christian and God will add to you ‘health and wealth.’” The list obviously differs from pulpit to pulpit. But the message is the same – Christianity is the means to self-gratification in every conceivable realm of life. And yet, the entire New Testament denies such a belief. Jesus said, **“If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me”** (Luke 9:23). God given faith is not focused on the betterment of self but on the exaltation of Jesus Christ and the spread of the glorious Gospel which points to Calvary.

The modern attitude of using God for self-gain is foreign to the Scriptures. Jesus never gained the “Best Life Now” that is promoted

today. None of the apostles ever found such a life. Jesus’ very instruction to the rich young ruler to sell all that he had and donate it to the poor certainly flies in the faith of such a movement (Luke 18:22). The church at Jerusalem became so poor that other churches actually collected money to help them financially (I Corinthians 16:1-4). The list goes on and on.

True Christianity simply is not about self – it is about denying self! Firstly, we are to seek to glorify God in all that we do (I Corinthians 10:31). This does not mean using God for personal gain. This means using whatever gain He has provided us, according to His will and purpose, to glorify Him! Deny self!!

Secondly, we are to live for others. Jesus was the perfect Example of this. He left Heaven’s glory to live a life as a man (albeit a sinless man) to ultimately bear the penalty of our sins. Yet, we are commanded to love one another in the same way. We are even commanded to put others ahead of ourselves. Philippians 2:3 seems plain enough, **“Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.”**

Child of God, the Lord did not open your heart to the Gospel so that He is now your servant. On the contrary, He opened your heart to the Gospel so that you would serve Him. He remains God and you remain a creature. He also saved you in order that you would share the love of Christ with others. Seek today to deny “self-seeking in your hearts” and serve God and man as He gives you ability.



After the Election

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that office, I can say assuredly, is not my president. I did not vote for him. nor would I ever vote for a man that holds the views that this one does.

I also have no reservation in saying how disappointed I am of the American people. and especially Baptist men and women, who voted for such a one as this. And I can not find strong enough words to express how ashamed Baptist men and

women should be that did vote for him, shame on you! Do not come crying to me, you voted for him, you were warned for years, you wanted a king, and now you have one, but HE IS NOT MY KING! For my KING is sitting at the right hand of God making intercession for me (Hebrews 7:25; 10:12-13).

Because of the selfishness and wickedness of the people they have gotten exactly what they wanted, a king to rule over them and have set in motion things that will never get better, but worse.

Like Samuel, the best thing we can do as God’s elected people is stand with God regardless of the outcome. Do as Paul told young Timothy to do, **“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine”** (II Tim. 4:2). May God help those who are sincere to do His will, and may He help us to stand in this time of evil days! God Bless!



Wizard of the Wind

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Or, He can send a strong gale at 47 miles an hour to cause damage to fruit crops. Or, He may send a windstorm at 64 to 75 miles an hour which is dangerous both to crops and property. Or, on a few occasions, He sends a hurricane above 75 miles an hour which is devastating to crops, property, and man himself. Then to show His extreme power He may send a tornado at above 300 miles an hour to destroy all in its path! God does what He pleases, when He pleases, to whomsoever He pleases!

THE FOUR WINDS

Revelation 7:1 speaks of **“the four winds of the earth.”** The Bible speaks mostly of the **“east wind”** (Gen. 41:6,23,27; Ex. 10:13; 14:21; Job 15:2; 27:21; 38:24; Ps. 48:7; Isa. 27:8; Jer. 18:17; Ezek. 17:10; Hos. 12:1; Jonah 4:8). The east wind was hot and blasting in Egypt (Gen. 41:6), the valley of the Euphrates (Ezek. 19:12), in Canaan (Hos. 13:15), and at Nineveh (John 4:8). It was very tempestuous in Uz in Job’s day (Job 27:21).

The **“west wind”** is seldom

mentioned in the Bible. It was what took away the plague of locusts from the land of Egypt (Ex. 10:19). The **“north wind”** is said to be free from humidity: **“The north wind driveth away rain”** (Prov. 25:23; cf. S. of S. 4:16).

The **“south wind”** has some strange and good things said of it. In Job 37:17 we are told that God **“quieteth the earth by the south wind.”** When the piercing blast of north wind dies away and the wind comes around the south, it produces a gentle air. Jesus Christ said: **“And when ye see the south wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass”** (Luke 12:55). The people in Job’s day seem to understand that the equatorial regions were warmer than those at the north. **“Out of the south cometh the whirlwind: and cold out of the north”** (Job 37:9). Luke in the Book of Acts speaks of a time **“when the south wind blew softly”** (Acts 27:13).

THE CREATOR OF THE WINDS

“For, lo, he that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind, and declareth unto man what is his thought, that maketh the morning darkness, and treadeth upon the high places of the earth, The LORD, The God of hosts, is his name” (Amos 4:13). The winds of Heaven are God’s creatures. The Almighty formed that creature which is invisible in this visible world--the most immaterial of things material. The power of the air is derived from God, and He makes the air to move and become wind. The same One who created the mountains is the sovereign Disposer of winds and storms.

Why is it that we live at the bottom of a vast ocean of air whose ebb and flow are as ceaseless as the tides of the oceans? Why is there unequal temperature and pressure of the atmosphere over different parts of the earth that causes the wind? Why does the air move constantly upward over the equatorial regions? Who made the powerful narrow band of winds that exists about five miles above the ground called “the jet stream”? Why does this wind which reaches a velocity of about 150 miles per hour affect the earth’s weather? Scientists could give us much information on

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Wizard of the Wind

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this subject I am sure. But a simple answer is that God is the Creator of the wind and weather.

The psalmist wrote: **“He sendeth forth his commandment upon earth: his word runneth very swiftly. He giveth snow like wool: he scattereth the hoarfrost like ashes. He casteth forth his ice like morsels: who can stand before his cold? He sendeth out his word, and melteth them: he causeth his wind to blow, and the waters flow”** (Ps. 147:15-18).

THE CONTROLLER OF THE WINDS

Man has little, and in most cases, no control over the wind. But there is never a single moment when the winds are not fulfilling the will of our sovereign God. It is said of the Supreme Being in Psalm 18:10: **“And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly; yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind.”** It appears that the **“wings of the wind”** are designed by the psalmist to represent the rapidity with which the winds sweeps along. Just as a bird flies by use of its wings in the wind, so God moves with the majesty of omnipotence to execute His pleasure. The winds serve His purpose very much in the same manner that it does to cause an eagle to soar in easy grandeur with wings outspread, without violent flapping and exertion. Our God is the Wizard of the winds!

In Proverbs 30:4 a number of questions are raised: **“Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son’s name, if thou canst tell?”** No man or group of men can hold the wind in their fists. The mightiest angel cannot do it. Although Satan is **“the prince of the power of the air,”** he cannot restrain or let loose the wind at his pleasure. None but the Creator and Controller of the winds can command them to blow or be still. The God of Heaven holds the loose winds as firmly as a man might hold a hammer in his hand. Nahum

wrote: **“. . .the LORD hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet”** (Nah. 1:3).

“For he looketh to the ends of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven; To make the weight for the winds; and he weigheth the waters by measure. When he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder: Then did he see it, and declare it; he prepared it, yea, and searched it out” (Job 28:24-27).

What is lighter than the wind? Who can put it on scales? God can. He made all things and balanced it in the most exact manner, as if He had weighted them when He made them. He can make the winds heavier or lighter---add to or take from its weight. Modern man did not become aware of atmospheric pressure until the seventeenth century, but the God of the Bible knew this from the beginning. Without such weight, there could exist on the earth neither animal or vegetable life.

During the days of His flesh Christ demonstrated that He was God, the Wizard of the winds: **“And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships. And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?”** (Mark 4:36-41).

Christ did what was impossible for a man to do. He spoke to the winds and they obeyed Him. He turned the raging storm into a calm with a few words: **“Peace, be still.”** The winds knew the voice of their Master, and like obedient servants, were quiet at His command. This was not a gradual dying away of the wind, followed by

a long swell of the waters, but a quick cessation, followed immediately by a great calm. This was a miracle of God.

What a wonderful Savior we have. No stormy passions are so strong but He can bring them under control. No man is so rough and violent but He can change him. No conscience is so disquieted but He can speak peace to it and make it calm. Storms may assail His people like a mighty tempest, but He will turn every tempest into a calm. But while He cares for us that we perish not, He will rebuke our unbelief and excessive fears. Let us adore Him who is the controller of both natural and spiritual winds.

STORMY WINDS

“For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof” (Ps. 107:25). The mere expression of His will raises up a stormy wind and throws the sea into commotion. Stormy winds are not raised by either men or demons, not even angels, but by the Lord Himself. If He but give the order, a storm arises at once and executes what He pleases: **“Fire, and hail; snow, and vapours; stormy wind fulfilling his word”** (Ps. 148:8). Even though the wind may seem to sleep, it will suddenly awake at the bidding of its Master. Such a stormy wind rended the mountains in the days of Elijah the prophet (I Kings 19:11).

In Ezekiel 13:13 it is written: **“Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; I will even rend it with a stormy wind in my fury; and there shall be an overflowing shower in mine anger, and great hailstones in my fury to consume it.”** God used the wind to rend Jerusalem. The stormy wind is an instrument in the hands of God. He uses strong winds to alarm proud sinners and secure transgressors. When He mingles such winds with His wrath they are fearful and forcible indeed. This stormy wind arose in God’s righteousness indignation and leveled the walls of Jerusalem.

Storms are disturbances of the atmosphere generally marked by strong winds, rain, snow, or hail, or by a combination of two or more of these (Ps. 148:8). Storms would never occur if the temperature of the air everywhere was equal. The air in low latitudes is heated while that in

high latitudes is cooled. As cold air accumulates in the high latitudes, there is a tendency for large masses of it to spread out toward the equator. Eventually these large masses break off into separate, wandering masses of cold air, which move generally eastward toward the equator. In the middle latitudes, these masses of cold air usually meet warm air masses which come up from low latitudes. Whenever warm and cold air masses meet, a struggle develops, which may result in storms. Let us all be thankful for our **“escape from the windy storm and tempest”** (Ps. 55:8).

WONDERS OF THE WIND

God may use the wind to reclaim a backslider. When the Prophet Jonah fled toward Tarshish to avoid going to Ninevah **“the LORD sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken”** (Jonah 1:4). The Hebrew verb rendered “sent” is an inherently strong word in the causative stem. It means that God cast forth with force and violence this strong wind upon the Mediterranean Sea. The rebellion of the prophet causes God to make rebellion in the winds of Heaven.

The winds of God brought locusts upon the land of Egypt in the days of Moses: **“And Moses stretched forth his rod over the land of Egypt, and the LORD brought an east wind upon the land all that day, and all that night: and when it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts”** (Ex. 10:13). It was not uncommon in that day for this to happen. Then God caused the west wind to remove these locusts (Ex. 10:19-20).

The Lord God used the wind to part the Red Sea so Israel could cross: **“And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left”** (Ex. 14:21-22). Then God caused the east wind to cease and the waters returned. The Egyptians were drowned (Ex

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CELLBLOCK TO CELLBLOCK

By David G. Hoffman

Encouragement and thoughts from a prisoner to other prisoners and readers.
"Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried" (Rev. 2:10).



T. U. L. I. P.

Greetings, grace, and peace to you, dear reader. I hope this finds you all doing well and in the highest of spirits.

I have been transferred back to the Jester 3 Unit to finish my Culinary Arts degree, which I will complete in December. As far as prison transfers go, it was good getting back to "J3." All I heard for the first week was when am I going to get back in the bakery so they could have some good biscuits? I have quite the reputation as a baker here, but the short answer, however, is I will be baking. . .but it will be at the Jester 4 Unit across the street. Sorry fellas, but that is where the classes and practicums are for finishing my degree.

Now to this month's column. I do not normally go to the chapel services here in prison. The main reason is they are mostly Arminian and I am decidedly 'Calvinist.' Another way to put that is they are mostly 'Free-willers' and I am decidedly Sovereign Grace.

Here and there when I am on a unit that has Messianic Jewish services I go to those. At least there I do not have to worry about all the pagan tapestries the Protestants kept when they left their harlot mother.

On my prison travel card I am listed as a Messianic Jew. It is easier to explain to someone what a "Messianic" is than to tell the whole history of Arminians and Calvinists and Sovereign Gracers every time someone asks why I do not go to chapel services.

So, just what am I? And exactly what do I believe? Well, I am glad you asked. I am a Sovereign Grace Baptist to the core and I fully believe in the doctrines of the Holy Bible. These doctrines are sometimes called, "Calvinism" but I prefer the term Doctrines of Grace and over the next five months or so I am going to expand upon these doctrines one at

a time. I am a layman, I do not have a degree in theology so any errors or blunders I make during my treatise on the Doctrines I fully own. And I would appreciate the more learned among us to write me about those blunders so that I may prayerfully reconsider my stance.

The Doctrines of Grace fit neatly into the acronym: T.U.L.I.P. Having laid the foundation for my treatise I will begin with the T, which stands for Total Depravity.

Total depravity is the total inability of man, not born of the Spirit, to do anything acceptable or good in the sight of God.

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seek after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit: the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes" (Rom. 3:10-18).

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23).

This is a picture of mankind without the regeneration of the grace of God.

The Psalmist said, **"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me"** (Ps. 51:5). We are all in this same boat, from the moment we take our first breath we are sinners. Conceived in sin. And it does not get better with age, **"for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth"** (Gen. 8:21). **"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked"** (Jer. 17:9).

This, dear reader, is the state of the

natural man. There is nothing but wickedness in his heart from moment to moment, nothing to cause him to turn to God for the salvation he so desperately needs, nothing to make him cry out, **"Abba! Father!"**

If you have any questions or comments about this or any of my other columns, please write me at: David Hoffman #809805, 3 Jester Road, Richmond, Texas 77406.

Until next time, dear readers, may God bless you all!



Wizard of the Wind

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14:23-30). In the song of triumph Moses and Israel sang: **"Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them: they sank as lead in the mighty waters"** (Ex. 15:10).

In the wilderness journey of Israel the wind brought quails to eat: **"And there went forth a wind from the LORD, and brought quails from the sea, and let them fall by the camp, as it were a day's journey on this side, and as it were a day's journey on the other side, round about the camp, and as it were two cubits high upon the face of the earth"** (Num. 11:31). The psalmist wrote: **"Man did eat angels' food: he sent them meat to the full. He caused an east wind to blow in the heaven: and by his power he brought in the south wind. He rained flesh also upon them as dust, and feathered fowls like as the sand of the sea: And he let it fall in the midst of their camp, round about their habitations. So they did eat, and were well filled: for he gave them their own desire"** (Ps. 78:25-29).

A wind from the wilderness killed Job's sons: **"And, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee"** (Job 1:19). This was a dark chapter in the book of Divine Providence designed to test Job's faith and to prove to the Devil that Job served God because he loved Him.

The winds hindered the sailing of Paul on the sea: **"And when we had launched from thence, we sailed**

under Cyprus, because the winds were contrary" (Acts 27:4). These same winds finally destroyed the ship upon which Paul and the others were sailing (Acts 27:14-44).

PROPHECY AND THE WIND

When God scattered Israel to the nations He did it with His whirlwind: **"But I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations whom they knew not. Thus the land was desolate after them, that no man passed through nor returned: for they laid the pleasant land desolate"** (Zech. 7:14). When the Lord regathers them He will gather them from the four winds: **"And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other"** (Matt. 24:31; cf. Deut. 30:3; Ezek. 37:9-14).

In the millennium the Lord will use the wind to dry up the tongue of the Red Sea: **"And the LORD shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the even streams, and make men go over dryshod. And there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria; like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt"** (Isa. 11:15-16).

If you look at a map the Red Sea has the appearance of the head of an animal---the Gulf of Akabah its upper jaw and the Gulf of Suez its tongue outstretched to lap the waters of the Mediterranean. In connection with the permanent and final regathering of Israel to Palestine, God by use of the wind will fill up the bed of this western gulf. A highway will be built for Israel to return to their ancient homeland.

This is clearly a restoration of Israel to the land of her fathers in Isaiah 11. A number of things suggests this: (1) This is during the reign of Christ (vv. 1-10). (2) It is not the first return from exile, for it says the Lord shall gather His people the second time (v. 11). (3) Never before has there been such a gathering of Israel from all nations as is described here (v. 11). (4) The uniting of Ephraim and

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Judah does not refer to the church (v. 13). (5) The church never flew on the shoulder (the mountain ridge) of the Philistines (v. 14).

In the seven-year tribulation period God will let four angels hold back the four winds: **"After these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree"** (Rev. 7:1). Without the winds of earth there can be no rain upon our planet. Other Scriptures tell us there will be no rain for the first three and a half years of the tribulation period (Rev. 11:3-6). This great calm will prevail in the lower atmosphere of the earth. No breeze will blow in the trees and no waves will break on the sea.

CONCLUSION

The Prophet Elijah went to Heaven by a whirlwind: **"And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven"** (II Kings 2:11). He went up body and soul through the regions of the air to the invisible world. This was wind accompanied with varied flashes of fire. There is a very good possibility that this was angels who are called a flame of fire (Ps. 104:4) and chariots (Ps. 68:17). We know that the angels carry believers to Paradise (Luke 16:22). The old prophet rode in triumph, like a mighty conquering king, to glory. What a wonderful way to leave this world!

Let all wicked men take warning. God has purposed to destroy them with a whirlwind of wrath: **"Behold, a whirlwind of the LORD is gone forth in fury, even a grievous whirlwind: it shall fall grievously upon the head of the wicked. The anger of the LORD shall not return, until he have executed, and till he have performed the thoughts of his heart. . ." (Jer. 23:19-20).** You may sit quietly to day, thinking that no evil will ever come upon you. But how foolish to dream that every thing will always be calm and serene. The

Wizard of the Wind says a storm is coming! You will not be able to stand against the winds brought out of His treasures of Divine vengeance. Do not treat this warning lightly. Do not consider it a **"reed shaken with the wind"** (Matt. 11:7).

Flee to the Rock of Ages for shelter and protection. Christ is a hiding place from the winds of eternal wrath. If you are in Christ, then let the rains descend, the flood come, and the wind blow upon your house, for it will fall not since it is founded on the Rock (Matt. 7:25).

"As the whirlwind passeth, so is the wicked no more: but the righteous is an everlasting foundation" (Prov. 10:25).



Kingdom that is God's

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This King is a loving and sovereign – yet unyielding and uncompromising King, and none can oppose His will and purpose.

Secondly, I hope that you will also realize that the "kingdom of God" is in existence on the earth now – but only within the hearts and minds of the people of God. Where are the people of God today? What has happened to the hearts and minds that make up the "kingdom of God" on this earth? Today, it is very hard to distinguish between those that make up the "kingdom of God" and those that make up the kingdoms of the world!

Thirdly, I hope you will also join with me in anticipation of the revelation of the literal and physical "kingdom of God" which will one day be set up on the earth. In reality, this is our best and truest and only hope: that Jesus Christ would return, and that He would do away with the kingdoms of men, and set up His literal and physical "kingdom of God."

THE PLACE WHERE GOD RULES

Let us begin by giving a definition to the phrase "The kingdom of God." (The title "kingdom of God" appears to be interchangeable with the New Testament usage of "kingdom of Heaven." The term "kingdom of Heaven" is used approximately 33 times in

the gospel of Matthew, and appears nowhere else in Scripture. However, an examination of the other gospels reveals that even parallel accounts of the same events – in the other gospel accounts – make use of the term "kingdom of God." Therefore, the two terms must mean the same thing.) I believe that the "kingdom of God" can be defined as the place where God rules in the lives or existence of men or beings. Or, we might say that the "kingdom of God" exists where men or beings serve God. Sadly, it appears that many of the "subjects" of the "kingdom of God" have lent their allegiance to another!

Let me insert here that the "kingdom of God" is not synonymous with the church of Jesus Christ. The Catholics equate the two, making water baptism the door into the kingdom and the church. And, it is apparent that all of the harlot daughters of Rome make a similar mistake – though they substitute so-called "spirit baptism" for the water baptism of the Catholics. However, true Baptists (and the Lord's true churches) have always taught that water baptism is the door into the church of Jesus Christ. Of course, those candidates that are fit for baptism must be taken from amongst the members of the "kingdom of God." In other words, when a person is first saved, that person is ushered into the "kingdom of God"; because, that person has believed in Jesus Christ, has confessed his sins, and has acknowledged Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. Then, as the Holy Spirit deals with individual saints of God, many are led to a particular church of Jesus Christ, where they are baptized into the body of Christ. So, the scope of the "kingdom of God" includes all of those that are saved on the face of the earth. And, the churches of Jesus Christ are made up of those bodies of Christ that are set apart and congregated together throughout the world.

But, let us get back to our message and our thoughts concerning the "kingdom of God." Though our definition of the "kingdom of God" declares that the kingdom exists where God rules in the lives and existence of men or beings; some might determine that the "kingdom of God" exists everywhere in creation, since God is the

indisputable sovereign of all that exists (See Daniel 4:34-35). However, I submit to you today, that the "kingdom of God" – as it is described in the Scriptures – implies the existence of both a Sovereign King and willing subjects. This is the "kingdom of God" of which the saved are citizens; and, this is the "kingdom of God" that I want to consider.

I want you to know that wherever God rules, there must be the "kingdom of God." Oh, that our nation were as it used to be, when men would fear God, respect His word, and call upon the name of the Lord! Oh, that the world would know that our country and our people will fear and follow God! **"Consume them in wrath, consume them, that they may not be: and let them know that God ruleth in Jacob unto the ends of the earth. Selah"** (Ps. 59:13) Let **"them know that God ruleth"** your heart! Let the world know that the God of the Bible is still feared and respected in our communities, our states, and our country!

THE SPIRITUAL KINGDOM

So, we have noticed some of what the "kingdom of God" is. Now, for the rest of our time I want us to look at two ways in which the "kingdom of God" is manifest – the "spiritual kingdom," and the "physical kingdom."

The spiritual "kingdom of God" is something that does now truly exist. This kingdom exists in the hearts of men on earth, and in the realms of Heaven. From the words of the Lord's prayer, it can be seen that the Lord God does reign in Heaven. **"After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven"** (Matthew 6:9-10). And, if we imitate the Lord's manner of praying, then we, too, will pray that God's will would be **"done in earth, as it is in heaven."** In other words, if men will have God in their hearts, then there is a legitimate "kingdom of God" on earth – within the hearts of those men that will follow after Jesus Christ. And in those hearts, we can expect that the will of the Father will be done, and that the will of the Father would be adhered to and followed.

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Inventors of Evil Things

By Chad Johnson
of Auburn, Kentucky

“Backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents” (Rom. 1:30).

This is a very powerful and humbling chapter in the Word of God. In verses 18 through 32, the Apostle Paul makes the indictment of the depravity of the human race. Paul states in verse 18 that the wrath of God is revealed from His throne in Heaven against ALL ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. The word wrath means righteous anger. God is high and holy and He is very righteous in His judgment against sin. Man is a created being and though he is totally dead spiritually and cannot, nor, does he look to find God on his own, he does have a God conscience about him. What I mean by this is that man knows that there is something out there beyond the clouds bigger than he is. That is why you can go to secluded jungles where they have not heard of Jesus Christ and find them worshipping something. We also see in Romans 1:20, that creation declares the invisible things of God such as His righteousness, holiness, glory and power. When the unsaved man stands before a just God, he will have no excuse for himself and his condition.

Now I want to finish the thought of inventors of evil things in verse 30. As the people described in this chapter progress in their wickedness and reprobation, they invent evil things. I think how many things have been invented in the last 100 years. Television, computers, cell phones, etc. These things could have done much good, I believe, however when we weigh the good with the evil it appears evil has won. This

young generation cannot, for the most part, talk to you because they are always on the phone texting or emailing. Pornography is so easily obtained now. I truly believe that these inventions have been used by Satan to devour our culture in useless information that has robbed us of our time and our virtue.

I am not saying there is no good use for them. I am saying, for the most part, they are used for evil. Evil men create evil things to spread their evil.

We can also see this in the clothing industry. They have pushed on us a unisex sodomite look that is destroying the division of the sexes. Please be careful in this world in your use of modern inventions. We must not let them take us away from our God.



Kingdom that is God's

(Continued from page 168) ◊

The Lord Jesus explained the “kingdom of God” to the Pharisees this way: **“And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you”** (Luke 17:20-21). Wherever men know and obey God; wherever the people will follow Jesus Christ; wherever worship of God is – there exists the realm and “kingdom of God.” Now, Christ could be saying that the “kingdom of God” is **“within you”** – meaning that there are currently various citizens and members of the “Kingdom of God” **“within”** your ranks. But, I rather think that the Lord Jesus is teaching (and reminding) us that the “kingdom of God” is currently a spiritual kingdom, whose citizens carry the kingdom about **“within”** themselves. In other words, the “kingdom of God” on earth, is currently a spiritual and an inner kingdom.

Previously, when the Lord Jesus was sending out the Seventy, He instructed them this way: **“And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you: And heal the sick**

that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say, Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you” (Luke 10:8-11). In a sense, the “kingdom of God” is **“nigh unto”** all of us, in that we can see the evidence of His power, and we can see the proof of His deity, in Creation itself, and in the gracious behavior of those that are saved by the grace of God. But, the Lord is saying even more when He addresses these seventy. He is letting us know that it is a dangerous thing to reject the power of God, and the power of the gospel of Christ! When the Lord sends His ministers forth, they go forth with the power of the “kingdom of God!” Let men beware, and let men pay close attention! This is a kingdom that is not of this world, whose ruler is not mere mortal man! This kingdom is one of Heaven, and the message of this kingdom is one of repentance and belief unto eternal life! To reject this kingdom and this Saviour is to reject more than the mere men who carry the message; to reject this Saviour is to damn your soul to Hell!

I believe that Paul makes reference to the importance and necessity of the “kingdom of God” when he told the Corinthians, **“For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power”** (I Cor. 4:20). Now, I know that Paul is really reminding us that those that are members of the “kingdom of God” must show forth their citizenship with more than words. Rather, they must show forth their true citizenship in the “kingdom of God” through their deeds and their works. However, I want you to know that we are capable of incredible deeds (and words) when we make use of the power that is available to us through the “kingdom of God!” This is not some wimpy or minuscule kingdom of men. This is the “kingdom of God!” We can call on our Lord and Saviour to help us in time of need; we can call on our King and Master to make us effective in the use of God and His kingdom. As a child of God, and as a citizen of the

“kingdom of God,” remember where it is that your allegiance lies, and remember where it is that your help and strength and authority comes from!

THE PHYSICAL KINGDOM

Finally, let us think about the future, and the end of this age. The physical “kingdom of God” does not now currently exist on the earth. Within the ranks of mankind, there is another ruler – the ruler of darkness and spiritual wickedness, the devil himself. Paul refers to the devil this way: **“In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them”** (II Cor. 4:4). Though God is sovereign over all of His creation, the devil has been given certain powers and the rule of certain aspects of Creation (See John 12:31; Ephesians 2:1-3). And, though Christ does reign in the hearts of those that love and worship Him on this earth; still, the power of Satan will be the strength and might of humanity, until such time as God brings this age to a close.

However, one day, the Lord will establish a literal and physical kingdom on this earth. This is what we look forward to. **“When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world”** (Matt. 25:31-34). Do you realize that this real, literal, tangible, future **“kingdom”** has been prepared for those that love God **“from the foundation of the world?”** I want you to know that it has always been God's good pleasure to provide for you and me a glorious kingdom, where we shall reign with God, and where goodness and righteousness will be the standard by which all are judged.

I believe that the Lord has refer-

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. What is the role of women in public worship according to the Bible?

-Email

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In most ways, the role of women in public worship is the same as men, in that they are coming to worship the same God in spirit and truth. They will sing along with men, pray silently in communion with the body as a male member leads in prayer and grow in grace and knowledge as the teacher teaches and the preacher preaches.

However, because God clearly makes a distinction between male and female in EVERY walk of life, we must also as members of His church make a peculiarity here as well, and thus the question at hand.

Let me first take the positive perspective of what is required of women to “do,” and we will next take up the task of limiting their actions from what they “can not do”... Sometimes we cover the “not” and ignore what may be the most important part of what the work is that they really are REQUIRED to carry out!

Ladies should sing specials and play the piano or other suitable instruments in our public worship services. Miriam gives us our Scriptural example after the Red Sea Crossing in Exodus 15:20-21, **“And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances. And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.”**

Women are to teach children and other women in segregated Bible classes. **“But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine: That the aged men be sober,**

grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed” (Titus 2:1-5). Some might say that this teaching is to be done elsewhere than the Lord’s Day services, but I really do not think it can fully be done in private sessions; private Bible studies; or as some might say- by example only. It would be a virtual impossibility for many ladies to be able to “see” enough good witnessing on the needed regular basis. Either the godly ladies of the church are going to have to be going from house to house to teach, or the church should fill its function as the teaching organism that it is by supplying time for the younger ladies to learn these things from the mature.

Conversely, the Christian ladies will not speak publicly; will not usurp authority over men in teaching mixed classes; will not speak or vote in business meetings. **“Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence”** (I Tim. 2:11). Certainly elders/pastors/deacons are to be the husband of one wife, not the wife of one husband!

The issue of “silent women” in the public services of teaching, preaching and conducting business has more to do with authority and headship, than anything else. A speaking woman in either a preaching service or a business meeting will contradict the authority of the man every time. The Bible constrains their silence to the point that if they have any question about the subject matter, that it says in I Corinthians 14:35,33, **“..if they will learn any thing, let them ask**

their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church. ...For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.”

Finally, the woman’s public role in worship is to be a covered head, as Scripture is clear, **“..but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered. ... For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels”** (I Cor. 11:6, 10). In the Greek, there is no confusion about the headcovering or about the threatened discipline of shearing or shaving. Men are NOT to be covered, but the ladies are... and the sign of “power” or “authority” on their head must be a removable hat or veil that can be taken off at the conclusion of the services.

Modern liberalism has beguiled many along the way, but if we keep the order of the Scriptures, God will be honored by both men and women, subjecting themselves to the Word of God...! Selah! Think about it!

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I will not use my words to answer this question. I will only use the Scriptures as regarding a woman’s work in Baptist churches as referenced in the bible.

“Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law” (I Cor. 14:34).

“In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array” (I Tim. 2:9).

“I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully” (I Tim. 5:14).

“The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh

holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things” (Titus 2:3).

“That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children” (Titus 2:4).

“For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands” (I Pet. 3:5).

“But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven” (I Cor. 11:5).

Our women of the churches have a great and wondrous duty, a sphere of work no man can or should try to accomplish. I want to thank all of the faithful Godly women who have worked in the churches all these years. Young ladies, the older women are models to look to as being a woman working in the churches. Watch your examples and learn, those younger than you are watching.

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They are to worship the Lord in Spirit and in truth (John 4:24). They are to pray silently and reverently in their heart as the pastor or another man leads in prayer (I Cor. 11:5-6, 9-10). They are to sing unto the Lord in worship and praise (Psalm 149:1). They are to promote the unity and peace of the church by being submissive to their husband and by maintaining **“...a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price”** (I Pet. 3:4). They are to be quiet and reverent as the pastor preaches the Word of God, cheerfully obeying the truth as the Spirit opens their understanding (Heb. 13:7, 17). They are to maintain a holy testimony of virtue and modesty as an example to the younger women (II Tim. 2:9-10; Titus 2:3-5). They are to go forth from the worship services ready to

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. Was John the Baptist ever lost? - Oklahoma

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"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. 5:12), no exceptions, not even John the Baptist. Just because there is no record of his salvation does not mean he never sinned.

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Yes, John the Baptist like all other people inherited a sin nature when he was conceived in his mother's womb according to Psalm 51:5: "**Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.**" All are lost until the Holy Spirit brings them to spiritual life in regeneration (John 3:3-5; Eph. 2:1-4; Col. 1:12-14). The moment they are born again they are given the gifts of repentance and faith in response to the Gospel of grace (Rom. 10:17; I Cor. 1:21).

John the Baptist is a unique case. He was regenerated by the Spirit in his mother's womb and leaped for joy as he heard the glory of his Saviour's name according to Luke 1:41-47: "**And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For, lo, as**

soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord. And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour."

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Absolutely John the Baptist was lost, "**For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God**" (Rom. 3:23).

"**There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes. Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned,**

and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:11-26).

There was no man without sin that walked this earth except the Lord Jesus Christ. For me there is one Scripture that stands out that shows John's depravity or sin nature and that is found in the Gospel of Luke 7:19-22. In these verses we find John alone, afraid, and uncertain. He baptized the Son of God and heard the Father's declaration of His only Son, "**And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased**" (Matt. 3:17).

John knew that Jesus was the Messiah, "**The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world**" (John 1:29). "**And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God**" (John 1:36)!

It was John's depravity, his sin nature that caused him to have doubts. So again we answer, Yes, John was lost. God Bless!

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"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: ... For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous" (Rom. 5:12, 19). Our text passage here teaches us two things. 1) We all have sinned and 2) We all were made sinners. Now we could go back and forth about

whether we are sinners because we sin, or whether we sin because we are sinners, but both are covered in Paul's writing to the Romans! We sin AND we are sinners! It does not matter which route we take- all bases are covered... All of us, and that MUST include John the Baptist as well, as he certainly was Zacharias and Elizabeth's son, and thereby a depraved son of Adam. Lost as a goose. Spiritually dead as a doornail. Selah! Think about it!

That being said, I think I am aware of the point of context of the question about whether John the Baptist was ever lost. Because of Luke 1:13-15, "**But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.**" The last phrase in verse 15 indicates that the prophesied pregnancy and parenthood will be different from the normal course of events of both the child (yet in his mother's womb) and the man (the great prophet that he will become).

I believe this passage to be one of the great texts for the salvation of children at the sovereign will and purpose of God. There is simply NO possibility of the child (fetus, anyone?) John being filled with the Holy Ghost in his mother's womb and him not being saved! The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is imparted at the moment of salvation as is shown by Ephesians 1:11-14, "**In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased**

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Forum #1

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apply the truths of the Word of God and be a faithful witness of the glory of Christ and His Gospel (II Tim. 1:5; 3:14-17). These are some of the primary responsibilities that godly women have in the public worship of the church.

There are certain things that women are not to do in public worship. They are forbidden to speak, pray aloud, preach, or usurp authority over the man according to the following Scriptures. I Corinthians 14:33-35, 40: **“For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints. Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church...Let all things be done decently and in order.”** I Timothy 2:11-12: **“Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.”** I realize that many churches have abandoned these Scriptures to their own peril in favor of the cultural pressure of feminism. Romans 3:4 declares: **“...yea, let God be true, but every man a liar.”**

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“Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law” (I Cor. 14:34).

“And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church” (I Cor. 14:35).

“In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and

sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works. Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence” (I Tim. 2:9-12).

I believe I Corinthians 14:34-35 is Paul dealing with the church there at Corinth, and it seems to me it is very explicit and self-explanatory. But it seems there are those who would still debate the role of the women in the worship service. There are even some who believe they have as much right as a man in the worship service including the right to preach. In all of my studies, I have never seen, not even a glimmer in Scripture that women can preach or be pastors of the Lord's churches. But yet there seems to be a growing number of women who are put into this position.

Allow me to mention this and then I will move on. Unless you are ordained by a true Sovereign Grace Independent Landmark New Testament Baptist Church, because they are the only institution on the face of the earth that has the authority to do so, you cannot be a pastor of a church of any kind, so that would exclude women from the ministry as pastors because no true church would ever ordain a woman.

Though I will not go into the much debated head covering issue, I believe that is one role a woman should exercise in public worship (I Corinthians 11:1-16). I believe wholeheartedly that women should not speak once the service starts. I did not use to believe this concerning Sunday Schools/Bible Schools that are being conducted in a mixed assembly. Once I came to realize that all services are worship services I saw were women must keep silent.

I believe women should not look like a harlot when in public worship. What I mean by that is, there is no problem with makeup and nice clothes as long as they do not look, as I said, like a harlot, which should not have to be explained. If a lady comes in the house of God showing off her taillight (as one preacher put it) instead of her spiritual light, **“Let your light so shine before men,**

that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matt. 5:16), than she has a problem.

I like this definition of “modest” - not overtly sexual: (reserved in appearance, manner, and speech, especially in relation to sexual matters) and unwilling to draw attention to themselves. One can look attractive and nice without flaunting it.

Women should be in prayer as should the men while in public worship. They should be willing to help as much as is permitted, singing, playing of the piano and organ, or other permissible instruments. I would not want to see a woman (or anyone else for that matter) dragging in a set of drums and start beating on them.

At the mission there is only one man besides the preacher, but the presence of the women and their stillness, moderation, and temperance is a true blessing to me while I conduct the service. I have found that most women are more faithful than some men, so they are truly a blessing.

I am sure there is more I could say but as at other times, let us recommend a couple of good books for the questioner; *The Veiled Women* by the late Elder Milburn Cockrell and *God Has Ordained Headship* by Elder Wm. Doyal Thomas. A study of Titus 2:1-5 would be very helpful as well. God Bless!

ROGER REED



Forum #2

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possession, unto the praise of his glory.”

I believe that John the Baptist was lost when his life began at conception and that he was saved later in the chapter when Mary arrived with his Saviour! **“And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth. And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: And she spake out with a loud**

voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy” (Luke 1:39-44). Salvation is the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ our LORD! I will brook no quibbling that the boy was given the gift of faith and repentance, then the Spirit left him and came back normally with ANOTHER salvation experience when he was older... NO! You cannot give and take and give again eternal life! There is absolutely NO death after eternal life is possessed! Impossible! Selah! Think about it!

Also to assert that the baby had no ability to believe denies the passage just quoted. With men, it is impossible, but with God all things are possible! Just as God gave a 15-year-old dead Matthew Stepp the ability to believe and repent (who previously had no ability to do so), He can give a 15-week-old the ability to believe and repent! Please do not shortchange either God's power or the vastness of the miracle it takes to save a child of the devil at any age and transform them into a child of God! Selah! Think about it!

MATTHEW STEPP



Kingdom that is God's

(Continued from page 169) ◊

ence to this physical “kingdom of God” when He prophesies of the end times: **“And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away”** (Luke 21:29-33). Remember, the **“kingdom of God is nigh at hand.”** Whenever the Lord will return unto us to take us to be with Him, He will begin to set up His kingdom; and

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Kingdom that is God's

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men, angels, and all nature will bow unto Him and Him alone.

Whenever the "kingdom of God" enters the heart and soul of a man in this life; then, the power of Satan is bested, and that man begins to serve Jesus Christ. Well, the same thing is happening now in the case of the coming physical "kingdom of God." We read this account of a time when the Lord cast out demons, and the Pharisees denied Him and his power: **"But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils. And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand? And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges. But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house"** (Matt. 12:24-29). The kingdoms of this earth may seem strong. And, the kingdom of Satan – which exerts his influence in all of the kingdoms of the earth – may seem stronger still. But, the power of God and His kingdom will (and does) supersede all. The devil may be a **"strong man,"** but the Lord is far stronger! He has (and is) adding unto the "kingdom of God" daily, as He sees fit. And, He will set up His physical and literal "kingdom of God" as He has ordained, and at such a time as He sees fit.

In fact, I believe that it is safe to say that the end of this world (or age) will be a process of setting up the "kingdom of God." Paul said, **"Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power"** (I Cor. 15:24). This coming "kingdom of God" is (and has been) the great hope and com-

fort of all of those that worship God in spirit and in truth. **"And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time"** (Rev. 12:10-12).

Then, when the time is right, Jesus Christ will set up His throne, and He will rule over all of mankind. The Scriptures plainly teach us that Jesus Christ will presently and literally establish a Millennial Reign during which He will legislate, execute, and judge the laws and behaviors of all of mankind for a thousand years. **"And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years"** (Rev. 20:1-4). And then, this Millennial Reign will transition into an eternity of bliss and favor in the presence of God and His Son Jesus Christ. **"Then said Samuel to the people, Come, and let us go to Gilgal, and renew the kingdom there"** (I Sam. 11:14).



THE BIBLE AND THE NEWSPAPER

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

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

SOUTHERN BAPTISTS URGE CHURCHES TO CONSIDER BOY SCOUT ALTERNATIVES

(WNS)--The Southern Baptist Convention, holding its national meeting in Houston, approved a resolution June 12 expressing disappointment in the Boy Scouts of America for allowing openly homosexual boys into the organization. The resolution also calls on the Boy Scouts to remove executive and board leaders who pushed for the policy change. The Southern Baptist Convention is the country's largest Protestant denomination, with 45,000 congregations and 16 million members. Baptist churches sponsor nearly 4,000 Scout units representing more than 100,000 youths, according to the Boy Scouts of America. Because Southern Baptist churches are autonomous, this resolution is not binding, but such resolutions are influential.

SUPREME COURT REJECTS BELIEF REQUIREMENTS FOR GROUPS RECEIVING INTERNATIONAL AID

(WNS)--The Supreme Court ruled 6-2 on June 22 that the U.S. government's conditions for groups receiving international aid violated the First Amendment. USAID required that organizations receiving grants as part of President George W. Bush's massive public health programs in Africa fighting HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis, must explicitly oppose prostitution and sex trafficking. Several groups balked, saying that position could harm their efforts to reach sex workers and violated their First Amendment rights. Chief Justice John Roberts agreed in his majority opinion. "The policy requirement compels as a condition of federal funding the affirmation of a belief that by its nature cannot be confined within the scope of the government program," he wrote. "In so doing, it violates the First Amendment and

cannot be sustained."

HOUSE PASSES LATE-TERM/FETAL PAIN ABORTION BAN

(WNS)--Despite the cries of Democrats, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act June 18 evening in a vote that advocates dubbed "historic" for the pro-life movement. "It's simple: Children capable of experiencing unimaginable pain from abortion must be protected across the country," said Marjorie Dannenfelser, president of the pro-life Susan B. Anthony List. "This pro-woman, pro-science, constitutional bill deserves an immediate vote in the U.S. Senate." The Democrat-controlled Senate is unlikely to take up the bill, and President Barack Obama issued a statement threatening a veto if the legislation reached his desk.

DOCTORS GROUP WARNS MEMBERS AGAINST "HOMOPHOBIC" ATTITUDES

(WNS)--The American Academy of Pediatrics, an organization representing 60,000 pediatricians, has published bold new advice for doctors who may find themselves treating "lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning" youth: Watch your attitude. In a policy statement and report the AAP published June 24 in its flagship journal, *Pediatrics*, the group warned its doctors against "homophobia" and "heterosexism," defined as "the societal expectation that heterosexuality is the expected norm and that, somehow, LGBTQ individuals are abnormal." The organization called heterosexism "insidious and damaging," and said doctors should treat LGBTQ youth in a "nonjudgmental" fashion.

CHICK-FIL-A UNDER FIRE AGAIN OVER CEO'S GAY MARRIAGE STANCE

(WNS)--"Seems like not much has

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changed in the world of Chick-fil-A," declared a Huffington Post article after Chick-fil-A President Dan Cathy, perhaps predictably, tweeted his opinion about the Supreme Court's ruling on DOMA and Proposition 8. The ruling will extend federal recognition to same-sex marriages in the states where they are legal. "Sad day for our nation; founding fathers would be ashamed of our gen. to abandon wisdom of the ages re: cornerstone of strong societies," Cathy tweeted on June 26. Apparently not much has changed in the social media world either, where anything short of full support of gay marriage is still "homophobic." Huffington Post contrasted the "anti-gay" post with those who were "celebrating equality." The response on Twitter was less forgiving, calling Cathy a bigot and hateful, with renewed decisions to avoid Chick-fil-A. Cathy later deleted the tweet. In a statement, Chick-fil-A said, "Dan recognizes his views do not necessarily represent the views of all Chick-fil-A customers, restaurant owners, and employees, so he removed the tweet to eliminate any confusion."

PEW: MEDIA FAVORS SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

(WNS)--A search for same-sex marriage on AP pulls up a slew of photos featuring sad homosexual couples denied the "right to marry," and not much else. Now a study by the Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism recognizes what any perceptive reader could have told them. Around the time the U.S. Supreme Court was considering the same-sex marriage issue, news reports had more quotes from supporters than opponents, the study concluded. Pew looked at nearly 500 stories on the topic over a two-month period that began just before the court heard oral arguments in March. By a 5-to-1 margin, stories with statements supporting legalization outweighed those dominated by opponents' views. The findings were consistent across various media: Almost half of newspaper stories showed at least a 2-to-1 margin of pro views to con, 8 percent were dominated by opponents, and 48 percent were largely neutral, Pew said. All three cable news networks had similar proportions

of supporter to opponent content in their stories.

HOLLYWOOD MAKES MORE WITH FAMILY FRIENDLY MOVIES

(WNS)--It's often said that Hollywood doesn't have an agenda other than to make money. When it produces raunchy movies, that's only because it's what people want. If that's true, it's hard to explain numbers released last month by the National Association of Theater Owners. The study says the 177 Hollywood-produced R-rated movies averaged only \$16.8 million at the box office. On the other hand, the 119 PG-13 movies generated nearly three times that much: \$47.3 million per movie. PG and G movies also generated much more per movie than R movies. If that's so, why so many R movies? They are often (though not always) cheaper to produce, since they are driven more by script and character. Most of the expensive, special effects-heavy movies are PG-13. Demographics also play a role. Teens are the most significant movie-going demographic, and most of them can't (or aren't supposed to) attend R movies.

SENATE COMMITTEE EXTENDS SPECIAL RIGHTS FOR HOMOSEXUALS

(WNS)--A Senate committee has approved a controversial bill that would extend special workplace rights to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered (LGBT) persons. On July 10, the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee voted 15-7 to pass the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA), legislation that has long been a priority for homosexual activists. Three Republicans joined 12 Democrats voting in favor: Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, and Mark Kirk, R-Ill. The bill bans workplace discrimination based on sexual orientation. That idea may sound appealing, but conservatives say the law would further sexualize the workplace, lead to costly lawsuits, and infringe on the religious liberty of those who may disagree with the homosexual lifestyle.

CONSERVATIVE GROUPS AID SOLDIERS FACING RELIGIOUS LIBERTY INFRINGEMENT

(WNS)--On the week that marks the 237th anniversary of George

Washington's general order establishing chaplaincy in the U.S. military, a chaplains organization launched a project to educate service members of their constitutionally guaranteed right to live out their faith. The group is trying to catalogue and stop what they call a growing threat to religious liberty. The Chaplain Alliance for Religious Liberty represents more than 2,400 chaplains in all branches of the U.S. military. It will distribute "Religious Liberty Palm Cards" to soldiers. The cards outline what a soldier's religious liberties are and provide a website address for soldiers to report a suspected violation of their religious liberty and to seek counsel from attorneys and retired chaplains.

MARRIAGE HITS NEW LOW

(WNS)--The marriage rate in the U.S. continues to slide. A new report says the rate of marriage has dropped to a new low of 31.1, meaning there are about 31 marriages in the U.S. per year for every 1,000 unmarried women. In 1950, that number was 90.2. In 1920, it was 92.3. "Marriage is no longer compulsory," study researcher Susan Brown, co-director of the National Center for Family and Marriage Research (NCFMR) at Bowling Green State University, said in a statement. "It's just one of an array of options. Increasingly, many couples choose to cohabit and still others prefer to remain single." The NCFMR calculated the marriage rate by looking at the number of women over the age of 15 who get married each year, so delaying marriage would also affect the rate. A woman's average age at first marriage in the United States is now nearly 27, the highest in more than a century, according to the NCFMR report.

TEXAS SENATE PASSES 20-WEEK ABORTION BAN

(WNS)--Pro-abortion and pro-life supporters stood shoulder to shoulder inside the rotunda of Austin's Capitol while the constant din of chanting echoed throughout the building. The thousands who came to support or protest the bill banning abortion after 20 weeks knew it would ultimately pass. But they came out anyway in hopes that their voices would influence a growing movement of pro-life legislation around the country. Republicans passed the bill 19-11, with all but one Democrat voting against it. The measure passed the House earlier. It

was signed into law by Gov. Rick Perry. In addition to banning abortion after 20 weeks, the bill will require abortionists to have admitting privileges at a nearby hospital and require all abortions to take place in surgical centers. Only five out of Texas' 42 existing abortion clinics meet the surgical center requirements, and many clinic owners say they can't afford to upgrade or relocate, so they'll have to close their doors.

ISLAM INCREASINGLY DRAWS LATINA CONVERTS

(WNS)--The rate of Latinos converting to Islam in the United States has doubled since 2000, according to a report by the Cooperative Congregations Studies Partnership. African-Americans still represent the largest group of converts—64 percent—but Latinos represent the greatest increase since 2000. Latinos are 17 percent of the American population, and American converts to Islam were only 6 percent Latino in 2000. But by 2010, that had grown to 12 percent. Among Latinos, female converts increased from 32 percent to 41 percent. And as the number of practicing Muslims in the United States increases, so do the number of mosques—from 1,209 to 2,106 during the first decade of the 21st century.

ABORTION ATTITUDES HAVE REGIONAL DIFFERENCES

(WNS)--A recent Pew study on abortion includes a new round of data that highlights regional differences regarding attitudes toward abortion. Among the most interesting findings: the South Central region of the country is now solidly against abortion-on-demand: "The most important trend in this report is that the balance has flipped" in the South Central part of the country, says Carroll Doherty, associate director of the Pew Research Center. "You always saw less support for legal abortion in South Central, but since the '90s, it's flipped from modestly in favor to 12 points against." The South Central Region includes Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Texas. The country is still divided on abortion, but the trend is definitely in the direction of life. The Pew study says Americans are more pro-life than a similar study the organization did in 1995, but 54 percent

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of Americans still say abortion should be legal in all or most cases, and 40 percent say it should be illegal in all or most cases. In 1995-96, the figures were 60 percent favoring legal abortion and 38 percent opposing abortion all or most of the time.

DEFIANT TEXAS ABORTIONIST ADMITS DEFEAT

(WNS)--After vowing to continue offering abortions to women, even if he had to do it illegally, a Texas abortionist said in July he would close his facility near the Rio Grande Valley town of Harlingen. Lester Minto's facility will be the fourth to close since Texas enacted a 20-week abortion ban. Planned Parenthood announced last week it would shutter three of its centers. When the state Legislature passed the ban, Minto initially told a local newspaper, "I can't tell you how I will go underground, but somehow I will be there." But on last week, he told a local television station his center will close in less than 90 days. Minto plans to close his center partly because he does not think he can obtain the necessary admitting privileges he needs to fulfill the law. Both local hospitals are affiliated with Valley Baptist Health System. In a July 13 article, *The New York Times* said Minto's center performed between 1,500 and 2,000 abortions a year at about \$400 each.

MORE U.S. COMPANIES BUCKLE UNDER LGBT PRESSURE

(WNS)--The Human Rights Campaign's (HRC) list of LGBT-friendly businesses is long and quickly growing—almost 300 Fortune 500 businesses offer workplaces with insurance, employment, and retirement policies friendly to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered workers. When HRC first released the Corporate Equality Index a decade ago, only 13 businesses made the list. "The numbers are irrefutable: The more successful a business is in the United States, the more likely it is to embrace equality," HRC's president Chad Griffin wrote in a letter accompanying the project. But Rob Schwarzwalder, executive vice president of the Family Research Council, believes that LGBT-friendly companies miss a bigger picture in light of current profit: "Companies that actively and openly

affirm homosexuality as a valid choice of life and behavior are failing to recognize the toll that homosexual unions will take on society if they become fully legitimated. They are, in my view, looking for social acceptance and quick profit ahead of principle." Of the country's top 20 businesses, 13 received perfect scores from HRC, meaning they offer homosexual and transgender protection policies, equal spousal and insurance benefits to married homosexuals, training for employees on LGBT issues, and public support for LGBT groups. Chevron, Fortune's no. 3 company, topped the list of LGBT-inclusive companies, with General Motors, Bank of America, Ford Motor Co., and AT&T following closely behind.

DEFENDING LIFE IN NEW MEXICO'S CITY OF DEATH

(WNS)--Pro-life advocates in Albuquerque, N.M., are bucking the trend in the "late-term abortion capital of the U.S." by petitioning for a ballot measure that would ban abortion after 20 weeks. The petition is a grassroots effort led by Bud and Tara Shaver with Project

Defending Life. Organizations such as the Catholic Coalition, New Mexico Right to Life, Knights of Columbus, and Voices for Family Values also support the petition, which calls for a measure modeled after the fetal pain bill passed in the U.S. House earlier this year. The city ordinance would only apply to Albuquerque, where three of New Mexico's five abortion centers operate.

UNINTENDED, BUT NOT UNEXPECTED.

(WNS)--Rhode Island now allows same-sex marriage, but on the first day of same-sex marriage in the state last week, couples queued up to get a same-sex divorce. Homosexual couples who had previously gotten married in states that recognize the marriage, also have to get divorced in states that recognize same-sex marriages as marriages. So homosexual Rhode Island couples who had gotten married in nearby Massachusetts can now divorce in their home state, and some of them already have, or at least have applied to. The bottom line: More legal, cultural, and social chaos created by same-sex marriage.

GAO TAKES STEP TOWARD HOLDING PLANNED PARENTHOOD ACCOUNTABLE

(WNS)--The Government Accountability Office (GAO) is launching an investigation into Planned Parenthood and related organizations, a move some lawmakers are calling the first official look into abortion providers' use of federal subsidies. Direct funding of abortion is illegal, but that hasn't stopped the government from being Planned Parenthood's largest source of funding. Counting Medicaid reimbursements, Planned Parenthood received \$542 million in taxpayer money in the fiscal year that ended in June 2012. That's 45 percent of the organization's budget, giving it financial stability to continue or expand abortion services through other funding sources. "Planned Parenthood and other organizations that provide abortions clearly benefit from Uncle Sam," Sen. David Vitter, R-La, said in a statement. "But there's no accounting to prove how they actually use that money."

SAME-SEX MARRIAGE CAUSES PRO-LIFE RIFT IN OHIO

(WNS)--The nation's oldest and largest grassroots pro-life group, the National Right to Life Committee, has broken ties with a Cleveland affiliate over its stand against same-sex marriage. The move signals a new political strategy in an era when politicians may be pro-life but untraditional in their view of marriage. In this case, the untraditional politician is Sen. Rob Portman of Ohio, who in March declared his support for same-sex marriage, a reversal of his previous position. The flip-flop caused some Ohio conservatives to drop support for Portman, who has otherwise been a consistent pro-life ally in the U.S. Senate. On June 24, after a year and a half of discussion, Cleveland Right to Life announced it had updated its mission statement to include same-sex marriage as a practice "contrary to 'the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God.'" The group added it would "consider any political candidate who does not support the right to life of the unborn child and marriage as only between a man and a woman to be unworthy of representing the rights and well-being of all of their constituents."

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ACLU JOINS STREET MINISTRY IN UNLIKELY ALLIANCE

(WNS)--When the City of New Orleans passed a ban that kept Troy Bohn's ministry from preaching in the famous French Quarter, the group found an unlikely ally—the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). Months after the ministry's initial run-in with New Orleans police, city council members finally lifted the ban last week. Raven Ministries has worked on Bourbon Street since 1960. But in October 2011, the city passed a ban on disseminating "any social, political, or religious message between the hours of sunset and sunrise." Even so, the ministry continued holding "street church" on Friday and Saturday nights. They don't "chase people," Bohn said. They set up shop, and talk to people who are interested. Trouble didn't come until this past September, when police showed up and arrested Bohn and two of his coworkers. Bohn called the ban "a blatant violation of First Amendment speech." Police gave the evangelists a citation and held them for a couple of hours. Bohn told officers people needed to hear his message and insisted he would be back the next day. That's when the ACLU contacted the ministry, and said it wanted to take the case. Bohn said the man on the phone admitted he didn't agree with the ministry, but said the city's ordinance was a violation of the First Amendment. The ACLU won a restraining order against the ban in late September, and Bohn and his group have continued preaching since then.

JUDGE ORDERS HALT TO PRAYERS AT MEETINGS IN NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY

As reported by FOX News a federal judge has ordered Rowan County commissioners to end their practice of opening government meetings with a prayer specific to one religion.

Judge James A. Beaty Jr. issued a preliminary injunction granting a victory to three complainants who said their rights were violated by prayers, most of which are in the name of Jesus Christ, the Salisbury Post reported.

"We are very pleased that the court reaffirmed one of the most basic principles of religious liberty - that all

members of the community should be treated and welcomed equally by their government, regardless of their personal religious beliefs," said Chris Brook, legal director for the ACLU of North Carolina Legal Foundation, who is representing the plaintiffs.

"Opening government meetings with prayers that are specific to only one religion not only alienates people of different beliefs but also clearly violates the Constitution's protection of religious liberty," Brook said in a statement issued after the judge's decision.

The organization accused the board of violating the First Amendment provision ordaining the separation of church and state by routinely praying to Jesus Christ to start its meetings.

In March, the commissioners opened their meeting with a prayer just one week after the ACLU filed its lawsuit.

DHS EXTINGUISHES 197 MILLION PEOPLE'S 4TH AMENDMENT RIGHTS IN CONSTITUTION FREE ZONES

Using data provided by the U.S. Census Bureau, the ACLU has determined that nearly 2/3 of the entire US population (197.4 million people) live within 100 miles of the US land and coastal borders.

The government is assuming extraordinary powers to stop and search individuals within this zone. This is not just about the border: This "Constitution-Free Zone" includes most of the nation's largest metropolitan areas.

Strangely enough, the border for these "Constitution Free Zones" includes not only Mexico and Canada, but also states like Oregon, New York, North and South Carolina and various other coastal states, even Alaska! In these areas the Department of Homeland Security will take your computer or other electronic devices, search your belongings and shake you down without a warrant and without cause and claim they are within the law.

The ACLU is now suing over this event, but there's no telling how the case will go with such limited media exposure. The DHS is literally gutting the Constitution and declaring itself higher than the law of the land by doing this, and it spells out major trouble for the entire Bill of Rights at large.

In 2008 Homeland Security promised to demonstrate within 120 days that what it was engaged in was constitutional. In

August 2009, a year later, a report was released by, not surprisingly, the DHS, in which they had basically investigated themselves and determined that it was acting constitutionally.

Their explanation was that they weren't actually removing the Constitution from US soil, only the border, which has now apparently moved thousands of mile well past our borders.

It's clear that Obama Justice Department aren't worried about the clear violations of the Fourth Amendment by the DHS.

As early as 2006 the ACLU was questioning the Department of Homeland Security's Constitution Free Zone which was started under the former Bush administration.

OBAMACARE WORKERS ANGRY AFTER BEING OFFERED JOBS WITHOUT HEALTH BENEFITS

As reported by the *Contra Costa Times* in Concord, CA, a soon-to-be-opened call center meant to help teach the public about ObamaCare is under fire for offering some of its new employees part-time positions — in turn denying them benefits under the very law they are helping to implement.

The call center, which is set to be opened Oct. 1, attracted about 7,000 applicants after the county won the right to operate it earlier this year. Workers and local politicians say they believed that most if not all of the positions at the center would be full-time with benefits.

However, out of the 147 call center employees, only 103 were offered permanent full-time agent positions. The rest are considered "permanent intermittent customer service agents," Lauren Brosnan from Contra Costa County's Employment and Human Services department said.

Local politicians say they feel duped. "It is very disappointing. I was under the impression these were going to be well-paying, well-compensated positions," said County Supervisor Mary Piepho. "We were really hopeful these would be jobs meeting the unemployment needs in our county and offer them the ability to make a living and support their families."

INTERNATIONAL BRIEFS RUSSIA, CHINA AMONG WORST COUNTRIES FOR HUMAN TRAFFICKING

(WNS)--China and Russia failed to meet minimum standards for fighting human trafficking, according to the U.S. State Department, which dropped the countries to the lowest possible ranking in its 2013 report, released in June. The annual "Trafficking in Persons" report ranks 188 countries on performance in fighting various forms of human trafficking. Promises to improve kept China and Russia on the Tier 2 Watchlist for nine consecutive years. Now, the State Department has dropped the two countries, along with Uzbekistan, to Tier 3, on par with countries such as Iran, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, and Zimbabwe. The report accused China of state-sponsored forced labor under the name "re-education through labor," as well as widespread sex trafficking. China's one-child policy—and the skewed sex ratio of 118 boys to 100 girls it caused—has created a huge demand for the "trafficking of foreign women as brides for Chinese men and for forced prostitution." Activists commended Secretary of State John Kerry for being willing to downgrade powerful nations.

CHINA CLAMPS DOWN ON FAMILIES WHO RESCUE ABANDONED BABIES

(WNS)--Orphaned children hold on to their toys at the Bethel foster home for the care and education of blind and disabled children in Lan Fang, China. China has banned groups and individuals from privately adopting abandoned infants, making it much harder for babies without families to find good homes. The country's Ministry of Civil Affairs announced in late June that people who find an abandoned child must immediately tell local residential committees and the police and not adopt the child at will. Tens of thousands of infants are abandoned each year in China due primarily to its strict one-child policy, which limits most urban couples to one child and rural couples to two. A traditional preference for male heirs leads many families to abandon the girls and disabled children that have not been aborted, hoping to have a boy. Poverty and the social stigma for unwed mothers are also factors. Zhou Xiaozheng of Renmin University's School of Society and Population Studies said around 200,000 babies are abandoned in China

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each year, mostly girls whose parents wanted to try again for a boy.

SENEGAL PRESIDENT RESISTS OBAMA'S CALL FOR GAY RIGHTS

(WNS)--President Barack Obama's support of the Supreme Court rulings on same-sex marriage caused some friction with his African hosts last month. Obama said from Senegal, his most recent stop on his African tour, that all states should recognize same-sex marriage. Senegal is one of the many African countries that outlaw homosexuality. Senegalese President Macky Sall resisted Obama's call for Africans to give gays equal rights under the law. "We are still not ready to decriminalize homosexuality," Sall said, insisting his country is "very tolerant" and needed time to digest the issue without pressure. "This does not mean we are homophobic."

UK APPROVES GAY MARRIAGE AND CHURCH-RUN SCHOOLS

(WNS)--Britain legalized gay marriage in July after Queen Elizabeth II symbolically gave her stamp of approval, clearing the way for the first same-sex weddings next summer. The queen's assent, which she offered the day after Parliament cleared the bill, is a formality, and the last step necessary for a bill to become law. The law, first introduced in Parliament in January, enables gay couples to get married in both civil and religious ceremonies in England and Wales, but only if the religious institution consents. The Church of England, the country's official church, says it will not perform such ceremonies, at least for now. The Church of England actively opposed the bill as the House of Commons and House of Lords debated it. When Members of Parliament (MPs) continued to advance the measure, the Church issued a brief reiterating that it does not condone homosexual marriage, although it supported the existing civil unions for homosexual couples: "The Church of England is committed to the traditional understanding of the institution of marriage as being between one man and one woman."

CHINESE PASTOR KNOWN FOR PROCLAIMING THE BENEFITS OF PERSECUTION DIES

(WNS)--Well-known Chinese house church leader Samuel Lamb died Aug. 3 at the age of 88. Lamb, who is known for saying "more persecution, more growth," spent more than 20 years in prison for his faith and led an unregistered house church of 4,000 people in Guangzhou. The son of a Baptist pastor, Lamb (Lin Xingiao in Chinese) preached his first sermon at 19. As China came under Mao Zedong's Communist rule, Chinese authorities arrested Lamb in 1955 for the "anti-revolutionary" act of refusing to join the government's Three-Self Church. He was released in 1957, but five months later was sent to a labor camp for 19 years. His wife died while he was imprisoned, working in the coal mines. Once he was released, Lamb reopened his house church in Guangzhou. Still he refused to register his church as a Three-Self Church because the government body forbids teaching minors under 18 and preaching on the second coming of Christ. According to Open Doors USA, Lamb was insistent that Christians obey the government unless it contradicted God's Word. "The laws of God are more important than the laws of man," he said.



Kid's Magazine Stirs the Pot on Homosexuality

By Amy Henry

(WNS)--You know something's wrong when your 10-year-old won't let her 9-year-old brother read her latest copy of *Stone Soup*.

Touted as a magazine for children ages 8-13, *Stone Soup* features stories, poems, artwork, and book reviews by children. I bought my budding writer a subscription when she was 8, in hopes she might submit her own work.

Normally, both children enjoy the magazine, and, until this issue, I have had no qualms with it. But when my daughter yanked it out of her brother's hands, I knew something

was up.

That something was an 11-year-old girl's review of *My Mixed-Up Berry Blue Summer* by Jennifer Gennari. The book's protagonist is a girl whose mother is planning a wedding with her future wife. The backward townspeople object, but in the end achieve enlightenment and embrace the lesbian couple who then marry and live, apparently, happily ever after.

The young writer of this review lets us know her own views on the issue: "Just like in the book when Eva says, 'We won't keep quiet about homophobia,' I think that people shouldn't be afraid of homosexuality, and if they are they should talk about it so they aren't so uncomfortable with it. I think homosexuals should get the same rights as everyone else, the right to be in the military, the right to get married, and the right to have children."

While I was appalled to find such overt propaganda in a children's magazine, given today's heated debate over homosexual marriage, I certainly wasn't surprised. Our children are exposed to homosexuality in some form nearly every day—no longer is it a forbidden topic. To wit: TV Guide reports that a future episode of Disney's *Good Luck Charlie* features a homosexual drama. Seeing two men kiss may shock parents today, but after seeing it a few hundred times, our children may not so much as glance up from their smartphones for such things.

Although I was disappointed with *Stone Soup* (and planning a strongly worded letter to the editor), this book review gave me just what the reviewer hoped it would: the opportunity to talk with my little ones (but far sooner than I would have liked) about homosexuality. They know the Bible says it is wrong, but how then do we treat a family member or friend (both of which we have and love) who is homosexual? Do we shun or shame, or is there a better, more effective and loving way to approach them?

With the recent Supreme Court decision to strike down the Defense of Marriage Act, such questions are more apropos than ever. As much as we'd like to, no longer can we act like homosexuality is an issue we

can hide from our children, even within the supposed "safety" of a children's magazine. As much as I disagree with *Stone Soup* for their political correctness on the issue of homosexuality, I agree with the reviewer that indeed we need to have more conversations with our children about it.

But the end result of these conversations may not be quite what she had in mind.

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Pro. 22:6).



Pastoral Authority

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called to minister to must realize that the proper exercise of pastoral authority is absolutely necessary for a successful and God-honoring ministry.

THE NATURE OF PASTORAL AUTHORITY

1. The nature of pastoral authority does not lie in the intellectual abilities, natural talents, or leadership skills of the man himself. The very best of men possessed with charisma and eloquence are not necessarily qualified to exercise pastoral authority. The Bible warns against putting confidence in mere men as men: ". . . **Verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. . . It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man**" (Ps. 39:5; 118:8). Men cannot presume to exercise pastoral authority unless they have received the Divine call of God into the pastoral ministry. The principle implied in Hebrews 5:4 must be carefully heeded with regards to pastoral authority: "**And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.**"

2. Therefore the very nature and exercise of pastoral authority lies in the fact that God Almighty has issued a Divine call to the heart of the minister to preach the Word and pastor a particular flock of God's elect. Thus pastoral authority is not inherent in a man, but rather derived from the special call of God into the pastoral ministry. Romans

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Pastoral Authority

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1:1 declares: **“Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God.”** The special, invincible, and powerful call of God into the ministry must be evident in a man who is to exercise pastoral authority.

3. God not only calls, qualifies, and equips certain men for the Gospel ministry, He also Divinely appoints them to a particular field of labor. Acts 20:28 declares: **“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”**

Pastoral authority is vested only in those God has sovereignly called and appointed to oversee a particular church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Pastors of the Lord's churches are not in that position by mere accident or coincidence, but rather by the Divine appointment of a Sovereign God.

4. Furthermore, the nature of pastoral authority is recognized by a church of the Lord Jesus Christ when she collectively affirms God's appointment of a particular man to oversee them. When a church votes to call a man as pastor, it is in effect, confirming its desire to be led in spiritual things and fed the Word of God by a specific elder. Therefore every church must understand that when it calls a man as pastor it is recognizing the authority given to him by God to oversee them with regards to spiritual things. Thus the exercise of pastoral authority lies in God's call and the church's recognition of that call.

THE EXTENT OF PASTORAL AUTHORITY

1. Negatively, pastoral authority must never be extended beyond the bounds of Scripture, nor must it ever usurp the authority of the local church. I am afraid that many men fueled by the lust for power, a desire for preeminence, and worldly ambition abuse their pastoral authority by dictating to the church rather than leading it in love. No pastor should be permitted to abuse his authority by leading the church according to his own personal

opinions and preferences. Paul's instruction to the church at Corinth was: **“Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ”** (I Cor. 11:1). A church of the Lord Jesus Christ should only follow the pastor as long as he is faithfully following Christ and preaching the truth of Scripture. When the pastor departs from the scriptural mandate of **“thus saith the Lord”** and replaces it with his own desires the church is not obligated to obey him. Many churches have been ruined by dictators who force their own personal agenda under the guise of pastoral authority. Beware of any preacher who presumes to say that he is the only one God has appointed to know the will of God within the church. The church is a body that is to function collectively under the Headship of the Lord Jesus Christ. When a Pastor abuses his pastoral authority, he is in effect, presuming to take the place of Christ.

2. The extent of pastoral authority ties within the bounds of Scripture. Pastor's are commanded to **“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine”** (II Tim. 4:2). The pastor is not called to share personal opinions, insights, or to entertain, but chiefly to preach God's Word and to lead the flock of God in the ways of godliness. In order for a Pastor to fulfill this holy and weighty responsibility he must be careful to obey the admonition of I Peter 4:11 which states: **“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”**

3. Titus 2:1 declares: **“But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine”** and Titus 2:15 commands the Pastor: **“These things speak. . .with all authority.”** Thus the Pastor has been commissioned by God to exercise scriptural authority in the preaching of sound doctrine. Sound doctrine serves to edify and strengthen a church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Every Pastor should be committed to systematically feeding the church he has the oversight of with the sincere milk and strong

meat of doctrinal truths found in the Word of God. I Timothy 4:13 and 16 state: **“Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. . .Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.”** A Pastor who does not authoritatively preach doctrinal truth will soon weaken the church he pastors to the point where they will be undiscerning and susceptible to error. A Pastor and church that does not stand for doctrinal truth will soon fall into a myriad of errors. In order to guard against error and promote spiritual growth Ephesians 4:14-15 must be carefully heeded: **“That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the slight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.”** The Pastor is to herald the doctrines of the Word of God despite opposition, rejection, and persecution (II Tim. 4:2-5).

4. Pastoral authority is not confined to proclaiming the doctrinal truths of Scripture, but also includes the responsibility to **“exhort. . .with all authority.”** The Greek word for exhort is *parakaleo* which carries the idea of admonishing, entreating, beseeching, and diligently urging one to pursue a specific course of conduct. Thus the Pastor has the authority from the Word of God to call upon his hearers to obey the clear and practical commands of Scripture. The Pastor should faithfully proclaim the believer's responsibility to live a godly and separated life, to be zealous of good works, to be faithful in all areas of stewardship, to be fervent witnesses to the lost, and to practice the principles of righteousness. I Thessalonians 4:1-2 illustrates this pastoral authority being exercised by Paul: **“Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more. For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.”** A Pastor who

is not authoritatively preaching and commanding the members of the church to obey Christ and practice righteousness will soon be pastoring a church that is morally weak and without power to carry out the Great Commission. Oh, that more Pastors would authoritatively call upon the Lord's sheep to obey and follow Christ regardless of the cost! Pastors must **“exhort with all authority”** without fear or favor if they are to faithfully discharge their pastoral responsibility.

5. Every Pastor is also charged with the responsibility to **“rebuke with all authority.”** The Greek word for rebuke is *elencho* which conveys the idea of convincing and correcting those who are disobedient or in error by calling upon them to repent. The Pastor must not allow immorality, sin, or doctrinal error to go unchecked within the church. He must obey God's command to **“Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins”** (Isa. 58:11). Ezekiel 18:30 declares: **“. . .Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin.”** Though it is human nature for people to be adverse to the scriptural rebukes of a Pastor, he must nevertheless be faithful to obey the admonition of I Timothy 5:20 which states: **“Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.”** A Pastor has every right and authority from the Word of God to preach against sin and doctrinal error. If he does not faithfully exercise this authority because of the fear of man he is failing to follow the example of his Lord of whom it was said: **“For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes”** (Matt. 7:29).

6. The Pastor is also charged with the responsibility and authority to assume the spiritual leadership of the church that he pastors by setting a godly example of purity, humility, and compassion. I Peter 5:2-3 declares: **“Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being**

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Pastoral Authority

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lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." A Pastor who is mean-spirited, dictatorial, and prideful will soon undermine the authority of his office and will be rendered useless. Thus a Pastor cannot push the flock of God, he must gently and lovingly lead them by example. I have found that those Pastors who lead and feed the flock of God in humility soon earn the respect and love of the sheep that are under their care. As they lovingly lead, the Lord's sheep will follow them as they follow Christ. No Pastor has authority from God to treat the people he pastors rudely or without Christian courtesy. A man who rants and raves in the pulpit and treats the members with disrespect is not worthy to be esteemed or followed. II Timothy 2:24-25 declares: **"And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves. . ."**

THE PROPER RESPONSE TO PASTORAL AUTHORITY

1. The last sentence of Titus 2:15 reads: **"Let no man despise thee"** implying a twofold responsibility involving the Pastor as he exercises his pastoral authority, as well as the members of the church he pastors. It is the duty of pastors and church members to respond to pastoral authority in a correct and God honoring manner.

2. The Pastor must be careful never to abuse or misuse the pastoral authority that he has been vested with. A domineering, dictatorial, hateful, and cruel spirit will surely cause a Pastor to soon be despised by the people he pastors. An inconsistent example will also cause a Pastor to lose respect from the people that he pastors. Thus, every Pastor must be committed to **"speaking the truth in love"** (Eph. 4:15) if he is to exercise his pastoral authority in the right manner. He must also follow the admonition of I Timothy 4:12 which states: **"Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity."**

3. As the Pastor faithfully, lovingly,

and humbly executes his pastoral authority by preaching the truth and rebuking sin, church members are to respond by obeying the Word of God. Every church member must realize that the Pastor has been appointed by God for their good to lead the church in spiritual things. Hebrews 13:17 declares: **"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."**

Also, if a Pastor labors in the Word and in doctrine church members are to respond with love, respect, and support for his ministry among them. I Thessalonians 5:12-13 declares: **"And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves."** I Timothy 5:17 states: **"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine."**

CONCLUSION

1. The teaching of pastoral authority is often misunderstood by church members and abused by power hungry, dictatorial pastors. However, it is a clear teaching of Scripture, and must be regarded as such.

2. How careful every Pastor should be to carefully execute the pastoral authority God and the church has vested him with in a God-honoring manner. The weight of this responsibility should cause every Pastor to humbly fall before God earnestly beseeching Him for grace to fulfill his office with integrity. May God help every Pastor to never seek to usurp the authority of the Scriptures or the church under the guise of pastoral authority. It is a most grievous sin when a Pastor stops serving the Lord and the church and begins serving his own interests fueled by personal ambition and pride.

3. It is in the best interests of every church to follow the truth and godly example of their Pastor as he faithfully feeds and leads them in the things of God. May every church of the Lord

Jesus Christ follow the example of the model church at Thessalonica of whom Paul wrote: **"That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory. For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe"** (I Thess. 2:12-13).



BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 6-1-2013 to 6-30-2013

Beginning Balance	\$6,879.76
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	225.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	100.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
.....	425.00
TOTAL	7,304.76
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio Time	363.98
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$363.98
.....	\$6,940.78
interest	+ .05
.....	6,940.83
Less Corbin, KY des.	-483.72
ENDING BALANCE	\$6,457.11

CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT

Beginning Balance	\$643.72
RECEIPTS:	
TOTAL	643.72
EXPENDITURES:	
WCTT	160.00
ENDING BALANCE	\$483.72

BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 6-1-2013 to 6-30-2013

Beginning Balance	\$3,148.44
RECEIPTS:	
Amazing Grace B. C., Stockdale, TX	50.00
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	300.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL	60.00
Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX	50.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV	313.45
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	150.00
Carol Johnson, Payette, ID	2.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL	25.00
Faith B. C., Lynn, AR	12.50
Gail Knowles, Scarborough, ME	20.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
Grace B. C., Winston-Salem, NC	50.00
Grace M. B. C., Marion, IL	50.00
Grace M. B. C., Tulsa, OK	35.00
Indore B. C., Indore, WV	100.00
Jeshua Lehman, Ivor, VA	4.00
Leroy Bullard, Albuquerque, NM	100.00
The Lord's Church, Goose Creek, SC	50.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH	100.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN	50.00
Parkway L. B. C., Springfield, OR	200.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL	100.00
Portland B. C., Pumerville, AR	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Silsbee, TX	30.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA	25.00
Subscriptions	105.00
Anonymous	200.00
Dividing checks	150.00
Sub Total	\$2,581.95
TOTAL	\$5,730.39
EXPENDITURES:	
Printing	535.00
Postage	636.31

Wages	2,300.00
FICA	175.96
Supplies	161.11
Dividing checks	150.00
Total Expenditures	\$3,958.38
.....	1,772.01
MS State tax charge	-21.78
.....	1,750.23
Bank charge	-13.00
ENDING BALANCE	\$1,737.23

BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 7-1-2013 to 7-31-2013

Beginning Balance	\$6,940.83
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	225.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	100.00
Calvary B. C., Everson, WA	100.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
.....	525.00
TOTAL	7,465.83
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio Time	454.98
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$454.98
.....	\$7,010.85
interest (May & August)	+ .11
.....	7,010.96
Less Corbin, KY des.	-283.72
ENDING BALANCE	\$6,727.24

CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT

Beginning Balance	\$483.72
RECEIPTS:	
TOTAL	483.72
EXPENDITURES:	
WCTT	200.00
ENDING BALANCE	\$283.72

BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 7-1-2013 to 7-31-2013

Beginning Balance	\$1,737.23
RECEIPTS:	
Amazing Grace B. C., Stockdale, TX	50.00
B. C. of Brimfield, Brimfield, IL	50.00
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	300.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL	60.00
Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX	50.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV	313.45
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	150.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL	25.00
Faith B. C., Lynn, AR	12.50
Gail Knowles, Scarborough, ME	20.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
Grace B. C., Winston-Salem, NC	50.00
Grace M. B. C., Marion, IL	50.00
Grace M. B. C., Tulsa, OK	35.00
Indore B. C., Indore, WV	100.00
Leroy Bullard, Albuquerque, NM	100.00
The Lord's Church, Goose Creek, SC	50.00
Michael Sherman, Ashland, KY	25.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH	100.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN	50.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL	100.00
Portland B. C., Pumerville, AR	50.00
Southside B. C., Fulton, MS	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Silsbee, TX	30.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Warren, OH	75.00
Steve Cooper, Kansas City, KS	11.10
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA	25.00
Subscriptions	85.00
Anonymous	2,200.00
Dividing checks	204.90
Sub Total	\$4,621.95
TOTAL	\$6,359.18
EXPENDITURES:	
Printing	535.00
Postage	635.02
Wages	2,300.00
FICA	175.90
Supplies	147.81
Dividing checks	204.90
MS State Tax (3rd Quarter)	198.00
Total Expenditures	\$4,196.63
.....	2,162.55
Bank charge	-13.00
ENDING BALANCE	\$2,149.55

Perseverance in Well Doing

By Milburn R. Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)

“And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not” (Gal. 6:9).

In these words Paul encourages the Galatians in well doing in general (Gal. 6:10). Well doing respects every part of a Christian's duty.

WELL DOING OUR DUTY

We are regenerated unto well doing (Eph. 2:10). We are commanded to perform good works (Heb. 13:16). These good works are good and profitable unto us (Tit. 3:8, 14). Well doing shows our faith in Christ (Jas. 2:17-18). Christ **“went about doing good”** (Acts 10:38). We are to follow in His steps (I Pet. 2:21). Christ even taught it was **“lawful to do well on the sabbath days”** (Matt. 12:12). By well doing we give evidence we shall be in the resurrection unto life (John 5:28-29).

THE IMPORTANCE OF PERSEVERING IN WELL DOING

Paul does not say the Galatians were not doing good works. Rather he warns them not to be weary in well doing. Without perseverance in well doing God's glory will not be promoted (Matt. 5:16), nor will the Bible be obeyed (II Thess. 3:13). Without well doing the prosperity of the church will be hindered (Matt. 28:19-20). If we do not persevere in well doing our tears will freeze (Ps. 126:5-6), and we will lessen and lighten our crowns (Col. 2:18; II John 8; Rev. 3:11). Hence we ought to seek new opportunities of usefulness.

CAUSES OF WEARINESS

The causes of weariness are complex and numerous in their operation. First, sometimes an enlarged view of our depravity may cast us down. Our corruptions appear to have increased, and we see more hidden abominations. This argues only for more light and labor.

Second, there may be a lack of success in the work. We must advance or decline. Many of our great expectations are disappointed. We

have toiled much and have brought in little. It is no sin to feel weary, the sin is to be weary.

Third, it is our nature to depart from God even after we have received grace (Hos. 11:7). Duty seems difficult and sin easy. We tend to love ease and hate hard work. Physical fatigue has a tendency to generate moral weariness.

Fourth, there is much work to be done and much opposition to the work of Christ. This tends to make our work defective. Sometimes we become so weary we are ready to give up the work.

Fifth, some who did run well have slowed down, or they have become cold in the work (Gal. 5:7). We tend to be influenced by them.

Sixth, there is want of rest. In a very busy time Christ said to His disciples: **“Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while”** (Mark 6:31).

Seventh, there is want of nourishment. We neglect private prayer (speaking to God) and Bible study (God speaking to us).

ENCOURAGEMENTS AGAINST WEARINESS

First, we cannot remove the causes of weariness in well doing. Nor can we escape the temptation to be weary. But we can refuse to yield to the temptation. We may grow weary in the work, but let us never grow weary of the work.

Second, we can learn a lesson from nature. The sower does not see his harvest the day he sows the seed. If he works his field well, in the fall he shall have a bountiful harvest. If we faint under the heat of adversity (Prov. 24:10) or persecution, we can never gather the golden grain in the fall of life.

Third, no relief is gained by yielding

to weariness. We must work hard for our Savior. Our labor is not in vain in the Lord (I Cor. 15:58). There is a reward for faithful service in due time (Luke 14:14). The reaping will surely come (Jas. 5: 7), for there will be a harvest to all who labor in God's field.

The harvest will be glorious and eternal. God's time is the best time. Don't be weary in well doing. When we reap the heavenly harvest we shall rest from our labors for evermore (Rev. 14:13).

CONCLUSION

It is evil to be sound in the faith and yet be idle and useless in God's work. Some begin in fruit and end in leaves.

Crop failure for one year may be made good by the next year's abundance, but eternity can never compensate for what was lost in time.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Calvary Baptist Church of Piqua, Ohio, is in need of a pastor. Any interested party may contact Terry Allen at (937) 773-9272.

The Faith Missionary Baptist Church of Cobbitty, South Wales, Australia is in need of a pastor. For more information please contact David Jackson at 4 Station Street, Thirlmere, NSW 2572, Australia or Email: shellie45@bigpond.com.au.

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

The Liverpool Independent Baptist Church of Liverpool, New York

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

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

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

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

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

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

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