

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

Well Done, Satan, Well Done Are Baptist Briders Sectarians?

By Nathaniel Hille
of Caldwell, Kansas

"Lest Satan should get an advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices" (II Cor. 2:11).

"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Eph. 6:11).

Two events, one by the United States Supreme Court and one by the state of South Carolina, have caused quite a stir amongst some Baptist people. And many



God-fearing people became incensed at these decisions. Satan has "pulled the wool over the eyes" with these two events. Let us examine these

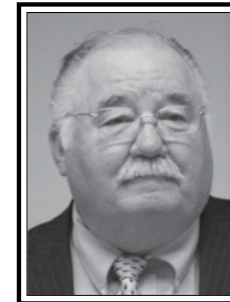
things in the light of the Scriptures as opposed to our personal biases. After all, the Scriptures are to be our sole rule of faith and practice.

EVENT #1: The Supreme Court's decision with respect to
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By Larry J. Killion
of Tacoma, Washington

"For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ" (II Cor. 11:2).

"For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.



Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it

with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without
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Are You Calling and Are You Called?

By Roger Reed
of Mansfield, Ohio

"Let all things be done decently and in order" (I Cor. 14:40).

"This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work" (I Tim. 3:1).

I am ever amazed at the announcements in the two Baptist papers I receive every month



concerning "churches in need of a pastor"! They appear month after month and year after year. I can not recall ever seeing many new ones added to the list over the years, but always the same ones.

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War in the Gates

By Paul Stepp
of Indore, West Virginia

"They chose new gods; then was war in the gates: was there a shield or spear seen among forty thousand in Israel" (Judges 5:8)?

I would like for us to approach a subject that is often on my mind, and often preached upon from this pulpit. The title of my sermon is "War in the Gates." But, my sermon is meant to remind us of the conflict that exists between



good and evil, and the part which you and I must play in the fulfilling and accomplishing of the will of God – which will of God is violently opposed by the will of man and the will of Satan.

There is a warfare that is raging in our nation today. This is not a
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**A prayerless soul is a Christless soul,
and a Christless soul is a graceless soul.**

"And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth" (Acts 9:11).

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The purpose of the Berea Baptist Banner is as follows:

1. To honor God and to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. To preach the gospel to lost sinners.
3. To spread the whole counsel of God's Word.
4. To encourage God's preachers and to strength-en His churches in the most holy faith.
5. To motivate God's children to a closer fellow-ship 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.

Baptist Briders

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blemish" (Eph. 5:23-27).

"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God" (Rev. 19:7-9).

What is a Baptist brider? There is more than one opinion in answer to this question. Number one, the Baptist brider does NOT believe that only Baptists are saved. Proof of this is found several places in the Bible. In Luke 23:39-43 we see that Jesus promised salvation to one of the thieves that died next to Him that day without him having to join the New Testament church first. **"And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, to day shalt thou be with me in paradise."**

All Old Testament believers like Abraham were not Baptists but we believe they were saved by grace through faith. **"There**

was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded,

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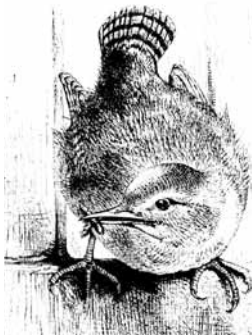
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Baptist Briders

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though one rose from the dead" (Luke 16:19-31).

Angels like the seraphim dwell in glory with God and yet they are not Baptists, they are not even saved from their sins for they have always been faithful to God. If they should leave their first estate wherein they were created as holy, just and good ministering spirits, they would be lost forever. **"In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke"** (Isa. 6:1-4).

"And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day" (Jude 1:6).

The four beasts and the four and twenty elders of Revelation 4:9-10 are not all Baptists either but they are shown in Scripture to be in glory, wherein is the throne of God. **"And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their**

crowns before the throne."

Continuing with the thought of what a Baptist brider is NOT; we notice that a Baptist brider does NOT believe that all Baptists will be in the Bride. Let me explain. There are many in the world today that wear the name Baptist but in fact are not really Baptists. That is, they are not Baptists according to the New Testament definition of the term. Likewise, there are at least two examples of Baptists in the New Testament that will not be in the Bride of Christ.

The first example is Judas. This man had a lot going for him. He was baptized by John the Baptist (you are what you were baptized). If a Catholic priest christened you, you are a Catholic. If a Presbyterian elder sprinkled you, you are a Presbyterian. If you were immersed by a Campbellite, you are a Campbellite. **"Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry. Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Aeldama, that is to say, The field of blood. For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick let another take. Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us,**

Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection" (Acts 1:16-22).

Judas was a charter member of the first Baptist Church (in doctrine and practice) **"And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues"** (I Cor. 12:28).

If the reader struggles with the thought that the first church in the New Testament, the church that Jesus built, was a Baptist assembly, let that thought go for now and we will come back to it later. We will later compare the distinctive doctrine and practice of the New Testament churches with the distinctive doctrine and practice of true Baptist churches down through ecclesiastical history until today. **"And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him. And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils: And Simon he surnamed Peter; And James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder: And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Canaanite, And Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him: and they went into an house"** (Mark 3:13-19).

Yes, Judas had a lot going for him but he also had one big

problem. He was not saved in the first place. He had fooled all the men around him (except for Jesus) and he will not even be in Heaven, let alone in the Bride of Christ. **"Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil"** (John 6:70)? **"That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place"** (Acts 1:25). There is a special place in hell for Judas. He may have been the treasurer in the first Baptist church in the Bible but that does him no good now.

There is another Baptist in the New Testament that will not be in the Bride of Christ either. He was one of the greatest men ever born of a woman according to Jesus. Yes, we are talking about THE Baptist himself, John the Baptist. We believe that John was saved. The Bible says that he was filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb and none can deny that he was a Baptist because that is what God calls him. John, however, is not identified as part of the Bride of Christ but rather as the friend of the Bridegroom. **"And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him. John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the**

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bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:26-30).

So, again, we see that Baptist briders do NOT teach that only Baptists are saved, and they do NOT teach that all Baptists are in the Bride. Now let us move to a more positive look at what Baptist briders teach. Let me give it to you in a nutshell right here. Baptist briders teach (basically) that only the saved that have scriptural baptism will enjoy that special intimate relationship with Christ that the Bride has with her Bridegroom. Scriptures that we have already looked at show us that the New Testament writers, the Apostle Paul and the Apostle John wrote from a Baptist brider point of view.

Many Baptists today are about as messed up as the Corinthians were but if they have the New Testament kind of salvation and the New Testament kind of baptism they are candidates for the Bride even as the members of the Baptist church in Corinth were. There is also strong argument in favor of a third qualification for being in the Bride and that is steadfast faithfulness and perseverance in the distinctive doctrine and practice of the local Baptist churches of the New Testament. Discussion of this aspect of the Bride of Christ can sidetrack the study here so to keep the discussion moving, let us stay with the basic objective things we have mentioned and not delve into subjective thought regarding relative faithfulness in Christian service. Sometimes it is difficult to know where to draw the line

regarding faithfulness. So for now, let us draw the line here at true salvation and scriptural baptism like that which is ascribed to the members of the local Baptist church in Corinth.

In Revelation 19:9 we see that all those that are saved will enjoy the blessings of attending the marriage supper of the Lamb. If you are saved, you will be called to it. What a blessing it will be for all the born again guests at the supper. The Bride on the other hand will consist of only born again believers that have scriptural baptism and were members in good standing of a true New Testament local Baptist church. That is part of what the distinctive doctrine and practice of Baptist briders is about.

The next question we want to consider for a moment is the question, "What is a sectarian?" According to Webster's New Illustrated Dictionary, a sectarian is 1. A member of an organization devoted to one belief or doctrine; a narrow, bigoted person. 2. One who is blindly attached to a particular creed and intolerant of the beliefs and practices of others. Fanatical.

The term is often misused and has a definite bad ring to it most of the time. Whether the term is good or bad however depends on the sect that it is in reference to. **"For we have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes"** (Acts 24:5). **"But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against"** (Acts 28:22).

If you have a Scofield Bible,

Scofield refers to Luke 9:49-50 as "Sectarianism Rebuked." Let us look at these verses again. **"And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbad him, because he followeth not with us. And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us."**

The terminology used by Scofield is often problematic. We see this passage not so much as a rebuke but as wise counsel. We have a work to do and if others in the religious world are doing anything that is not against us then let them alone to do their own thing and let us concentrate of doing the job God called us to do. A good Baptist brider will rejoice anytime any truth is being preached anywhere no matter who is preaching it and meanwhile he will stand separated and distinct from all others and will steadfastly preach the whole counsel of God by the sovereign grace of God to His honor and glory. Amen. As a matter of fact, Jesus Himself sounded rather sectarian in Matthew 16:18 if you remember. **"And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build MY CHURCH; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it"** (Emp. LJK). The church that Jesus built has distinctive doctrine and practice that sets her apart from all other "churches." After salvation in Christ, that is where you go to find the Bride of Christ.

Now we come to the question that this article is all about. Are Baptist briders sectarians? Perhaps the reader has already concluded this but the writer admits to being of the Baptist brider persuasion. So, based on the definitions already given earlier

in this article, let us see. He is a member of an organization that is devoted to the Word of God. It is our only creed. He is as narrow-minded as the Bible forces him to be. He is not blindly attached to the truths of God's Word for they have been illuminated to him by the enlightening of the Holy Spirit. **"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints"** (Eph. 1:18). Ecclesiastically (regarding church truth) he rejects the beliefs and practices of non-Baptists and Baptists in name only but he defends their civil right to believe as they wish as long as they do no harm to others. Most other Baptist briders will probably admit that they feel the same way.

The Apostle Paul was called the ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes (Acts 24:5). This is not a reference to the modern day denomination that preaches an on again off again salvation and the so-called state of sinless perfection in this life. The sect of the Nazarenes is just another name like Baptist brider given to churches that faithfully followed the distinctive doctrine and practice of Jesus of Nazareth. Please notice also that universal briders often quote I Corinthians 3:9 as if it were support for their position. However, be reminded that a Baptist brider wrote this verse to a local Baptist church. Therefore, Baptist briders are only sectarians in the sense that Jesus and the writers of the New Testament were sectarians. **"For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building."** AMEN.



War in the Gates

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mortal or physical warfare that is readily evident to the naked eye. Rather, this is an ongoing struggle that has been continued from each of the previous generations; a struggle in which the forces and powers of Satan have assailed to demolish and destroy the forces and powers of God; a struggle in which immorality is opposed to morality; a struggle in which unrighteousness and wicked men have opposed themselves to all things righteous and to good and godly men.

There is war in the gates! I want us to consider some aspects in which we can see this warfare taking shape.

THE GATES OF HELL

There is a warfare that is going on today, upon the face of the earth, and within the realm of the unseen world of spirit which surrounds us. This is a warfare that goes on between good and evil, between the servants of God and the servants of the devil. This warfare has been going on since the Garden of Eden. The gates of Hell are attempting, even now, to subvert the whole of mankind, and to deny the power of God in this world. The gates of Hell are powerful, and they are able to extend their attacks from the spiritual, into the mortal realm. **“Have the gates of death been opened unto thee? or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death”** (Job 38:17)? These forces of Hell are especially evident in the tortures and the deaths of the men and women of this world. The devil will use death and all the powers of Hell to attack and destroy the sons of men. The mortal realm trembles at the attacks and the powers of Satan and the gates of Hell.

In particular, we find that Satan and his powers are arrayed against the churches of Jesus Christ. **“And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it”** (Matt. 16:18). Though Satan and his forces and the very gates of Hell are constantly engaged in a struggle against God and the church of Jesus Christ, we know, in the end, that Jesus Christ will bring His church to victory!

There is war in the gates! And yet, despite this constant warfare, and all of the nefarious slanders and attacks of Satan, the truth still stands: Neither Satan, death, or the grave shall utterly prevail against the church of Jesus Christ. **THE GATES OF JUDGMENT**

In the Old Testament, we find that the place of judgment – the place where justice was sought in the cities of the Israelites – was the gate of the city. It was there where the elders would gather to hear and deliberate. It was there that the people would come with their disputes and grievances. And, it was there where the decisions would be made, and justice would be granted.

Today, I think that there is war in the gates of judgment. To me, this war in the gates of judgment is a symbol of what is taking place in our society, and the destruction of justice, and the corruption of right and wrong, in our legal system. In other words, I believe that we can rightly compare this warfare in the gates of Judgment, to the warfare that now rages in the courts and justice system of the land in which we live. There is war in the gates!

In our text chapter, we read the following: **“They that are delivered from the noise of archers in the places of drawing water, there shall they rehearse**

the righteous acts of the LORD, even the righteous acts toward the inhabitants of his villages in Israel: then shall the people of the LORD go down to the gates” (Judges 5:11). If there was peace and judgment in the gates of the city, then the inhabitants could expect peace and judgment in their daily lives. If there was peace and judgment in the gates of the city, then the stranger might reckon this city to be a city where God is feared, and His Word is respected. I am afraid, that the nation that we live in, no longer has a fear of God nor a respect for His Word. Judgment and peace are not found in the gates of our cities; nor can we expect to find peace and judgment in our families or in our society.

This should be the noble aspiration of the people of God: **“These are the things that ye shall do; Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates: And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for all these are things that I hate, saith the LORD”** (Zech. 8:16-17). As the people of God in this nation, if we would set the example to others by being honest, being just and fair, and refraining from evil against our neighbors, I wonder how much better our society and our nation might be? Sometimes we are quick to condemn the world, the place we live, or the time in which we live; when, in fact, as the children of God we are not doing our part to convey righteousness and justice and fairness and morality and honesty to the world around us. Good things and good words and good deeds should begin in the lives of the people of God, and should be present in the churches of Jesus

Christ. There is war in the gates! Let us resist the evil, and portray the good in our lives and homes.

THE GATES OF THE HOUSE OF GOD

“Stand in the gate of the LORD’S house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the LORD, all ye of Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the LORD” (Jer. 7:2). We already talked about the gates of Hell and how they are opposed to the people of God. I believe, that in this age, the church of Jesus Christ is the primary institution which will withstand the attacks of the gates of Hell, and it is here – within the bounds of the churches of Jesus Christ – that the attacks will be the most fierce, and where the defence of the gospel will be most genuine.

Let me read to you an Old Testament passage which will remind us of the duties that we share with our ancestors in the faith. **“And Phinehas the son of Eleazar was the ruler over them in time past, and the LORD was with him. And Zechariah the son of Meshelemiah was porter of the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. All these which were chosen to be porters in the gates were two hundred and twelve. These were reckoned by their genealogy in their villages, whom David and Samuel the seer did ordain in their set office. So they and their children had the oversight of the gates of the house of the LORD, namely, the house of the tabernacle, by wards”** (I Chron. 9:20-23). Today, you and I who are members of the churches of Jesus Christ, are reckoned the porters and the warders of the house of God. We are the ones who stand at the gates of the

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house of God, and we proclaim the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ, and we usher in the new members of the churches of God, and we direct the flow of teaching and preaching which enters in and issues forth through the gates of the house of God.

And yet, even here, there is a constant warfare! The world rails against our proclamations of truth! The religious societies and elements of the race of lost mankind will attack us and seek to silence us. And, sadly, even the members of the churches of Jesus Christ may rebel against the teachings and the knowledge and the truths that are found within the hallowed walls of these churches of Jesus Christ. There is war in the gates!

In our text verse we find that there were very few weapons found amongst the children of Israel. And, we find that there were very few pieces of armor that were found amongst the children of Israel. As a people today, the members of the churches of Jesus Christ are very poorly equipped for the warfare at our gates. We have neither the armor to protect ourselves from the attacks of others; nor have we the weapons that are necessary to attack and bring to a halt, the sins and the heresies and the continual plunge into iniquity that exists in the world of men.

It is a monument to our failures, as the churches of Christ, that there are unsaved persons, and heretical doctrines, and false teachings, and ministers of Satan – even now – within the ranks of so-called Christianity, and even within the members of the churches of Jesus Christ. **“The kings of the earth, and all**

the inhabitants of the world, would not have believed that the adversary and the enemy should have entered into the gates of Jerusalem” (Lam. 4:12). It is nearly beyond belief, that the children and the people of God should be brought so low in our generation. It is not that we are less saved than the generations that have gone before. It is simply that we are more like the flesh, and more attuned to mortality, than ever before. The warfare that has been raging throughout history, has evolved from a physical and brutal attack on the bodies and souls of God’s people, into a more refined and hidden attack upon the morals and desires of those who are the people of God. In our generation, the devil probably has more of his people actively working from within the ranks of Christianity than ever before. In our generation the devil probably has more heretics and ministers of Satan within the membership of the churches of God, than ever before. Who would have thought, or believed, that such terrible sin and sinners would have entered into the gates of the churches of Jesus Christ?

And yet, there is hope! The warfare rages on, and though we have suffered many defeats, there are still triumphs and a final victory that await us. And, the church of Jesus Christ will be preserved – spotless, and undefiled – until she takes up her abode in the heavenly city, New Jerusalem.

THE GATE OF HEAVEN

“And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven” (Gen. 28:16-17).

Finally, let us consider the gate of Heaven itself, and the warfare that rages there, outside that gate. I want you to know, there are none who can successfully assail the gate of Heaven. There are none who can successfully prevent or hinder those who are destined to enter in; nor are there any who can successfully prevent or hinder the messengers and ministers of God as they issue forth; nor are there any who can forever successfully prevent or hinder the will and purposes of God as they are sent forth to be accomplished in earth and in Heaven. And yet, there are many – in fact the whole of unregenerate mankind, and the entirety of the fallen angels – who seem bent on doing their best to oppose themselves to the will of God and the purposes that God has ordained to accomplish.

What I want you to see, in closing, is that the world of Satan and the world of men do their best to hinder the salvation of the lost, and the preservation of the saved. Now, I know that they cannot be successful in their attempts to thwart the will of God – but this does not mean that their attempts are any more feeble! The Lord Jesus Christ said, **“But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows’ houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves”** (Matt. 23:13-15).

Is it not amazing what evil men can accomplish, when they are shrouded in the garments of religion? Is it not amazing what the devil and his minions can accomplish, when the world recognizes them as the religious, academic, and scientific elite of mankind? The world rages against God and His authority! Mortality and the fallen spiritual realm wage a constant warfare against the will and purpose of Heaven – and yet they must fail. This does not preclude or eliminate the guilt or the judgment of those guilty parties; rather, these men, women, and fallen angels only heap damnation upon their heads.

But, it should be in our best interest to proclaim the truths of salvation. And, it is in our best interests to inform the world that there is a Heaven and there is a Hell – and the two are utterly opposed. There is a straight gate, and a straight and narrow way which is the path of the just; and, there is a wide gate, and a broad way which is – even now – leading men unto destruction. **“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it”** (Matt. 7:13-14).

I pray that God would give us grace that we could participate in a positive fashion in the **“war in the gates.”** I pray that God would help us – so we would be a help to those entering into the strait gate, and we would be an encouragement to those who travel the narrow way. There is war in the gates! May we find peace in the pursuit of God and Heaven, as we travel the way that God has made for us.



Are You Calling

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What is the problem? Why is there such a difficult time with so many churches in need of pastors? The last I heard there was some forty New Testament Baptist churches in need of a pastor.

I have pondered this for quite some time, and the Lord has given me a couple of insights on this and I would like to share them with the reader, but mainly this is meant to churches without pastors and pastors without churches.

Three things have been brought to my attention (I am sure there may be more, but these stick out as the three to be taken under consideration). The three are these; "comfort," "fear," and "faith." So which one of these three fits you, dear reader, young preacher, church member?

Let us start with "comfort!" And let us begin with the Lord's churches that are currently without a pastor. I have been very frustrated as I said that the request for prayer for these same churches, month after month and year after year continue. My home church even has those churches without pastors listed in the bulletin for prayer. I have no problem praying for them, but after years of seeing the same ones the question comes to mind, "Why?" Several churches have been asking for prayer for years. When I got up this morning thinking on this article, I looked in the mirror to make sure I did not have stupid written on my forehead, because I think some might think that we who have been praying are stupid.

Let me be clear, I am not writing to point any certain church group out but to bring to our attention some issues that churches and preachers are facing. And I am not

wanting to offend any but simply to point out the facts and the truth of this matter, "**Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them**" (Ps. 119:165). Why would any church that has over the course of the years had top notch preachers in to preach in view of a call and never called any of them...Why? Many of these preachers are now pastoring very good churches and I would stack them up against any that we have today, church and preacher. I know some of these men personally and I have a hard time understanding why any church would turn them away. I have my belief why they were not called in some of these cases, but I reserve the right not to express it here but to give a general idea why good men are not called.

Now out of the forty that I have heard, about five or six have been listed in the papers for prayer. I would ask that if you have been that long in asking for us to pray for you, then stop, because apparently you are not interested if you have men in to preach in view of a call and can not come to some kind of decision. I do not mean to sound harsh or tell any church what to do, but allow me to illustrate my point. Most of us have heard the story of the man that was praying for God to save him because of being caught in a flood. As the man prayed there was one that came along in a boat and offered him to get in and he would take him to safety. Well, the man refused and said that God will provide and save me. Meanwhile the water was still rising even higher to the point the man caught in the flood had to make his way to the roof of his house. Still praying for God to help, a helicopter flying by saw the man and dropped a ladder and yelled down for him to take

hold and they would pull him to safety...again the man refused, and said God will provide and save me. Well, the man drowned. Standing before God, the man asked God, "Why did you not save me?" God simply replied, "I sent you a boat and a helicopter, what more would you have Me to do?"

I have had people (generally in a backslidden condition) ask me to pray for them, and a year later they are still asking. God has always answered my prayers, but if a person is unwilling to change their backslidden habits, God is not just going to reach down and miraculously help if you do not care enough for Him to make a change for the better. All the prayers in the world are not going to help if you can not get right with God first. I have gotten to the place if such a person asks me and is not willing to change, respectfully tell them NO!

What we have here is a simple case of the Laodicean church in Revelation chapter 3. Something is wrong and great care should be taken not to be as this church was. In fact that is the warning. Now I know every church may have their reasons for not calling a certain man. Sad to say but there are many issues with doctrine today and some preachers that do not want to make a stand or think they can change churches that have been around for a long time. And some churches think that they do not want some preacher who believes in the old paths. And sad to say, there are certain church members that just are too stubborn to let the rest of the membership call a certain man. Again, I am not stupid or blind! I do not believe anymore in tiptoeing through the tulips, but I do try to lovingly tell it like it is. God did not call me to be a people

pleaser or an entertainer but to preach the gospel and the truths that are in His Holy Word.

Back to the first word "comfort." Man's nature is not hard to figure out. The Bible tells us it is a depraved nature that all have from birth (Psalms 58:3) "**The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.**" (Romans 3:23) "**For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.**" We need to ask a question here. What happens to a flock of sheep that have no shepherd? Let the reader study the question. The first thing is that they wander and many go astray. Many churches (not all) have become "Comfortable." Maybe too much so, and really do not want a pastor because they can do as they want, come and go as they please without correction or consequences. Basically they do not have to answer to anyone. I know of some churches that if the pastor is not there they simply cancel church. Imagine a church without a pastor for years. They get "comfortable" and they like it. Let us not lie about it. God sees all, so who are we fooling? I have learned over the years even God's people will justify their sinful actions. Let me ask you dear church, are you "comfortable?" Be careful of your comfort because Ichabod could be written across your door.

Now the same question to young preachers, those that are still in the "comforts" of their home church. How about it young preachers (not in age necessarily) are you "comfortable"? Do you get to go places and preach with the "comfort" of knowing you get to come back home? If God called you to preach, then He has a church or mission for you to

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pastor. I can give you the names of those who thought they could just preach and not pastor a church and soon found out later that it does not work that way. I would rather pastor a church than be a missionary but the Lord had other plans for me, unawares to me. Preachers are not called to be “comfortable” and about the time they get that way the Lord may move them. Paul was a Jew, and he would have been more comfortable to preach to his own people but the Lord gave him charge to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, **“And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain”** (Gal. 2:2). What about Peter? He got a rude awaking about preaching to the Gentiles in Acts 10. And Paul rebuked Peter for his attitude toward the Gentiles when the Jews were around (Galatians 2:11-14).

We could tell you of Moses, Elijah, Jeremiah, and others whom God called and they had some kind of excuse not to leave their “comfort” zone. If you want to save yourself from hardship and grief, submit to those that are in need of you.

The last conference I attended the pastor of the church holding the conference asked for all the preachers there to stand up. I was amazed how many there were that were still members of their home church. Now, I do not know who was who, or how long they had been called to the gospel ministry, but I encouraged them not to stay too long in the “comfort” of their home church,

and also to be careful and not be in a hurry to jump right into pastoring a church unprepared. But what I do know is that there are preachers out there and churches that need pastors.

The second word I believe may be the problem is “fear.” There is nothing wrong with “fear,” but we should fear God and nothing else. **“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man”** (Eccl. 12:13).

For the church to be fearful is a good thing, but not to the point of using it for an excuse. Even Paul warned, **“For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock”** (Acts 20:29). Some may have lost their pastor and may find it difficult to call another. That is understandable. My daughter and son-in-law struggled hard to go to a church of like faith that was three minutes from their home versus an hour and forty-five minutes where I was pastoring. I was the only pastor they ever sat under their entire saved life. But I want them to be faithful and enjoy getting up on Sunday morning and going to church. So when one preacher is all you may have known it will be hard, but not impossible. I think that a church that has lost their pastor for whatever reason should ask themselves, if our former pastor were here and had seen that we have been so long without a pastor what would he say, what would he tell us to do?

There are many reasons a church may be fearful. **“And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible”** (Mark 10:27). Make it a priority if you have not already to have a special meeting just for

praying for a pastor if you really want one.

Preacher, the time has come to put away “fear” and get down on your knees and ask God Almighty for a church or mission work to preach to. I will touch upon mission work a little farther along in this article.

I am about to preach at a Bible Conference that I have never been to before and it is their 65th and over half the preachers and people there I have never met. I am scared to death, but I need to be. Many older preachers have told me the day you start not being afraid and nervous when you preach is the day you should fear the most. **“It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God”** (Heb. 10:31). If I am not fearful then it is me preaching not God using me by the leadership of the Spirit of God! “Fear” is an important part of a man’s ministry. I believe it helps our maturity. I am ready to face my death for the cause of Christ and the ministry of the church. Preachers are you better than hard working pastors? Are you too good and proud to be counted as a sheep for the slaughter? **“Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter”** (Ps. 44:22). **“As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter”** (Rom. 8:36). Are you better than Jesus? **“As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep”** (John 10:15).

My mission pastor encouraged me often to read I and II Timothy. It is aged Paul writing to young Timothy who was pastoring a church full of older folks than Timothy. He told me to read it over and over. I encourage you young preacher to do the same.

“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27).

The third and final word to be considered is “faith.” We lack so much “faith” today it is a terrible thing. We need to study and cross-reference Hebrews chapter eleven. Look and see what these great men of “faith” accomplished, and sometimes they only had God to help them, no one else.

Oh, church, you have to have the “faith” without wavering; that God will send you the right man. **“Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching”** (Heb. 10:23-25).

Again, I do not know all the reasons these some forty churches do not have pastors, but I am sure there is at least one man in every one of them that does and should heed the words of our Lord to the church at Laodicea, **“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me”** (Rev. 3:20). You know the problem? Then be brave, bold, and have the “faith” to fix it.

Youngpreacher you need to have the “faith” to leave your homes, leave your home church, and yes, leave your jobs if need be to pastor one of the Lord’s churches that He may call you to. Two of the five preachers I mentioned

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earlier did that very thing. One is my daughter's pastor and the other is now pastoring a church I helped in calling this young man for a candidate, whom they did call and he accepted. Both these men had families, jobs and a home church. They moved to the area they are now in without jobs or homes. Because of their "faith" God found them a place to live, a job to help support their families. Do you think they had fear? Yes, but they had something far greater, they had "faith!" **"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen"** (Heb. 11:1).

Preachers without churches, do you have that kind of "faith?" These are just two men who were obeying God and they are just two out of many that have done the very same thing. Are you one of them?

America is full of vile, wicked, and evil people! I keep hearing, "America needs revival," but it can not have revival without godly churches and godly men to preach in them. I implore you men, called of God, seek God to put you in one of the Lord's churches. **"Also I heard the voice of the LORD, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me"** (Isa. 6:8). And church seek God to have Him bring you a preacher; do not rely on others to do what you should have been doing all along.

One last thought! I mentioned about missions. America needs missions; churches need to send out missionaries here at home. Do you realize that here in America there are some states that have not one of the Lord's true churches in them, and some states like Pennsylvania and New York there

is maybe one, two at the most? That is a shame considering how large they are. To my knowledge there is one mission in Arizona and not one church. How many other states are there with few or none? Folks we have failed the Great Commission here in America, no wonder she is in the shape she is in. God help us! God help our churches to raise up godly men and godly wives to help our preachers go forth with the gospel message. **"Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations"** (Jer. 1:4-5). God Bless!



Well Done, Satan

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Sodomite Marriage:

Once again, Satan has tempted God's people to settle for a half-truth. "Christians" are against "gay-marriage." That is good. It is good to be against what God is against. However, Sodomy is only a part of what the Scriptures have forbidden when it comes to marriage. Jesus taught that marriage was between a man and a woman for life (till death do they part).

"The Pharisees also came unto him, testing him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore

they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He [Jesus] saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts permitted you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and whosoever marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery" (Matt. 19:3-9).

"But from the beginning it was not so." What a statement! We must ask ourselves the question "how was it in the beginning?" Did God simply put one man and one woman together? Is that all the Lord said concerning marriage? NO! EMPHATICALLY NO! **"And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh"** (Gen. 2:22-24).

Please note that God made man a woman, not another man. In addition, please note, that God **"brought her unto the man."** The LORD did not did NOT, bring the woman to Adam, then take her away, give her to another man; then give the man a different woman. The Lord brought one woman (Eve) to man (Adam). This is how it was in the beginning. We then look at Genesis 2:23 where Adam gives this new creation a name:

Woman. God had given Adam the duty of naming all of creation (Genesis 2:19). Adam named this new creature Woman. We now look at Genesis 2:24 which is when the LORD institutes marriage and the law of marriage. Genesis 2:24 is actually spoken by the Lord! Many err in that they attribute this unto Adam, but this is not so. When we compare Scripture with Scripture, we find that Genesis 2:24 is attributed to the Creator by Jesus! NOTE: Matthew 19:4-5, **"And he [Jesus] answered and said unto them [Pharisees], Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh."** Jesus states when answering the Pharisees that it was **"He [God] which made them at the beginning..."** who spoke Genesis 2:24. It was God, not Adam, who spoke those words, and those are the words of the law of marriage and the institution of marriage.

One of the principles of Scripture is this: When God states a principle, He excludes all others. For example: When God instituted the ordinance of baptism all other means were excluded. The fact that baptism is by immersion in water, excludes all other modes of "baptizing." The fact that baptism is done under the authority of the Lord's church, excludes all others from administering it. The principle that baptism is administered upon a confession of faith, excludes all other manners of baptism, such as "infant baptism."

When it comes to marriage, this principle also applies. When the Lord instituted marriage He

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stated: **“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh”** (Gen. 2:24) (See also Matt.19:5). Please note that God spoke of a union, not a living together. A union between a man and a woman; not a man and a man, or a woman and a woman. A union that has taken two and made them one.

Furthermore, let us note what is missing from the “law of marriage.” The omission is very telling. What did the Lord omit from Genesis 2:24? The Lord omitted any dissolving of the union. He said that the man should leave his mom and dad and **“cleave [cling] unto his wife and they shall be one flesh”** (Gen. 2:24). How do you dissolve a union of one? The Lord tells us what dissolves this union: DEATH! **“Know ye not, brethren (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man”** (Rom. 7:1-3).

Do not the words of the Holy Spirit through Paul the apostle unto the church at Corinth agree with what Jesus spoke unto the Pharisees in Matthew 19 and what Jesus said when He instituted marriage in Genesis 2:24? Certainly they do!

Some will say, “Well what about divorce?” Well, what about it? Did not Jesus testify that it was permitted by MOSES BECAUSE OF THE HARDNESS OF THEIR HEARTS? **“He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered (permitted) you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so”** (Matt. 19:8). I have never known the **“hardness of heart,”** physical or spiritual to be a good thing; or yield anything that is good. Yet, it was for this reason that Jesus said that MOSES did permit the people to divorce; but remember the words of our Savior, **“but from the beginning it was not so.”** Now if God instituted marriage in the beginning and divorce was not a part of the marriage institution, and God does not change (Malachi 3:6—**“I am the LORD, I change not...”**); then where did this institution of divorce come from? Jesus stated, **“Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives.”** Do we not read in Ecclesiastes 7:29, **“Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions [devices].”**

One thing I do NOT understand is that the entire “belief system” taught in the Bible is based upon forgiveness, reconciliation, forbearance—not only between God and man, but also between man and man. Yet, when it comes to marriage, we have forsaken the basis of our beliefs: forgiveness, forbearance, reconciliation. Why is it that many “Christians” neglect to forgive **“seventy times seven”** (Matt. 18:22) when it comes to marriage? If “Christianity” is based on love (and it is), then why is our love not suffering long, kind, envying not, seeking not its own, thinking no evil, bearing all

things, believing all things, hoping all things, enduring all things, and never failing (I Cor.13:4-8)?

The LORD has instituted marriage as one man, one woman for life-till death do they part. The Scriptures declare it. History declares it. It was not all that long ago that in our own nation divorce was not the norm! Divorce was preached against in pulpits and husbands and wives sought to reconcile with one another. Yet today, some seem to know better than God! Have we ever known society to “get better” or “evolve” into being more right with God today than yesterday? Is the United States of America more Biblical or Spiritual today than it was 200 years ago? Certainly not. Satan has slowly lulled us into darkness. We have become use to the darkness to the point that we are willing to settle for a half-truth. And as you know, a half-truth is nothing more than a lie with some truth in it! The truth is Sodomy is wrong! Not just Sodomy-marriage, but Sodomy is wrong! And we stand on that point. Yet, it is not where the Scriptures end with the subject of marriage. The Bible declares that marriage is to be between a man and a woman until that union is dissolved in death. Let us not settle for half of the truth when it comes to marriage.

EVENT #2: The Removal Of The Confederate Flag From The South Carolina Capital Building:

The removal of the Confederate flag from the South Carolina Capital Building has caused an uprising amongst Baptists, and for the life of me I cannot figure out why! While the removal of the Confederate flag is just another sign of infringements upon all things personal, it has NO affect on spiritual things! In fact, there is another banner that ought to

be displayed by God’s people, particularly His Church:

“Thou has given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth. Selah” (Ps. 60:4).

“He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love” (S of S 2:4).

“And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah-nissi (The LORD our Banner): For he said, Because the LORD hath sworn that the LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation” (Ex. 17:15-16).

Beloved, these verses indicate that there is another flag, another banner that needs to be flown. The banner of God’s love has been taken down voluntarily, yea even surrendered. It is not a flag that is visual, but spiritual. There is no so-called “Christian flag”; at least not in the Bible. We do have a banner. And that banner must be hoisted. The colors must be displayed. It must stand as a beacon of the ongoing warfare against the world, the flesh, and the devil. It must be displayed that there is a place of true freedom, true and genuine salvation to all who come to God in repentance and faith in Jesus Christ.

We do know that Jesus walked on this earth while the Jews were under a Roman yoke. Yet never do we ever read of our Lord making any type of civil protest about the Roman flag being over Jerusalem; or the Romans infringing on His Jewish rights. Jesus told Pilate that He had a kingdom, but that His kingdom was not of this world (John 18:36). Furthermore, we find that Jesus never entered the political arena. Rather, Jesus was busy about the work that

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His Father had given Him to do, **"..wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business"** (Luke 2:49)? The work of God is not in establishing civil liberties of citizens from a tyrannical government, but rather in setting the souls of men, women, boys, and girls free from the tyranny of sin and Satan's kingdom. The Spirit of Christ warned us through the writings of the apostle Paul to not be entangled with the affairs of this life, if we wish to war a good warfare (II Tim. 2:4).

While the churches of the Lord Jesus Christ in the United States have more freedoms than any other people, yet, what have we done with them? Have we used these freedoms for the furtherance of the gospel and the advancement of Christ's Kingdom? Did Jesus' churches at Jerusalem, Antioch, Thessalonica have the same freedoms we do? Did Paul, Peter, Barnabas, Silas, John, the Waldenses, the Paulicians, the Catharies, etc. have the freedoms that you and I have? No. Yet, did they not preach the truth regardless? Did they not worship the Lord in spite of what they were told (Acts 5:27-32)?

The removal of the Confederate flag is not our fight! The United States of America, nor the Confederate States of America is NOT the kingdom of God any more than America is Israel (see article The United States Is Not Israel by Bro. Curtis Pugh, December 2013). The Kingdom of God IS the Kingdom of God. And God's Kingdom provides a freedom for all its citizens by the benevolent rule of its Sovereign: Jesus Christ the Righteous. And it is such a freedom that is incomparable with anything

that the Confederate States of America could have ever offered from the United States of America. Therefore, we ought to be promoting the freedom which is in Christ. **"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed"** (John 8:36).

While I do NOT have any interest in living in another country, we must not forget that we are citizens of a city whose builder and maker is God. We must remember that this world is not our home. **"For our conversation (citizenship) is in heaven, from which also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself"** (Phil. 3:20-21).

Therefore, let us carry forth the banner that our God has given us:

*There's a royal banner given for display
To the soldiers of the King;
As an ensign fair we lift it up today,
While as ransomed ones we sing.*

*Marching on, marching on,
For Christ count ev'rything but loss!
And to crown Him King, toil and sing
'Neath the banner of the cross!*

*Though the foe may rage and gather as the flood,
Let the Standard be displayed;
And beneath its folds, as soldiers of the Lord,
For the truth be not dismayed!*

*Marching on, marching on,
For Christ count ev'rything but loss!
And to crown Him King, toil and sing
'Neath the banner of the cross!*

*Over land and sea, wherever man may dwell,
Make the glorious tidings known;
Of the crimson banner now the story tell,
While the Lord shall claim his own!*

*Marching on, marching on,
For Christ count ev'rything but loss!
And to crown Him King, toil and sing
'Neath the banner of the cross!*

*When the glory dawns, 'tis drawing very near,
It is hast'ning day by day,
Then before our King the foe shall disappear,
And the cross the world shall sway!*

*Marching on, marching on,
For Christ count ev'rything but loss!
And to crown Him King, toil and sing
'Neath the banner of the cross.*

(Lyrics to the Hymn Commonly Known as: *The Banner of the Cross*)

Beloved, let us not be ignorant of Satan's devices. Marriage IS between a man and a woman for life (till death do they part). And there is but one banner that God's redeemed people and His church ought to be concerned about displaying: The banner of His love. Let us follow the example of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Maran-atha. AMEN.



From the Pen of a Country Preacher



Milburn R. Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)



The Temptation of Jesus Christ

"And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness. And he was there in the wilderness forty days tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him" (Mark 1:12-13).

The word "tempted" conveys the idea of either testing with a view to improving, or to solicit in the way of evil. God can be tested (Acts 15:10; 5:8-10; Matt. 22:18; Luke 20:23; John 8:6), but He cannot be tempted to sin. In James 1:13 it is written: **"God cannot be tempted with evil."**

Then in what sense could Jesus Christ be tempted in all points like His brethren? The Divine nature could not be tempted as all agree. It was the human nature alone which was subjected to Satan's assaults. When the Last Adam took a human nature it was necessary that He be put to the same test as the first Adam. Before He preached a sermon, or called a disciple, the Lord was

led of the Holy Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil (Matt. 4:1).

At the dawn of human history, Satan appeared to tempt Adam in Eden, and then he presented himself in Judea to tempt the Second Adam. The first Adam was tested in the Garden of Eden; the Second Adam was tried in a place uninhabited except by wild beasts. The first Adam engaged the Devil in battle which resulted in the fall of man; the Second Adam met the Devil as the Spirit-filled Son of man and whipped the Devil at his own game. The writer of Hebrews tells us our Savior **"was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin"** (Heb. 4:15).

THE PLACE

Some believe the wilderness where Christ was tested was Mount Quarantania, west of Jordan across from Jericho, a

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. Please explain how a church can allow someone to remain a member when they belong to another church. Alabama

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Unfortunately this scenario is a common one among “churches” who place little value or importance on the sanctity of church membership. What normally happens in cases like the one described in the question is that a member grows dissatisfied with one church and stops attending. The church they are a member of never disciplines them for non-attendance and covenant breaking. Eventually they start attending another church that in all probability is not scriptural. The second church receives them by statement of faith and does not even inform the first church of their action. All parties involved are dead wrong. The first church is in rebellion against God for not practicing discipline. II Thessalonians 3:6 declares: **“Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.”** The member in question is dishonest for not informing the first church he has joined another church and in all probability for not telling the second church that he has membership elsewhere. The second church has no respect

for Baptist baptism, church authority, or Baptist polity as evidenced by the sloppy way they handle their business. There is absolutely no scriptural support for this practice. It is scripturally impossible to be a member of two churches at the same time. It is sinful rebellion against the teaching of the New Testament.

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They can not!! A person can only be “under the authority” (a member) of one church! (... at a time, if you wish.) A lot of churches need to clean up their books to avoid such problems! Selah! Think about it!

Baptism is the doorway into original church membership, as it is the ordinance of authority that separates Baptists from every other collection of assemblies in the world. Anabaptists have earned that name down through the ages, because they will accept nought but scriptural baptism from true, New Testament Baptist churches—ALONE (Acts 18:24-19:7).

Membership can be moved from one true Baptist church to another by a church letter; or in rare cases, by a statement of faith, where it is not feasible/possible to procure such a letter of authorized transfer (Acts

9:26-28). Such transfers put the person/member under the full authority of the second church. It is a letter of recommendation AND release that is sent from church “A” to church “B.” This is the Biblical standard as seen in II Corinthians 3:1, **“Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you?”**

With such a cut-n-dried procedure, there will NEVER be a situation where a church member will be on the church rolls of two different churches. However, because of negligence in this day and age, there are improper scenarios where the beloved reader’s question becomes pertinent.

Problems arise when members are disciplined and then contrary to scriptural admonitions of reconciliation and submission to the Lord’s church, they go off (in a huff?) and try to join another church. If that second church is not judicious and deliberate in searching out the prospective member’s baptism and current church membership, then a pseudo-dual membership could develop. In reality, the person is still a “disciplined member” of the first Baptist church and their “so-called membership” in the second Baptist church is bogus. The second church had no authority to override the disciplinary action of the first church, without a judicious background search of that disciplinary action.

“And they said unto him, We neither received letters out of Judaea concerning thee, neither any of the brethren that came shewed or spake any harm of thee. But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, we know

that every where it is spoken against” (Acts 28:21-22). This is why “letters of authority” are essential in our Baptist ranks today. If disciplined members do not come back to the original disciplining church to “make it right,” they can never escape from the authority of that church to become a member elsewhere. A rare exception would be in the case of a member doing everything they sensibly can do to “make things right” and “church A” is the one being unreasonable. Mediation and every other practical action should be attempted to reconcile this member with his church by “church B.” But if the conflict cannot be reconciled and “church B” determines that everything that could be done, has been done and still the original “church A” will not come to a reasonable reconciliation with said member; then “church B” may take the disciplined member in by a statement of faith. As already stated, this is a very rare exception, and one that the two churches and member of interest should still have an eye toward appeasement down the line (Perhaps a recalcitrant pastor or truculent member that God would deal with and clear the path for reconciliation).

It is a Baptist hallmark, that each church is independent and autonomous. **“Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven”** (Matt. 18:18). **“For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth...”** (I Cor. 5:12-13). Churches should seamlessly work together, recognizing each

◊ (Continued on page 14)

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. Can a church exist and call itself the Lord's church if they do not practice communion? Alabama

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Let me again remind the questioner and the reader, that a New Testament Baptist Church is an independent autonomous body and it can do whatever it wants, and no one has the right to tell it what in can and cannot do.

A church can and will exist until the Lord writes Ichabod (God's Glory Departed) across the door. Only He can say whether a church is still a church or not. Other churches can break fellowship with any church if it is done scripturally but the Lord determines that church's existence or nonexistence.

When I read the question, two verses of Scripture stood out, **"And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me"** (Luke 22:19). **"After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me"** (I Cor. 11:25).

In our church's "Declaration of Faith" it states, "We believe that the Lord's Supper is one of the two Ordinances of the church. Of which the members of the local church, by the use of unleavened

bread and wine show their Lord's death till He comes. We further believe this is restricted to the members of the local assembly, (CLOSED LORD'S SUPPER). (I Cor. 11:2; I Cor. 11:23-24; Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Acts 2:42)."

As far as I know the Lord's Supper has always been a "Church Ordinance." That means it is to be observed and practiced just as we are to observe and practice baptism as the entrance into the church for those who confess Jesus Christ as Saviour. An "Ordinance" is a decree or law and the church should be in obedience to follow such a law.

I have known churches that will not give the Lord's Supper because of the pastor's recommendation for the reason of problems in the church. I myself used to believe that, but there is no such Scripture to support such a belief. The burden to eat worthily falls on each member, not the church or the pastor, **"Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body"** (I Cor. 11:27-29). So I believe it is wrong for the pastor or the church to withhold from the membership what we have been told to do by our Lord. If a church member feels unworthy, then do not take it.

Get your act together, repent, and be worthy the next time it is given. Each member is told to **"examine himself,"** so listen to what it says, and do it.

My, my, my, there is too much fussing today. Listen to Jesus and serve God to the fullest and forget this nonsense. We have allowed Satan too many victories and he has robbed the church of its joy and he is delighted. If you do not like what the church is doing and it is contrary to the Scriptures, stand up for the truth or go somewhere where they do it according to the Word of God. If the pastor is the problem, there are proper ways to take care of that as well. I hope this is of some help? God Bless!

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Only for a short and/or specified length of time. The LORD'S Supper requires an introspective examination of each individual member and the church as a whole. **"Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep"** (I Cor. 11:27-30).

Upon this pensive scrutinization of our hearts and lives, if there is disunity, open sin or heresy in the

church, then these problems need to be addressed and taken care of before the Supper should be taken. It would not be appropriate to observe this 2nd ordinance of the New Testament Baptist church if she is not in "one accord" and in "pure and holy fellowship." Selah! Think about it!

However, the communion celebration should be delayed for a specified period of time, only. To put it off indefinitely is dangerous. It should be a priority for the church to take care of these serious problems. The pastor and the elders in the church should sit down and formulate a plan to take care of the crisis without delay. Festering wounds will only cause more sickness and spiritual coldness/decay.

Too many church members are lazy and apathetic about the unity and vitality of our churches today. The Lord's Supper is not just a mere pictorial dinner, but it is an ordinance of discipline and submission. The purpose of Jesus Christ commanding this observance is to give His body a periodic opportunity to remember HIM and His holiness in sanctifying His life in sacrificial atonement for us. **"And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me"** (Luke 22:19).

As baptism is the ordinance of authority, so the Lord's Supper is specifically the ordinance of discipline. **"For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged"** (I Cor. 11:31). Precise instructions are given concerning this memorial supper, that would direct the church forward in unity. **"For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as**

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Forum #1

(Continued from page 12) ◊

other's authority and accepting the discipline of other churches as binding on said members. But with churches becoming more carnal and worldly, there are times when error might be upon the individual churches. May the Lord help us to keep the faith! ... and to keep our churches pure. Selah! Think about it!

MATTHEW STEPP

we shall choose to withdraw our membership from this church, we will as soon as possible unite with some other church of the same faith and order where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word." That would mean that you could not be a member of two churches at the same time.

Even Paul was the member of only one church...the church in Antioch. Barnabas and Paul were ordained at Antioch to start missions all across the country, but remained members of the mother church at Antioch. So my answer is; I can not explain how a church can allow someone to remain a member when they belong to another church, because there is no such an account in the New Testament that I know of. Therefore it would be wrong for either church to allow such a thing.

There are several questions that arise to me from such a practice. First, if a person could remain a member at one church and be a member of another, which church would they pay their tithes to (their ten percent)? Second, which church would they attend a business meeting to cast their vote? Third, at what church could they take the Lord's Supper since we believe in closed communion? I may be missing some other issues that would be pertinent to this question, but I think the point is made; no one can be a member of two churches at the same time and have things in order. I am puzzled that a church would allow such a practice for I can find nothing in the Scripture that would approve of such.

I would remind the questioner and the reader though, that a New Testament Baptist Church is an independent autonomous body and it can do whatever it

wants and no one has the right to tell it what in can and cannot do. But that does not mean they are right and that I or another church would agree with them if in error, which I believe is the case here. God Bless!

ROGER REED



Forum #2

(Continued from page 13) ◊

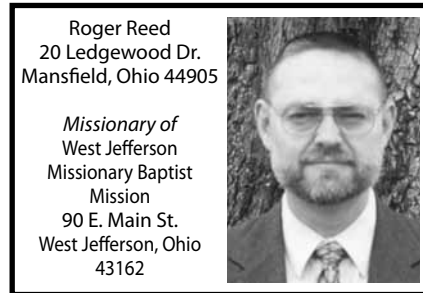
in all churches of the saints" (I Cor. 14:33). "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. ...And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:42, 46-47).

Since we have this direct commandment from our Head to **"this do in remembrance of me,"** it is a blatant and pernicious sin to indefinitely refrain from observing the Supper. Any church that delays the necessary corrections and implicit unification required of a "church in one accord," will certainly forfeit her candlestick and will no longer be a church of Jesus Christ! **"Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; ... Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do**

the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent" (Rev. 2:1, 4-5). Selah! Think about it!

As a final point, the Lord's Supper **MUST** be kept with the proper elements also, else that church is not keeping the Supper, either. To observe the communion ordinance with anything other than wine and unleavened bread, is to defy the commandment of Christ and to subvert the multiple pictures requisite in these holy elements. How long the Lord will allow a disobedient church to continue "pretending" to keep this paramount church ordinance, without removing her candlestick of authority, is only known by the Lord. Certainly other errors will follow, if a strict adherence to God's Word is not chosen. Selah! Think about it!

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After reading both questions for the September's issue of the BBB I could tell that there is a serious problem with a church somewhere, or churches, which may be in this case. Now I am not sure if the questions asked are from the same person, but they are from the same State. With that said we will attempt to answer the first question.

Referring to the church in his letter to the Corinthians Paul said, **"Let all things be done decently and in order"** (I Cor. 14:40). I take this to mean every New Testament Church. And in order to keep order in the church certain things must be done.

First let me say, I have never heard of such a thing in my forty-two years as being a member of a Baptist Church; that one could be a member of two churches at the same time. Nor have I seen this anywhere in the Bible concerning New Testament Churches. And, in fact every Church Covenant that I have ever read states, "Moreover, we engage that, when



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It is highly irregular for a New Testament Baptist Church not to observe the Lord's Supper periodically in remembrance of the great work of our Savior. There are no prescribed or regulated times for observing the Lord's Supper in the New Testament. However, it is one of only two ordinances the Lord gave to His church and as such should be observed on a regular basis. I Corinthians 11:23-26 states: **"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the**

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Forum #2

(Continued from page 14) ◊

Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, **Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.** After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, **This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.**" Churches who fail to observe the Lord's Supper are obviously in rebellion against this command of Scripture. The phrase "**as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup**" implies that a church is in the regular practice of observing the Lord's Supper. In my estimation a church that does not observe the Lord's Supper on a regular basis is disrespecting the great Head of the church, the Lord Jesus Christ. A church that refuses to observe the Lord's Supper is in reality devaluing the finished work of the Savior along with His commands. They are failing to carry out the third aspect of the Great Commission as outlined in Matthew 28:18-20, which involves teaching them to observe all things that the Lord commanded. I cannot definitively say when a church loses its candlestick and authority to exist. I think it is obvious that if a church does not observe the ordinances as they were delivered (I Cor. 11:1), it will not be long before they cease being the Lord's church.

TOM ROSS



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.

WISCONSIN PASSES 20-WEEK ABORTION BAN

(WNS)--Wisconsin's legislature passed the Pain Capable Unborn Child Protection Act last week, making it the 12th state to ban abortions in most cases after 20 weeks gestation. The state Assembly passed the bill by a 61-34 vote. Gov. Scott Walker has promised to sign the bill. Passed by the Senate in June, the bill prohibits abortions after 20 weeks unless the pregnancy threatens the mother's life or would cause irreversible injury within 24 hours. It imposes fines up to \$10,000 and up to three and a half years in prison for violations.

CHRISTIAN NONPROFITS LOSE APPEALS COURT CHALLENGE TO CONTRACEPTIVE MANDATE

(WNS)--The 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals on Tuesday ruled against several Christian nonprofits who sought to prove the government's accommodation under the contraceptive and abortifacient mandate violated their First Amendment rights, as well as the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. The accommodation requires nonprofits to fill out a form declining coverage for contraceptive and abortifacient drugs and allowing their insurance companies to issue coverage to their employees directly. The Affordable Care Act, adopted in March 2010, requires all group health plans to cover preventive services, including contraception, without employee cost sharing.

"Contraception" includes drugs such as Plan B and Ella, which can act as abortifacients, and are morally objectionable to people who believe life begins at conception. Organizations with 50 or more employees who do not comply with the law are subject to huge fines. Churches are exempt from the mandate, while nonprofits are offered a religious exemption accommodation.

LAWMAKERS PUSH PROTECTIONS FOR MARRIAGE VIEWS

(WNS)--Conservatives in the House and Senate are pressing for a quick vote on bicameral legislation that would protect faith-based organizations from losing tax-exempt status due to holding traditional views on marriage. "Inaction in this matter would place a great number of organizations at risk," Rep. Vicky Hartzler, R-Mo., said during a joint press conference Thursday on Capitol Hill. "It's sad that we even need such a bill, but the First Amendment is being ignored by many and forgotten by others." For many faith-based organizations, long-standing fears over tax-exempt status were confirmed earlier this year during Supreme Court oral arguments in *Obergefell v. Hodges*—in which the court later declared a constitutional right to same-sex marriage. When Justice Samuel Alito asked if universities that oppose same-sex marriage could lose their tax-exempt status, U.S. Solicitor General Donald Verrilli said it is

possible: "It's certainly going to be an issue. I don't deny that. I don't deny that, Justice Alito. It is—it is going to be an issue."

FEDERAL COURT FLATLINES NORTH DAKOTA'S FETAL HEARTBEAT BILL

(WNS)--Pro-life lawmakers in North Dakota lost a two-year battle in July when a federal appeals court overturned a law that would have effectively banned abortions as early as six weeks gestation. The law passed by the GOP-led legislature in 2013 banned abortions if a fetal heartbeat could be detected. Compared to other state laws, supporters said this was the most stringent in the country. Within weeks of the law passing, the state's only abortion facility filed a lawsuit. Anticipating legal challenges, lawmakers set aside \$800,000 to defend the law. The bill caused a significant drop in abortions in 2013, before it even went into effect, because many people thought it banned all abortions, said Tammi Kromenaker, director of the state's only abortion center, in Fargo. But abortion numbers returned to normal in 2014.

CDC: MORE TEENAGERS TURNING TO PLAN B

(WNS)--Teen pregnancy has declined by 51 percent since peaking in the early 1990s, but new government data show more young girls are relying on the morning-after pill. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported 22 percent of sexually active teenagers used the Plan B pill at least once. A decade ago, less than one in 12 girls had used emergency contraception. The popularity of emergency contraceptives is likely due to increased availability. Since 2006, girls 18 and older can buy the morning-after pill without a prescription. But the increasing

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Bible & the Newspaper

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use of emergency contraceptives also shows the impact of narrowly focused sex education, according to Valerie Huber, president and CEO of the National Abstinence Education Association.

MORE EVIDENCE OF DOLLARS FOR DEAD BABIES

(WNS)--The Center for Medical Progress (CMP) continues to turn the abortion industry upside down with its video series on the sale of aborted baby body parts. Though abortion provider Planned Parenthood has argued it does not profit from the sale of fetal remains and is merely reimbursed for the time and cost of harvesting them, CMP has evidence to the contrary from both ends of the aborted baby body parts supply chain. In new footage released this morning, a Planned Parenthood abortionist talks with undercover journalists about how to skirt laws against selling fetal remains. The latest video comes less than 24 hours after a judge temporarily ordered CMP not to release any video of employees from StemExpress, a company that buys baby body parts from Planned Parenthood.

BOY SCOUTS TO ALLOW HOMOSEXUAL LEADERS

(WNS)--The Boy Scouts of America (BSA) ended its ban on homosexual leaders. The 45-12 vote came during BSA's National Executive Board meeting in Irving, Texas, in July. The outcome was not a surprise. BSA President Robert Gates has said banning homosexuals from serving as leaders was "no longer legally defensible." A statement issued earlier this month noted, "the BSA's commitment to duty to God and the rights of religious chartered organizations to select their leaders is unwavering."

John Stemberger, chairman of the Christian youth outdoor program Trail Life USA, disputed that claim. He said the churches that stand for Biblical values will find it increasingly difficult to operate in the structure of the Boy Scouts since so many activities are cooperative in nature. "Camporees, jamborees, and high adventure programs such as Philmont all expose Scouts to leaders from outside one's chartered unit," Stemberger said. He said churches that charter Scout units can no longer be confident other leaders will share their beliefs, values, and behavioral standards.

SENATE DEMANDS HEARING ON SUSPECT CHANGES TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING REPORT

(WNS)--Prominent senators questioned the integrity of the annual human-trafficking report, released in late July, and demanded a hearing after Obama administration officials dropped Malaysia and Cuba from the report's blacklist. The annual Trafficking in Persons report (TIP), published by the U.S. State Department, ranks the performance of 188 countries in fighting human trafficking. Malaysia and Cuba both ranked in Tier 3, the blacklist, in the last report. Human rights activists and even some Democratic lawmakers claim the State Department allowed the valuable report to be politicized, ignoring facts. "Bending the standards to reward a country that accepts trade in women, children, and forced laborers is wrong," said Rep. Lloyd Doggett, D-Texas.

NORTH CAROLINA HIGH COURT OKS SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAM

(WNS)--The North Carolina Supreme Court ruled 4-3 in favor of taxpayer-funded scholarships for low-income students to attend

private schools. "Most Americans have school choice, but it is only available if you have money," said Renée Flaherty, an Institute for Justice attorney who advocated in favor of the grants, known as opportunity scholarships. The ruling allows for 2,400 low-income students from kindergarten through 12th grade to receive up to \$4,200 toward a private school education. The program derailed in August 2014, when North Carolina Superior Court Judge Robert Hobgood declared it unconstitutional.

SENATE BLOCKS BILL TO DEFUND PLANNED PARENTHOOD

(WNS)--Democratic senators blocked a measure aimed at defunding Planned Parenthood despite a growing controversy over how the nation's largest abortion provider harvests the body parts of unborn children for medical research. The procedural vote this evening fell short of the 60 votes need to move the bill forward. The final tally was 53-46. But the battle likely isn't over. Some GOP lawmakers in the House and Senate have indicated they might attempt to block any spending bill that includes money for Planned Parenthood this fall. Rep. Mick Mulvaney, R-S.C., has said he expects several dozen GOP lawmakers to object to spending bills with funding for the group. Sens. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, and Rand Paul, R-Ky., have raised similar possibilities during their presidential campaigns.

TENNESSEE COURTS REVERSE BAN ON 'MOTHER' AND 'FATHER'

FOX NEWS--The Tennessee Administrative Office of the Courts reversed a controversial decision to replace the terms "mother" and "father" with "parent 1" and "parent 2." "After receiving feedback regarding a recent change made

to the permanent parenting plan form, the AOC has reviewed the procedures and determined that, before making any changes to the form, the AOC should consult with the Domestic Relations Committee of the Tennessee Judicial Conference," the office said in a statement. "We have reverted to the previous form and the Committee has been notified." Shortly after the Supreme Court redefined marriage, the state's Office of the Courts had revised its documents. A spokesperson for the courts confirmed earlier that the words "Mother" and "Father" had been replaced by the terms "Parent 1" and "Parent 2." The court spokesperson did not elaborate on why they felt compelled to change the longtime wording or whether Parent 1 brings home the bacon or whether Parent 2 wears the pants in the relationship.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH TO ORDAIN GAY, TRANSGENDER MINISTERS

The First Baptist Church of Greenville, South Carolina, which was formed in 1831 and whose first pastor served as the first president of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1845, and was also the birthplace of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, has taken a bold move in "embracing the complexities of gender identity."

The church has decided all are welcomed in their pulpit, going so far as to ordain gay and transgender ministers. The church affirmed a consensus statement which says, "In all facets of the life and ministry of our church, including but not limited to membership, baptism, ordination, marriage, teaching and committee/organizational leadership, First Baptist Greenville will not discriminate based on sexual orientation or gender identity." In moving forward, the church

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ministers can perform same-sex unions and ordain any person, regardless of sexual orientation and lifestyle, to serve in a leadership role.

The church split from the SBC in the early 1990s, and is now a member of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. The liberal, non-Biblical leanings of this congregation are nothing new and can be traced all the way back to the late '60s and early '70s when they decided the Bible was riddled with uninspired passages. You can see their erroneous belief remains.

INTERNATIONAL BRIEFS PORTUGAL WANTS WOMEN SEEKING ABORTION TO GET COUNSELING FIRST

(WNS)--A new legislative bill in Portugal could require women to get counseling before abortions and cover part of the expense themselves. In 2007, Portugal passed an abortion law that allowed women to have a state-funded abortion up to the 10th week of pregnancy. But under the new amendment proposed Wednesday by center-right lawmakers, women would be charged the equivalent of up to a \$55 to have an abortion. They also would be required to get psychological and social counseling and attend family planning sessions before ending their pregnancies. The legislation still needs a final presidential approval.

RESEARCHERS DIGITALLY UNWRAP ANCIENT, CHARRED LEVITICUS SCROLL

(WNS)--The contents of a 1,500-year-old-parchment scroll, burned so badly it could not be opened without destroying it, has remained a mystery since its excavation, 45 years ago, from inside the Holy Ark of the synagogue at Ein Gedi, Israel,

on the western shore of the Dead Sea. But scientists at the University of Kentucky recently used a new software program to digitally unwrap parts of the document and analyze its text. They were surprised to find the first eight verses of the book of Leviticus enshrouded within the scroll. The most ancient manuscript of Leviticus that archeologists have discovered so far dates to the first century B.C. and is part of the Dead Sea scrolls. Researchers have found no other copies of the book dated to within a thousand years of that. "It is important to go as far back as possible to the original sources and to have continuous examples of copies of texts without one-thousand-year gaps where we can lose track of things," Seales said.



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forbidding and desolate place. Luke's "returned" (4:1) also favors this idea. Others say it was a place on the east side of the Jordan. Some of the oldest scholars make it to be the wilderness of Sinai. A special providence may have caused the precise locality to remain unknown to restrain superstition. We can be certain Christ retired to a wild part of the countryside for Mark mentions the wild beasts.

The temptation was not planned by Satan; he probably would have avoided it, if it were possible. While he did not originate this time, he was the tempter. The Holy Spirit led Christ to the wilderness in fulfillment of the eternal purpose. This meeting was no "happened so." The Spirit led Christ as a champion into the field to fight the enemy He must conquer. "Led" implies an internal impulse caused by the Spirit.

THE FORTY DAYS

The Savior was "forty days tempted of the devil" (Luke 4:2). The time was the same as in the case of Moses (Ex. 34:28) and Elijah (I Kings 19:8). These 40 days in the wilderness after His baptism was a miniature of the 40 years of Israel in the wilderness after their baptism in the Red Sea. The entire period of forty days was a period of protracted temptation. During this time Christ was tempted in all points. What we have recorded here are the three grand assaults of the adversary at the closing up of the long season of trial.

THE FASTING OF CHRIST

It has been questioned by some whether our Lord abstained wholly from food, or only from the food to which He was accustomed. Luke says: "And in those days he did eat nothing" (Luke 4:2). The fast was an entire abstinence from food. During this time the supernatural power of endurance was imparted to His body. Luke brings this out also: "And in those days he did eat nothing; and when they were ended, he afterward hungered."

There is no justification for the popish dogma of Lent. The practice of fasting 40 week days from Ash Wednesday to Palm Sunday is without any Biblical warrant. To make the experience of Christ the authority for a regular annual fast for all Christians is to add to the Scriptures. Christ did not need to fast to subdue corrupt desires; He merely dieted to give Satan an advantage against Him, so as to make the victory over him more illustrious.

THE FIRST TEMPTATION

Throughout the forty days of mental toil and spiritual conflict, the Savior seems to have been unconscious of physical needs. But when the limit of endurance

was reached, there would naturally be an awful craving for food. Satan believed this was the psychological moment to wage one of his most vicious attacks. "And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread" (Luke 4:3).

The first temptation, similar to the one in Eden, raised the question of doubt: "If thou be the Son of God?" This was Satan's attempt to get Christ to distrust the heavenly testimony of the Father at His baptism. Satan's suggestion is that if Jesus were God's Son, He would not be suffering. The Tempter said: "Why do you not turn this stone to bread by a miracle? This would prove your Sonship. You will die of hunger unless you eat, how then can you carry out your kingdom plans? Did you not feed the hungry Israelites in the wilderness? Then why should you starve?"

What was the harm of this proposal? Wherein is it a temptation? Why would it have been wrong for Christ to relieve Himself from personal distress, which was incompatible with His comfort and ease? Are the desires of the appetite sinful?

The sin would have consisted of lawful gratification by improper means. Jesus Christ had taken the place of man; He was dependent on the living Father (John 6:67). He could act only in obedience to the Father's will. To entertain any suggestion from Satan would have been disobedience and distrust in the Father's Word and providence. The Father gave Him power to work miracles, not for His own need, but for the benefit of others. The Savior could no more give into the plea of Satan than He could do other things

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which men demanded (Matt. 12:38; 27:40; Luke 23:8-9). He turned water into wine for His friends, but He would not make bread for Himself.

CHRIST'S FIRST VICTORY

Our Lord met every temptation with a quotation from the Old Testament. **"And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God"** (Luke 4:4). He used the sword of the Spirit, the only offensive weapon in all the Christian armor (Eph. 6:17).

The expression, **"Man shall not,"** denotes Christ's humanity. Jesus was fighting Satan as a Spirit-filled man, not as the great God of Heaven and earth. Here He took the position of trust and dependence upon the heavenly Father, declaring man needed something more than physical food. Man is to live by everything his Maker commanded. The Father's will was the meat of Christ. The Son must leave all to the providing of the Father.

Life depends upon God who can support life by extraordinary means---He is Jehovah-Jireh (the Lord will provide). The Lord sustained Moses and Elijah without bread; He fed the Israelites for 40 years with bread from Heaven. The Father had already sustained Christ for forty days without bread. The Savior knew the Father could furnish a table in the wilderness (Ps. 78:19); He could feed men with angel's food (Ps. 78:24-25).

SECOND TEMPTATION

Having failed to get Christ to give in to the lust of the flesh, Satan appeals to the lust of the eyes. **"And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed**

unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time" (Luke 4:5).

These kingdoms belong to Christ already by right of creation, and they would be given to Him by the Father at the Millennial Reign (Ps. 2:8; Rev. 11:15). Satan is here seen offering Christ a short cut to universal dominion.

We are not told where this mountain was. It was probably a mountain near Jerusalem. Some believe it was Mount Pisgah where Moses saw the kingdoms of Canaan (Deut. 34:1-3). From this mountain Jesus could see all the kingdoms of the world by a supernatural vision. The Lord beheld the robes and crowns of kings, the pomp of thrones and stately palaces with their wealthy, pleasure, and gaiety. He saw the splendor of great armies and the power of governments.

"And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine" (Luke 4:6-7).

This was a compromise offer, an attempt to rob Christ of His Millennial Reign. The Lord Jesus did not dispute Satan's claim to lordship over the kingdoms of earth, for He knew Satan would one day give these to Antichrist (Rev. 13:2, 7-8). Later the Savior called Satan **"the prince of this world."** No one knew better than Jesus Christ that Satan had deceived the world (Rev. 12:9) and was in control of the world systems by usurpation (I John 5:19). Christ's refusal left the kingdoms of this world under Satanic control, and they will remain there by the permission of God until Christ comes to reign over the nations of earth.

The Devil told our Lord He

could have these kingdoms without going to Calvary, if He would bow down and acknowledge his supremacy over these kingdoms. Christ was being tempted to worship Satan! What an insult to suggest that the eternal God worship a creature of His own making! Only Divinity can comprehend the depth of this insult! To have done so would have made Christ guilty of idolatry.

CHRIST'S SECOND TRIUMPH

The Savior refused to worship the enemy of God. **"And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shall thou serve"** (Luke 4:8). This is a quotation from Deuteronomy 6:13. By another saying of God the foe was vanquished.

SATAN'S THIRD TEST

The final attempt of the Devil concerned the pride of life. **"And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence"** (Luke 4:9).

We are not to understand by the words that Satan compelled Christ to go with him. The original suggests Satan conducted Jesus or merely accompanied Him. The Savior went of His own free will to this place.

It is not certain as to what the pinnacle of the temple really was. It may have been the roof of the building or some place on the cornice. Some believe it was Solomon's port on the east side of the temple. Still others say it was the royal porch of Herod on the south side. Sufficient is it to say it was a highly elevated portion of the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem suitable for the temptation mentioned.

Satan appealed to Christ's Messianic aspirations: **"If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence: For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee: And in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone"** (Luke 4:9-11).

Malachi had foretold the Messiah would come suddenly to His temple (3:1). What could be more impressive than for Christ to float down from Heaven into the court of the temple filled with multitudes of people? Such a presumption would have put Christ outside the pale of angelic assistance and resulted in His death on the marble pavement of the temple.

The Devil can quote Scripture when it serves his purpose. He called Christ's attention to Psalm 91:11 in the temptation. We might say the Devil had a Bible under his arm and a text upon his lips. A careful study of Psalms 91:11 reveals that Satan misquoted, misinterpreted, and misapplied this text. He did the same when speaking to Eve (Gen. 3). Since he could not tempt Christ from the Word of God, he seeks to try to tempt Him by it.

CHRIST'S THIRD VICTORY

Once again Christ replied to Satan by a text of Scripture from Deuteronomy 6:16 which said: **"Ye shall not tempt the LORD your God."** If Christ had cast Himself down He would have been tempting the Father. This He refused to do.

God does preserve in danger, but we are not to create danger merely to test His power. We must never throw ourselves into uncommanded danger and appeal to God for protection. God does aid His people in trouble, but we

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are not to trifle with His promise as some have (Ex. 17:2, 7; Ps. 78:18; 95:8-9; I Cor. 10:9; Heb. 3:9).

THE DEVIL DEPARTS

All the resources of Hell had been employed against Christ. He had won a great victory and was destined to win a complete victory. Having emptied his quiver of arrows, Satan momentarily quit the field of battle. **“And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season”** (Luke 4:13). He left because he had nothing in Christ. The Devil would return and do battle with Christ at Gethsemane and the cross (Luke 22:53; Col. 2:15).

After the Lord, as a Spirit-filled man, vanquished the Devil by the Word of God, the angels came immediately to minister unto Him with supernatural food and support. These came visibly as did Satan (Matt. 4:11). These holy messengers came from the courts of Heaven to minister to their Creator.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE TEMPTATION

Could Jesus Christ have sinned during His temptation? Was He only finitely perfect like Adam? Does the Bible teach the peccability or impeccability of Christ?

I understand the Bible to teach the impeccability of Christ. The human nature of my Savior was sinless. Luke described it as **“that holy thing”** (Luke 1:35). Christ was tempted in all points like His brethren, except that of a sin nature. The human nature could only be tempted from without. The idea that temptability implies susceptibility is unsound. The temptation of Christ was real, yet there was in Christ infinite power

to resist evil.

If there was any possibility of Jesus sinning, then the whole scheme of salvation hung in the balance until after the wilderness temptation. Such a thought is utterly contradictory to the eternal purpose of a sovereign God. The Scripture declares that whosoever is born of God cannot sin (I John 3:9); therefore, Jesus could not have sinned in the wilderness. If He were liable to sin back in the wilderness, then the same would be true of Him today as He still possesses that same human nature.

WHY WAS HE TEMPTED?

If there was no possibility of the Savior sinning, then what was the purpose of the Devil tempting Him? There were many good reasons.

First, Christ was subjected to Satanic assaults to prove He is the Lamb without blemish and without spot (I Peter 1:19).

Second, He was tempted to be an object of faith to all believers who are tempted of the Devil. The Lord from glory demonstrated that man, aided by the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, can overcome every temptation common to man.

Third, He was tempted as a part of His personal discipline (Heb. 5:7-9) and to make Him the sympathizing Intercessor (Heb. 2:18; 4:15).

Fourth, this was done in partial fulfillment of the prophecy of Genesis 3:15.

Fifth, it was essential to prove He came to do the Father's will (Heb. 10:5-7).

Sixth, this whole affair was a lesson of failure to Satan.

Seventh, this ordeal gave to man an ideal example of how to deal with Satan. Hence we learn of the value of Scripture in dealing with Satan.



Replacement Theology

By Stephen A. Toms
of Chelmsford, England

Does God Mean What He Says?

It appears that the philosophy of “Replacement Theology” is becoming more commonly believed amongst professing Christians and, consequently, we consider it right to say something about the issue.

Replacement Theology is the strange notion that the Church (made up of Jews and Gentiles) has “replaced” national Israel, so that the covenant promises made by God to His ancient people are not really meant for them at all, but were intended for others. Hence, the word “replacement.” In a peculiar way and with great inconsistency, it is thought that the Church replaces the nation in order to receive the promised blessings, but the curses are left for the Jewish people.

We would submit that, amongst other things, replacement theology (1) denies that God's words are to be taken to mean what they say; (2) gives the idea that God's words can mean anything; (3) deviates from true spirituality (4) leads to anti-Semitism; (5) tends to imply that Old Testament teaching is different from New Testament teaching - as if one part of the Bible is more inspired than the other; and (6) proclaims a false message.

Some of the Scripture references quoted in an endeavour to prove the theory are Matthew 21:37-46; John 10:16; Romans 2:28-29; Romans 9:6; Ephesians 2:10-21; and Galatians 3:27-29. It is strange to provide these passages as proof-texts as there is nothing in any of them which says that

when God uses the word “Israel” He intends us to understand that He really means the Church.

Denies God's Words Mean What They Say

Faith is a believing of that which God has said in His Holy Word. The words used in Scripture are words which the Holy Ghost has chosen to reveal truth. To “replace” any such word by saying that it means other than that stated seems to us to be a very dangerous practice. We would have thought that the idea of “replacing” any Divinely inspired words would be obnoxious to all true believers.

The Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony has always insisted that God means what He says and says what He means. Also, that where the plain sense is good sense, it is the right sense. That does not mean that the Lord has never used dreams, visions, types, shadows, parables, etc., but the explanations given, and all plainly-worded statements, are to be taken as meaning precisely what they say.

Mr. George T. Hunt, an early editor of the magazine, “Watching and Waiting,” wrote, “In reading prophecy, remember that Israel means Israel and not believers; Jerusalem means Jerusalem and not Heaven; Zion means Zion and not the Church; Babylon means Babylon and not Rome; Egypt means Egypt and not the world.” That is an excellent guide.

It is understood that the names “Israel,” “Jerusalem,” and “Zion” are used to illustrate lessons for the whole Church of God. For example, we read in Psalm 125:2, **“As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the LORD**

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is round about his people."

In that way, godly men have included these terms in hymns which we love to sing. However whilst there is application, we need to understand that this is not exposition.

In more recent years, the Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony has republished a sermon preached by Elder J. C. Ryle entitled "Scattered Israel To Be Gathered," in which the learned Elder gives a list of Scripture texts from the prophetic books - both "major" and "minor" prophets, as they are often described - where definite statements are made concerning the future gathering of the nation of Israel. We would strongly recommend that Elder Ryle's remarks be studied by all who are concerned about truth. Elder Ryle was no mean scholar, but it does not take a lot of intelligence to understand that it is the same nation that was scattered that will be gathered. Although the sermon, preached from Jeremiah 31:10, was delivered many years ago - in 1858 - there is no need to change one word. The booklet is still obtainable from the Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony. There is, of course, much other good literature on this subject.

The three chapters in Romans (9-11), which give so much information about God's purposes for Israel, are very specific and it ought to be noted that they were written "after" the crucifixion of the Messiah. Anyone reading these chapters with an unbiased mind should be able to understand what God has said. You do not need to be a great scholar to grasp the plain words of Holy Scripture, but you do need

the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit to believe these statements. We are clearly told that Gentiles will be "grafted in" - that is, to the nation which is described as "a good olive tree." However, there is no suggestion that Gentiles become the Israel of which the passage speaks.

In Galatians 3:27-29, we are instructed concerning the unity of all true believers. There is mention of there being neither Jew nor Greek (Gentile), bond nor free, male nor female. All three groups, as Christians, have a real unity but that does not alter the fact that such groups have existed through the centuries, and still do exist. There are still males; there are still females, etc., However, it makes no difference to our unity in Christ whether we are male or female, bond or free, Jew or Gentile. The passage goes on to explain that all those truly saved by God's grace are Abraham's seed.

The covenant with Abraham is recorded in various places - see Genesis 12:1-3, 7; 13:15-17; 15:5-7; 17:4-8; 24:7. When these passages are studied together, it is abundantly apparent that the promise concerned (1) the land, (2) the people, and (3) the Messiah (in Whom all nations of the earth would be blessed). As Jehovah is a faithful God, He will keep all three parts of the covenant, and the fact that persons from nations other than the Jewish people are blessed in the Messiah is no proof that God will not keep His promises concerning the land and the nation. In fact, it is a strong indication that He will perform "all" that which He has spoken.

The idea of God failing to do as He has said could be more accurately described in other words by saying, God did not mean what He said about the land

and the nation because He has fulfilled, and will more completely fulfill, that spoken concerning the Seed! What folly!

Apart from the covenants made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob there are the many, many promises made to the nation of Israel which are recorded in Holy Scripture, particularly in the prophets and the psalms, and we submit that not to believe these statements of God is to deny that He has used the right words in His book, the Bible, which is, of course, a book of revelation.

Proverbs 30:5 tells us that **"Every word of God is pure."** "Every" means "every" and "pure" means "pure." Consequently, it is inconceivable that when the Lord gave covenant promises to a certain nation, He had no intention that they would actually be for that people.

Suggests God's Words Can Mean Anything

It is a dangerous thing to say that God does not mean the words He has used in Holy Scripture. That is how modernists treat statements of history and doctrine. They, in their folly, would imagine that there was no six-day creation, that Jonah was not swallowed by the great fish, etc. They are satisfied to look for, what they call, a "spiritual meaning." We contend that everything in the Bible is true. We further contend that wherever the word "Israel" is used in the Bible it refers either (1) to the man, Jacob, or (2) to the nation that descended from him (that is from his loins).

Those persons imbibing the replacement theory often endeavour to prove their notion by using the term 'spiritual Israel', as if that allows for the inclusion of persons other than those of the Jewish nation. The truth is that this title (spiritual Israel) describes

those Jews who are converted to Christ and are truly born again. Although the Scripture speaks of a time when 'all Israel' (those Jews who will be alive at the time of the coming again of our Lord Jesus Christ) shall be saved (Rom. 11:26), it is evident that not each person of the Jewish race during the centuries has belonged to the spiritual Israel. Judas Iscariot is a notable and obvious example.

This is really what Romans 2:28-29 and 9:6 teach us. When God says in chapter 2, **"He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly. . .but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly"** it is a reminder that there have been and will be those Jews who are only "outwardly" so, but there are those who know a real experience of God's grace and can be described as "inwardly," for example, Moses, David, Paul. When God says in chapter 9, **"They are not all Israel, which are of Israel"** it is a reminder that there are those who are "of Israel" - merely born into the nation - but there are those who are the true Israel, experiencing the grace of God in their hearts. These verses do not make any mention of Gentiles. Why read into the Bible that which is not there?

Mr. Newmark used to comment that when God re-affirmed to the nation in later years, the covenant that He had formerly made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, He frequently used the name "Jacob" instead of "Israel." He would remark that if God had said "Israel" some people would think that He meant the Church and others would think He meant Britain!

This is a very important issue for each one of us individually as, if God never intended to keep His plainly worded promises to the nation of Israel, how could any of

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us be confident that He will keep His promises to us?

Deuteronomy 4:2 states concerning God's Word, "**Ye shall not...diminish ought from it.**" "Diminish" means "lessen," "decrease," "abate," "degrade," "take from." Clearly, such diminishing is evident when the word "Israel" is understood to mean other than what it says.

If we are to accept that "Israel" in the Bible can be "replaced," is there any other word in Holy Scripture that cannot be replaced?

Deviates from True Spirituality

It would be quite wrong to suggest that many persons who have embraced the teaching of replacement theology are not spiritually minded people; but that is "in spite of" their reception of the theory rather than "because of" their imbibing the notion.

It is often spoken of as a "spiritualizing of the prophecies," but we submit that it is not spiritual at all. It is, in effect, a "vapourising" of prophetic truth. We consider that, when studying Holy Scripture, the most literal understanding of God's plainly-worded sentences is the most spiritual.

We have heard it said that Galatians 4:26 and Hebrews 12:22 warrant the taking of the word "Jerusalem" in the prophets as meaning "the Church." How can that be?

In Galatians, the apostle is speaking about Sarah and Hagar, Isaac and Ishmael, and he specifically states that these "**things are an allegory**" (verse 24). Hagar and her son represented the conditional covenant of the Law, which is described as "**Jerusalem which now is.**" Sarah and her son represented the new

covenant, which is unconditional. This is described as "**Jerusalem which is above.**" So, there are two Jerusalems, one on earth and one above.

The passage in Hebrews has a similar theme and contrasts Mount Sinai with "the heavenly Jerusalem."

John tells us, in the Book of the Revelation, that he "**saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven**" (21:2). It is however, unreasonable to confuse this city with the place of which we read so much in God's Word - the Jerusalem here on earth, that which God "has chosen, to put His Name there." It is foolish to think that what God has clearly said concerning the earthly Jerusalem does not mean what it was obviously intended to convey.

It is amazing how so many of God's people, who appear to be otherwise godly persons, seem to lose their Christian character when they are endeavouring to enforce their belief in this "so-called" spiritualizing. Sadly, we have heard some, whom we would consider to be dear believers, refer to pre-millennialism as heresy, and pre-millennialists as heretics!

Leads to Anti-Semitism

God has made unconditional promises in a covenant of grace towards the nation of Israel. It is true that the covenant at Sinai was conditional, but it is impossible to read the Bible with an open mind and not realize that much that God has said to and about the ancient nation does not depend for its fulfillment on their behaviour.

Replacement theology seems to tell us that Jehovah has rejected the Jews because of their sin. We who are Gentile believers are far from sinless, so would that mean that God will reject us? Any

professing Christian who knows anything about the grace of God will be very conscious of many personal sins and short-comings and will be thankful that God's sovereign grace does "**much more abound**" - is super-abundant. Is it consistent with the doctrine of free and sovereign grace to suggest that God would cast away His covenant people because of their transgressions? In any case, He has definitely stated, "**I will never break my covenant with you**" (Judg. 2:1), and that in spite of the fact that in the next verse, Jehovah continued by saying, "**Ye have not obeyed my voice.**"

Those who understand that the Lord retains His love for His ancient people, although they, as a nation, rejected the Messiah, will love those people too, as did the Apostle Paul (Rom. 9:2-4). Moreover, there is the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ, Who was able to choose into which nation He would be born, chose to be a Jew. Those who understand these things rightly seek to love those whom God Himself has loved and still loves with an everlasting love (Jer. 31:3).

A man, in speaking to me, sought to describe the church he had been attending, and he said, "They pray for every country under the sun, except Israel."

The Scripture specifically tells us that we should pray for the peace of Jerusalem (Ps. 122:6); and to this is added the promise that those who thus pray will prosper. That peace will not come until the time when the Jewish people look upon Him Whom they have pierced and are brought to godly repentance (Zech. 12:9-14).

Some seem to presume that our love for Israel means that we support the present apostasy of the nation. However, there

must be many Christians who love and pray for godless relatives and friends. They would abhor the fact that those for whom they have concern continue in rebellion against God, but that does not cause their concern to cease. In the same way, we who have a love for the Jews do not condone the nation's apostasy but we look forward to the time when "**all Israel shall be saved**" (Rom. 11:26).

It appears sadly obvious that those who fail to grasp the truth of God's perpetual love for Paul's "**kinsmen according to the flesh,**" often look at God's ancient people as the world sees them; and whether or not it is admitted, the inability to grasp God's purpose does lead to anti-Semitism. Zechariah 2:8 refers to Israel as "**the apple of his (God's) eye.**" If the nation is thus so precious to Jehovah, should they not also be to His people?

Implies Testaments Not Equally Inspired

We find too, that amongst those persons embracing replacement theology, there is a tendency to speak of the New Testament as if it were superior to the Old Testament; this in spite of the fact that both are equally inspired.

It is worthy of note that it is in the New Testament, in Hebrews 8:8-11, that a quote is made from Jeremiah 31:31-34. This is what is said in Hebrews: "**Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For**

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this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least to the greatest."

The quotation is not altered to say that the new covenant is with the Church, but it is specifically stated that it is a "covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah" - that is, with both sections of the Jewish people following the division at the time of Rehoboam and Jeroboam. The covenant of which Jeremiah spoke is contrasted with that given to Moses. Both were to the same people but one (the Sinaitic Covenant) depended on the nation keeping God's commands whereas the other rests solely upon the grace of God. The new covenant is referred to as "a better covenant" and that is because it does depend entirely upon the unchangeable and unfailing promise of an immutable God rather than upon the conduct of the nation.

II Timothy 3:16 informs us that "All scripture is given by inspiration of God." That includes the Old Testament as much as the New Testament. The New Testament does not annul, render void, or abolish the clear promises set forth so continuously in the Old Testament. The truth is that the New Testament confirms the abundant grace of God in keeping His Word to the Israel nation, which Word was so frequently

set forth by faithful messengers in Old Testament times. Well may the Apostle Paul exclaim, "Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people" (Rom. 11:1-2).

We may well ask, is it right or is it reasonable to "replace" God's words with men's thoughts? We would submit that replacement theology leads to unbelief.

Proclaims a False Message

A real problem with the teaching of Replacement Theology is that it creates a false hope. Sadly, men who otherwise soundly preach salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, by Blood alone - men whom we would regard as dear brethren in Christ, are taking Scriptures which refer to Israel's future blessing and they try to apply them to the Church in this age; whereas the Bible clearly teaches that this present evil age will culminate in terrible apostasy and extreme godlessness. It is not difficult for a spiritually-minded person to see the way things are now going on the earth.

The Old Testament prophets had a similar experience. In the "historical" books, we read of many prophets (about four hundred men) telling Ahab that all would be well (I Kings 22) but Michaiah stood alone and boldly uttered the true message of Jehovah. The king and people found that the message of the false prophets was much more appealing to them and they accordingly refused to hearken to the faithful man of God.

When we read the "prophetical" books, we find that this situation occurred fairly regularly. For example, in the days of Jeremiah, there were plenty in Judah who found a very palatable message was given by those who professed

to be speaking in the name of Jehovah, but God had not sent them (Jer. 23:21). Jeremiah faithfully preached the truth revealed to him by the Lord and for this, was treated most cruelly.

It may be very "nice" to believe that, in our days, we will see what men consider to be wonderful revival, but that is not what God has promised. The teaching gives a false hope. Thankfully, we are encouraged to continue in faithful testimony, to go on preaching the truth of the Gospel, because the Lord will not cease to call out a people for His Name (Acts 15:14). However, we have been clearly informed that the lot of the Church in this age is tribulation and suffering, not ruling over nations. The failure to discriminate between the Scriptures speaking of the present age and those which refer to the future age, things which will come upon the earth with the return of the Lord Jesus Christ, has led many sincere believers into great confusion.

There is an oft-repeated phrase, "time will tell;" but we do not need time to tell us because we know, by reading the Bible, what events must take place at the end of this age. God's words ought to be believed, "not replaced."

We are told in Jeremiah 44 of those who refused to accept God's Word through the prophet, and verse 28 states that ultimately they "shall know whose words shall stand, mine, or theirs." Time certainly will tell whether God will do as He has said for the Israel nation, and it will then be evident to all whose Word will stand - those of the Omnipotent God or those of the teachers of Replacement Theology.

Blest pledge! He never will revoke A single promise He has spoke. He will not His great self deny -

A God of truth can never lie;
As well might He His being quit
As break His oath, or word forget.



The Short Pews



Brief
Articles
by Curtis
Pugh

THE BIBLE IS NOT ENOUGH

We hold the Bible in highest esteem. It is the Word of God. It tells us all we need to know about salvation and how to live a life that is pleasing to God. But a mere head-knowledge of the Bible will not save. The Bible says that "knowledge puffeth up" (I Cor. 8:1). We fear there are a great many professing Christians who have only the kind of head-knowledge that results in pride and confidence in their ability to obey the Bible.

Other than the Bible, what is needed for a sinner to be saved? The Lord Jesus said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again" (John 3:6, 7). While the Bible is the Word of God, the Bible is not the Holy Spirit. Jesus said that a birth brought about by the Spirit is necessary for salvation. That is why we say that the Bible is not enough. We note that the Greek word for "born again" found in the original language of the Bible is more often translated "from above." The King James Bible - if you have a complete one - bears this out. It has a note in the margin that says, "again - from above."

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The Short Pews

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There is not a verse in the Bible which says do this or that and you will be born again. Jesus said, **"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit"** (John 3:8). No man controls the wind. And no one controls whether or not he or she is born from above. Since a lost man – a natural man – cannot do anything to please God, no act of obedience can induce God to birth a sinner into God's family.

"What? Someone cries out – a natural man cannot please God?" That is what the Bible says in Romans 8:8: **"So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."** It is a mistaken idea that praying the sinner's prayer (whatever that is), going forward in a religious meeting, being baptized, making a decision for Christ, or doing any other thing will cause God to look favorably upon a lost sinner. How can a sinner please God? The next verse, Romans 8:9 tells us, **"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."** The Holy Spirit of God must of His own will move into a lost person in the new birth before a person can please God. Lost person, you are entirely dependent upon God. Have no confidence in the flesh. **"Ye must be born again."**

WHO IS A BLESSED PERSON?

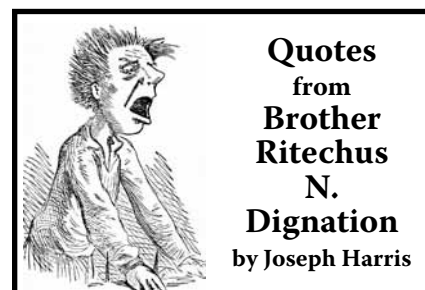
Today we hear many politicians crying out, "God bless America!" Oh that He would! But many people who want blessings think of only financial and material

blessings. Consider this from the Word of God: **"Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple"** (Ps. 65:4). The Psalm writer, guided and moved by the Holy Spirit in what he wrote, had quite a different idea about God's blessings than most of us.

The right idea about blessings is this: temporary natural blessings are not the primary thing. The blessing desired by the Psalmist is that he might enjoy God's presence. The most important thing is to be near to God. All the material things – the natural blessings – amount to nothing if the possessor of them is a stranger to God. Without peace, without hope, without that special Friend: **"a friend [Christ] that sticketh closer than a brother"** (Pro. 18:24) – what comfort for the soul is there in mere possessions? What hope for eternity? In Matthew 16:26 the Lord Jesus said: **"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"** Possession of the world's goods and yet to be lost is no profit!

Notice also that those who do come near unto God do so because of God's actions. First of all such people are those **"whom thou [God] choosest."** Sinners do not choose God. They do not even seek God - **"There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God"** (Rom. 3:11). God must initiate the salvation of sinners by choosing them. This He did before the foundation of the world: **"According as he hath chosen us in him [Christ] before**

the foundation of the world..." (Eph. 1:4). The second thing God does to those whom He has chosen is this: He causes them **"to approach unto"** Him. As the prophet wrote: **"The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee"** (Jer. 31:3). Because God had loved Jeremiah with an everlasting love He had tenderly drawn him. The Lord Jesus said in John 6:44: **"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."** Back **"before the foundation of the world,"** God chose some sinners in Christ. These He draws. He draws successfully. He does not try to draw them and fail. Otherwise they would not come. They are free to come but they will not: they cannot. **"Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee..."** There is no room for pride or self confidence in the salvation of sinners. Salvation is all of God! Give Him all the praise!



Modern day times have given us amazing gadgets, gizmos and electronic devices, yet none of these things improve the character and heart of people. We have had an explosion in science and technology, but not an ounce of growth in morality and common sense to balance it all out.

BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 7-1-2015 to 7-31-2015

Beginning Balance	\$7,411.47
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	225.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	100.00
Calvary I. B. C., Everson, WA	100.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	200.00
.....	625.00
TOTAL	8,036.47
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio Time	363.98
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	363.98
.....	7,672.49
Interest	+06
ENDING BALANCE	\$7,672.55



BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 7-1-2015 to 7-31-2015

Beginning Balance	\$1,775.08
RECEIPTS:	
B. C. of Brimfield, Brimfield, IL	25.00
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	300.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL	60.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	150.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV	313.45
Carol Willett, Edgewater, FL	50.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL	25.00
Don Poore, Hollywood, FL	26.00
Emmanuel M. B. C., Oldtown, KY	100.00
Faith B. C. Lynn, AR	12.50
Gail Knowles, Scarborough, ME	20.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	200.00
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
Landmark B. C., Moncks Corner, SC	100.00
The Lord's Church, Goose Creek, SC	50.00
Michael Sherman, Ashland, KY	30.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH	100.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN	50.00
Parkway Landmark B. C., Springfield, OR	100.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL	100.00
Portland B. C., Plumersville, AR	50.00
Rebecca Williamson, Huntingburg, IN	15.00
Southside B. C., Fulton, MS	25.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Indianapolis, IN	85.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Silsbee, TX	60.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA	25.00
Subscriptions	98.00
Anonymous	1,000.00
Dividing checks	150.00
Sub Total	\$3,654.95
TOTAL	\$5,430.03
EXPENDITURES:	
Printing	490.00
Postage	1,038.05
Supplies	69.95
Wages	2,300.00
FICA	175.90
Dividing checks	150.00
Bank Charge	13.00
Total Expenditures	\$4,236.90
ENDING BALANCE	\$1,193.13

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Grace Baptist Church of Rural Hall, NC and pastor Andy Proctor, would like to announce their 36th Annual Labor Day Weekend Bible Conference along with our 50th Anniversary as a church of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The conference will be held at the Davie County Senior Center at 278 Meroney St., Mocksville, NC 27028, Friday, September 4th until about 4:00 pm Sunday, September 6th. Lunch and Supper will be provided for all who attend the conference.

The conference theme is centered around our 50th Anniversary as a Church, "50 Years of the Preeminence of Christ" as taken from Colossians 1:18.

Conference speakers will be Elders Andy Proctor, Chris Wallace, Pete Horn, Jeff Short, Almond Katryan, David Green, Gene Kiger, John Pruitt, Rick Perdue, Willard Pyle, Sam Wilson, James Hobbs, Leroy Pack, Jon Rule, Lewis Kiger, and Stephen West.

All are invited to attend. If you have any questions, please call pastor Andy Proctor at (352) 895-1437.

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Caldwell, KS is holding Sunday afternoon services in Pratt, KS at 117 W. 3rd St., Pratt, KS (Municipal Building). Services begin at 4:00 p.m. and will be held from May 24th thru October 25th. If you happen to know anyone who lives in the Pratt, KS area please let them know we are having worship services. Please pray that the Lord might be pleased to use this endeavor to save souls and glorify His name.

If anyone has any questions,

please feel free to contact Pastor Hille at nhille@gmail.com or at (620) 845-4183.

The Berea Baptist Broadcast can now be heard on WQRL 106.3 FM in the southern Illinois area at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings. The program is being sponsored by the Grace Missionary Baptist Church, 306 North Vicksburg St, Marion, IL 22959. If you enjoy the program let them know by calling them at (618) 841-0228.

A new mission work has begun. The Providence Baptist Church located at 1115 Jones Mill Road, Cartersville, GA 30120, is an outreach of the Tibet Baptist Church of Ludowici, GA. Service times are Sunday School at 9:45 a.m., Morning Worship at 10:45 a.m., and Evening Worship at 5:00 p.m.

For more information please contact Bro. Bruce Allen (502) 468-6563, Email: providencebc30120@gmail.com or on Facebook under Providence Baptist.

The Landmark Baptist Church of Moncks Corner, SC, is in need of a pastor and are prayerfully seeking qualified candidates. Any interested Brother possessing the

qualifications found in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 should contact Bro. Andrew Cook at 843-873-6945.

The Windsor Baptist Church of Windsor, IL is seeking a qualified candidate for pastor. They are small in number but rich in truth. Candidate should meet the qualification in I Timothy 3. For more information please contact Brother John Gregory at (217) 728-9966 or Email windsorbaptist.grace@gmail.com.

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 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 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.

The Berea Baptist Church of Mantachie, MS is seeking a pastor. Any interested brother may call at (662) 282-7794 or Email:bbchurch@nexband.com for a pastoral questionnaire.

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. We also welcome any upcoming meeting or conference announcements.

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