

The Berea Baptist Banner

Displaying Biblical truth for twenty-six years in the printed page.

"Christians Cry, Too!"

By David Green
of McDermott, Ohio



See also Matthew 5:4, which says **"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted."**

In my lifetime, I have met a few folks who will say "real men don't cry." Even

among professing Christians, there are those who claim that tears are a sign of little or no faith. Yet what does the Bible say?

Our Lord, while preaching this sermon said **"Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh. . ."** Now, if weeping is a sign of little or no faith, then is He saying,

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"Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh. Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets. But woe unto you that are rich! For ye have received your consolation. Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep" (Luke 6:21-25).

The Battleground

By Curtis Pugh
of Bocsa, Romania



Whether or not you are able to give a clear definition of the words "Arminian" and "Calvinist," if you profess to be a Christian, you are one or the other. Some try to say that they believe only "some" of the things Calvinists believe. What they are really saying is that they are Calvinistic Arminians. We think that such a position is untenable: it cannot be supported either by the Word of God or by logic. To be consistent in your thinking, you must believe either in all five points of Arminianism or all five points of Calvinism. I do not say that you can prove the five points of Arminianism by the Bible. I merely say that to be consistent, each system must be followed

in its entirety.

Let us look at the "five points" that we hear so much about, and these two terms "Arminian" and "Calvinist." Of course the term "Calvinist" comes from the name John Calvin who was born July 10, 1509 in France. He died in Geneva, Switzerland May 27, 1564. John Calvin never listed "the five points" that are associated with his name, but he did systematize his doctrine in the book, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. While we Baptists abhor some of the teachings

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Not Willing That Any Should Perish!

By Matthew Stepp
of Wayne, West Virginia



asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation" (II Pet. 3:4). The Apostle Peter agrees with the body of Scripture, in remonstrating those that would

liken our Mighty God to a man. In men, this long delay of two thousand years might indicate a slackness, (in the Greek - slow, dullness or tardiness). However, as the apostle speaks out, we are speaking in reference to God.

He is different from us. He is special! Every time we open our Bibles, we must begin with this understanding---that we cannot understand everything! God is God, and we are not! If it seems to us that God carries yet a bit too much---no matter, it changes not the time of His return! He will come at the appropriate time, the proper time and the wondrously,

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"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (II Pet. 3:9).

This is a particularly important verse in Scripture, if that can accurately be stated of any verse in the Holy Writ. By particularly important, I mean that it is a verse that will polarize the beloved readers. It is not a verse that can be taken lightly; neither can comprehension come with just a languid glance. It concerns our dear Lord and wondrous Maker, so the depths are rightly as deep as He is.

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness. . ." It can rightly be inferred from this opening phrase that some men will in reading the text of the promise of our triumphant Savior's return, become scoffers **"...saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell**

What Grace Teaches

By Tom Ross
of Chesapeake, Ohio



(Titus 2:11-14)

The passage under consideration proves without a doubt that the grace of God teaches believers to live holy lives as they anticipate the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and consider the purpose of Christ's redemptive work on their behalf. God's free and sovereign grace is His unmerited favor showered upon the most unworthy of sinners. The grace of God gives sinners what they need rather than what they deserve. When we consider what we are by nature; rebels, sinners, wretches, transgressors who are deserving of the lowest Hell, our hearts should be filled with amazement that a God so just and holy would manifest His saving grace in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. As we revel and delight ourselves in the nature of God's sovereign grace we must never forget that the grace of God also has a profound impact upon the people whose lives have been miraculously transformed by its

saving power. Grace is not just God's unmerited favor toward undeserving sinners, it is also an energizing principle that enables them to live sanctified lives. Grace not only

frees the elect from the penalty of sin, it also delivers them from the power of sin. Grace not only delivers sinners from the condemnation of the law, it also implants a holy desire to love God's law. Grace not only brings guilty sinners into a right relationship with God, it also fits them for fellowship with Him. Grace not only saves a sinner from Hell, it also sanctifies him and makes him meet for the glories of Heaven.

When the nature of God's sovereign grace is comprehended from a scriptural standpoint it becomes obvious that true grace produces a changed life that

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Editor: Christopher Cockrell

Staff: Sheron Cockrell, Marsha Kiser, Virginia
Cockrell

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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 strengthen His churches in the most holy faith.
5. To motivate God's children to a closer fellowship around His Word.
6. To inform people of world events in light of Bible prophecy.
7. To condemn and expose error wherever it may rear its ugly head.
8. To stimulate Christian growth in grace.
9. To make the Devil and his demons as mad as possible.

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"Christians Cry, Too"

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"Blessed are ye that [have no faith] now: for ye shall laugh. . .?" And, if that be true, we have here in this passage our Lord promising blessings to those that sin! This would mean that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, totally contradicted the teachings of the Bible. This is an impossibility, so then this idea that the Bible forbids weeping must be wrong. Let us notice what the Bible really says about crying.

TIMES OF WEEPING

"A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance" (Eccl. 3:4).

There is a time to weep! And the Bible is full of examples of crying:

I. ABRAHAM

"And Sarah was an hundred and seven and twenty years old: these were the years of the life of Sarah. And Sarah died in Kirjatharba; the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan: and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her" (Gen. 23:1-2).

Abraham wept and mourned over the death of Sarah his wife, Abraham had his faults but this was not one of them! Abraham knew of the heavenly country--Hebrews 11 tells us that. He wept over her because he loved her and missed her. Nothing is wrong with that.

"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city. By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered

up his only begotten son, Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure" (Heb. 11:8-19).

More is said about Abraham and Sarah in Hebrews 11 than any of the others who are written in there. What a wonderful thing it is to read just to see a name in that chapter, but to read so much about Abraham and Sarah.

II. DAVID

"And it came to pass, when David and his men were come to Ziklag. . . and burned it with fire; And had taken the women captives, that were therein: they slew not any, either great or small, but carried them away, and went on their way. So David and his men came to the city, and, behold, it was burned with fire; and their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, were taken captives. Then David and the people that were with him lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep" (I Sam. 30:1-4).

Here we read of a time when David and his men found the city burned and their wives, sons, and daughters were captured. The Bible says they wept until they had no more power to weep. Have you ever cried that much? I know I have. Did they not believe the Lord was powerful and in control? Of course they believed it! Read David's life. He knew of God's power and sovereignty.

"Then David took hold on his clothes, and rent them; and likewise all the men that were with him: And they mourned, and wept, and fasted until even, for Saul, and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of the LORD, and for the house of Israel; because they were fallen by the sword. . . And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his son: . . . Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you in scarlet, with other delights, who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel" (II Sam. 1:11-12, 17, 24).

Here David mourned and wept over the deaths of Saul and Jonathan. Verse 17 uses the word lamented. That word means "an expression of sorrow; cry of grief; act of bewailing." In verse 24, he commanded the women to weep over Saul.

Again, David had his faults, but I find no evidence that this was one of them. In fact, notice what God said about David in this passage: **"And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all my will"** (Acts 13:22).

III. THE PSALMIST

"By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we

remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the LORD'S song in a strange land? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning" (Ps. 137:1-5).

Here were a people who saw their temple burned, their city ruined, their wives ravished, and their children slain. They were in a strange land, and they wept. They did not weep because of the cruelties of the Babylonians--they wept because of what they had lost.

IV. JOB

"I have sewed sackcloth upon my skin, and defiled my horn in the dust. My face is foul with weeping, and on my eyelids is the shadow of death; Not for any injustice in mine hands: also my prayer is pure. O earth, cover not thou my blood, and let my cry have no place. Also now, behold, my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high. My friends scorn me: but mine eye poureth out tears unto God" (Job 16:15-20).

Every one of us has heard of Job. Often, when trouble comes in our lives, we quote Job 1:20-22. But, let us also remember that Job cried. Let us remember that he wished he had never been born (Job 10:18-19). Someone says "no wonder he was not in Hebrews 11!"

But notice these passages:

"Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord GOD" (Ezek. 14:14).

Here Job is numbered with Daniel and Noah. This is also repeated in verses 16 and 20.

"Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy" (James 5:11).

Here we see him as an example of patience. No doubt about it, friends, Job was a man of faith. Let us not be judgmental to those who weep! Job's friends were very judgmental. They were of no comfort, but God was. So, when Job cried, he poured out tears unto God! And our Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy, even when our earthly friends are not.

V. OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR

"Jesus wept" (John 11:35).

This is the shortest verse in the Bible, but oh what a message it is! In order to get the reason behind it, we must go up to verse 33. He wept when He saw that Mary wept. Our Lord has compassion on us!

"Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book" (Ps. 56:8)?

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“Christians Cry, Too”

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God not only takes notice of our tears, but He records them. They are kept in a bottle and recorded in a book. Matthew Henry observed, “(1.) That He observes them with compassion and tender concern; He is afflicted in their afflictions, and knows their souls in adversity. As the blood of His saints, and their deaths, are precious in the sight of the Lord, so are their tears, not one of them shall fall to the ground. (2.) That He will remember them and review them, as we do the accounts we have booked. The tears of God’s persecuted people are bottled up and sealed among God’s treasures; and, when these books come to be opened, they will be found vials of wrath, which will be poured out upon their persecutors, whom God will surely reckon with for all the tears they have forced from His people’s eyes; and they will be breasts of consolation to God’s mourners, whose sackcloth will be turned into garments of praise. God will comfort His people according to the time wherein He has afflicted them, and give to those to reap in joy who sowed in tears. What was sown a tear will come up a pearl.”

VI. DEVOUT MEN AT STEPHEN’S BURIAL

“**And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him**” (Acts 8:2).

Devout men made great lamentation at Stephen’s funeral. The word devout means “yielding a solemn and reverential attention to God.” These were Godly men who made great lamentation! Folks, there were some tears shed over the death of this martyr!

Someone said we ought not to cry at a funeral. For their proof they use I Thessalonians 4:13, which says: “**But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.**” But that passage does not say it is wrong to sorrow. All someone has to do is just read it to understand the meaning! It says that we are not to sorrow as though we have no hope. I agree with John Gill when he wrote, “. . . the apostle’s view is not to encourage and establish a stoical apathy, a stupid indolence, and a brutal insensibility, which are contrary to the make of human nature, to the practice of the saints, and even of Christ and His apostles, and our apostle himself; but to forbid excessive and immoderate sorrow, and all the extravagant forms of it the Gentiles ran into, who having no notion of the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, had no hope of ever seeing their friends more, but looked upon them as entirely lost, as no longer in being, and never more to be met with, seen, and

enjoyed; this drove them to extravagant actions. . .” To use this passage to say that mourning and weeping are forbidden is quite contrary to the teaching of God’s Word! As Matthew Poole wrote in his commentary, “. . . he doth not condemn their sorrow, but the excess of it. Grace destroys not nature, but regulates it; nor reason, but rectifies it; nor takes away the affections, but moderates them. . . . And to mourn for the dead, especially the dead in the Lord, is a duty that both nature and grace teach, and God requireth. . .”

We certainly ought not to sorrow like those who have no hope. There is a difference. Perhaps you have been to such a funeral. How sad it is! As Charles Spurgeon said it in his sermon “Death, A Sleep” (although his wife named it “His Own Funeral Sermon”), “It may be natural to the unbridled passions of an ungodly man, who has lost his wife, to tear his hair, to throw himself upon the bed, to clutch the body, to declare it shall not be buried, to rave through the house, cursing God, and saying all manner of hard things of his dispensations. . .” This certainly ought not to be our behavior as children of God.

A child of God may weep over the loss of a loved one, but he does not do it without a hope. Though we sorrow and mourn for their loss, we know that there is life beyond the grave. Thus, Job said, “**My face is foul with weeping. . .**” (Job 16:16, but he could also say “**For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me**” (Job 19:25-27).

At the loss of a loved one there may be outward signs of sorrow, but there should also be happiness too. While we miss them, we realize that departure from this life is “. . . to be with Christ; which is far better” (Phil. 1:23).

Only God’s people can be “**As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing. . .**” (II Cor. 6:10).

CONCLUSION

“**Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep**” (Rom. 12:15).

Let us never forget the second part to this verse. It is easy to rejoice with them that rejoice, but we also need to be compassionate to those who weep. Never let anyone tell you that the Bible forbids the Christian from weeping. In this article, we have read of such mighty men as Abraham, David, and Job all crying. We even read that our Lord wept while on this earth. These were all Godly men who believed without a doubt in the sovereignty of God, yet we have read of these men crying because of loss, tragedy, death, and sorrow. The Bible certainly does not forbid it. And God help us if

our religion should become one that forbids any signs of outward sorrow! But praise the Lord we do have a time to look forward to when “. . . **God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away**” (Rev. 21:4).



The Battleground

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of Calvin, such as baptismal regeneration, and while we do not wish to be identified as followers of any man, we use the terms Calvinist and Calvinism for convenience sake only. Sometimes rather than use the term Calvinism we may substitute the term sovereign grace and we may refer to the “five points of Calvinism” as the doctrine of grace.

Writing under the Latinized pen name James Arminius, Jacob Harmenszoon, was a member of the Dutch Reformed Church and a professor in theology at the University of Leiden. From his penname comes the term Arminian – not to be confused with one from Armenia who is called an Armenian. Arminius was born October 10, 1560 and died October 19, 1609. Note his birthday, please! He was born in 1560 and John Calvin died in 1564. Thus Arminius was barely a babe out of arms when Calvin died. I point this out because some imagine that Calvin and Arminius were contemporaries and antagonists. The plain fact is that they never knew each other and while Arminius was indeed familiar with the doctrine and writings of Calvin, obviously Calvin was ignorant of Arminius. And so while Arminius wrote against the teaching of Calvin, Calvin never even heard of Arminius, and could not have written against him.

Calvin’s doctrine was the doctrine of the Dutch Reformed Church, the state church of the Netherlands. Arminius taught against the beliefs of Calvin. Arminius died in 1609 and only after his death did his Dutch followers issue a document entitled *Remonstrance* in the year 1610. This *Remonstrance* was filed with the government of Holland and by it they sought to change the doctrine of the state church of Holland. Those advocating Arminianism were called Remonstrants. In this document were set forth the reasons that the Dutch Remonstrants disagreed with the doctrine of Calvin, i.e. the doctrine of the state church of their country. They set forth their disagreement under five points. So it was the Arminians who first published their five points. It was left to others to distil the teachings of Calvin into five points that answered the five points of the followers of Arminius.

And so, throughout Christendom

there exist two great schools of theology: Arminianism and Calvinism. (Among the Catholics, the same views held by Arminius were earlier promoted by St. Thomas and are known as Thomism). These views are nothing new. Arminianism is by far the more popular of the two views and while historically most Baptists were Calvinists, today most Baptists are Arminians to one degree or another. The noted English Baptist preacher Charles Haddon Spurgeon is credited with saying that all men are born Arminians and we think his assessment is true. This accounts in a great measure for the popularity of the Arminian system.

Why all the disagreement? Because these five points concern how God saves sinners and what part man has, if any, in his regeneration and conversion. These are fundamental issues and affect every part of a man’s thinking. Furthermore, and more importantly, what you believe about these 5 points determines what you believe about salvation – so much so that it determines what you tell a lost person they must do in order to be saved. Thus, these are vital issues.

I have entitled this article THE BATTLEGROUND because it is the first point of the 5 that is the basis for the entirety of both Calvinism and Arminianism. That point is usually presented as TOTAL DEPRAVITY by Calvinists and simply as DEPRAVITY by Arminians. You may discuss or even argue and debate with an Arminian about the other four points, but unless and until you deal thoroughly with this first one, you have not dealt with the foundation on which Calvinism rests. For it is here that the system of doctrine known as Calvinism stands or falls. If this first point is not biblical, then the other four cannot be successfully maintained. I submit that unless and until a person sees these five points as a connected unit all of which stand or fall together, that person does not fully understand Calvinism. That is why it is impossible to be a “four pointer,” or a “three-and-a-half pointer.” So it is we want to look over this BATTLEGROUND i.e. the doctrine of total depravity that necessarily includes the doctrine of total inability.

Now if you ask the average Arminian if he believes man is a sinner, he will reply in the affirmative. This, however, does not mean that he understands what it means to be a sinner in the same sense as Calvinists believe the Bible teaches. The Arminian is willing to admit that all men are sinners and that this sin nature came as a result of the fall of Adam. But, generally speaking, to him man has a “free will” which was not affected by the fall and can act independently of his sin nature. So while the Arminian believes in depravity he does not believe that every part of man has been affected by it.

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The Arminian maintains that a man can change, can believe, can repent, and can do “certain things” and thereby please God. That is why he tells lost men to do these “certain things.” Depending on his other beliefs, the Arminian may tell a man that he must be baptized in order to be saved. Or he may tell a man to make a decision for Christ as many popular “evangelists” do. Or he may insist that a man “open his heart’s door and let Jesus come in.” According to his preference and persuasion, he may tell a lost man that all he has to do is “believe.” But regardless of the precise thing required, the Arminian will advise the lost sinner to “do” something and believes that based on what that man does, God will save him. The idea is that if the sinner will take one step toward God, God will do the rest – or at least part of the rest. But the lost sinner, in all these schemes, must initiate his own salvation.

While the Arminian is telling man what he can and must do, the Calvinist is telling men what they must do, but also that they cannot do what God requires of them. You see, it is not so much that the Calvinist believes less than the Arminian, but rather that he believes more! Those who believe in sovereign grace insist that man is responsible to meet the standards God has set for him, but that he cannot meet them. Now this is the BATTLEGROUND. Here is where Arminianism or Calvinism – one or the other – falls to the ground in utter defeat and that battleground is regarding the doctrine of total depravity which includes the doctrine of total inability.

Before we proceed further, let us ask and answer one question: Does God require of a man what he cannot perform? The Arminian says “no.” The biblical answer is yes, God does demand things of a man that he cannot do. Let me prove this with a few examples. First of all, God gave the law to Israel through Moses knowing full well that the Jews could not and would not keep it. Notice also that God demanded perfection, a thing to which man cannot achieve. In Deuteronomy 18:13 we read, **“Thou shalt be perfect with the LORD thy God.”** And again in 1 Kings 8:61 we are instructed, **“Let your heart therefore be perfect with the LORD our God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments, as at this day.”** Again, we read that God requires that men be holy – a thing which we know to be humanly impossible. We furnish one example in Leviticus 20:7 where we read, **“Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the LORD your God.”** Even the Psalmist wrote in Psalm 4:4: **“Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed,**

and be still. Selah.” God is perfect, holy, and sinless and rightly demands of men that they also be perfect, holy and sinless. This is right for He created the first man in His image, without sin. The fact that man cannot, since the fall, be what God says he must be is not attributable to God. If I may illustrate it this way: Let us say that a man gets really drunk and attempts to drive an automobile. This man has a wreck and is arrested for driving while intoxicated. He attempts to defend himself by saying to the judge something like this: “I cannot be expected to drive according to the demands of the law because I was drunk and incapable of doing what I was supposed to do.” The judge might well reply: “The fact that you were drunk and incapable of driving as is demanded by the law does not relieve you of the responsibility of doing what you are supposed to do. Because, no matter what your condition, you are responsible to obey the law. Since you are accountable for your actions you will be sentenced according to the laws you have broken.” So we see that accountability has nothing to do with ability even if man’s ability has been impaired by man’s actions. So it is with all the sons of Adam. Our ability has been reduced to total inability by the sin of our father Adam. We were in Adam seminally and bear now, not the image of God, but the image of fallen Adam. That image of God, which Adam originally possessed, has been marred, ruined and corrupted by his fall. As a result, we cannot do what we are obligated to do, but this is not God’s doing. It is not God’s fault. It is ours, for had either you or I been the first man Adam, we would have sinned as grievously as he did.

But does the Bible teach total inability? This is the crux of the matter. This is the place where Arminians and Calvinists differ. It is also the basis for the subsequent 4 points of each system of doctrine that follows. If you do not believe in total depravity, you will believe that God elected men based on their foreseen faith or goodness. If you do not believe in total depravity, you will believe that Christ died equally for all men, but that the blood of Christ really accomplished the salvation of no one unless and until a man, of his own volition chooses Christ as his Savior. If you do not believe in total depravity you will believe that all men have the ability to come savingly to Christ apart from any interference from God. And if you do not believe in total inability you will be liable to believe that since men chose Christ of their own free will, they can later decide against Christ and be eternally lost. (I realize that many who are Arminians in the first four points inconsistently hold on to the belief that we shall call “once saved, always saved.” In their system of things, the sinner has a free will and can choose Christ, but it seems that after the new birth the sinner loses his free will and cannot ever be lost

even if he wishes to do so.)

To the law and to the testimony: Let us see what the Bible says. Does the Bible teach total inability? Sound Baptists care not what either Arminius or Calvin said or wrote! We do not care what John MacArthur or even Billy Graham said or wrote. We don’t even rely on the Baptist Faith and Message of the Southern Baptist Convention or on any of the historical confessions of faith written by our forefathers. We Baptists are not a creedal people, subject to the doctrines set forth by any man or men. Give us chapter and verse to prove what we believe. If the Bible teaches it we care not what name we may be slandered with, sound Baptists will follow the Bible!

First of all let us look at what the Old Testament says about this matter of total depravity and total inability. Isaiah 1:5-6 says, **“Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.”** We read in Genesis 6:5, **“And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”** Can any honest person say that things have changed since God made this assessment? Again we read in Jeremiah 17:9, **“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”** In Psalm 58:3 the Psalmist wrote, **“The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.”** Then God says in Jeremiah 13:23 **“Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.”** The honest reader will conclude that the Old Testament really does teach that man is totally depraved – that men are evilly affected in every part of their being – and unable to remedy the situation.

But what of the New Testament? Have things changed in this age of grace? Does the New Testament teach the same thing as does the Old? First of all, the New Testament teaches that all men are sinners. The clear statement in Romans

3:23 is this: **“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”** No one is omitted from this condemnation. The Lord Jesus Christ is the revealed glory of God and no man measures up to the standard of perfection He raised. The Arminian believes, in spite of this verse, that there are some people who of their own will seek after God. But the Word of God proclaims: **“As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one”** (Rom. 3:10-12). Men may have a propensity for religion and seek after it, but this is not seeking after God. Likewise, men may have a fear of hell and a desire for eternal happiness and seek after it, but this is not seeking after God. Men may have an urge to achieve personal improvement and some standard of personal righteousness and may seek after these things, but this is not seeking after God. By our use of the word “total” we do not mean that every man is as bad as he can be. Rather, from these verses we learn the extent of depravity – it is total in that the entire human race has been evilly affected by the fall and that every part, i.e. every faculty of man has been ruined. And that is what we mean when we speak of total depravity. Every man is not as bad as he could be, but every man is as bad off as he could be; for the Bible goes on to teach not only total depravity, but the twin doctrine of total inability.

Consider the teaching of the following verses and it will become clear why Paul wrote, **“There is none that seeketh after God”** as we quoted above. Let us notice the two-fold reason that a natural or unregenerate man does not receive spiritual truth. Paul makes this clear by writing, **“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned”** (I Cor. 2:14). The first reason lost men and women do not receive the truth of God is this: the Bible and its teachings are foolishness to them. People are not interested in spending time and energy on things that they think are without benefit – things that

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WCCT, Corbin, KY.....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.....	680.....	5,000 AM
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DXDS, Digos City, Philippines.....	Sunday 12:00 - 12:30 p.m.....	1161 Khz.....	1,000 AM

The Battleground

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are foolish in their estimation. And so men reject the Word of God. But there is a second reason Paul gives us here: Lost men and women lack the ability to know these things in a spiritually profitable way. Read again what he wrote, "**neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.**" So we learn from the Bible that (1) man views the Word of God as foolishness and (2) he lacks the ability to receive the truth profitably because he lacks the ability to do so, i.e. he lacks the Holy Spirit and these things are only understood by those who have been regenerated by and therefore possess the Holy Spirit.

Let me give another poor illustration: Wherever you are reading this, there are many things around you that you are unable to receive profitably. Do you see that band of Indians attacking the U.S. Cavalry? Do you see the football game going on all around you? If asked these questions, you would reply in the negative. But IF you had a television receiver and wanted to watch it, you might very well see such things as these for they are all around you. The reason you are unaware of them is that you lack the proper equipment necessary to receive them. And so it is with the unregenerate man or woman: lacking the Spirit of God they cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God!

Having read in God's Word that (1) natural men - men as they are born naturally - will not receive the Word of God because it is foolishness in their eyes, and that (2) these natural men cannot receive the Word because they lack the Spirit of God, we must conclude with Paul that **"...the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God"** (Rom. 8:7,8). Those **"in the flesh,"** i.e. the people who have experienced only the natural birth **"cannot please God!"** So we conclude that unsaved men cannot do anything to please God. They will not and cannot come savingly to Jesus Christ!

Now those last two sentences are either right or wrong. The Arminian says they are absolutely wrong and bases his whole scheme of doctrine on the fact that men can be persuaded to come savingly to Christ and can, of their own free will, come to Christ. His whole program of evangelism is based upon the idea that lost people can come to Christ and be saved. But we have sown otherwise and conclude with the words of our Lord Jesus Who said, **"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"** (John 6:44). Jesus Himself declared that no man **"can"** i.e. no man

has the ability to come to Him and be saved. God must draw the lost to Jesus if they ever come! And those who do come in a saving manner to Christ have been drawn by the Father and these will be raised up at the last day.

So where does that put you and me? In light of these verses (and others which we could cite) we ought to examine ourselves as to whether or not we have truly been drawn by the Father to Christ. **"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"** (II Cor. 13:5). Trust not in your faith, your coming to the front, your baptism, or all your self improvements! You are unable to do anything to please God or secure for yourself His salvation. Your only hope is in God and that He be pleased to draw you to His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Take your place as a helpless and hopeless sinner before a Holy God and cast yourself upon His free grace as your only hope of salvation!



What Grace Teaches

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is dedicated to bringing glory to God through holy living. When a person has truly been saved by God's grace you will not find them making light of or justifying sin as the Antinomian does. Those who have been touched by God's grace will not be guilty of **"...turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness."** (Jude 4), rather they will be found echoing the sentiments of Paul who said: **"For I delight in the law of God after the inward man"** (Rom. 7:22). Those who contend that the grace of God is magnified the more they sin are sadly deluded and deceived by the disease of Antinomianism. Real grace is magnified when its recipients have a testimony marked by being **"zealous of good works"** (Titus 2:14).

GOD'S GRACE IS INTERNATIONAL IN SCOPE (Titus 2:11)

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men."

1. Prior to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and even during His earthly ministry, the grace of God was confined mainly to the Jewish race. The descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were singularly chosen and favored by God as Deuteronomy 7:6-8a declares: **"For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But**

because the LORD loved you. . ." As you read the Old Testament you will find few accounts involving the salvation of Gentiles. In fact, the Jews were so accustomed to their favored status, they came to believe that God's saving grace was confined to their race. They regarded Gentiles as unclean dogs and reprobates. They ignored prophecies that proclaimed God's grace would one day extend to the Gentile nations through Jesus Christ such as Isaiah 42:6-7 which declares: **"I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house."** It is for this reason that God inspired the writers of the New Testament to use words such as **"all," "every,"** and **"world"** to express the fact that Christ's redemptive work was not limited to one race of people, but extended to the elect who are redeemed: **"...out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation"** (Rev. 5:9). Thus, Christ's redemptive work and God's saving grace are not universal because they do not extend to all men without exception. Rather it is international in scope extending to all kinds of men throughout the world regardless of race, culture, or creed. When this principle is clearly understood it at once destroys the unscriptural notions of universal salvation and its twin heresy, universal atonement.

2. Our text makes it clear that the salvation of God's elect proceeds from the grace of God. This implies that God's purpose of grace was formed before any man actually experienced salvation. This truth is beautifully set forth in II Timothy 1:9 which declares: **"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."** God's purpose of grace did not stop with the decree of unconditional election, but also included the sacrificial work of Jesus Christ who was sent to die in the stead of those whom the Father

had chosen. God's eternal love for His people was demonstrated by sending His only begotten Son to die in their stead and secure their redemption through the shedding of His precious blood. Romans 5:8-9 declares: **"But God commendeth his love toward us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him."** In time, those who are chosen by the Father, and redeemed by the Son are also born of the Spirit in regeneration enabling them to repent and believe the Gospel. Thus, the entire machinery of salvation, from beginning to end, is all of God's sovereign grace apart from the works of man.

3. God's saving grace must be brought to man because by nature he is unable and unwilling to receive it. Every faculty of man has been defiled and spiritually deadened to the things of God. Carnal, unregenerate, spiritually blinded man, if left to himself, will always reject the Gospel of Christ and continue on in rebellion against the righteous government of God. Romans 8:7-8 declares: **"Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."** Yet, God in His marvelous, transforming grace makes salvation in Christ appear to man through the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit who enlightens the eyes, changes the will, and enables the sinner to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. This revelation of saving grace is aptly described in II Corinthians 4:6 which declares: **"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."**

4. The fact that God's grace is international in scope is bolstered by the fact that Jesus Christ commissioned His church to preach the **"Gospel of the grace of God"** (Acts 20:24), to **"every creature"** (Mark 16:15), **"among all nations"** (Luke 24:47). God's grace is not limited to one race of people. He has His elect scattered throughout all the nations of the world. He is pleased to use the international declaration of the Gospel message to call and confirm the elect in salvation (II Thess. 2:13-14). It is in this sense we must understand the words **"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men."** God's salvation is not universal, it is not brought to and experienced by all men without exception. Rather it is international, meaning that it is brought to and experienced by **"the children of God that were scattered abroad"** (John 11:51) throughout all nations.

GOD'S GRACE LEADS TO SANCTIFIED LIVING (Titus 2:12)
"Teaching us that, denying ungod-

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IS THIS THE END OF A GOOD THING?

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IS THIS THE END OF A GOOD THING?

What Grace Teaches

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liness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."

1. When the amazing grace of God is brought in power to the heart of a sinner his life is forever changed. Where once he loved sin and the ways of the world, now his affections are drawn to Jesus Christ. Where once his heart craved sinful pleasures, now he is convicted by even the thought of such unlawful desires. Where once he lived to please himself, now his innermost desire is to please God. Where once he took delight in the company of the ungodly, now he desires to separate from them to walk in sweet fellowship with the saints of God. Where once he despised the worship of God, viewing it as boring and unnecessary, now he relishes every opportunity to assemble in the name of Christ to hear His Word preached and the songs of Zion sung. These are just some of the marks of inward sanctification of one who has truly ". . . **tasted that the Lord is gracious**" (I Pet. 2:3). II Corinthians 5:17 declares: "**Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.**" The fruit of God's grace is a sanctified life that is characterized in a greater or lesser degree by a desire to please the Lord. A genuine experience of God's saving grace always results in sanctified living marked by good works. Ephesians 2:8-10 illustrates the inseparable correlation between saving faith and sanctified living: "**For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.**"

2. The essence of sanctification is expressed in Titus 2:12. It is not only a separation from that which is sinful and evil, it is also the pursuit of that which is holy and godly. Sanctification consists of a negative as well as a positive, of being set apart from sin and being consecrated to God. It is a two-sided process whereby we are becoming less and less like our old, sinful self, and more and more like the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a lifelong, progressive, transformation process performed by the Holy Spirit in the life of God's elect as described in II Corinthians 3:17-18 which states: "**Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.**"

3. The negative side of sanctification consists of ". . . **denying ungodliness and**

worldly lusts" meaning that the believer is to engage in a conscious, purposeful action of denying himself from engaging in that which is contrary to God and His laws. Rather than embracing the pleasures of sin, the believer is called upon to abhor and detest everything which is unholy and unlawful in the sight of God. We are not only called upon to abstain from the practice of sin, we are also to crucify the desire to sin within our old nature. Romans 6:12-13 describes our duty: "**Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.**" In order to carry this out we must actively, daily, and purposefully obey the command of I John 2:15-16 which states: "**Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.**"

I agree with the comment of Matthew Henry who wrote:

"Put away ungodliness and irreligion, all unbelief, neglect or disesteem of the Divine Being, not loving, nor fearing, nor trusting in Him, nor obeying Him as we should, neglecting His ordinances, slighting His worship, profaning His name or day. Thus deny ungodliness (hate and put it away); and worldly lusts, all corrupt and vicious desires and affections that prevail in worldly men. . . all sensuality and filthiness, covetous desires and ambition, seeking and valuing more the praise of men than of God; put away all these."

4. The positive side of sanctification consists of living ". . . **soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.**" This means that God's grace teaches the people of God to replace that which is sinful in their lives with that which is pleasing to God. To live soberly means to act sensibly, being controlled in our thinking and actions by the Spirit and the Word of God. To live righteously means to live according to the precepts set forth in God's law and exemplified in the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. To live godly, means to conform our thoughts, words, and actions to God's ways, living as though we are truly God's children as Philippians 2:14-16a declares: "**Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life. . ."**

Hezekiah Harvey summed up the believer's threefold responsibility thusly:

"In these three words the language, perhaps without intending to define strictly, points out the three chief lines of human duty: first, the duty we owe ourselves, in maintaining a well-balanced mind, a self-governed, self regulated spirit and life; second, the duty we owe to our fellow man, in a life of truth and justice and equity toward them; and third, the duty we owe God, in a life of piety, supremely devoted to Him. This is the moral goal of Christian living, the grand end the Gospel seeks to reach in its teaching and discipline. . . Three words express the whole of Christianity: to be strict toward oneself, just to one's neighbor, and pious toward God. If thou livest thus, dear Christian, thou livest right."

GOD'S GRACE TEACHES US TO LOOK FOR THE IMMINENT RETURN OF JESUS CHRIST (Titus 2:13)

"**Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.**"

1. The very last words spoken by Christ in the New Testament are recorded in Revelation 22:20 which states: "**He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen.**" The response of the ready believer who is anxiously anticipating this glorious day is also recorded "**Even so come, Lord Jesus.**" Those who have experienced God's grace are taught to earnestly and diligently look for the imminent return of the Lord Jesus Christ. We don't know the day or the hour of the Lord's return but we should be found obeying the command of Christ who said: "**And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man**" (Luke 21:34-36).

2. The object of our hope is also the object of our faith, the person of the Lord Jesus Christ who is identified as ". . . **that blessed hope.**" The reason why the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is referred to as the blessed hope of the believer is because it will mark the culmination of Christ's redemptive work when the believer will be completely conformed to the glorious image of the Son of God. At the present time we are justified, meaning we have been delivered from the penalty of sin. We are also being sanctified, meaning that we are progressively being delivered from the power of sin. But when Jesus comes again we will be glorified, meaning we will be delivered from the presence of sin. The transformation the believer will undergo when Jesus comes again is described in Philippians 3:20-21: "**For**

our conversation is in heaven; from whence 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." Oh, blessed day of complete and absolute freedom from sin that yet awaits the true believer in Jesus Christ. Gone forever will be the desire of sin and the defects that go along with it. When Jesus comes again we will also be freed from all pain, sorrow, suffering, heartache, and disappointment. We will be able to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness in the fullest sense of the word. There will be no fleshly hindrances to bar our fellowship with the One who is Altogether Lovely. How our hearts should daily beat in holy anticipation for the coming of the Lord when the prophecy spoken of by Paul will come to fruition: "**Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality**" (I Cor. 15:51-53).

John Gill wrote:

"Now this the Gospel directs, and instructs believers to look for, to love, to hasten to, most earnestly desire, and yet patiently wait for, most firmly believing that it will be: and this the saints have reason to look for, with longing desire and affection, and with pleasure, since it will be not only glorious in itself, but advantageous to them; they'll then be glorified with Christ, and be for ever with Him."

3. When the importance of consistently looking for the coming of the Lord on a day to day basis is understood and practiced by believers their lives will be marked by greater growth in grace and holiness. As we anticipate the coming of the Lord we will find ourselves being more careful not to offend the Lord along with a more fervent desire to please Him in all that we do. I John 3:2-3 describes the effects produced by maintaining an interest in the blessed hope: "**Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.**"

4. Our looking by faith for the coming of Christ is one day going to be realized when our eyes will behold ". . . **the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.**" All of the trials, difficulties, hardships, and struggles that we have endured in this life will all disappear with just one glimpse of our

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glorified Lord. What a privilege it will be for us to behold the One who loved us, suffered in our stead, and poured out His precious life's blood so that we can enjoy the glories of Heaven! How I long for that day when my faith shall turn to sight, when my bondage in the flesh shall be turned into perfect liberty, when my joy shall be complete. Notice also that Jesus is referred to as God in our text. The Father is never said to appear to men, neither is the Holy Spirit, but the Divine Son of God, the One who took upon Himself a human nature, is the person of the sacred Trinity that believer's will behold throughout eternity. Our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, is truly **"God manifest in the flesh."**

GOD'S GRACE TEACHES THE PURPOSE

OF CHRIST'S DEATH (Titus 2:14)
"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

1. This verse is perhaps one of the clearest declarations that Jesus Christ willingly and voluntarily offered Himself as a vicarious substitute for a definite, particular people. It is obvious from the context of the epistle that Paul's use of the personal pronoun **"us"** refers to the objects of Christ's redemptive work who are elsewhere identified as **"God's elect"** (1:2); **"the pure"** (1:15); those that **"adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things"** (2:10); those who are presently undergoing the work of sanctification (2:12); and who are found faithfully **"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ"** (2:13). None of these descriptions are characteristic of those who die in unbelief, hence we may safely conclude that Jesus gave Himself only for the elect who in time come to a genuine, saving knowledge of Him. Hence God's grace teaches us that Christ's sacrifice on the cross was for a particular, chosen people who are literally redeemed, purified, and characterized by being zealous of good works. The universal atonement theory, which is embraced by so many in our day, dishonors and degrades the grace of God. Where is the grace of God found in a redemption that does not actually redeem a multitude of people for whom it was supposedly intended? How is God's grace magnified in the teaching that Christ died for the sins of all men, and yet a large majority of those men wind up in Hell suffering for the very sins Christ was supposed to have died for? These are the logical and yet strange results of the universal atonement theory!

2. God's grace teaches us that **"the great God and our Saviour Jesus**

Christ. . .gave himself for us" meaning that Jesus willingly and voluntarily came from the heights of Heaven to die and offer Himself as a sacrifice upon the cross of Calvary for a multitude of people who did not in any way merit such love. Should not our heart's tremble at the thought that the very God of glory was willing to unite Himself with human nature and then suffer the penalty of justice as a righteous substitute in our stead? The punishment that we justly deserved was graciously taken by Him. The sins that we should have suffered an eternity in Hell for were born and put away by Christ. I Peter 3:18 declares: **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit."** What an amazing display of love and grace is expressed in the language **"Who gave himself for us"**! No wonder Paul, prompted and inspired by the Spirit, wrote of Christ: **"who loved me, and gave himself for me"** (Gal. 2:20).

3. The grace of God also teaches that the express purpose of Christ's death actually and literally was so **"that he might redeem us from all iniquity."** The sacrifice and bloodshedding of Jesus Christ actually accomplished the redemption of those for whom it was intended. To redeem means to free someone by the payment of an acceptable ransom price. Christ purchased the elect with the ransom price of His own precious blood, freeing them from the guilt, condemnation, and penalty of sin. He paid our entire sin debt owed to the strict justice of the law of God by **"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross"** (Col. 2:14). We may safely deduce that those who die in their sins were not redeemed from all iniquity, hence Jesus did not give Himself for them. Christ's redemptive work was a complete success according to our text. Everyone He came to give Himself for, and redeem from all iniquity actually and literally experience the freedom purchased for them by the blood of the Son of God. Jesus did not try to redeem anyone. He gave the exact payment God's justice required to satisfy the penalty of the law, for a definite number of people, who in time are literally brought into a right relationship with God. Galatians 1:4 expresses the purpose of Christ's redemptive work in a powerful manner: **"Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father."**

4. The results produced by Christ's redemptive work on behalf of the elect are clearly stated. Jesus did not merely die in order to free us from sin's penalty, but also to **"purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."** Christ

died to purify as well as pardon His people. He died to purchase them as His own special possession to be indwelt and controlled by the Holy Spirit. I Peter 2:9 describes God's special people and the reason why they are given such titles of honor by stating: **"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praise of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."** The way in which God's people demonstrate that they are Christ's purchased possession and a peculiar people who are set apart for Him is by actively being **"zealous of good works."** Those who have been redeemed by the blood of

Christ should be actively and earnestly engaged in obedience to the commands of God through the performance of good works that are pleasing and acceptable to God. Jesus commanded the children of God to **"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. . . Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect"** (Matt. 5:16, 48). These are the things which God's grace teaches! May God give us grace to accept His teachings and practice them with every fiber of our being!



From the Pen of a Country Preacher

Milburn R. Cockrell
 (1941 - 2002)



Christ Our Mediator Part One

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (I Tim. 2:5).

This verse relates some of the most important subjects of revelation. These words are the very essence of the gospel. It is to be doubted if there is any subject of greater importance than the mediation of Jesus Christ. No one should be satisfied with a limited understanding of this all-essential doctrine. It is a truth inseparably connected with the things pertaining to our everlasting peace and pardon. It is the cardinal pillar of redemption, the very keystone of the arch of Christianity.

A MEDIATOR DEFINED

A mediator is a person who mediates. Meditation is the work of one who reconciles persons at variance with each other. Sin made a quarrel between God and man. There is no fellowship between a holy God and a sinful man. There cannot be more direct antagonism than that between holiness and sin. Man cannot be restored to open friendship to God without a mediator.

Once in Eden man was made in the moral image and likeness of God. But sin entered into man and separated him from God, and man became the enemy of God (Jas. 4:4). God was offended because His law was broken. Since the fall man cannot draw near to God by a direct or independent approach. Every man from Adam on down has had sins of his own to answer for. These sins keep him at an inaccessible distance from God. There is a great gulf between man and God. Through Christ as the only mediator the vilest of sinners may draw nigh and receive mercy which has met with truth and peace which is in alliance

with righteousness.

CHRIST A MEDIATOR BY OFFICE

God would have been perfectly just and righteous if He allowed all the race of Adam to perish in their sins. God was not under obligation to provide man with a mediator. He saw fit to do so only out of His pure, free, sovereign grace. When God alone inhabited eternity there was held an everlasting council of the three Divine Persons concerning the redemption of the elect (Acts 20:27; Rom. 11:34; I Cor. 2:6; Eph. 3:10-11). In this council Christ was chosen to be the mediator of the covenant of redemption. The Father said to Christ: **"Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased"** (Matt. 12:18; cf. Isa. 42:1). To the greater David He declared: **"I have made a covenant with my chosen"** (Ps. 89:3) and **"I have exalted one chosen out of the people"** (Ps. 89:19). The First Person in the Godhead gave the Second Person **"for a covenant of the people"** (Isa. 49:8). The people to be represented by Him were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4) and given grace in Him (II Tim. 1:9).

Those chosen in Christ were viewed by God as estranged from Him by sin and transgression. The thought of reconciliation originally arose in the heart of God, the offended party. II Corinthians 5:18-19 says: **"And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ. . . To wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. . ."** Again we are told in I Corinthians 8:6: **"But to us there**

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Christ Our Mediator

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is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things. . ." (cf. Rom. 11:36).

The Father consulted the Son in the scheme and method of reconciling His elect. A council of peace was held between the Lord of hosts and the man who is the Branch (Zech. 6:13). In this council of peace Christ agreed to be the peacemaker, or mediator. He was **"set up from everlasting"** (Prov. 8:23) to perform this work in the covenant of redemption. He was **"foreordained to be a propitiation"** for our sins (Rom. 3:25; cf. I Pet. 1:20). Hebrews 8:6 says of Christ: **"...he is the mediator of a better covenant. . ."** Again in Hebrews 9:15 it is written: **"And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament. . ."** Still again in Hebrews 12:24 I read: **"And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant. . ."** Thus we see Christ is a mediator by office, transacting matters between God and man.

CHRIST A MEDIATOR BY NATURE

In human affairs men intercede between men. In every such case the mediator possesses the nature of each party. Seeing God and man are parties at variance, the mediator must have a relation to both which is exemplified only in the person of Christ. In Him the Divine and human elements are united. Christ is so Divine that He can reach His hand up to God the Father and vindicate the throne of Heaven. But He is so human He can reach down to man upon earth and raise him from his wretchedness and ruin. Christ alone possesses the necessary mediatorial qualifications. Thus Christ is a mediator by nature, partaking of the human and Divine natures.

The human nature of Christ was not assumed in the before-time covenant. This assumption was not necessary to His being the mediator of the covenant. It was enough that He agreed to be the mediator and in time became a man. Some parts of His mediatorial work did not require His enfleshment. He could draw nigh to God and treat of the terms peace and pardon when He possessed only the Divine nature. But His sufferings and death required the actual assumption of a human nature.

THE SENSE IN WHICH HE IS THE MEDIATOR

In the Old Testament Moses stood between God and the people of Israel (Ex. 32:32; 20:21; Deut. 5:5; Gal. 3:19). He received the Divine oracles and delivered them to Israel. Christ is the revealer of God (John 1:18) and the dispenser of the covenant of grace in several periods of time before His incarnation. But this work more properly belongs to Him as **"the messenger of the covenant"** (Mal. 3:1) than the mediator of it. Thus Christ

is a mediator in a greater sense than Moses ever was.

Christ agreed to be a mediator of reconciliation. It was His work to bring together the two parties at variance and to reconcile them to each other. He was not only to reconcile God to man, but man to God. **"Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one"** (Ga. 3:20). God is the offended party, and the mediator reconciled God to man by the satisfaction He made to His holy law and justice. But Christ also is to reconcile man unto God. Arminians teach that man must reconcile himself to God. But it is the work of the mediator to bring poor sinners to accept the terms of peace agreed on in order to their interest in the covenant. Christ must send the Holy Spirit to change the sinner's heart and bring him into the bond of the covenant. To declare it is in the power of man's free will to lay hold on the covenant robs Christ of His work of mediation and attempts to remove the crown of everlasting glory from His head!

Christ acted the part of a mediator by proposing that the Father make satisfaction for offense committed by man and so appease injured justice. Christ is a mediator of reconciliation in a way of satisfaction. He **"appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself"** (Heb. 9:26). He is in this sense a mediator of the covenant of redemption. Colossians 1:21 reads: **"And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled."**

Christ is not a mediator for fallen angels who are not spared by Divine justice (II Pet. 2:4). The elect angels need no mediator. They are admitted into God's presence without one, having never sinned. Only fallen man can be reconciled to God, and he alone has Christ as his mediator.

Man in his unfallen state had no need of a mediator. Where there is no war there is no need of peace. In the apostasy of the race there came into being a terrible breach between God and man, and hence the necessity of a mediator. Thus the elect are considered as fallen creatures who need God's mercy. This is why Christ became a mediator of reconciliation and satisfaction. God foresaw us like an unwanted child when He entered into a holy covenant with His own Son. **"And as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all. None eye pitied thee, to do any of these unto thee, to have compassion upon thee; but thou wast cast out in the open field, to the loathing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born. . . Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee. . . and**

entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becomest mine" (Ezek. 16:4-5, 8).

THE PERSON OF THE MEDIATOR

Ancient heretics and modern cultists take great pleasure in attacking the person of Christ. They either deny His divinity or humanity. First, there are those who say Jesus Christ never existed prior to His birth, and that He stands only at the head of the created servants. This is Socinian doctrine, and it leaves us without a mediator.

Second, there are those who teach that Christ is the highest and firstborn of every creature. They say He was made before all worlds, and therefore is more glorious than any of the angels of God. They say that He is no more than a created being. This is Arminianism, and it robs us of a qualified mediator.

Third, there are those who teach there is but one person in the Godhead. They hold that He descended into the virgin, became a Son, and accomplished our salvation, then diffused Himself on the apostles in tongues of fire, and was thus denominated the Holy Spirit. This is Sabellianism, and it sets aside all possibilities of any kind of a mediator.

Four, there are those who teach there is one person only in the Godhead--Jesus Christ. They say Christ came into the world in His human nature, by making it one with the Divine, and that human nature itself is now divine. This is Swedenborgianism and deprives us of a competent mediator.

The Bible teaches a doctrine respecting the person of Christ essentially distinct from each and all of these. In the Godhead there are three Divine persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The First Person sent the second Person, who clothed Himself with our nature and became the God-man in one person. He is not part man and part God. He is all man and all God. It was this Second Person, or Middle Person, who became our mediator. By the union of the two natures, He is concerned with God's glory and man's salvation.

HE MUST BE A MAN

It was necessary that the mediator be a man. Our text stressed this truth: **"...the man Christ Jesus."** He assumed a true body and a reasonable soul that He might be related to those He was to redeem.

First, He must have the nature of those for whom He would mediate and redeem. Jesus Christ had to become our kinsman, our Goel, so as to have the right to redeem us according to the law (Lev. 25:48-49). Reconciliation for sin must be made in the same nature which sinned. Jesus Christ of all the kindred was the only one who was free and able to pay a ransom for us. He is **"the firstborn among many brethren"** (Rom. 8:29). **"And the Word was made flesh"** (John 1:14). Romans 8:3 speaks of **"God**

sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh." Hebrews 2:14 declares: **"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same. . ."**

Second, the mediator must be a man to be capable of obeying the law which man had broken by sin. As God He could not be subject to the law nor yield obedience to it. So He had to become a man in order to work out a righteousness in the same nature that sinned. Man was obligated to keep the law perfectly, and he must do this if he was to be justified before God, for God will not clear the guilty (Ex. 34:7). The covenant did not require that this be done by every sinner, but in their representative. Adam made all his seed sinners. Even so, Christ made all His seed righteous. **"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous"** (Rom. 5:19).

Christ was made of a woman so that He might be under the law and yield obedience to it: **"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law"** (Gal. 4:4). The language implies that He was originally above law. He was never under it till made under it. How was it possible for Him to be made under it? Because He had the right of self-disposal. There was no coercion in this matter. To compel an innocent party to suffer for the guilty would violate every principle of propriety and justice, but our mediator suffered voluntarily. He did so in the exercise of His right of self-disposal--a right vital to His mediatorial work.

The law dispensation ended with the advent of Christ (Luke 16:16; Mark 1:1). One mediator came to fulfill the law (Matt. 5:17). During the days of His flesh He magnified the law and made it honorable (Isa. 42:21). His perfect obedience was essential for the justification of the sinner before God: **"For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth"** (Rom. 10:4).

Third, the mediator must be a man to be capable of suffering death. The law required that man die to satisfy offended justice (Gen. 2:17; Ezek. 18:4). A sacrifice for sin was to be offered. Therefore, it was necessary that Christ should have somewhat to offer, even a true body and a reasonable soul. These He did offer in the fullness of time. Peace was made by His blood and reconciliation by His suffering death. God could not die. Therefore Christ had to assume a nature capable of shedding blood and of suffering death. Without this nature He could not have been made sin and a curse for men as the law required.

The Scriptures speak plainly on this. The Captain of our salvation was made

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Christ Our Mediator

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“perfect through sufferings” (Heb. 2:10). Hebrews 2:14-15 says: **“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.”** Hebrews 8:3 tells us: **“For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat to offer.”** Still again in Hebrews 9:15: **“And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.”**

Fourth, it was required that the mediator be a man so as to be able to sympathize with men. Christ must have a fellow-feeling with His people. He must be capable of sympathizing with them in their temptations, trials, and troubles. By assuming their nature He would desire to succor and relieve them. **“Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted”** (Heb. 2:17-18). **“For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin”** (Heb. 4:15).

Fifth, it was necessary that He should be a perfectly holy man, without spot or sin. Personal holiness was essential to His mediatorship. He was born of a virgin to be free of original sin and so as not to inherit a sinful nature. A sinful being could not mediate between a holy God and sinful man. The purity of Christ's character was put to the severest test. Satan tempted Him in all points (Heb. 4:15) and found Him to be free from all sin original and actual. He was made **“in the likeness of sinful flesh”** (Rom. 8:3), but He was never in Himself sinful flesh. He **“bear the sins of many”** (Heb. 9:28), but He never had any sins of His own. He retained His sinless integrity to the last, asking His enemies: **“Which of you convinceth me of sin?”** (John 8:46). When Christ died He suffered **“the jut for the unjust”** (I Peter 3:18).

The sinlessness of our mediator is often declared in the Bible. **“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin. . .”** (II Cor. 5:21). The old prophet wrote of Him: **“ . . . he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his**

mouth” (Isa. 53:9). He **“was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin”** (Heb. 4:15). Hebrews 7:26 says: **“For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.”** Hebrews 9:14 tells us that He **“offered himself without spot to God.”** Peter declared of Christ: **“Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth”** (I Peter 2:22). John informed us: **“And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin”** (I John 3:5).

In Part II I want to show how that Christ must be God to be a qualified mediator. My friend, Christ is our only mediator. There is no other. Mary cannot help us. Neither can some human priest with his shirt on backwards. There is no help for the guilty sinner but the man Christ Jesus. Do you know Him as your Savior? Are you trusting in His precious blood? Have you repented of your sins? Oh, my friend, repent and believe the gospel (Mark 1:15).

(Continued in next issue)



Not Willing That

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particularly, specially, gloriously---right time.

Our text verse is one that I lead folk to, in order to find out what they truly believe our God is. What does it mean, when the Holy Spirit breathed upon Peter and caused him to write that the Lord is not slack, but rather is **“longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance”**? I warn you before you answer---I am listening closely. I am waiting for the only correct response. Like many Scriptures, the passage here makes a statement about the very nature of God and His emotions.

THE EMOTIONS OF GOD

“Does God have emotions?” you ask. Certainly! **“Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness”** (Ps. 45:7). **“ . . . and it grieved him at his heart”** (Gen. 6:6). Further, here in our text we can note that God “suffers” long. Also, that He “desires” the joy of salvation through repentance!

So, is that what this verse is speaking about? The emotions of God? Some believe so, and that is actually where the erroneous interpretation of this verse begins. Because, in reality, the passage is drawing up on an easel board for us the sacred, very nature of God Himself! If we miss that fact, we will blithely and carelessly read this verse as if our loving God desires the best for all of mankind, and would never (of Himself) allow any to perish, but if He had it His way, they would all come to repentance. And that would be dead wrong. But, at the least,

by the reading of this particular verse we now have it out in the open! We now have a more complete understanding of the God that you have consciously, or unconsciously, established in your mind! And that's a good starting point!

Is this your understanding of God? Does God desire to save some or all, but cannot? **“ . . . Not willing that any should perish. . .”** means that He would not have any of the sons and daughters of Adam to be lost? **“Not willing that any. . .”** die without repentance and go to Hell? Is this hopeful God the One you serve? Please ponder seriously, beloved reader, before answering this question. Can your God fail?

If that is the conclusion you have stumbled into from the wording of this passage, then isn't it good that we read this verse? Now, please don't twist things around and dismiss this verse. It holds no water for the theory that God is not failing, just the people He desires to save, are failing. Eh, what's that? He's done all He can, but He can't help it if the sinner won't listen? It's not His fault? You see, this is what the text brings into stark focus---what kind of God do you have?

What this verse is actually saying is that God's promise is longsuffering to **“us-ward”** (also known as the **“Elect according to the foreknowledge of God”** as Peter calls the recipients of his epistle in I Peter 1:2), and **“to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ”** in the current epistle (II Pet. 1:1). So, if Peter and the Holy Spirit are both addressing the elect sheep of God, it makes perfect and holy sense to see that God is not willing that any of His sheep will perish and that every single one of them will come to repentance and thereby salvation and eternal life!

We could go on with this correct understanding of this verse, but what I wanted to spend some time on in this article was the thought processes. The mindset and preconceived notions that cause so many to make the very serious blunder when considering II Peter 3:9 that we've just discerned---thinking that God could fail! What we need are thought processes that will make this and other similar verses in the Bible very easy to understand and perhaps will shine the light of truth to steer us more clearly on otherwise difficult passages. You see, it's the thought processes that steered us wrong back there. We thought of the verse in light of our own emotions and interpreted it without even considering that God's nature is markedly different from ours.

What do you think of when I type, God “desires” a certain thing? or God “wants” a certain item? If we're not careful, we will slip into a line of logic that would precipitate answers such as “Well, that means He would like to have that,”

or “He means that He would be happy to get such an item.” Beloved reader, if God desires a thing, or wants a certain item---He gets them. No ifs, ands, or buts!

Let's change track for a second. Do you think Jesus ever had to choose the lesser of two evils in His earthly life? If He had, it would have still been evil, and it would have been sin. So, No! Every choice God makes is always holy. God's choices, wants, and desires are holy, not by emotive quality, beloved reader, but by nature! **“God, that cannot lie”** (Tit. 1:2) is not merely speaking of a desire that God has innately within Himself that abhors lying and thereby will do all in His power to avoid lying. The Apostle Paul uses the word “can” which speaks of ability and is telling us that God cannot lie, because His nature so binds Him! Because of His holy nature, God cannot be tempted to lie, cannot desire to tell a fib, cannot even fathom what it would feel like to tell a lie!

So a more precise statement to understand II Peter 3:9 is to say that God ordains (rather than desires or is willing) that none should perish and all shall come to repentance! Both are equally true, and the KJV word used is properly more descriptive, using God's perfect emotions to show the depth of the promise kept by God's inviolable nature! In light of God's nature, however, we must understand that it is indistinguishable in effect to say that God desires something as it would be to say God decrees something! Or further in case of point, that if God is “not willing” for something to happen---it won't happen! Amen?

Look at this graduating list of words:

God desires	God allows
God wants	God permits
God wills	God ordains
God chooses	God decrees

Each and every one of these emotive descriptions is equally synonymous in the mind of God! Why do I say that? Because the answer is rooted in something deeper in the nature of God---His immutability!

THE IMMUTABILITY OF GOD

Let's succinctly define the immutability of God as the fact that the essential nature of God disallows change. He is unchanging? Not good enough---the rank FreeWiller defines it that way, too. Again, I think we need to go a little bit deeper in our understanding. He is unable to change, would be better. Because, again, we are not talking about emotional attributes or variable wants and hopes of New Year's resolutions---we're testifying concerning the very nature of God. When the Apostle John writes that **“God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him”** (I John 4:16), he is not merely saying that God is a loving God-

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. From John 6:45, please explain what it is that we must learn of the Father in order to come to Christ? - Michigan

Mike DeWitt Sr.
PO Box 950
Springfield, OR 97477

Pastor
Parkway Landmark
Baptist Church
PO Box 950
Springfield, OR 97477



"It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (John 6:45).

First of all we need to find out who is the all that is taught of God. An examination of the Scriptures reveals that the all, is those who God gave to our Savior in eternity past, those that are His people He came to save in Matthew 1:21.

Jesus our Savior did not and does not think as we do when it comes to who is saved and who is not saved. Let me explain that statement. Jesus knew who God's elect were and who He was going to die for and who is going to be saved by His vicarious death. The statements of Jesus concerning the all, and every man, and the world when concerned with the salvation of the soul is and only are, those God gave to Him to die for, the Elect, those ordained to eternal life, those who are predestinated to eternal life, and so on.

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (I Cor. 2:14). To be learned of the Father one "must" be one of the Father's saints that have the indwelling Spirit. The lesson that is taught of God to a sinner is that the sinner is just that, a lost sinner in need of the Father's Lamb that takes away the sin of the world. This lesson is learned and taught from the time of new birth to the death of the saint.

"That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them" (Mark 4:12).

"He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them" (John 12:40).

"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of

God, should shine unto them" (II Cor. 4:4).

The Father has learned all the saints by giving them a new heart. We can do nothing to come to Christ unless we have that new heart that only comes from God. We cannot and will not come to Christ until God draws us to Him.

MIKE DEWITT

Tom Ross
6339 County Rd. 15
South Point, OH 45680

Pastor
Mt. Pleasant
Baptist Church
6939 County Rd. 15
Chesapeake, OH 45619



The natural man is incapable of understanding the things of the Spirit of God (I Cor. 2:14). His fleshly nature has polluted his understanding and affections regarding the things of God (Eph. 4:18). As a result the unregenerate man is unable to understand, perceive, or know the power of the Gospel unless God intervenes. Romans 8:6-8 declares: **"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."** Thus, it is impossible for the unsaved, unregenerate, natural, fleshly, carnal man to rise above his depraved Adamic nature and understand the grace of God in Christ.

In John 6:44 Jesus made it clear that unless God intervenes in grace, the natural man will not come to Him in repentance and saving faith. When the Father intervenes in grace, He not only imparts spiritual life through the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit, but also at that very moment imparts spiritual knowledge and wisdom. Those who were once blinded by Satan suddenly learn what they are in the sight of a Holy God, and what they need in the person of Jesus Christ. II Corinthians 4:3-6 describes the powerful knowledge that God imparts to His elect: **"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts,**

to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

I will never forget the day when I was personally taught of God and directed by the Spirit to embrace the power of Christ as revealed in the Gospel. My eyes, which had been blinded by sin and Satan, were suddenly opened to see the glories of a crucified and risen Christ as my blessed Lord and Savior! At that moment the love of God was shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost and I learned to repent of my sins and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. The entire process of learning about God's grace begins in regeneration, is carried on in sanctification, and ultimately consummated in glorification. I Corinthians 1:30 declares: **"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom (regeneration and enlightenment through the Spirit), and righteousness (imputed to the elect in justification through the gift of saving faith), and sanctification (the process carried on by the indwelling Holy Spirit), and redemption"** (the redemption of the body accomplished in glorification). How thankful we should be to be taught of God and to learn of His grace!

TOM ROSS

Raymond F. Bennett
Berach Baptist Mission
271 Gray Road
Ithaca, NY 14850-8761

Missionary of
Berea
Baptist Church
PO Box 39
Mantachie, MS 38855



John 6:45: **It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.**

Let's put the verse in its immediate context. (Verses 43-45) **"Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves. 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. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me."**

The learned Pharisees could not understand and would therefore not accept the teaching about Jesus as the "Bread of Life". They were murmuring and grumbling in view of this hard teaching. **"I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world...Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed"** (Verses 51, 54 and 55).

The world of lost men and women cannot understand the gospel message. We cannot

make it academically clear with the best of our efforts. The evangelist that brags about winning a soul to Christ in 15 minutes flat is a liar! To the lost man the concept of his sins being paid for and removed by the death of another is beyond their comprehension. Much more so the concept of Deity becoming flesh in order to save sinful man! That is the unique thing about Christianity! **"And he is the propitiation (that which appeases) for our sins"** (I John 2:2). The very Deity whom we must appease becomes that appeasement because God could never be appeased any other way! They must be **"taught of God"**!

When Jesus was dealing with Nicodemus He said: **"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things"** (John 3:11-12)? The point is that natural man cannot understand the things of God, even though they are right there before him in black and white. **"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned"** (I Cor. 2:14). Therefore he must be **"taught of God"** as was Peter. **"...Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven"** (Matt. 16:17).

This, by the way, is the reason why all the modern attempts to change the Bible versions, supposedly making them easier to understand, is a spiritual exercise in futility by men who evidently have a problem believing the verbal inspiration of the original autographs or don't really believe the power of the Holy Spirit to teach His own elect the truths they must know.

There is no amount of academic teaching that must be learned in order to come to Christ. We preachers, evangelists and missionaries attempt to teach people the Word of God because **"The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple"** (Ps. 119:130). But only the supernatural teaching by the Holy Spirit, expressed in this verse as **"taught of God"**, can or will bring a person to Christ.

So "what we must learn of the Father in order to come to Christ" is that supernatural spiritual truth that only the Father can teach us, as He did Peter in Matthew 16:17, quoted above. Those in verse 44 whom the Father has drawn, are the **"they"** (v. 45) of whom the prophets have spoken. They have been **"taught of the Father"**. Or to put it another way, the teaching of God referred to in verse 45 is the "drawing" referred to in verse 44.

"Every man therefore that hath heard" (has come under the teaching of the Word of God), **"and hath learned of the Father (i.e.: been granted spiritual life and insight, taught by the Holy Spirit), cometh unto me."** These would be the **"all"** spoken of in John 6:37: **"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."**

RAY BENNETT

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. In II Corinthians 5:14-15 it says that Christ "died for all." You believe that Christ only died for some. How do you explain these verses? - Mississippi

Tom Ross
6339 County Rd. 15
South Point, OH 45680

Pastor
Mt. Pleasant
Baptist Church
6939 County Rd. 15
Chesapeake, OH 45619



It is a fact that Christ died for all "kinds" of men. Jesus did not die for elect Jews only, but also elect Gentiles scattered throughout the world. Revelation 5:9 declares: **"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou was slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."** However, Christ did not die for all men without exception. We know for sure that He did not die for Esau, Pharaoh, or Judas Iscariot. The Scriptures reveal that these men died in their sins to suffer the eternal torments of the Lake of Fire. It is a fact that "all" those who die in their sins will spend eternity in the Lake of Fire. It is unscriptural, unreasonable, and illogical to believe that those whom Christ supposedly loved and died for would suffer for an eternity in the Lake of Fire. Jesus made it quite clear that "all" those that the Father gave Him before the world began in the eternal decree of election will ultimately come to Him in saving faith and would not be cast out. John 6:37 & 39 state: **"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out...And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."** Later Jesus told some unbelieving Pharisees that they would die in their sins. John 8:21 declares: **"...I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come."** The "all" in John 6:37 obviously did not include the unbelieving Pharisees because Jesus plainly told them they would die in their sins. All unbelievers who die in their sins will be cast out into outer darkness (Matt. 7:19-20; 13:42 & 50; Mark 9:44-45; Rev. 20:14-15). We also know that every one of God's elect that Christ did die for will be brought to God in light of I Peter 3:18 which states: **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God..."**

The above paragraph illustrates the fact that the word "all" must be interpreted by its context in Scripture.

The entire chapter of II Corinthians 5 has reference to believers as evidenced by Paul's repeated use of the plural pronouns "we" and "us". Only the elect will be clothed with a glorified body (II Cor. 5:1-4). Only the elect whom Christ died for have the earnest of the Spirit (5:5), walk by faith (5:7), and will stand before the judgment seat of Christ (5:8-10). The love of Christ constrains all believers to reckon themselves dead unto sin and alive in Christ to serve Him. Christ did die for "all" those who come to Him in faith and live for Him. They no longer live unto themselves like the unsaved do because saved people have been bought with the price of the blood of Jesus (I Cor. 6:19-20). In fact, the redeemed are contrasted with the unsaved as those who are new creatures in Christ (II Cor. 5:17).

II Corinthians 5:14-15 states: **"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again."** These verses limit the "all" to include only those who no longer live unto themselves, but rather live a life devoted to the One Who died for them and rose again. This certainly cannot be said of all men without exception. However it can be said of all the elect who are new creatures in Christ.

John Gill, the Baptist expositor, commented on this verse:

"The persons for whom Christ died are all; not every individual of mankind, but all His people, all His sheep... Wherefore this text does not make for the doctrine of general redemption; for it should be observed, that it does not say that Christ died for all men, but for all; and so, agreeably to the Scriptures, may be understood of all the persons mentioned. Moreover, in the latter part of the text it is said, that those for whom Christ died, for them he rose again; He died for no more, nor for others, than those for whom He rose again: now those for whom He rose again, He rose for their justification; wherefore, if Christ rose for the justification of all men, all would be justified, or the end of Christ's resurrection would not be answered; but all men are not, nor will they be justified, some will be condemned; hence it follows that Christ did not rise from the dead for all men, and consequently did not die for all men: besides, the all for whom Christ died, died with Him, and through His death are dead both to

the law and sin; and He died for them, that they might live, not to themselves, but to Him; neither of which are true of all the individuals of mankind: to which may be added, that the context explains the all of such who are in Christ, are new creatures, are reconciled to God, whose trespasses are not imputed to them, for whom Christ was made sin, and who are made the righteousness of God in Him, which cannot be said of all men." (Gill's Expositor Volume 8:788-789).

I like the quote of A.W. Pink who was explaining the usage of the words "world" and "all" as they relate to the redemptive work of Christ:

"What has been said above concerning the signification of the term "world" when used in connection with the objects of God's love or the subjects of Christ's redemption, applies with equal force and pertinency to the word "all". That Christ gave Himself a ransom for all without distinction of nationality, social status, age or sex, is blessedly true; but to say that He died in the stead of "all" without exception cannot be maintained without involving the most palpable absurdities and contradictions. Nor is there anything elsewhere in Scripture which obliges us to give to "all" in this and similar verses an absolute and unlimited meaning." (The Atonement, pp. 261-262).

TOM ROSS

Raymond F. Bennett
Berach Baptist Mission
271 Gray Road
Ithaca, NY 14850-8761

Missionary of
Berea
Baptist Church
PO Box 39
Mantachie, MS 38855



The word "all", in English, Greek or Hebrew, has a wide scope of meaning. The breadth of that scope must be determined by context and logic. For instance, when your 13-year old child wants to do something that is popular in his or her circles they say, "Everybody is doing it." Of course you realize that "everybody" is really a pretty small clique. Here are a few biblical examples of where "all" has an obviously limited scope.

Luke 2: 1: **"And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed."** Obviously "all the world" is confined to that portion of the world under Roman control. The term "then known world" doesn't apply because Caesar certainly knew there was world beyond the boundaries of the Roman Empire.

John 12:19: **"The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him."** Here again the "all inclusiveness" which the Pharisees were trying to imply was merely an exaggerated term for a very small

segment of the world.

Mark 1:37: **"And when they had found him, they said unto him, All men seek for thee."** Pure common sense understands the limited scope of "all men".

Logically then, "all" in the questioned verse can only be stretched to some unlimited scope in the mind of someone trying to prove an argumentative point. If you were to enter my house you would observe a large number of books. I would tell you, "I paid for all the books." It would never enter into your mind that I paid for all the books in the bookstore or the world. You would notice the nice pair of boots I'm wearing. When I went to the shoe store I paid for "that" pair of boots only. I did not pay for more boots in case someone might want a pair later.

On the other hand, only the shoes and boots in my closet - the ones I paid for - are mine. If there had been an overnight guest and he had happened to leave his boots behind, they might be in my closet but they would be "his" boots, not mine. If I had paid for them they would be mine, but I didn't pay for them. That can be seen in John 10:3-4. **"...He calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice."** (Italics for emphasis RB) The clear implication is that there were other sheep than His own in the fold, which of course stands for the world.

In the Passover there were to be no "leftovers of the lamb"! (Ex. 12:4 and 10). What a picture of Particular Redemption! Christ did not waste any blood on the cross! Just as the Hebrews were to only get as much lamb as they needed for the number of the household, Christ only paid the price for His elect.

There is another good picture for us in our legal affairs today. After a sentence has been served; after the price has been paid, no one else can be made to serve the same sentence or pay the same price. It is called "double jeopardy." If Christ paid the price for all men's sin when He died on the cross, then all men are saved. To punish them again would be spiritual double jeopardy.

Praise God for that first portion of John 6:37 which is too often left off! **"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me"** God has a people and He will save all of His people! The "all" here is also limited in scope. It's **"All that the Father giveth me."** And it is the assurance (four times in that short discourse) that He will raise them up in the last day.

The Father didn't give some to the Son that won't come! There won't be any that the Father gave Him whom He will not raise up in the last day!

A so-called evangelist once said that "hell stands as a monument to all whom

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Forum #2

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Christ died for but God didn't save." **WHAT HORRIBLE BLASPHEMY!** God will save all for whom Christ died and Christ died for all whom He will save!

Our job is to just faithfully plant the seed and let God give the increase. (1 Cor. 3:6)

RAY BENNETT



Mike DeWitt Sr.
PO Box 950
Springfield, OR 97477

Pastor
Parkway Landmark
Baptist Church
PO Box 950
Springfield, OR 97477

"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (II Cor. 5:14-15).

Obviously the "all" are those that Christ died for. I suggest that we look at this from another angle... for whom did Christ arise from the grave? My explaining will never change anybody's mind unless God blesses it with His grace.

The elect of God are new creatures; old things have passed away and all things are become new. A new life comes with new friends, a new way of living, speaking, a new citizenship.

Christ's resurrection secured, for the elect, justification. Those who are justified by Christ are dead to the former life and ways before salvation.

Obviously the "all" cannot be all mankind for we see that all are not living to please God, yet are living to please themselves. This is seen even in those that profess salvation. Can the elect of God stop serving God and serve the flesh and lose the salvation that Jesus secured? **"God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein"** (Rom. 6:2).

I will close with the words of our Savior when He prayed to the Father for His elect. **"And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst**

send me. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world" (John 17:5-24).

MIKE DEWITT



Not Willing That

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--"but that God 'is' love!" Conversely, love is God! God doesn't do loving things and thereby is called love. He is love and thereby does loving things! It's only natural for Him to be loving; He is love. It would in fact be unnatural for Him not to love! It would in fact be impossible for Him "not" to love! He is in verity the Person of love!

So when we say God is immutable, we again are dictated to by His very nature that He cannot change. Not that He has a lack of desire to change, but that He has a lack of ability to change! Inherent within Him is an unchanging quality that goes

even deeper into the nature of God--the eternity of God!

THE ETERNITY OF GOD

Now we're getting closer to the core of the truth of the matter! How do we define God's eternity? **"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever"** (Heb. 13:8). Always has, always--(what?)--will be? Good, but even better--always has, always is! Or best of all the scriptural--always has, always--**"I AM!" "And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you"** (Ex. 3:13-14).

Yahweh is the self-existent One! Jehovah's origin, His destiny and every one of His means along the way are not a whit predicated on anything but His own existence! Creation is merely an extension of His self, **"for whom are all things, and by whom are all things"** (Heb. 2:10). The creation is for Him, and by Him! Even further it is stated in I Corinthians 8:6: **"of whom are all things, and we in him."** Of Himself!

When we say the statements in our text are rooted in the eternity of God, what does that mean? It means that whatever is true today will be true tomorrow and was true from eternity past! God and thereby His Word are both immutable and eternal! There is an inherent inability within God to evolve. He is perfect! For Him to gain knowledge would reveal a previous time of deficient intelligence. For Him to be able to change for the better or worse would deny the eternity of a perfectly divine God. I hope you're following the trail as we dig deeper and deeper into the nature of God. We first of all revealed that God has emotions based upon His nature, then that His nature requires immutability and thereby eternity. Beloved reader, marvel with me at the rigidity and inflexibility of this chain! Each attribute requires and stands within the framework of the others. Without any one of them, the others would collapse! We cannot just pick and choose what we would believe! We must take each of these natural attributes of God into account when we read His Word! It will make it much more discernible and praiseworthy, because as we must now take note--the eternity of God is also rooted in something deeper--in His sovereignty!

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

On to our remedial definition--by being sovereign, He always does as He pleases! But yet again, I have chosen the weaker characterization first, to highlight the necessity of this stronger definition that we need: He must do as

He pleases! **"And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"** (Dan. 4:35). For Him to have the opportunity to fulfill His purpose and not do it, would be a breach of nature, and with God--impossible! As Nebuchadnezzar states in the Daniel passage above, none can even question God's actions! Not, may, but can! Again, it's the ability that is called in question, not the permissibility or feasibility! It's just not possible; it's completely out of the realm of possibility that the balance of nature in the Creator and His creation could be brought to such a scene--that the holiness and righteousness of God could be called into question!

Always there is a chain-link succession of God's purposes being carried out. The first pronouncement just supports and substantiates the next of His decrees! Never thwarted, never slowed, never empty! Just a continuous stream of dominoes falling and striking the next as it pleases my Lord! Clink, click, click! Monotonous? Yes, to all else or others! But music to God's people's ears!

The sovereignty of God exhibits throughout eternity unparalleled fluidity and rhythmic glory and honor to the eternal, immutable One! With nary a battle or struggle to maintain that inviolable winning streak, but just a natural progressive order, dictated and stipulated by God's very nature! Satan and all the host of his demons concentrated for six thousand years on even the slightest of His desires will never sway the will of our Sovereign an iota. Inevitably, inevitably, inevitably the sovereignty of God is rooted in His omnipresence!

THE OMNIPRESENCE OF GOD

It is imperative that we take this last stop in our scratching of the surface of God's nature. The disposition of our study demands this last bit of information to show that definitive, true wisdom is bound up in the nature of God, rather than the emotions that are exhibited by that nature. (Just as we would learn more about ourselves if we understand our own nature and are not influenced by emotional data and superficialities). Define Omnipresence: Ubiquity! He is always there! **"I AM"** always there! The distinctive nature of God's omnipresence is that--He is--**"I AM!"**--I are!

Where? He is everywhere! You mean every continent? Yes! **"Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: (Here I AM!) if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there (here I AM!). If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea (Here I**

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AM!); **Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me (Here I AM!)**” (Ps. 139:7-10; inserts TMS).

Where? He is everywhere! You mean every century? Yes! **“LORD, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God”** (Ps. 90:1-2).

Where? He is everywhere! You mean ever dimension? Yes! **“For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord”** (Rom. 8:38-39). Yes, YES, YEEESSS!

Okay, did you notice what just happened? We lost ourselves, but we didn't lose God! God is not dimensional! Ergo the following questions:

1. How tall is God? What ruler would you use? What increments would apply?

2. How heavy is God? He fills the universe, yet lives in the heart of my son!

3. How fast is God? If He's already here and there, how does speed relate?

4. How old is God? Time is irrelevant to an ageless, timeless being!

I've saved the best question for last. If you can answer this one correctly, you'll have aced the test! Where is God---right now? Scratch your head first, beloved reader, before answering. The answers are myriad and tend toward incompetency. Here. There. Everywhere. Everywhen! God has no future. God has no past. No limits of creational measurements for He precedes and postdates them all---simultaneously!

In other words, God is omnipresent! I can't even type that sentence without the key phrase “God is!” **“I AM”!**

Where is God---right now? How about **“I AM”** for an answer? HE IS. . .

SOME CONCLUSIONS THAT MUST BE DRAWN

God has no desires that are not carried out! Why? Because He is omnipresent! **“He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength: who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered? Which removeth the mountains, and they know not: which overturneth them in his anger. Which shaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble. Which commandeth the sun, and it riseth not; and sealeth up the stars”** (Job 9:4-7). I want to emphasize that I've not used God's omnipotence to answer the question---certainly that is an answer as well. He carries out His desires

because He is omnipotent (possesses all power!), yes, but the answer is also as we've stated, because of His omnipresence---simply stated “Been there, done that!”

God has no purposes that go unfulfilled! Why? Because He is omnipresent! **“Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it”** (Isa. 46:9-11). Again, this verse recommends itself to God's omnipresence in that the end is of no significant difference to God from the beginning. To Him and His omnipresence, they are indistinguishable! Why would you question the end and have complete confidence in the beginning? How very absurd to an omnipresent God!

God has no design that is uncreated, no election of love that is not tenderly consummated! Ask me now about absolute predestination! Can you yet detach yourself from His Word and deny it? Ask me now in the marvel of His omnipresence about the election and reprobation of mankind! Could it have ever been any other way? Not with an omnipresent God! Marvel at the audacity of the Nazarene with the Pharisees: **“Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am”** (John 8:57-58).

This is my very favorite Scripture concerning this subject! Do you believe Him? Yes? Wonderful! You believe in the omnipresence of God! The Pharisees did not, and in verse 59 they took up stones to kill Him. Oh, beloved reader, please beware lest we be caught with stones in our hands at any juncture of Scripture history. Surely the Pharisees believed in the fact of God and His omnipresence, but found themselves on the wrong side of the stone, because of preconceived notions and on illogical concept of the Son of God.

Okay, then, let's apply this imperative knowledge to our text verse. **“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance”** (II Pet. 3:9). It becomes so simple in the framework of knowledge! As we have determined from a host of Scripture, the very nature of God is at stake in this verse. Beware lest any should rate God's desire so stated as **“not willing”** to be anything less than an immutable, eternal and sovereign decree of an omnipresent God!

When we steer into other uncharted territories where the word **“us-ward”** is

not used, the principle still holds firm and constant! **“Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth”** (I Tim. 2:4). God's standard still waves true! If God will have all men to be saved---if that is His desire---it will happen! Right? Correct! So the passage here must mean one of two things: 1) All of His sheep or 2) All men without distinction, not all men without exception.

God's desires we can then quickly determine, become foregone conclusions! Not even the mighty free will of man can stay His purpose, pleasure and decrees. Man's feeble attempt to force God's love into an alien echelon high above His immutability, eternity, sovereignty and omnipresence will not affect in the slightest the effectual, invincible working of His will.

WHAT HAPPENED AT CALVARY

I want to close with one last picture of the omnipresence of God the Father. (Author's note to beloved reader: I prefix this word picture with an exemption for the God-Man, Jesus Christ. He, did indeed, suffer chronologically as a man, fully human as He was. Each step of the bruising and each phase of the grief taught Him obedience (Heb. 5:8-9). Kindly bear that in mind as we study the divinity of God.)

“Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain” (Acts 2:23). This is a marvelous text that the Apostle relates. What does it mean? Who really crucified our Lord? 1) The Roman soldiers that nailed His hands and feet to the wood and lifted Him up. Correct, but not perfect---the Romans are not the only culpable agent. 2) The Jews that connived and contrived to put Him on the cross. The ones that shouted **“Crucify him, crucify him!”** They also are guilty and have wicked, bloody hands. 3) Every one of God's elect that required a blood sacrifice to atone for the penalty of our sins. We are certainly the cause and our iniquity was the reason for the three hours of darkness, when our Savior suffered our Hell for us! 4) But as the Apostle Peter, stated, God foreknew and in His determinate counsel decreed to crucify the Christ, His only begotten Son. That much I'm sure we can agree on. Sure, the Romans and Jews crucified the Lord, but could they have done it without God? How would you phrase the sequence of events? Would you say that God allowed the crucifixion to take place? I think you'd have to, wouldn't you? Certainly if Satan couldn't attack Job without God's permission, then how could he and his minions crucify the Son of God? God allowed---Hmm---if our study has any relevance thus far, we would have to also say that if God allowed the crucifixion, then we would also have to say that God desired the crucifixion,

wouldn't we? That God wanted His Son to die on a cross? Yes, even further as we go into this one-way street of God's implacable will---God ordained and chose and decreed that His Son would terribly and horribly suffer, bleed and die on a dark and wondrous day outside Jerusalem. Undeniably awesome---

But let's take it one level deeper in this next unconditional passage: **“Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief. . .”** (Isa. 53:10).

Now this is where it becomes unfathomable to us chronological creatures! Picture Abraham with the knife hovering above Isaac! Yes, we know and understand that the terrible deed must be done. We've sweated it out, prayed it out and come to the conclusion that despite the horrific cost, the sacrifice must be made. There's no other way. It is simply put---God's will. (cf. Desire/Decree/etc.) But for us created beings framed within the dimensions of time and matter, it is a task of grief. We can do it---Abraham did it---but we cannot find emotive pleasure alone in the slaying of the perceived Innocent! God can! It pleased Him boundlessly and eternally! We cannot perceive the outcome with any degree of certainty, other than a trust in God's promises---and that is again where the omnipresence of God is our anchor! He can! He is! **“I AM”!**

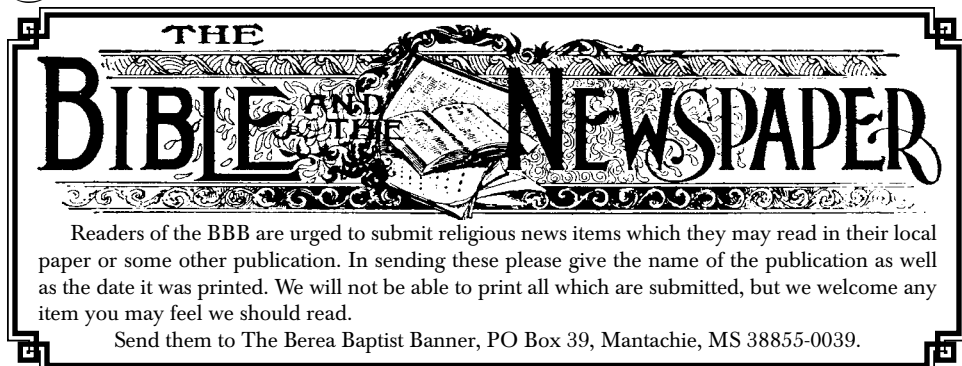
The Isaiah passage shows an omnipresent God that not merely knows the outcome; there is no experiential outcome---it already has happened. No that's not right, either! It is! He is! **“I AM”!!!** That's the only way the phrased sentence makes spiritual sense. It can only please God, because He is not tied to the moment. He is! He indwells the eternal continuum! **“I AM”!** I am pleased to torment My only Son, because it is a part of the whole. It is the essence of the whole---and it cannot be incrementally segmented, not in the eyes of an omnipresent, eternal, immutable, sovereign God.

And sometimes that's all we can stand back and say. Thank God and praise the Lord for Who you are! The great **“I AM”!**

“Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God (in His omnipresence!). . . have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and (I AM) the God of Isaac, and (I AM) the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but (God is God) of the living. And when the multitude heard this, they were astonished at his doctrine” (Matt. 22:29, 31-33; inserts and emphasis---TMS).

And so should we be, beloved reader, **“astonished at his doctrine”!** Astounded at His immutable, eternal, sovereign, omnipresent nature!





MARYLAND RESIDENTS WORK TO OVERTURN TRANSGENDER LAW

(EP News)--Maryland Citizens for a Responsible Government has collected enough signatures to let voters decide on a law that provides special rights to people with gender-identity confusion and essentially creates co-ed bathrooms. Enacted by the Montgomery County Council, the controversial law originally included an exemption for facilities such as restrooms and locker rooms. However, the wording was removed from the law because officials didn't think it was necessary, a county spokesman told WorldNetDaily.

Maryland Citizens for a Responsible Government fears that without the exemption, men will have easy access to women's restrooms and locker rooms. "People are energized; they really feel betrayed by their county government," said Ruth Jacobs, president of the group. "This issue (affects) the privacy of women and children."

ABORTIONIST SURRENDERS MEDICAL LICENSE AFTER PATIENT DIES

(EP News)--Rajin Osathanondh will never practice medicine again after a 22-year-old patient died during an abortion at his Hyannis, Mass., clinic in September. He permanently surrendered his license Feb. 20 in the wake of a criminal investigation and disciplinary action. On Feb. 18, the Boston Medical Examiner's office declared the cause of Laura Smith's death was "cardiac pulmonary arrest during anesthesia during a voluntary termination of pregnancy." Operation Rescue broke the news of Smith's death, then worked with her mom, Eileen, to apply public pressure to authorities so the death was not covered up. "While nothing can bring back Laura and her baby, we take great comfort in knowing that Osathanondh will never again hurt another woman or kill another innocent child," Operation Rescue spokeswoman Cheryl Sullenger said.

DOCUMENTARY DETAILS THE DECLINE OF THE FAMILY

(EP News)--As the media tell it, the world is running out of resources and space. But according to a new documentary called "Demographic Winter: The Decline of the Human Family," the world is actually running out of people. Worldwide, each woman of childbearing age needs to have an average of 2.1 children for the population to

break even. But, according to documentary spokesman Don Feder, global birth rates have declined by 50 percent in the last half-century. Many countries in Europe are hovering at a birthrate of 1.3 children per woman of childbearing age. "Demographic Winter" claims this is the first time in history that social forces have led to a global decline in population. "They include secularization, abortion, widespread use of contraceptives, late marriage, cohabitation (and) people choosing lifestyles or careers over children," Feder said.

INDIANA MARRIAGE AMENDMENT REMAINS STUCK IN STATE HOUSE

(EP News)--Voters may have to wait four years to decide the definition of marriage in the Hoosier state, after House leaders decided they won't consider legislation that passed the Senate. Supporters of traditional marriage and lawmakers expressed frustration Friday with the decision by Rep. Scott Pelath, D-Michigan City, not to hear Senate Joint Resolution 7, The Indianapolis Star reported. "Rep. Pelath is the one person now standing in the way of allowing Hoosiers to have a voice on the issue of same-sex 'marriage' in Indiana," said Micah Clark, executive director of the American Family Association of Indiana. To amend the Constitution to protect marriage, two consecutively elected legislatures must pass the measure, and voters must approve it in a general election.

AURORA, PLANNED PARENTHOOD SUED FOR ZONING VIOLATIONS

(EP News)--A pro-life group and residents of Aurora, Ill., filed a lawsuit Feb. 20 against Planned Parenthood and the City of Aurora for violations of the city's zoning laws. Fox Valley Families Against Planned Parenthood, as well as several Aurora property owners, say the abortion clinic applied for building permits under a front company that hid the true nature and ownership of the building during the zoning approval process. This prevented residents from being able to oppose the clinic. Tom Brejcha, chief counsel for the Thomas More Society, is providing legal representation for the homeowners and families involved. "Democracy can't work for people if they are denied an opportunity to impact even their own neighborhoods," Brejcha said in a press release. "It simply isn't fair to allow any entity, including Planned Parenthood, to operate outside the law." The lawsuit seeks

to revoke the clinic's occupancy permit.

FEDERAL COURT RULES AGAINST CHRISTIAN STUDENT

(EP News)--A federal district court judge in California has decided that statements about sexual orientation, if not "positive" in nature, can be restricted by public schools. Administrators in the Poway School District of California objected in 2004 when they learned that a student, Chase Harper, wore a T-shirt which quoted Romans on one side and on the other said, "Be ashamed, our school has embraced what God has condemned."

Harper said one administrator told him to leave his faith in the car. Harper later sued.

Tim Chandler, an attorney with the Alliance Defense Fund, said Harper's case is worth appealing to a higher court. "It's a classic case of viewpoint discrimination that really reflects a double-standard that's been created both in our public schools and in our legal system," Chandler said.

PLANNED PARENTHOOD PLANS SIX-STORY CLINIC IN HOUSTON

(EP News)--In October, Planned Parenthood opened the nation's largest abortion clinic — 22,000 square feet — in Aurora, Ill. But that's last year's news. Its Denver clinic, at 50,000 square feet, is under construction. And its new, six-story Houston clinic, which will dwarf the others at 78,000 square feet, will have an entire floor for abortions. Though the number of abortions nationwide is declining, at Planned Parenthood business is booming. In 2005, Planned Parenthood ended the lives of 264,943 preborn babies, according to its annual report. That was up almost 15 percent from 2002.

STUDENTS UPSET BY PROFESSOR'S STANCE THAT DOWN SYNDROME BABIES SHOULD DIE

(EP News)--Students who support life were outraged when their biology professor at the University of North Carolina (UNC) said all preborn babies who have been diagnosed with Down syndrome should be aborted. Professor Albert Harris, who has taught at UNC for 35 years, said he has made the same comment many times in order to spark discussion. Harris told students that aborting a Down syndrome baby is the moral thing to do. However, he would not abort his own disabled child, he told Raleigh's News & Observer.

CALIFORNIA GETS READY TO VOTE ON MARRIAGE

(EP News)--More than 100,000 California voters have signed a petition to let the people decide the definition of marriage. But there's more work to do. In order to put marriage on the November ballot, more than 1 million signatures are needed by April 1. A group called ProtectMarriage.com is attempting to gather the signatures. It is a coalition of local, state and national

groups. ProtectMarriage.com is putting forth a simple, one-sentence statement that defines marriage as between one man and one woman. Proposition 22, a legal statute protecting marriage as between one man and one woman, was passed by the people of California in 2000, with more than 61 percent of the vote. The constitutionality of Proposition 22 is pending before the California Supreme Court. A constitutional amendment would make challenges to Prop 22 moot.

"TOP GAY ACTIVIST SAYS 'HIV IS A GAY DISEASE'"

(EP News)--In a public statement Feb. 8, Matt Foreman, outgoing Executive Director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, rattled the homosexual activist community by joining the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), pro-family organizations and a growing number of homosexual activists willing to admit that homosexual behavior is both extremely high-risk and primarily responsible for the spread of HIV/AIDS in the U.S. Addressing the topic of AIDS, Foreman drastically deviated from the "gay" lobby's party line by admitting, "Internally, when these numbers come out, the 'established' gay community seems to have a collective shrug as if this isn't our problem. Folks, with 70 percent of the people in this country living with HIV being gay or bi, we cannot deny that HIV is a gay disease. We have to own that and face up to that."

VIRGINIA SUPERINTENDENT PULLS PRO-GAY BOOK OFF SCHOOL SHELVES

(EP News)--A children's book about two male penguins that hatch and parent a chick — used to promote same-sex relationships — was pulled from library shelves in Loudoun County, Va., elementary schools this month, thanks to a brave decision by the superintendent. David Weintraub, director of Equality Loudoun, told The Washington Post that "And Tango Makes Three" is based "on a true story ... of what happens in the animal kingdom. It's about the joy of being part of a family." But Superintendent Edgar B. Hatrick III decided the book's content might not be developmentally appropriate for some students and pulled it from his district's 16 elementary schools.

PARENTS AND STUDENTS TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SCHOOL CHOICE

(EP News)--A Heritage Foundation study shows school choice is on the upswing. About 150,000 schoolkids in the U.S. are receiving public scholarships to go to private schools. "The bottom line is that more kids than ever are able to be in schools or in educational opportunities of their parents' choosing rather than their government-assigned public school," said Evan Feinberg, research assistant in Domestic Policy Studies at The Heritage Foundation. Between 1 million and 2 million students are home-schooled

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— something more than half of Americans now approve of. “In terms of public opinion, home-schooling is gaining the day,” said Mike Smith, president of the Home School Legal Defense Association. “Home schooling is now legal in every state.” Charter schools, which are publicly funded, give parents more control and students more options. All of these school-choice options provide hope for the millions of students trapped in failing public schools.

N.Y. LEGISLATION WOULD FORCE ABORTION ON RELIGIOUS HOSPITALS

(EP News)--Under legislation sitting in the New York Assembly, religious hospitals and social service agencies in the state would be required to perform abortions or refer women to an abortionist. Hospitals would have to violate their religious policies if the Reproductive Health and Privacy Protection Act passes. Dennis Poust, spokesman for the New York State Catholic Conference, said it would make hospitals accessories to death. “It’s really a violation of religious freedom to force an organization to engage in an evil act which is against its clear teaching,” he said.

GAY ACTIVISTS LINE UP POTENTIAL PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEES

(EP News)--The Gay & Lesbian Leadership Institute launched its Presidential Appointments Project in late February to recruit openly lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) professionals to serve the next president of the United States. The organization will “identify, recruit and vet” LGBT applicants for thousands of government jobs that will be filled with political appointees. The group claims to be nonpartisan, but its commitment to promote homosexual and transgender “voices” throughout government has some conservatives concerned. “They know that these strategic appointments will advance their pro-gay agenda with little or no interference by elected officials in the legislative branch,” said Caleb Price of Focus on the Family. “They’re expecting a Democrat to win the presidency. And given the homosexual community’s overwhelming financial support of the Democratic Party, they expect payback for their support.”

PRO-GAY BOOKLET SENT TO EVERY SCHOOL DISTRICT IN AMERICA

(EP News)--All 16,000 public school superintendents in the U.S. will be receiving a copy of Just the Facts about Sexual Orientation and Youth, a 24-page booklet that concludes homosexuality is a “normal expression of human sexuality.” The pamphlet is endorsed by more than a dozen professional mental health and counseling

organizations, education associations and one liberal religious group. The theme: Schools are only allowed to provide one message about homosexuality — that it’s normal and should be embraced. Alan Chambers, president of Exodus International, said he knows that’s not true. “Allowing people to choose what is best for their lives is respectful, it’s tolerant, it’s everything that the other side uses as their mantra, but really fails to respect and live up to,” he said. The publication ends with a warning: “Schools should be careful to avoid discussions of transformational ministry in their curriculum.”

COUNTY APPEALS RULING THAT ATTACKS TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE IN NEW YORK

(EP News)--Officials in Monroe County, N.Y., plan to appeal a court ruling that requires New York to recognize same-sex “marriages” performed outside the state. Gay activists have gathered in upstate New York to protest. On Feb. 1, the Appellate Division of New York State Supreme Court ordered the Monroe County Community College in Rochester to extend health benefits to an employee’s lesbian partner after they were legally married in Canada. That followed a judge’s ruling in 2006 that the school did not have to provide benefits. Monroe County Executive Maggie Brooks, a Republican, said the ruling was a misinterpretation of the law. “In this particular case, we’re letting people in Ontario, Canada, define marriage for people who live in New York state. I don’t think that’s appropriate,” she said. The New York Court of Appeals will decide if the appeal will be heard.

MAN SUES AFTER 12-YEAR-OLD DAUGHTER IS EXPOSED TO PORNOGRAPHY

(EP News)--A Tennessee dad is suing a company that specializes in gay pornography after his 12-year-old daughter was exposed to unsolicited content that came in the mail.

According to news reports, the girl opened the plain, white envelope that was stamped “Free DVD,” thinking it was from the Disney Video Club. Kent Blackwelder heard a frightened gasp from the other room and a desperate call for “Daddy.” Inside the envelope was an ad containing pictures of half a dozen nude men. Blackwelder is seeking \$4 million in damages from Specialty Publications. Robert Peters, president of Morality in Media, said all the law requires is that pornographers put a sexually oriented notation on the front envelope or inside, if there’s a second, sealed envelope.

SENATE PASSES PRO-LIFE AMENDMENT TO INDIAN HEALTH CARE BILL

(EP News)--The U.S. Senate voted 52-42 in late February to prevent taxpayer-funded abortions within Indian health care. Sen. David Vitter, R-La., sponsored an amendment to the Indian Health Care Improvement Act based on the Hyde Amendment, which forbids federal funding of abortions. Indian

health services are funded through the Interior Appropriations bill, which has never been subject to the Hyde Amendment. “I applaud the Senate for voting to prevent Indian Health Service funds from being used to pay for abortions,” said Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council. “The majority of the Senate has now shown they agree with most Americans that government funding of abortion is morally wrong.”

N.J. GOV. TO SIGN GAY “MARRIAGE” BILL

(EP News)--Gov. Jon Corzine wants to give New Jersey homosexuals the right to “marry,” but he has said he will wait until after the fall elections to sign any bill into law. Next year, however, may not be much better for such a drastic measure: The governor and the Legislature face re-election. When Corzine ran for the U.S. Senate and when he initially ran for governor, he said he believed marriage was the union of a man and a woman. “Governor Corzine has flipped on this position,” said Len Deo, president and executive director of the New Jersey Family Policy Council. “Now he’s starting to say he sees same-sex ‘marriage’ coming to New Jersey. Well, he doesn’t see it coming, he’s going to help bring it unless we can stand up and stop it.” Deo’s group is gathering grassroots support for a constitutional amendment to protect marriage. “We are pressing the Legislature to move a state constitutional amendment to, once and for all, define marriage as the union between one man and one woman only,” he said. It then would go to the voters.

MOST CHILDREN STILL LIVE IN TWO-PARENT HOMES, CENSUS SHOWS

(EP News)--Of the nation’s 73 million children, nearly 45 million (62 percent) live with their biological parents, according to a Census Bureau report released Feb. 20. Another 19 million live with their unmarried, biological mothers. The report, collected from 2004 surveys, also shows cohabiting families are on the rise, with 3.7 million children living with one biological parent and an unmarried partner.

WISCONSIN MARRIAGE AMENDMENT COULD HINGE ON HIGH COURT ELECTION

(EP News)--The Wisconsin Supreme Court is ideologically split between liberals and conservatives. So whoever wins the open seat April 1 probably will control the future of marriage in the state. In 2006, 59 percent of Wisconsin passed a constitutional amendment protecting marriage. Gay activists have challenged the amendment all the way to the state’s highest court. “It’s the will of the people in Wisconsin that defines marriage, and the Supreme Court of Wisconsin should not disturb that will,” said Austin Nimocks, senior legal counsel for the Alliance Defense Fund. The case is expected to rest in the hands of candidates Louis Butler,

who leans liberal, or Michael Gabelman, who leans conservative. Julaine Appling, executive director of the Wisconsin Family Council, said the stakes are high. “How the candidates see the current makeup of the court and their role in it will be incredibly critical as we move forward with this court,” she said. “Whatever the court looks like when that marriage amendment hits, will be critical to the preservation of marriage in this state.”

ILLINOIS LAWMAKERS DROP SUPPORT FOR MOMENT OF SILENCE

(EP News)--Just five months ago, Illinois lawmakers voted in favor of a daily moment of silence in public schools. In October, an atheist, backed by the American Civil Liberties Union, filed suit. Now, 33 state representatives have changed their minds. The Silent Reflection and Student Prayer Act required Illinois public schools to start each day with a brief period of silence. “That action actually passed the Senate chamber and the House chamber overwhelmingly, with bipartisanship support from both sides of the aisle,” said Sen. Kimberly Lightford, the Democrat who sponsored the bill. She said she suspects the 33 lawmakers were pressured to change their vote when the state House voted on a new measure in mid-March.

TENNESSEANS STAND BEHIND TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE

(EP News)--A year after Tennessee voters passed a constitutional amendment to support traditional marriage, the majority of state residents — 66 percent — continue to oppose same-sex “marriage,” according to a recent Middle Tennessee State University poll. Among evangelicals, opposition to same-sex “marriage” is at 91 percent.

OHIO LIBRARY SUED AFTER DENYING ACCESS TO RELIGIOUS GATHERING

(EP News)--The Alliance Defense Fund (ADF) has sued an Ohio library after it denied a community group access to its public meeting room because the meetings contained religious content. Citizens for Community Values (CCV) requested permission to use the Upper Arlington Public Library’s meeting room, which is available to community groups. The event, Politics and the Pulpit, provides information on laws regarding Christian political involvement and includes Bible reading, prayer and worship.

Library officials denied the request, claiming that singing and prayer were not permissible. “Christian groups shouldn’t be discriminated against for their beliefs,” said Tim Chandler, ADF legal counsel. “The government cannot treat people with nonreligious viewpoints more favorably than people with religious viewpoints. Christians have the same First Amendment rights as anyone else in America.”

HOMOSEXUAL COUPLE SUES

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UNIVERSITY OVER MARRIED-HOUSING DENIAL

(EP News)--A same-sex couple is suing the University of Hawaii after being excluded from married student housing on campus. Joseph O'Leary and Phi Ngo applied for family housing, but the university denied their request, stating that Hawaii has defined marriage as between one man and one woman. A 1998 constitutional amendment reserves the right of the Legislature to limit marriage.

NEA DONATES MILLIONS TO LEFT-LEANING POLITICAL GROUPS

(EP News)--The National Education Association (NEA) gave \$12 million to political groups in 2007, and almost all of them lean liberal. Jeralee Smith, co-founder of the NEA's Conservative Caucus, said many teachers think they have no choice but to go along. "I know so many people who think the way I do, but for whatever reason they keep feeding the monster," she said. "It's basically a political machine to support a far-Left agenda." Some of the money comes back to haunt the teachers. More than \$150,000 went to gay-rights groups. "There are definitely groups that want to get into the classroom and indoctrinate kids with their values," said Karla Dial, managing editor of School Reform News.

OBAMA USES SCRIPTURE IN DEFENSE OF CIVIL UNIONS

(EP News)--Sen. Barack Obama's support for same-sex civil unions is nothing new. But on Sunday, he used Jesus' Sermon on the Mount to justify his stance. During a town hall meeting in Nelsonville, Ohio, he said: "I don't believe in gay marriage, but I do think that people who are gay and lesbian should be treated with dignity and respect and that the state should not discriminate against them. So, I believe in civil unions. ... If people find that controversial then I would just refer them to the Sermon on the Mount. ..." It's not clear what part of the Sermon on the Mount he was referring to. Sen. Hillary Clinton also has expressed her support for civil unions.

ILLINOIS JUDGE BLOCKS PARENTAL-NOTIFICATION LAW

(EP News)--A judge in Illinois has ruled that teens can continue to get an abortion without telling their parents. Illinois is one of 35 states with parental-notification laws, but the 1984 law has never been enforced. Joe Scheidler, national director of the Pro-Life Action League, called the inaction an injustice. "We're talking here about parents knowing that their minor daughter is having dangerous surgery — sometimes lethal surgery," he said. "And the courts believe that the parents shouldn't even know about it." Sandy Rios, president of the Culture Campaign, said, "We have all of these young

girls coming from our border states to get abortions because they don't have to have any parental notification. It is a disgrace."

PRO-GAY CHILDREN'S BOOK RETURNED TO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LIBRARIES

(EP News)--A Virginia superintendent has decided a children's book about two male penguins that hatch and parent a chick — used to promote same-sex relationships — will return to elementary school libraries in Loudoun County. Supt. Edgar B. Hatrick's decision comes even though nearly 700 people e-mailed him to say "thank you" for pulling the book. Hatrick will allow "And Tango Makes Three" to return to all 16 elementary schools after reviewing the district's "procedures." He discovered the parent objecting to the book is not a parent at the school that received the complaint, although she has children in other Loudoun County schools.

GRAND JURY REFUSES TO INDICT KANSAS PLANNED PARENTHOOD

(EP News)--After a three-month investigation, a grand jury refused to issue an indictment of a Johnson County, Kan., abortion clinic on allegations it violated state laws on parental notification and a mandatory 24-hour waiting period. The Planned Parenthood clinic still faces 107 criminal charges filed by Johnson County District Attorney Phill Kline. A hearing is set for April 7.

NURSE PRACTITIONER SEEKS RIGHT TO PERFORM ABORTIONS

(EP News)--A nurse practitioner wants the Arizona nursing board to decide if she can continue to perform surgical abortions. If she wins approval, other states could follow suit. Mary Andrews, who works at a Planned Parenthood clinic in Tucson, Ariz., wants the board to make her participation legal. State law isn't clear on the issue. Nine states don't require surgical abortions to be performed by a medical doctor. Most of them are similar to Arizona, said Denise Burke, vice president and legal director of Americans United for Life. "In many cases, they simply don't have a law on the books addressing who should be performing surgical abortions," she said. "If they (abortion supporters) can be successful in one state, then they may go to one of these others states that has no physician-only requirement."

INTERNATIONAL BRIEFS CHRISTIAN FOSTER PARENTS REJECTED OVER GAY DISPUTE

(EP News)--A British couple has been barred from future service because they refuse to tell children that homosexuality is an acceptable lifestyle. John and Eunice Johns say that to affirm homosexuality would violate their Christian beliefs. The Johns have been foster parents for 12 years, and have cared for 18 children during that time.



CELLBLOCK TO CELLBLOCK

By David G. Hoffman

Encouragement and thoughts from a prisoner to other prisoners and readers.

"Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried" (Rev. 2:10).



Answered Prayer

Greetings, grace, and peace to you, dear reader. May the Lord bless you day by day.

There is only one thing sure in Texas: nothing is sure until it's a done deal. Just like the weather, if the prison system tells you something, wait five minutes and it'll change its mind.

I did not go to the Culinary Arts course in February; come to find out that class was full by the time my kitchen captain submitted my name. Yes, I'm still going, in fact, I'm on the list for the class starting in May. Please keep this in your prayers for me; I'm really excited and ready to go.

In the mean time, I got back in two of the academic classes while I wait to go over there. I'm taking General Psychology and interpersonal Communications and doing well in both. Please keep my academic pursuit in your prayers for me as well. One of my major goals, before I'm released, is to earn an Associate degree.

Upon my release another major goal is to graduate from the Texas Culinary Academy's Le Cordon Bleu Culinary Arts Program. I've decided I want to be a trained chef. My job as a cook in the unit chow hall and the six month culinary arts course at the Eastham Unit are both in preparation for that.

Please continue to pray for me, dear reader, as I face the daily struggle that is prison life and pursue my goals through it all. Grace be with all who love the Lord in sincerity.

This month I have a praise report. A few weeks ago I received a letter forwarded to me by the Banner staff (Thank you, guys!) from Mr. Manuel T. Lopez, a jail ministry worker from California. Mr. Lopez wrote with the encouraging news that an inmate in California he writes to has begun a Pharmacology course and is maintaining a "B" average---because of something I wrote about educating myself while incarcerated. Ain't that great news!

Mr. Lopez asked if I would write to this inmate and encourage him further, but as many of you know, I can't write other inmates. So what I've decided to do is encourage him right here.

Jerry A. at the Chuckawalla State Prison in Blythe, California, the education you are receiving no one can ever take

away from you. The state may have our bodies locked away but they can't lock up our minds, only we can do that. I'm greatly encouraged by your commitment to expanding your horizons and bettering yourself through education. Keep your nose in the books and don't let the naysayers discourage you. The Lord gave us minds to use and an exercised mind is a healthy and God honoring mind. I truly believe the Lord would rather we learn how to weave baskets than do nothing to stretch our minds and enhance our skills. Keep up the good work, Jerry, and may the Lord bless your endeavor.

Dear reader, Jerry A. should be an encouragement to all of us. The whole reason I write this column is for people like Jerry, people like you and I. I'm behind bars just like most of you, but I and Jerry, and I pray many others have overcome our surroundings and strive to stretch our minds beyond the prison bars and fences.

You may not dream of being a pharmacist, like Jerry, or a professional chef, like myself, but each of you do have dreams of doing something when you're released from prison and you can start pursuing those dreams today, right where you are.

Sign up for a class offered by the institution where you are, go the library and read every book on whatever it is you're interested in, if you have the support write off for a correspondence course.

Two great correspondence schools are:

Penn Foster Schools
Student Service Center
925 Oak Street
Scranton, PA 18515

They offer several Career Diploma and Associate Degree programs.

Stratford Career Institute
12 Champlain Commons
P. O. Box 1560
Saint Albans, VT 05478-5560

They, too, offer several Career Diploma and Associate Degree programs.

I've completed three correspondence courses to date: Paralegal/Legal assistant Diploma---Blackstone Career Institute; Breaking Into Print Diploma---Long Ridge Writers Group; HVAC Technician Diploma---Penn Foster Schools, and will be starting another from Stratford by the time this goes to print. I don't say this

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Cellblock to

(Continued from page 316) ◊

to boast, but merely to show you this is possible. Endeavor to better yourself and I believe the Lord will bless your effort.

Whatever it is, getting your G.E.D., pursuing a college degree, taking a vocational course, or simply studying for self enrichment, get started today. You'll be glad you did.

Happy studying! May God bless your goal!

"A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels: To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark saying. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction" (Prov. 1:5-7).

Krystal Ruthann, I love and miss you dearly. One day this separation will be behind us.

Bro. Jeff & family, I love you guys, too. You remain, as always, in my thoughts and prayers.

Bro. Harold, thank you for your continued encouragement and prayers.

Bro. Kevin, I miss you, man! Stay strong, you are not alone.

Bro. Danny, good luck on your parole! Keep working on the book when you get out--I want a signed copy.

Until next time, grace be with you all!



We Shall See the King

By Milburn Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)

"Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off" (Isa. 33:17).

The king mentioned in this text is not the king of Assyria as some suppose. Nor is the reference to Hezekiah the king of Judah in his royal robe. I believe the prophet means the King of kings, the Messiah in the glory of His kingly office. The Targum reads: **"Thine eyes shall see the glory of the Majesty of the King of worlds in His praise."**

The far off land is not the remote parts of Judah as some say. Rather, the prophet speaks of the far country of Heaven, the land that earthly saints are afar off from at present. This beautiful land we now view by faith, not by the sight of the eyes of the flesh. As Christian pilgrims we long to go there where our citizenship is and where our departed friends and relatives wait to receive us.

In olden days it was an exalted privilege

and a special honor to be permitted to stand before an earthly king and to see his face (I Kings 10:8, II Kings 25:19; Esth. 5:1-3; Prov. 22:29). In Esther 1:14 the ministers of state in the Persian court are described as those who **"saw the king's face"** (Esth. 1:14). This is still true in our day. Men count it a distinct privilege to see the face of earthly dignitaries. They will stand in line for hours to see the Pope or the President of the United States. But the privilege of seeing great men passes into insignificance when compared to seeing the King of kings. It will be more glorious to see the King of glory in the beauty of holiness than to see any earthly king who ever lived.

ANGELS PRESENTLY SEE HIM

Since their creation in dateless past angels have been allowed free entrance to the King. They stand near the eternal throne. They see His face continually **"full of eyes within"** (Rev. 4:8). This privilege they have without interruption. Jesus said of the angels: **"Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven"** (Matt. 18:10). They always behold the Glory of God's nature and essence. They contemplate His perfections; stand ready to receive His orders and to obey His commandments.

We learn from Revelation 4:6 that four angels of a very exalted order stand before God's throne in Heaven. The angel Gabriel is an attendant at God's throne. He said to Zacharias: **"I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God."** According to the Jews, Gabriel is one of the angels that surround the throne of God. The names of the other three are Michael, Uriel, and Raphael. Michael they place at His right hand and say he "beholds the face of the King."

DEPARTED SAINTS SEE HIM

The departed saints in Heaven are in the presence of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul said: **"For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better"** (Phil. 1:23). The soul of a righteous man goes immediately to be with Christ at death. To be with Christ in Heaven is far better than to be in this old world of sin and sorrow. Jesus told the dying thief: **"To day shalt thou be with me in paradise"** (Luke 23:43).

In II Corinthians 5:8 Paul declared: **"We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord"** (II Cor. 5:8). The spirits of the righteous are not annihilated. They do not go to sleep in the dust of the ground. They do not go to purgatory. They are taken at once to be present with the Lord. There the disembodied spirits of the righteous will abide in the presence of Christ and see His glory until the resurrection morn. There they look upon His face with everlasting joy: **"And as for me, thou upholdest me**

in mine integrity, and settest me before thy face for ever" (Ps. 41:12).

OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS SAW HIM IN TYPE AND PROPHECY

The Old Testament revealed much about the coming Messiah. Its types disclosed the kingly office of Christ. Melchizedek was a king-priest. He foreshadowed Christ Who would one day be a priest and a king upon the throne of David (Zech. 6:13).

In II Samuel 19 we have a vivid picture of Christ as the coming King. The people clamored for King David to return to Jerusalem. **"So the king returned, and came to Jordan. And Judah came to Gilgal, to go to meet the king, to conduct the king over Jordan"** (II Sam. 19:15). According to Eastern custom, the men of Judah went over Jordan to meet their king and to bring him back. The crowd of rejoicing subjects increased as they drew near Jerusalem. All of this typified how one day Israel will welcome back to Jerusalem the King they rejected over 1900 years ago.

Old Testament prophecy presented Jesus as a coming King. Some very early prophetic utterances did this (Gen. 49:10, Num. 24:17). David was promised an everlasting throne, an everlasting family and an everlasting King (II Sa. 7:12-17; Ps. 89:1-37). This pointed to Christ in His kingly office (Luke 1:32-33). There is much prophecy of Christ as a King in the Psalms (Ps. 2:8; 24:7-10; 72:5; 110:1; 132:11-18). The prophets Isaiah (Isa. 9:6-7; 32:1; text: 40:10), Jeremiah (Jer. 23:5-6; 30:9; 33:17), Ezekiel (Ezek. 37:24-25), Daniel (Dan. 2:35, 44; 7:13-14, 27), Hosea (Hos. 3:5), Micah (Mic. 5:2-4), and Zechariah (Zech. 6:13; 9:9-10; 14:9) were inspired to present Christ as the coming King of the nations of earth.

THE DISCIPLES SAW THE KING IN HIS FLESH

In the fullness of time Christ was born of the virgin Mary in the city of David. For some 33 years He lived among men. Those who became His disciples heard and saw the King with the eyes of the flesh. John said: **"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us)"** (I John 1:1-2).

Peter, James and John saw a miniature of what life would be like in the kingdom age when they saw the King transfigured on the mount (Matt. 17:1-9). Peter declared that he was an eyewitness of the majesty of Christ when he was **"with him in the holy mount"** (II Pet. 1:16-18).

These early disciples had an unspeakable privilege. They saw Jesus in His life and ministry. They saw His miracles and heard His mighty sermons.

They saw Him hanging, bleeding, dying and dead upon the cross. They saw His return from the grave and resurrection from among the dead (Acts 1:21-22). No generation living before or after ever had such a privilege. Well did the King Himself say: **"Blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them"** (Matt. 13:16-17).

Oh, how I would have liked to have been present when the King was born and to have stood with the shepherds and gazed upon His sweet face! Think of what it would have been like to have stood on the shores of Jordan and to have seen John baptize the Lamb of God. Consider being present at the feeding of the five thousand, or the calming of the storm on the Sea of Galilee. Oh, the thrilling experience I could have had had I seen the institution of the Lord's Supper. Then think of being present at Calvary and to have seen His bleeding face that was marred more than that of any man.

But none of us living today were present when the King came to earth over 1900 years ago. We have only seen Him with the eye of faith. We are among those Jesus spoke to Thomas about in John 20:29: **"Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."** We never saw Him with the eyes of the flesh, but we do believe the record that God has given us His Son. We can say with Peter: **"Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now we see him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory"** (I Pet. 1:8).

BELIEVERS TO SEE THE KING

No man has ever seen God in the form of God and lived to tell it. John 1:18 declares: **"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."** Men did see the Word, the Angel of Jehovah, the veiled higher nature of Christ before He came in the flesh. Moses (Ex. 33:20-23) and Isaiah (Isa. 6:1) saw such Christophanies in the Old Testament. When Christ came in the flesh men did see the expressed image of the Father in Jesus Christ (Heb. 1:3; John 14:9). But no living man with the eyes of the flesh has seen God the Father Himself as He is (I John 4:12).

Job expected to see his Redeemer at the resurrection morn: **"For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be**

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We Shall See the

(Continued from page 317) ♦

consumed within me" (Job 19:25-27). The patriarch expected to die. His body would molder in the dust of the grave and his spirit return to God. Then at the resurrection morn he would arise to behold His Redeemer's glory for all eternity. He would not see a type or a figure, but he would see His Redeemer for himself. He would see him to his pleasure and profit. Seeing Heaven and the saints would not be worthy of comparison to seeing his great Redeemer-King.

Those living at the Rapture will rise from this lowland of earth to meet our Saviour and King in the clouds of Heaven (I Thess. 4:14-18). Paul said: **"Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord"** (I Thess. 4:17). The saints of all ages will see the King in His beauty at the meeting in the air. But the source of their unspeakable joy will be to see Christ, to live with Him, and to enjoy Him for ever.

THE SATISFYING SIGHT

The psalmist wrote: **"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness"** (Ps. 17:15). Earthly-minded men seek their portion in this life and are satisfied. The psalmist cherished no such desires. Nothing in this world could satisfy his longings. He looked to another world as his home. He would never be satisfied until he saw the King in the beauty of holiness in the land which is very far off. Then his happiness would be filled up in every part. Then he would lack nothing which could make him happy. All his desires would be satisfied without a shadow or fear of a change.

To David the resurrection was an awaking, for in death the body sleeps in the ground. Yet the body does not lie down in eternal sleep. One glorious day the King shall come and the trumpet shall sound to awaken the dead saints to the resurrection of everlasting life. The saints shall at that moment awake from the slumber of death in God's likeness. They shall behold the King's face in righteousness being delivered from the power and pollution of sin for ever. Nothing can truly satisfy true believers until that occurs.

When my soul is singing in that promised land above,

I'll be satisfied.

Praising Christ the Savior for redeeming grace and love,

I'll be satisfied.

THE TRANSFORMATIVE SIGHT

The Apostle John said: **"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not**

yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (I John 3:2). How marvelous the thought presented in this verse! The believer is predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ (Rom. 8:30). Presently our life is hid with Christ in God (Col. 3:3). When Christ appears in all His glory we shall see Him as He is. Then will take place **"the manifestation of the sons of God"** (Rom. 8:19). The elect will be raised in some physical form, then get a vision of the King in all His beauty, and at that moment be further transformed into His full likeness. Truly we shall be like Him by being able to see Him as He really is.

Here we see Christ in the Word and progressively we are changed from one glorious state of spiritual growth into another. **"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord"** (II Cor. 3:18). But there is a better day coming for the saints. At the appearing of Christ we are to see Him in all His fullness and be at once transformed into His complete likeness! To be like Him is the object of all true Christians. For this we live and strive. At the resurrection morn our long-sought goal will be attained. Oh, to be like the King in His beauty and to go to that land, which is very far off. In that land there will be endless pleasures and unspeakable satisfaction.

SEE HIM AS HE IS

Please mark the words in I John 3:2: **". . . see him as he is."** To see Christ in all His glory as the eternal Son of God is the special privilege of the righteous. To us His divinity will not be veiled. We shall see Him in His human nature with the eyes of the flesh and in His glorious Divine Person with the eyes of understanding. Today we can see only a portion of Him by faith as we read the Word and celebrate the ordinances. This is Heaven on earth. Seeing Him at His appearing in the future is going to be Heaven of heavens. What a glorious, desirable, delightful, satisfying and transformative sight! Think about seeing the King in His glorified human nature with His Divine nature beaming through the human!

To see the King and never lose sight of Him is Heaven's happiness. This honor is reserved for the pure in heart. Jesus said: **"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God"** (Matt. 5:8). The pure in heart shall see Him in the form of God. **"And they shall see his face"** (Rev. 22:4). When God's children are raised perfectly holy, then and only then shall they see God. Until we are completely purged and purified from the old nature we can not see and understand God as we should.

But will not lost sinners see Jesus Christ as their final Judge? Yes, indeed

they shall. **"Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him"** (Rev. 1:7). Truly they shall see Him as their final Judge, but they shall never see Him in the sense of the pure in heart. They shall never see Him in the sense that they will be transformed into His likeness.

NO LONGER THROUGH A GLASS DARKLY

We do not at present see as much of Christ as we want to see or shall see. The Gospels are a photograph of the Son of God. The Lord's Supper shows us His death and baptism, His burial and resurrection. We can see a little of Jesus Christ in His children. Yet all of these do not give us a tithe of the King in His beauty.

The King is coming! When the day of His appearing arrives, we shall see Him no more through a glass darkly. The apostle declared: **For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known"** (I Cor. 13:12). Then we shall say what the queen of Sheba was constrained to say when she saw the glory of Solomon, that one-half of His glory was not told us.

*Face to face with Christ my Savior,
Face to face---what will it be---
When with rapture I behold Him,
Jesus Christ who died for me?*

*Only faintly now I see Him,
With a darkling veil between;
But a blessed day is coming,
When His glory shall be seen.*

*What rejoicing in His presence,
When are banished grief and pain,
When the crooked ways are straightened;
And the dark things shall be plain.*

*Face to Face! O blissful moment!
Face to face---to see and know;
Face to face with my Redeemer,
Jesus Christ who loves me so.*

*Face to face I shall behold Him,
Far beyond the starry sky;
Face to face in all His glory,
I shall see Him by and by!*

CONCLUSION

My dear lost friend, you are going to see Jesus one day. You will see Him when you stand before the Great White Throne Judgment. You will see the One whose face is against them that do evil. You will see the face which makes Heaven and earth flee (Rev. 20:11). You must look into the face of Him who will take **"vengeance on them. . . that obey not the gospel"** (II Thess. 1:8). You must stand before Him whose face shines as

the sun (Matt. 17:2). There you will hear the voice as the sound of many waters say: **"Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire"** (Matt. 25:41). Flee to Christ for mercy and salvation.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Indore Baptist Church of Indore, WV and Pastor Paul Stepp would like to announce their Spring Fellowship Meeting that is scheduled for Monday, May 5th thru Saturday May 10th.

For more information you can contact Pastor Stepp at prstepp@indorebaptistchurch.org or phone at (304) 587-4660.

All are invited to attend the services.

The Grace Missionary Baptist Church and Pastor Raymond Ellis would like to announce that the church has moved its location into the city. The church's new location is at 408 East Deyoung St, Marion, IL.

Anyone located close to this area is invited to attend the services. For more information contact Pastor Ellis at 618-983-8697.

NOW AVAILABLE

The complete television sermons of Milburn Cockrell.

We now have all fifty-eight sermons that Elder Cockrell preached on the television programs **Gleanings from the Scriptures** and **The Sovereign Grace Telecast** available on DVD.

This is a fourteen disc set collection that contain fifty-eight sermons. Many have been waiting for these and they are now all here at last.

These programs are good to loan or give to those that are unable to attend services. These are also good for showing at rest and retirement homes to those who are bedridden or disabled.

We are making this entire set available for only \$25. This is below what it cost us to have them produced but we are making these available so that everyone is able to obtain them.

If you are wanting multiple copies of these, please let us know because we are only having a limited number produced.

World Scene

(Continued from page 320) ♦

In the sparse discussion of the war itself most battles are given a single sentence or ignored altogether. "Meanwhile, the first-hand, individual stories of our veterans are fast disappearing because our veterans are passing away at the rate of 1,500 per day." I can't sit by and let the individual stories of so many great men and women disappear forever.

"If everyone is thinking alike, someone isn't thinking. Lead me, follow me, or get out of my way. Never tell people how to do things. Tell them what to do and they will surprise you with their ingenuity."

General George S. Patton

(Letter, American Veterans Legacy Campaign, Col. Mac McNair, Founder and President, WWII Legacy Campaign).

Stop the ACLU's Agenda Against Religion

It should be troubling to our congress, Supreme Court, and media that the U.S. policy on school prayer is the same as the former Soviet Union's policy. John Paul Stevens and other justices hostile to voluntary school prayer and to all other religious overtures in our educational system are finding things in the Constitution that simply are not there and constitutional scholars have said that for the past 60 years. As our culture changes, many justices are changing the Constitution to fit their own agendas.

Obviously most supreme court judges value legal hair-splitting and legislating their own agendas from the bench, in preference to generations of historical precedents and national customs that have served so well to make America great by helping to instill character, honor, and morality into our greatest national treasures---our future leaders, the precious school children of America.

NO ORGANIZATION IN AMERICA

No organization in America discriminates against religion more than the ACLU! The ACLU (the infamous American Civil Liberties Union) has launched a systematic war against religion in America---and it must stop NOW! The ACLU has already won major battles to:

1. BAN prayer in public schools;
2. BAN nativity scenes;
3. BAN prayer at graduation ceremonies;
4. BAN the Ten Commandments;
5. BAN teachers from having Bibles at their desks;
6. BAN the Boy Scouts from public property.

WHAT'S WORSE

What's worse, the ACLU has actually

raided the American taxpayer's wallets to the tune of millions of dollars in "legal fees"---awarded to them by liberal courts---in order to finance the ACLU's war against religion in America. Finally, our organization called on the Bush administration to help defend religious freedom against the legal assaults of the ACLU---the justice department created a special counsel for religious discrimination. This special counsel is tasked with "identifying religious discrimination cases and bringing lawsuits" against the perpetrator.

WHY IS THIS CAMPAIGN?

Why is this campaign to expose and stop the ACLU's radical anti-religious agenda so vitally important? How far exactly does the ACLU go in its effort to destroy Christianity in America? Here's exactly how far it does: The ACLU is fighting for tax-exempt status for Satanists, and against tax-exempt status for Christian churches!

I BET MANY

I bet many---if not most Americans don't know that the ACLU fought "for" the Satanists while fighting "against" Christian churches in the country! Of course the liberal media won't report it. They love the ACLU and its radical agenda! This is the only way to get the facts out to the American people about the dangers posed by the ACLU, and then stop them.

For example, I'm sure you agree with me that Americans would be "outraged" and "furious" if they found out that taxpayers are one of the nation's biggest donors to the ACLU.

WELL THAT'S EXACTLY

Well, that's exactly what's been happening. Here are just a few examples:

* The city of San Diego handed over more than \$950,000 in legal fees to the ACLU when they lost a legal battle over city support of the Boy Scouts, which the ACLU calls a "religious organization."

* The taxpayers of Alabama forked over \$549,000 in legal fees to the ACLU and their allies after Chief Justice Roy Moore was forced out of office for displaying a Ten Commandments monument.

* Loudoun County, Virginia taxpayers coughed up \$106,918 in legal fees to the ACLU because public libraries were---Heaven forbid---actually using computer software to keep little children from viewing pornography. The ACLU actually got paid to "force a county to supply children with pornography!"

* Elkhart, Indiana gave up the fight for a Ten Commandments display on government property because they didn't have the funds to compete with the ACLU's taxpayer funded lawyers (and even after Elkhart gave up the fight, a liberal judge still forced Elkhart

to pay the ACLU \$63,000!).

As I said before, I bet you "never" heard about any of these out rages from the pro-ACLU liberal elite media.

WHAT IS THE ACLU FOR?

What is the ACLU for? Just to name a few:

- * Supports abortion on demand throughout the pregnancy
- * Supports pro-homosexual school curriculums
- * Supports freedom to desecrate our flag
- * Supports free access to pornography, including internet pornography access for children
- * Supports partial birth abortion
- * Supports legalized drugs
- * Supports legalized polygamy
- * Supports legalized prostitution
- * Supports censorship of the Ten Commandments and the Bible
- * Supports open homosexuality in the military
- * Supports legalized child pornography

WHAT IS THE ACLU AGAINST?

What is the ACLU against? Here are just a few:

- * Opposes "abstinence before marriage" sex education
- * Opposes Christian home schooling
- * Opposes legalized school prayer
- * Opposes our government's post 9/11 security measures
- * Opposes "God bless America" banners in schools
- * Opposes parental consent laws
- * Opposes pro-life demonstrators
- * Opposes religious displays in public
- * Opposes medical safety reporting of AIDS cases
- * Opposes prison terms for most crimes

THE ACLU IS DEFENDING PEDOPHILES

The ACLU defended NAMBLA, the North American Man/Boy Love Association. They represented the group in a lawsuit that was filed by the family of a slain 10-year-old boy, Jeffrey Curley.

Two men followed NAMBLA instructions and lured the boy with the promise of a new bike. They then smothered him with a gasoline soaked rag when the boy resisted their sexual advances. Then they stuffed the little boy's body in a concrete-filled container and dumped him into the river. **This probably was the worst thing the ACLU has ever done---defending homosexual pedophile predators after they raped and murdered a little boy.**

"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge" (Hosea 4:6).

(Excerpts are from previous writings of Captain Evans. Excerpts and letter, Christians Reviving America's Values, Pastor Don Swarthout, President).



BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 2-1-2008 to 2-29-2008

Beginning Balance \$12,702.26
RECEIPTS:
 Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY 100.00
 Berea M. B. C., West Point, TN 50.00
 Grace B. C., Corbin, KY 100.00
 Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS 225.00
 475.00
TOTAL 13,177.26

EXPENDITURES:
 Radio Time 1,900.60
 Postage 21.70
TOTAL EXPENDITURES 1,922.30
 \$11,254.96
 Interest +1.88
 11,256.84
 Less Corbin, KY des. -1,410.92
ENDING BALANCE \$9,845.92

CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT

Beginning Balance \$1,611.52
RECEIPTS:
 1,611.52
EXPENDITURES:
 WCTT 200.60
ENDING BALANCE \$1,410.92

BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 2-1-2008 to 2-29-2008

Beginning Balance \$8,353.09
RECEIPTS:

B. C. of Brimfield, Brimfield, IL 13.17
 Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS 458.36
 Berea B. C., Stonington, IL 60.00
 Berea M. B. C., West Point, TN 150.00
 Bethel M. B. C., Pasadena, TX 100.00
 Bible Believers B. C., Naples, ID 50.00
 Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV 300.00
 Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY 150.00
 Buffalo Valley B. C., Clay, WV 50.00
 Carol Willett, Edgewater, FL 20.00
 Cedar Grove B. C., Millport, AL 50.00
 Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL 25.00
 Faith M. B. C., Lynn, AR 25.00
 Gail Knowles, Scarborough, ME 20.00
 Grace B. C., Corbin, KY 100.00
 Grace B. C., Winston-Salem, NC 50.00
 Grace M. B. C., Marion, IL 50.00
 Grace M. B. C., Tulsa, OK 35.00
 Harold D. Smith, Poplarville, MS 69.00
 Indore B. C., Indore, WV 100.00
 Joseph Jurzec, Richmond, IL 50.00
 Leroy Bullard, Albuquerque, NM 100.00
 Lord's Church, Goose Creek, SC 100.00
 Morris St. B. C., Hobbs, NM 500.00
 Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH 100.00
 New Testament B. C., Bristol, TN 10.00
 New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN 50.00
 Ocoonita M. B. C., Keokee, VA 40.00
 Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL 100.00
 Southside B. C., Fulton, MS 25.00
 South Park M.B.C., Seattle, WA 25.00
 Sovereign Grace B. C., Columbus, MS 50.00
 Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL 100.00
 Sovereign Grace B. C., Wake Forest, NC 100.00
 Victory B. C., Courtland, VA 25.00
 Walnut Creek B. C., Grove City, OH 50.00
 Subscriptions 222.00
 Anon 230.00
 Dividing Checks 206.00
 Sub Total \$3,958.53
TOTAL \$12,311.62

EXPENDITURES:
 Printing 597.51
 Postage 739.93
 Supplies 38.60
 Wages 2,000.00
 FICA 171.37
 Dividing Checks 206.00
 Total Expenditures 3,753.41
ENDING BALANCE \$8,558.21



WORLD SCENE

By
Capt. G. Russell Evans USCG (Ret.)



Whitewash: What the Media Won't Tell You About Hillary

The 2008 presidential race is here now. The liberal media are doing all they can to help Hillary Clinton secure the presidential nomination for her party and win the White House next November. They are helping to shape, spin, dodge, bob, duck weave, and deliver Sen. Clinton's message to American voters in ways that will best work to her advantage. What they won't do is tell the truth about her.

LIBERAL MEDIA

This is nothing new. The liberal media have been spinning their coverage-webs for Hillary Clinton and her philandering husband for years. In fact, the liberal media have been pimping for Hillary Clinton's presidential run since 1992, when she became First Lady and promptly proceeded to draft policies for all Americans, such as her disastrous socialized health care plan. And then there were the scandals she was intimately involved in: Travelgate, Filegate, Chinagate, the bimbo eruptions, cattle futures, and on and on.

Whitewash: What the Media Won't Tell You About Hillary Clinton, But Conservatives Will, my co-author Tim Graham and I detail how the liberal media have actively worked since 1992 to make her presidential timber by deliberately keeping the truth of her scandal-ridden life from the public.

EVIDENCE IN WHITEWASH

Most of the evidence in *Whitewash* was culled from the vast media archives of the MRC, made possible over the last 20 years because of your kind and generous support. But beyond the research there is wonderful analysis. To get that analysis, we turned to over two dozen conservative leaders, such as Rush Limbaugh, Ann Coulter, Sean Hannity, Laura Ingraham, and Newt Gingrich. Their commentary is priceless.

The book, which was released on Nov. 12, answers a question raised by Rush Limbaugh in an interview with us: "The overriding question is: Why Hillary? She is the de facto nominee, the presumptive nominee. But what has she done?"

RUSH'S QUESTION

In the following brief excerpt from the book, we answer Rush's question: "How is it that Hillary is positioned to become the forty-fourth president of the United States? How did Hillary get here? The answer is that she had at her disposal what is arguably the most powerful weapon in politics. For all the books that

have explored her life and times, none has exposed this secret weapon, the real key to her political success, which allowed her to build a political career of her own and is now proving crucial to her presidential campaign.

NATIONAL MEDIA

"The weapon? The news media. The national media have shamelessly served as cheerleaders for Mrs. Clinton from the moment she emerged on the national scene in 1992. Liberal reporters---and truth be told, female liberal reporters especially---have consistently hailed her as a trailblazing pioneer, a feminist role model, a brilliant intellect, a politician of striking compassion, an inspiring leader, and more.

That is why it is so essential to chronicle Mrs. Clinton's years on the national scene---not to rehash 'old news,' but to expose the flaws, failures, and scandals for which the press corps have never held Hillary accountable. . . .The ugly character traits, as well as the radical ideology and poor political judgment, have been there from the beginning. But a servile press corps will never tell you that. We wrote this book to document that reality as well. We will name names, telling you who in the national 'news' media are advancing Hillary Clinton's candidacy, how they are whitewashing her record, and why.

WITHOUT QUESTION

". . .Without question, no political figure in America today has benefited from a water-carrying media more than Hillary Rodham Clinton. The flattery and damage control only continue as Hillary ramps up her presidential campaign. If the media refuse to seek out the truth, we must step in to fill the role they have abandoned. It's not about 'attacking;' it's about letting the American people have the full story so they can judge for themselves whether this media phenomenon is fit to be president."

The liberal media, of course, do not always seek the truth, which is why the MRC was created---and why it has flourished over the last 20 years. Our new book, *Whitewash*, exposes the truth the liberal media have ignored with details and facts that pull the curtain back from Hillary Clinton for all to see.

"It is the duty of nations as well as of men to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God; to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon; and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations are blessed whose God is the Lord."

Abraham Lincoln

October 3, 1863

(Letter, L. Brent Bezel III, Media Research Center, Founder and President)

Textbooks Flunk Test

Social studies textbooks used in elementary and secondary schools are mostly a disgrace that, in the name of the political correctness and multiculturalism, fail to give students an honest account of American history, say academic historians and educational advocates.

"Secondary and college students, and most of the rest of us, have only a feeble grasp of politics and a vague awareness of history, especially the political history of the United States and the world," says Paul Gagnon, emeritus professor of history at the University of Massachusetts.

Would you be shocked, as I am, to discover that great Americans like General Patton, Dwight Eisenhower, Douglas McArthur and many other figures from World War II are being "erased" from our history books? It's true. And it's no accident. Anti-military zealots are proclaiming our World War II veterans to be "murderers" and eliminating their story so that our next generation won't ever hear of them.

There is a group of people whose immediate instinct is always to "blame America first." And they are opposed to concepts like duty, honor, and country. So they are trying to eliminate any hint of those values for the next generation.

And it's happening all over.

For instance, in Great Britain the schools have banned Winston Churchill from the national curriculum. Why? They want a "history" unit on Global Warming, instead. Can you imagine actually banning the mention of one of the greatest leaders of all time? And justifying it by the need to discuss something that isn't even history-related?

At the University of Washington, student leaders tried to stop any mention that WWII Ace Pilot and Medal of Honor recipient "Pappy" Bouington as one of their alumni. They actually said that, as a WWII veteran, he was a "murderer" and cultural imperialist. A survey of the most commonly used high school textbooks in America shows that the study of the war itself, and the prominent figures of the war (like General Patton), has been eliminated in favor of social engineering.

You see there is a tiny minority in this country that "hate" America and concepts like "patriotism" and "freedom." Unfortunately, many of them are enshrined in academia and control what our young people will learn in the government schools. They cynically claim only ignorant people believe in values like duty to God and country, honor, courage, and sacrifice. So they've eliminated almost all of our veterans' story so that they can have expanded units on global warming and social movements that advance their agenda.

I need many thousands of ordinary Americans to also join with us and say, "Enough!" Enough rewriting history. *And enough manipulating of our children's and grandchildren's textbooks to eliminate any hint of patriotism.* This trend started in 1994. The U.S. Department of Education devised a new set of history "standards" to focus on "politically correct" themes.

Gone was any study of our veterans or our leaders or their battles. Instead, there were units about the treatment of Japanese-Americans and African-Americans on the home front. So while students can't name whom we fought in WWII, they can tell us all about racism in America during that time. When an event has such magnitude that it can't be ignored, America's actions are criticized.

For instance, most experts agree dropping the atomic bomb ultimately saved hundreds of thousands of lives, both Japanese and American. By ending the war quickly, a bloody, hard-fought invasion of Japan was avoided, which some thought could take as long as three years. But in one popular high school textbook, *American Odyssey* (published by Glencoe/McGraw Hill), there are five pages of "expert" quotes about the U.S. dropping the atomic bomb, "with every single quote critical of America."

There is no mention of Admiral Nimitz or other great leaders. But there's an entire chapter on "The War and Civil Rights."

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