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The Inevitability of Death

By Raymond F. Bennett

Ithaca, New York

Editor's note: This is the message Bro. Bennett preached for his wife's funeral (Stella Cedenia (Dee) Bennett, Aug. 6, 1935 - Aug. 23, 2002).



"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. 9:27).

As we gather to pay respects to Stella Cedenia Bennett, my beloved wife for 48 years, we are faced with many areas of thought. I want to address just three of them at this time. Please forgive me if I read a good portion of this message, but I am sure you will understand the emotions that are so close to the surface. However, in the course of this message you will discover the reason for those emotions and, hopefully, find the same comfort that God has given me.

That death is inevitable is a foregone conclusion. That fact does not require our attention. I Corinthians 10:13 declares: **"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man. . ."**

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Things Which Help Us to Grow

By Milburn Cockrell

(1941 - 2002)

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (I Per. 2:2).

As pointed out in an earlier chapter, there must be spiritual life before any growth can take place. The source of spiritual increase is from Christ who



Milburn Cockrell

dwells in our hearts in the person of the Holy Spirit. **"As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me"**

(John 6:57). Christ must be the very life and nourishment of the inner man. Unless one is alive in the spiritual realm, he is not better than a walking tomb. Jesus said in John 15:5: **"...for without me ye can do nothing."**

Although living things grow from within, it is also necessary that their environment be right. For a plant to grow it must have rain, fresh air, good soil, and sunshine. In addition to these things, there must be a constant supply of food. What kind of environment is conducive to spiritual

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True Worship

By John A. Broadus

(1827 - 1895)

"But the hour cometh, and now is when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23-24).

Jesus was tired. His humanity is just as important to us as His divinity. He had been doing that which always fatigues. He had walked and worked to win men to God. That is hard work. The disciples had gone ahead to buy



John Broadus

food. The Master rests by Jacob's well. He rouses up to do good. He sees an opportunity—a lone woman of no favorable surroundings. He brought her to God. This good deed affected all the town. It has gone on doing good through all the

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The Life and Character of Moses

By John T. Christian

Part 2

(1854 - 1925)

MOSES THE PHILOSOPHER

In that period that may be called the childhood of the world, Moses knew more of philosophy than has been discovered with all of the advancement and learning of the nineteenth century. I call Moses a great thinker. This means something if we take it in the higher sense of Carlyle: "Not one in a thousand has the smallest time for thinking; only for passive dreaming, and hear-saying, and active babbling by note. "Of the eyes men glare withal, so few can see." Or as Samuel Taylor Coleridge very pertinently asks, "If you are not a thinking man, to what purpose are



J. T. Christian

you a man at all?" Moses thought deep and dived for wisdom's pearl far beneath the current of life. He is thoroughly posted on all scientific subjects. M. Henri, a candid and erudite French writer, says: "The cosmogony of Moses, simple, clear, and natural is evidently the result of learned research. The author of this

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God's Invitation to Sinners

By Timothy Hille

Ashland, Illinois

Read Revelation 22:12-17

Text: vs. 17

We have recorded in our text the last invitation in the Bible to sinners from God. Let me lay this home to your hearts with all force at the outset, the Lord is the One who invites sinners to come and be saved from their sins. If you will ever be saved and receive the forgiveness of sins and everlasting life, it will be because you hearkened unto the voice of Jesus. **"I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches."** He is the One to whom you must look to be saved from sin, and He is the only Saviour. **"Neither**



Timothy Hille

is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved," (Acts 4:12). It is Jesus and only Jesus who says to sinners, **"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,"** (Matt. 11:28). There are others

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

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growth? That is my concern in this chapter.

CONFESS CHRIST BEFORE MEN

The very first thing a newborn babe should do is to profess his faith in Christ. The public confession of Christ must follow faith: **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation"** (Rom. 10:9-10).

No person but one who has felt the need of the Savior and believed unto righteousness, can truly confess Jesus as Lord. I Corinthians 12:3 declares: **"...that no man can say that Jesus is Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."** Confession of the resurrection of Christ as the crowning work of His atonement is as necessary as faith in Him, but for a different reason. Faith is necessary to obtain the gift of

righteousness. Confession is necessary to prove that the gift of righteousness has been received. He who does not publicly confess Christ even at the hazard of his life and liberty, he does not possess saving faith in Christ.

The place this confession is made is in the assembly of baptized believers. Paul told Timothy: **"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses"** (I Tim. 6:12). Timothy had confessed with his mouth the Lord Jesus Christ before the church. He did this in the assembly as well as when he was baptized into the church. Here we have clear Scripture for a person making a public profession of his faith before the assembly of baptized believers.

Baptism is the public confession of faith in Jesus Christ. It sets forth the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, the actual cause of one's salvation. Jesus Christ by His baptism in Jordan set forth in a picture His sufferings and death (Luke 12:50) by which He would fulfill all righteousness for His people (Matt. 3:15). We are to be baptized in water to declare that Jesus by His crucifixion fulfilled all righteousness for His elect. This is why Paul speaks of how the Galatians saw Christ with their eyes, meaning in water baptism: **"O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?"** (Gal. 3:1; cf. 3:27).

Christian baptism commemorates how Christ fulfilled all righteousness for His people on the cross. By the act of water baptism administered by a New Testament Baptist church we profess before the world our personal faith and conscious participation in His sacrificial death and resurrection. The act of baptism puts one into the church, the body of Christ: **"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit"** (I Cor. 12:13).

We must continue to confess our faith in Jesus Christ before the world throughout our Christian life. We cannot live in a corner hid out from the world. The Christian must constantly and consistently confess Christ as his Savior before men. Our Lord said: **"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven"** (Matt. 10:32-

33). Under every circumstance and at all hazards we must confess Christ. This may subject us to laughter, scorn, persecution, and even death. If we would have Christ confess us as His before the Father in Heaven, then we must confess Him as ours before the men of this evil world. Those who use every opportunity to confess Christ before men invariably succeed in their Christian life.

BE AN ACTIVE CHURCH MEMBER

Jesus Christ commanded His disciples to be church members. In the New Testament a candlestick represents the church (Rev. 1:20). Our Lord taught His followers to put their light on a candlestick: **"Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven"** (Matt. 5:15-16). A Christian who does not unite with the church has put his light under a bushel. This is abnormal. Saul, as soon as he was converted, tired to join himself to the Jerusalem church (Acts 9:26). His first request for admission was rejected, but upon Barnabas's recommendation the church received him (Acts 9:27-31). Every person who has had an experience of grace should desire to join a New Testament Baptist church and to become an active member.

The reasons for being a church member are numerous. First, the church is the place where baptism and the Lord's Supper can be enjoyed, for they are both ordinances of the church. Second, the church only has the commission to make disciples, to baptize, and teach all things Christ commanded (Matt. 28:18-20). Third, the church is the primary place the Lord receives glory in this age (Eph. 3:21). Fourth, the assembly of the saints is the place to have fellowship with Christ and His people (Matt. 18:20; I John 1:3). Fifth, the church is the place we are to bring our tithes and offerings (I Cor. 16:1-2). Sixth, the church is the place of public worship (Heb. 10:25). Seventh, the house of God is the place of comfort and cheer (I Cor. 12:25-27).

More important than any of these is that the church is a place of spiritual growth:

"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge

of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive: But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ" (Eph. 4:11-15).

The church is the place to be edified, the place for imperfections to be corrected. In order to develop and grow spiritually, saints need the teaching of God-called men who preach and teach in the church. These pastors-teachers are to perfect the saints. This way we can cease to be spiritual children and become full-grown men in Christ. One must be a faithful church member; he must attend all the instructions of these spiritual guides. A Bible-believing church will have a good Bible-centered ministry. If you want to grow up into Christ, then be a church member and have a pastor.

De Wette renders Psalm 84:7: **"Going they increase in strength until they appear before God in Zion."** The context is about public worship in this Psalm. Those who are faithful to worship in the house of God can bear trials better. They overcome more easily; they walk cheerfully and triumphantly on this earth. We gain strength in our journey to the palace of the great King by attending public worship. This advancement is a never-ending process. We must never minimize the place of the church in development in the Christian life.

Those who shun membership in a New Testament Baptist church are destined to remain babes in Christ, or minimum Christians. Believers who are non-church members have despised the body and bride of Christ. By refusing to be baptized in water at the hands of the church, they show they are not the friends of Christ (John 15:16). They have rejected the counsel of God (Luke 7:30), and they have refused to put on the uniform of a Christian soldier (Gal. 3:26). The Christian who does not tithe his income to the church is a robber (I Cor. 6:9-10) and under the curse of God (Mal. 3:8-10). These weak believers usually end up in some cult or with New Agers.

WITNESS FOR CHRIST

The gospel is the good news about the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. As such it must be carried by one individual to another individual. Those who have experienced the saving grace of God should desire and

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feel an obligation to tell others the good news. Each Christian has an influence and comes in contact with others. These opportunities of telling the good news must not be neglected.

The Scriptures speak clearly on this matter. **“He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus...”** (John 1:41-42). **“The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? then they went out of the city, and came unto him”** (John 4:28-29). **“Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee”** (Mark 5:19). **“And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias....Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus”** (Acts 8:30,35).

The growing Christian has in his heart a genuine concern for lost souls. Our Lord Himself wept over sinners: **“And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it”** (Luke 19:41). Paul was deeply concerned about the unsaved: **“I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh”** (Rom. 9:1-3). Paul was not only concerned about lost souls, but he also prayed that God would save them: **“Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved”** (Rom. 10:1). If a professed believer has not concern for the conversion of lost sinners, I fear his own soul is in imminent danger.

We cannot impart spiritual life to dead sinners. Only God can do that. But there are some things we can do. We can teach transgressors the ways of the Lord and see sinners converted unto Him (Ps. 51:13). We can be used of God to **“turn many to righteousness”** (Dan. 12:3). We can make disciples for Jesus Christ (Matt. 28:19-20). We can be a servant of the Lord by whom men believe the gospel (I Cor. 3:5). God can use us to convert a sinner and to save a soul

from death (Jas. 5:19-20). We may be used of God by witnessing of Christ to pull a brand from the fire (Jude 23).

Many of us know by experience that nothing makes a stronger Christian than one who is a bold witness of Jesus Christ. The world has Christ and the church on trial, and we are His witnesses. Many false witnesses put us to shame. The Apostle John was on the island of Patmos **“for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ”** (Rev. 1:2,9). The tribulation martyrs in Heaven are there **“for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held”** (Rev. 6:9). Jesus Christ said the time would come when the ungodly world would turn to us **“for a testimony”** (Luke 21:13). Let us make sure that we are both ready and willing to tell them the good news about Jesus Christ and what He has done for us.

GO TO WORK FOR THE LORD

In I Corinthians 15:58 it is written: **“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”** The word **“always”** is used by Paul to remind his readers of the perseverance, which characterizes Christian service. No believer should stand idle all the day. He should seek out some work for the Lord and do it faithfully. In doing the Lord’s work we must be fixed and settled. We must have a strong conviction and purpose of heart, which is not easily disturbed by things that would turn us aside. We must not let temptation or trials blunt the edge of our consecration.

What are some of the works we can do for Christ? We should strive for the advancement of His church in prosperity and spirituality. We are to conduct family devotions and to religiously educate our children. We are to redeem the time and to walk circumspectly before the ungodly world. We are to be honest and fair in our dealings with other people. We are to pray for one another and provoke one another to love and good works. We are to help the sick, the aged, and the fatherless. Like our Lord, we must go about doing good (Acts 10:38).

The person who works the hardest for Christ will experience the greatest spiritual achievements. If God works in us (Phil. 2:12; Acts 20:24), verily we shall work for Him. The Christian who serves little, will grow little. Christ has appointed **“to every man his work”** (Mark 13:34), and He has said: **“Son, go work to day in my vineyard”** (Matt. 21:28).

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PRAY ON A DAILY BASIS

In Hebrews 4:16 it is written: **“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”** There is much in this verse to encourage us to pray. While God’s throne is one of majesty and sovereignty, it is to His children a throne of grace. Every utterance from this throne is an utterance of grace. The scepter that is stretched from it is a scepter of grace. The very throne upon which our great High Priest sits rests on grace, which is upheld by mercy, and from which blessings flow forth a free and plenteous stream to the wretched and unworthy.

How sweet the words: **“Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace.”** The real sense in the Greek means “to speak everything,” an expression for unembarrassed, unrestrained, full outpouring of the heart. We are to bring our prayers cheerful and unembarrassed with full confidence He will give us a hearing as a dear Friend. This is a reference to the believer’s entrance into the full blessing of a life spent in the power of Christ’s heavenly priesthood.

We suffer many failures in the Christian life. Our growth is stunned because sin enters into our lives. We are plagued with weakness and worldliness, pride, self-sufficiency, the fear of man, and neglect of doing good things. For these things we need forgiving mercy. By confession of our sins and failure, we can obtain the mercy of the Lord. **“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”** (I John 1:9).

Because of our failures and weaknesses, we need grace so as to make progress in Christian living. Future temptation and trials await us. We may soon walk in slippery places. Dark doubts may assail us. Grace will inspire and strengthen us to press on to spiritual maturity. By daily prayer we must request this enabling grace from our great High Priest. By an abundant supply of this grace we can

grow into the likeness of Jesus Christ.

William W. Walford (1772-1850) wrote in his beloved hymn:

Sweet hour of prayer!

Sweet hour of prayer!

*That calls me from a world of care,
And bids me at my Father’s throne
Make all my wants and wishes known;
In seasons of distress and grief,
My soul has often found relief,
And oft escaped the tempter’s snare
By thy return, sweet hour of prayer.*

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

In I Peter 2:2 it is written: **“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.”** Appetite is an effect of life. A tree receives nourishment from the earth and sun; therefore, it stretches out its branches to receive the sun, and it sends its roots deep into the earth. This is the very nature of a tree. A newborn lamb runs to its mother for nourishment, though there be a thousand sheep in the fold. The little lamb desires its mother’s milk. It needs no instruction in nursing; it does this by instinct. Even so, a newborn babe in Christ desires the written Word of God by instinct. A desire for the Word of God proves a person has been born again (I Pet. 1:23).

God’s written Word is the Christian’s food. The new life desires this and is nourished by it. There is a hungering thirst for the Bible, an impatient longing for it. The young Christian will take advantage of every opportunity to hear it. It is milk for the saint’s intelligence. It is strength for the inner man, and it produces spiritual growth. No one has ever backslidden who daily feasts upon the Word of God.

Note how Peter puts stress upon **“the sincere milk of the word.”** This means “without guile, pure.” If not corrupted by men, the Bible is such: **“...the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes”** (Ps. 19:8). Peter means the Bible is unadulterated by the mixture of men, who often corrupt the Word of God (II Cor. 2:17). The Word

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improves a believer, for it does not leave him as it finds him. Unless the new life is nourished on the pure milk of the Word of God, the soul cannot grow to spiritual maturity.

It is no marvel that we have so many sick Christians in our churches. In order for newborn babes to grow they must hear the truths of the Word, the whole counsel of God. Regrettably, the vast majority of church members hear very little of the Word. In some cases it is just simply not preached in some churches. In other cases it is preached, but there is a famine of the hearing of the Word. Many pastors stay away from any controversial subjects, lest they offend some of the worldly members who put money into the church. Many preachers have quit preaching the Word. Instead they are entertaining goats on the way to Hell. Churches have been reduced to goat barns!

If newborn babes desire the Word, then surely young men and fathers must desire both the milk and the meat of the Word. Christ said of His disciples: **"My sheep hear my voice"** (John 10:27). The professed Christian who is bored by the preaching of the Word of God is a Judas-goat. Our Lord said: **"He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God"** (John 8:47). In I John 4:6 it is written: **"We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us."**

John Burton (1773-1822) so well wrote:

*Holy Bible, Book divine,
Precious treasure, thou art mine;
Mine to tell me whence I came;
Mine to teach me what I am.*

*Mine to comfort in distress,
Suffering in this wilderness;
Mine to show by living faith,
Man can triumph over death.*

BE LED OF THE SPIRIT

The Spirit leads all believers: **"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God"** (Rom. 8:14). The Spirit begins His gentle leading at conversion and continues to encourage the saints in the path of service for Christ and spiritual advancement. It is not the relationship of children which is being stressed, but that of a son or a spiritual adult. Those who have learned to follow the leadings of the Spirit are Christians who have experienced some growth. They have learned to put to death the deeds of the body by

help of the Spirit.

The word **"led"** means the exertion of a power of control over the actions of its subjects. Every movement of the divine life in man is owing to the Spirit. Every heavenward desire, and every yearning after Christ, is from the Spirit and by the Spirit. The Holy Spirit continually exerts Himself so as to effect all operations of a Christian man's activities, throughout every moment of his life. While stress is put on the controlling influence of the Spirit over the activities of God's sons, Paul does not represent the work of the Spirit as a substitute for our activities. Spiritual development is under the controlling influence of the Spirit, but the actual progress is owing to our own efforts.

You need to ask yourself the question: Is this life that I am living in the flesh a product of the Holy Spirit? Does the Holy Spirit lead me? Am I a son of God? Or, do I often grieve the Spirit? To grieve the Spirit is to hinder His loving and merciful operations in our lives. It is to hinder our spiritual growth and fruitfulness. To grieve the Spirit is to refuse to obey His teachings; it is to shun His leadings. Oh, let us walk in the Spirit. Let us be led of the Spirit in our daily lives!

Marcus M. Wells (1815-1895) uttered these encouraging words:

*Holy Spirit, faithful Guide,
Ever near the Christian's side;
Gently lead us by the hand,
Pilgrims in a desert land;
Weary souls forever rejoice,
While they hear that sweetest voice,
Whispering softly, "Wanderer, come!
Follow Me, I'll guide thee home.*

FORGET PAST FAILURES

In Philippians 3:12-14 it is written: **"Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."**

While Paul had made some progress in spiritual matters, the great apostle recognized he was not yet spiritually mature. His growth was not yet complete, for there was room for advancement. **"Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect....Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended."** He was not as he should be. He had not laid hold on that which Christ had

provided for him.

For what purpose had Christ apprehended (or laid hold upon) Paul? It was that the apostle should be completely conformed to His image (Rom. 8:29). The Lord Jesus desired the transformation of all parts of his personality into the character likeness of Jesus Christ. Paul's goal was the righteousness and holiness as found in Christ. This is the ultimate goal of all the Lord's people. We are to strive to be in life and lip like our Redeemer.

"Forgetting those things which are behind." Our confession of failures and God's forgiveness is the only way to deal with the past (I John 1:9). If we do not deal with the past, the past will become a haunting memory to sap our strength and to hinder spiritual growth. Don't let the past hinder the present or the future. Let the past, good or bad, be the past. Get rid of it by confession and correction. Don't let past accomplishments be viewed as though they cannot be equalled or surpassed.

We live in the present, and we must be concerned with the present. We cannot change the past. The future is not yet here. We must deal with things as they now are. **"Reaching forth unto those things which are before."** Go forward from where you are, for there is plenty of room in that direction. Each day that we live we must strive to be more Christlike. This is a never-ending work of a Christian while he remains on this earth.

"I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Paul is saying my rule of conduct is this. Forgetting the failures and successes which are behind me, I press forward toward the goal of Christlikeness, to win the prize (the reward) at the Judgment Seat of Christ. This should be true of each child of God. We must not merely make progress in Christian living; we must aim at perfect likeness to Jesus Christ. This involves perseverance, discipline, and determination.

EXPECT HIS COMING

The natural and normal attitude of a child of God is to live in constant expectation of the Lord's return. This hope causes self-purging on the part of those who have it: **"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"** (I John 3:2-3). The Christian hope is to see Christ as He is and to be made like Him (Col. 3:4). At His

first coming we received His life by faith. At His second coming we shall receive His likeness by sight: **"...we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself"** (Phil. 3:20-21).

This sure and blessed hope constrains a voluntary purity, a desire to become what we hope for. This hope is practical, and it does not lead to loose living. To know we may shortly stand at the Judgment Seat of Christ, will cause a person to purify himself in word, thought, and action. The one link between sonship here and likeness to Christ at His coming is a strenuous effort to maintain personal purity and to move forward in Christian growth. If a man is not seeking to purify himself and to be like the Pure One, it is clear he has no faith in the coming Savior.

There is much to make a man downhearted in his work of self-improvement. It seems we make so little progress. Slowly we manage some growth, inch by inch and bit by bit. But just about the time we seem to be doing better an outburst of temptation comes, and we backslide. But keep on keeping on in your attempts of Christian growth. Take free courage. Soon your limited progress shall be swallowed up by a complete likeness to the Savior. This will happen when Jesus comes again.

God's Invitation to

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spoken of in our text as saying, **"Come,"** and we shall note who they are in the course of the message; but these are those who speak on Christ's behalf and at His command. They are His heralds and His mouthpieces, by which He issues His call unto sinners to come and be reconciled unto God by Him. My prayer is that you might heed the call of God even today.

We note three distinct groups mentioned in this verse, the first two being those who send forth the invitation of God, and the latter of the three being those who are bidden. God is still bidding lost men, women, boys, and girls to come and take of the water of life. If that were not so, then His kind of local New Testament missionary Baptist church would no longer be in the world. I do not know how much longer God will extend the invitation to lost sinners. I do not know how much longer the door of mercy will remain open and the

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God's Invitation to

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message of the gospel of peace be sounded out. There is an urgency in proclaiming the gospel of Christ and inviting sinners to come and be saved, because there is coming a day in the which the door of God's mercy will be closed and the heavens shall be opened for the pouring out of His wrath upon unrepentant and unbelieving sinners. The invitation is given on this wise: **"To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts,"** (Heb. 4:7). **"For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation,"** (II Cor. 6:2). You that linger and put off the things of God for another day, today is the only day of which you have promise from God. Therefore we beseech you that you heed His invitation: **"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near,"** (Isa. 55:6). For the promise is thus from the scriptures, **"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved,"** (Rom. 10:13).

I would therefore that we note the following from the Word of the Lord this morning, and may He be pleased to open hearts that they might attend unto the things spoken of from His Word. First, I would that we should note *those who invite*. We have already stated that it is none other than God who calls sinners unto Himself, and that you must look to Him and Him alone in order to be saved; but let us note that agency by which He issues His call, namely **"the Spirit and the bride"**, and **"him that heareth"**. Secondly, let us take note of *the invitation that is given*, and we note that it is a simple one - **"Come"**. Then, let us see *those bidden* to come, and that they are such as are athirst, not physically, but spiritually. Finally, let us see *the gift of God and the manner in which it is given to those who are invited*: **"whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely."**

I. Those Who Invite.

The invitation of God to sinners is sounded out today by the Holy Spirit and the Lord's kind of New Testament church. **"The Spirit and the bride say, Come."** The Holy Spirit is the one who speaks to the hearts of men, women, boys, and girls, convicting them of sin, witnessing to their hearts of the truth of the gospel, and giving them repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus stated concerning the Holy Spirit, **"And when he is come, he**

will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment," (John 16:8). The Spirit of God makes the preaching of the gospel effectual to the saving of men's souls. We speak to men's ears, but it is the Spirit who speaks to their hearts.

The Spirit of God invites sinners in conjunction with the bride, the local New Testament missionary Baptist church. The church is the body that God has commissioned to spread the gospel and witness to men of the saving grace of God. The bride invites sinners to come to Christ. **"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned,"** (Mark 16:15,16). The bride has a message, and that message is **"Come!"** This church is here for a purpose, and that purpose is to invite you that are lost and on the road to hell to come to Christ and be saved. We are missionary Baptists because God has charged us with proclaiming the invitation (Rom. 10:13-15). If you ignore the invitation of this church, you are not ignoring the preacher, or the Sunday School teacher, or the members, you are ignoring God who speaks through His kind of church. Jesus said to His kind of church, **"He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me,"** (Luke 10:16). The Holy Spirit works in and through the Lord's churches to witness to sinners of the salvation that is in Christ Jesus to the glory of God (Acts 1:8).

The scriptures also state, **"And let him that heareth say, Come."** Those who hear and believe are become ambassadors and messengers themselves of the grace of God. The Lord uses those whom He has saved to invite others to come unto Him (II Cor. 5:18-20). To the lost I say none other things than I myself have heard: **"Come!"** I can tell you, if you are here and lost today, that Jesus invites sinners to come because he invited me and I heard His voice. You that are saved, you are to be bearers of this invitation. **"We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak,"** (II Cor. 4:13). We can say none other things than that which we have believed and been assured of by the Holy Spirit, that Jesus is the Son of God, and **"whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life,"** (John 3:16).

II. The Invitation.

Having noticed those who are used

of God to proclaim the invitation, let us now note the invitation itself: **"Come."** The gospel invitation which is proclaimed to all men is this. God bids sinners to come and be saved, to come to the fountain opened for sin and be cleansed, to come and receive that which He has provided through the shed blood of His only begotten Son Jesus Christ.

If anyone shall be saved, then he or she must come to Christ at the invitation of God. **"And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst,"** (John 6:35). (Read John 5:39,40.) Those who shall perish are those who will not come to Christ. You cannot stay where you are and be saved, you must come to the Saviour. What is it to come to Christ? It is the same thing as believing on Him, trusting Him as Saviour and Lord, turning from your sins and looking to Jesus for forgiveness and everlasting life. Many will gladly come to church, but this does not save. The church tells people about the One who can and does save, and to whom they must come in order to be saved.

In that God invites sinners to come, He enables them to come. No one can come to Christ except they receive the invitation (John 6:37,44,65). There is nothing in a sinner to make him or her come to Christ. He or she can only come by the invitation and effectual call of God. You that are saved would not have come to Christ except that you were invited, and that not only by some person inviting by the preaching of the gospel, but God drawing you and enabling you by His Spirit. David said in the Psalms, **"When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek,"** (Ps. 27:8). God verily uses human means to call men, women, boys, and girls to salvation through belief of the truth; but He makes the call effectual and He speaks to the hearts of sinners, saying, **"Come."** The invitation of God is thus: **"Come; for all things are now ready,"** (Luke 14:17; cf. Matt. 22:1-4). God does not tell sinners to bring anything, for they have nothing He wants. **"All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags,"** (Isa. 64:6). God has provided all that is needed for the sinner to be saved from sin in the sacrifice of His Son and the blood that was shed at Calvary. If you will not come and believe in the shed blood of Jesus, you will die in your sins.

III. Those Bidden.

"And let him that is athirst come." Note that those who are invited are not those who have but those who

have not. God invites those who need, and verily are aware of their need by the working of His Spirit upon them. Those who are athirst are bidden to come and partake of living water, which water, if they drink of it, shall cause them to never thirst again. Jesus said, **"If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water,"** (John 7:37,38). Jesus invites those who are thirsting, those who are hungering, those who are weary and fainting because of sin.

Beloved, God invites those who have a need; and yet, except He reveals it to them by the preaching of the Word and the working of the Holy Spirit, they do not even know their own need. Jesus told the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, **"If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water,"** (John 4:10). People don't even know that they need the living water that comes only from the Lord because sin has blinded their eyes and deafened their ears so that they cannot see, nor hear, nor know except that Jesus speak to their heart, **"Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst."** (Read John 4:14-29.) Jesus showed this woman her need, and then He showed her that He is the One who meets the sinner's need.

Are you thirsting? You have eaten and drank from the world, and you have hungered and thirsted again. Are you athirst in your soul? Are you parched because of sin? Jesus said, **"They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance,"** (Mark 2:17). Perhaps you are like the prodigal (Luke 15:16-20). **"Let him that is athirst come."**

IV. The Gift to Those Who Come.

"And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." That which God gives is the water of life, that if a man drink, he shall never thirst again. This is given, not on account of being fit, for no one is fit to drink. This is not given for one's works or merit, but is given freely to whosoever believeth (Isa. 55:1-3). Salvation is free to all who will believe that Christ died, was buried, and rose again, and will come in repentance and faith to the Lord. There is no exception, but the gift of life is given to **"whosoever will"** come and take of this water of life. The only thing that stands in your way is your own unbelief (Rom. 10:8-11). **"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord,"** (Rom. 6:23).

The Rantings and Ravings of Brother Ritechus N. Dignation



HOLY REAL ESTATE

Seems like some churches are more interested in temporal things rather than the eternal. A lot of time, money, effort and fuss in goes into land and buildings, particularly parsonages. The church parsonage, which was seldom heard of in the old days, has become a sacred cow of today, with a lot of churches, but is now a dinosaur, in my humble opinion.

Some churches have wised up and now give a housing allowance to their pastor so he can rent or buy his own piece of dirt and boards. Carnal church members are opposed to such "foolishness," because in their words, "Well, nobody gives me a housing allowance to buy my house. I have to work to come up with the money." Well, if they just traded pants with their pastor for one month, they would think differently when they realized he carries a bigger work load than them, through the stress and burden of being on call 24 hours a day, not to mention visiting 'til he drops and putting out fires while try'in to "stay" spiritual, prayed up and studied up for next week's sermons.

Time and again, I've seen my brethren in their old age have nowhere to go, after giving their life to the Lord's work, living a lifetime in a company house called the parsonage. It might be a different story if churches paid enough for them to squirrel away some money to buy a house, but ministry income usually provides just enough for the here and now, not the future.

Ask the preacher's wife how she feels. Somehow, you can never feel at home when the home belongs to everybody else. When you have to get a church vote to drive a nail or change the color of paint on a wall, somehow, a sense of belonging just ain't there. If a church does give up the parsonage and pay the preacher enough to buy a home, they give up some leverage of authority over him. You see, if they vote him out, he doesn't have to move out of "their" house, 'cause he's got his own. I suspect the power people in the church would oppose a housing allowance for this reason, as well as the old "Our pastor has always lived in the parsonage" plea.

Somehow, folks get the idea that the parsonage preacher is gett'in rich, since he doesn't pay rent, or utilities. Believe me, from what I've seen, there's never much danger of the average preacher turn'in a big profit on ministry pay alone. If anything, he may have to turn to the dirty "S" word and supplement his income. I hope some churches will open their eyes, kill the real estate sacred cow, provide for the man of God and get on with the Lord's business. And thank the Lord for those churches that already do.

Brother Ritechus N. Dignation

True Worship

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ages. This incident, so full of instruction gives an instance of the power of introducing religion into ordinary conversation; for Christian people this is a faculty to be desired—the tact to introduce religion into conversation. This woman came to draw water. Jesus tells of spiritual refreshment. She had no deep sense of personal sin. How delicately He managed to remind her of her own sinful life. Ah, the trouble of all troubles is, the world does not feel its sinfulness. Again there came to her the thought that He was a prophet; then the idea of worship, as she looked back from Jacob's well at Mount Gerizim. She speaks of the fathers

worshipping in that mountain, and the Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus spoke to her the words of our text.

Let us think awhile on that important theme of Jesus. Why should we worship God? How should we worship God? Why? Many of you are convinced that you ought to worship. There are two comprehensive reasons for worshipping: It is due to God; it is good for us. The German philosopher says: "Two things awaken sublimity within me: The starry heavens and man's moral nature." Why not worship Him who made them both? High heaven is but a thin reflection of the power and glory of God, and the moral nature of man is but a broken image of the character of God. We should adore God for the glory of His works. We should adore Him for

His holiness. We admire holiness. The worst man in Louisville, God knows who he is, sometimes admires goodness. Oh! shall we not adore the goodness of God, the high, sinless and pure Intelligence around whom angels cry, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty? There is something in you and me that responds to the thought of God's goodness. There are strange longings in our natures. How low we can fall, how high aspire. I have had moments of sympathy with those in Asia who bow to the sun as he rises in splendor, and we may sympathize with those who indulge in hero worship. All these are trifling. None can meet the ideal of our nature but the idea of God. "Thou hast made us for Thyself," says great Augustine.

Then worship expresses our dependence. How helpless we feel at times. The earth is rolling around with us and whirling along with us. We cannot help ourselves; we want to look higher, and again worship soothes our sorrows. I appeal to the experience of many here who have gone to places of worship troubled and come away soothed. And worship strengthens us to bear the burdens of life. Earth's burdens are sometimes terrible. What are we, flesh and blood, that we should slight God's help? Worship makes deeper the root of morality. There are surface roots, but the tap-root of morality is the fear of God. What would become of our happiness, our property, our lives, if everybody in Louisville ceased to worship God? My friends, you who do not worship regularly, consider, I pray you, how much you love your friends, your community, your age, your own soul, and worship regularly.

The other question: How shall we worship God? The text says in spirit and in truth. God is the Spirit; spiritual worship is essentially independent of any locality. Under the old dispensation, the childhood of our race, there was the picture-book system, symbolic places; now we are to worship anywhere, everywhere. We err when we apply the terms of the old temple worship to our modern places of worship. You can't have a holy house according to the New Testament idea. You can dedicate a house, you cannot consecrate. The only thing you can consecrate is a life. Why then do we have special places of worship? Principally for convenience. And there is a great power of association in the human mind.

Again, spiritual worship must subordinate to itself all the externals it may employ. Spiritual worship must have externals. I knew a man who said there was no use of spoken prayer, that a man might think his

prayer.

But God has to express Himself in spirit and in word; so must we express the inward by the outward. Externals must be subordinate. The beautiful features in architecture, in music, in style of speech, are natural expressions of spiritual worship; but the moment we appeal to them as merely gratifying taste, we do harm. It is difficult to prevent this. Think a moment; there are some men who, under the influence of drink or opium, feel religious and talk maudlin morality, yet to use these as religious influences would be outrageous. People say it would be well to use pictures and statuary as religious influences in church, and in spite of the Ten Commandments a large portion of Christianity do this. They say pictures of the life of Christ, and the crucifixes, help to bring them to the Saviour. Ah, the soul is dragged down from Christ to the crucifix. The same is true in regard to architecture, flowers in the pulpit, eloquence in the pulpit, charming music. So I expect all who preach in this pulpit to preach in the spirit and in the truth. I exhort all who sing in the choir, sing with the spirit and the understanding. Singing is a beautiful gift. It is a dangerous help to worship—danger that the singer may think of self, or that the audience may think of the performance. Singers, sing as in the sight of God, who searches hearts; worshippers, put your heart into all your worship. Then shall ye bring blessings to your souls and bless those about you. Have a tone of spiritual hospitality. Bring the glow of household hospitality to your church. Warm the stranger's heart who may enter. He may come again and become the pillar of the church. When the candidate is buried in the baptismal water, confessing Christ, be as solemn as at a real burial. When you gather at the table with the bread and wine, try to put your soul in solemn remembrance. When bridal processions sweep down the aisles and you see happy faces, pray God's blessing on them. Ah, when the coffin comes with its sorrowing scene, pray to the Great Comforter to heal the aching hearts. Let all things in this house be worshipped in spirit and in truth to God, the Spirit and Truth.

We send our children to school to train for college, and these train for the great school of life. Oh, that our worship in the flesh would better enable us to enter the higher, sublimer, delightful worship of Heaven.

*"Oh, that with yonder sacred throng,
We at His feet may fall;
We'll join the everlasting song,
And crown Him Lord of all."*

(*The Pulpit Treasury*, Aug. 1886).

Life and Character

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system, respecting the origin of the earth and the heavens, must necessarily have devoted himself to profound meditations on the history of the globe; and it is certain, that geology must, in his day, have reached an extraordinary point of perfection, for the historian to follow, as Moses has done, step by step, all the mysteries of that creation." M. Saintis remarks in his history of Rationalism in Germany, "So many things would prove Moses to be a wise geologist of our own age, if he did not learn the facts which he related, from some other source than the study of the formation of the globe, that it is only a mind in which great frivolity of character is joined to deplorable ignorance, that can perceive any flagrant contradiction between Holy Scripture and the profane sciences." And in another passage referring to Genesis, he remarks, "The sciences, in our days, display in their teachings, notwithstanding the assertions to the contrary, more and more harmony with biblical facts."

Moses places the creation of man last in the order of Genesis, and this is wonderfully corroborated by Geology. In the beautiful words of Mr. Richardson we will say, "The whole vast series of aqueous deposits, are crowded with organic remains, with fragments of the weeds, plants, corals, shells, crustaceae, fish, reptiles, birds and mammalian, relics of the vegetable and animal existence of the ancient earth; but no fossil remains of the human form have yet discovered in the solid rocks themselves, or in any, since the accumulations of silt or mud, which date from the most modern era, the yesterday, as it were, in the infinite history of the past. It is only in these accumulations of the historic period that we discover the remains of even the most ancient families of mankind; that in the British Isles, we meet with the implements or utensils of the ancient Britons, or the coins and weapons of their Roman invaders; that in Italy we find the Cyclopean structures and works of the Etruscans, a nation who appeared to have preceded the Romans in occupation of Italy, and to have excelled them in civilization and the arts of life; while vestiges of the Pelasgi are alike discovered in similar deposits of Greece; and in the New World, traces exist of the Talteques, a people who seem to have been the predecessors of the Mexicans, and their superiors in knowledge and improvement. In the solid repeat, no traces of man are

discernible."

Look at the clear views Moses had of God, of the brotherhood of man, and the unity of the human race. On these subjects scientists are still lingering in the border land, but Moses had gone up and possessed the country.

THE LAWGIVER

The Bible has ruled the world; all the beneficent laws which have governed the nations have directly or indirectly been derived from the Bible. Blackstone, that eminent writer on common law, has fully admitted this. "As God," says he, "when he created matter and endued it with a principle of mobility, established certain rules for the direction of that motion, so, when he created man, and endued him with free will, to conduct himself in all part of life, he laid down certain immutable laws of good and evil, to which God himself always conforms, and which, as applicable to man, reason can discover; and which are so admirably ordered of God, as always to promote the substantial and permanent happiness of men; such, *e. g.*, as that we should live honorably, hurt nobody, and render to every one his due. Indeed, to these three precepts Justinian has reduced the whole doctrine of law. This is the law of nature. But further, in comparison to the frailty, the imperfection, and the blindness of human reason, God hath been pleased, at sundry times and in divers manners, to discover and enforce his laws by an immediate and direct revelation. The doctrines thus delivered we call the revealed or divine law, and they are to be found only in the Holy Scriptures. These precepts, when revealed, are found, upon comparison, to be really a part of the original law of nature, as they tend, in all their consequences, to man's felicity; but, though agreeable to right reason, reason, unaided and alone, could not make them known. Upon these two foundations, the law of nature, and the law of revelation, depend all human laws; that is to say, no human laws should contradict them."

Jurisprudence is indebted to no portion of the Word of God more than to the books of Moses. It is not to the stern laws of Solon, or the wisdom of Confucius that the world has turned, but to Moses. Not the Forum, not the Areopagus, but the lone granite mountain of Sinai has become the judicial centre of the world. I here use the words of Chief Justice Hornblower of New Jersey: "When these giants of human intellect can tell me whence Moses derived his science in legislation, without admitting the supernatural and divine authority of the Ten Commandments, I shall begin

to listen with more reverence to the teachers of human perfectibility. In that short and comprehensive code, we find given to us a perfect rule of action, covering the whole ground of man's existence; a rule, not only prescribing our duty to God and man, in our external behavior, but reaching to the secret thoughts and feelings of our hearts in every possible condition of life, and in all our relations to our maker and to our fellow beings. The wisdom of ages, the learning and philosophy of the schools, have never discovered a single defect in that code. Not a virtue which is not there inculcated. Not a vice, in its most doubtful and shadowy form, which is not there prohibited. Whence, then, I ask, did the great Jewish lawgiver derive his spirit of legislation? If that code was written by the finger of the Almighty, let us bow in it with holy reverence, and seek no better rule of life, nor any wiser principles of action. But if it emanated only from the capacious mind, and was the capacious mind, and was dictated by the wisdom of Moses—then Moses was a wiser, a more learned man, than any of our new teachers; and I had rather be under his jurisdiction and keep his commandments, than learn new rules of civil polity and social intercourse from the most learned and wise of the present day."

We boast of our liberty and free institutions, but all of these were learned from Moses. His system of society was for the people and not to elevate the few in rank or power; it was one of equality, not the circumstances, but the civil institutions were contrived with that end in view.

THE GENERAL

Josephus tells us that Moses at the head of the Egyptian army gained great victories over the Aethiopians and captured Saba. However this may be we know he was a warrior of great powers. Pharaoh had a well organized army and successful generals; the Israelites had no arms, no provisions, for years they had been in slavery, and yet he successfully led them out of Egypt. In the wilderness there were

many enemies who would have been only too glad to overcome them. By his skillful generalship he defeated Sihon and Og; and by not following his advice the battle of Hormah was lost. It is true that he did not sweep over the entire East as a mighty tornado, as did Alexander; he did not fight the bloody Marengo, or Austeritz, as did Napoleon, but he conquered under more adverse circumstances than any general who ever lived.

THE PREACHER AND THE MAN OF GOD

His doctrine distilled as the dew, and his speech dropped like the rain. It was with Moses as Coleridge said in his tribute to his friend Thomas Poole. The mere abstract argument was almost lost sight of "in the life, freshness, and practical value of his remarks and notices; truths, plucked as they are growing, and delivered to you with the dew on them; the faith earnings of a deserving eye, armed and kept on the watch by thought and meditation." In all of his manifold duties he forgot not the coming Christ. He esteemed "**the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt.**" It was his pleasure to know that "**the scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; then shall come a star out of Jacob; and a scepter shall come out of Israel;** and he was wont to admonish his brethren that, "**A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren like unto me; him shall you hear.**" He had sincere love to his God, and "**respect unto the recompense of the reward.**" This is the loveliest part of his character. A mind of the greatest stature without love "is like the huge pyramid of Egypt—chill and cheerless in all its dark halls and passages. A mind with love is as a king's palace lighted for a royal festival."

He was slow of speech; but it was always noted that he meant something. "A man rather taciturn in speech; silent when there was nothing to be said; but pertinent, wise, sincere, when he did speak; always throwing light on the matter. This is the only sort of speech worth speaking."

He was a man of prayer and loyally submissive to his God; only small, mean souls are otherwise. He was ever ready to put his shoes from off his feet when he was on holy ground and he has left one of the most beautiful prayers on record. To him prayer was the shining of heaven's own splendor in the waste howling wilderness, the pillar of fire by night, that was to guide him on his desolate, perilous way.

MARK OF THE BEAST

Look at your name on the front page of this month's paper. If you see the mark 12-02, so detestable to a Baptist, wash it out by renewal of green-backs. If not your paper will stop next month. We are not able to credit. It is not a good plan.



Life and Character

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He was a man of meekness and humility; perhaps this is the test of a true great man. But I very readily agree with John Ruskin in his *Modern Painters* when he says, "I do not mean by humility doubt of his own power, or hesitation of speaking his opinion; but a right understanding of the relation between what he can do and say, and the rest of the world's doings and sayings. All great men not only know their business, but usually know that they know it; and are not only right in their main opinions, but they usually know that they are right in them; only they do not think much of themselves on that account."

He did what God commanded in the face of every danger. He could stand before the angry Pharaoh, or his own treacherous people. He would drop his actions as an ostrich does its young and hasten on without caring where they fell. He dared to

*"Do all that may become a man,
Who dares do more is none."*

Thus we have seen Moses as the poet, historian, philosopher, warrior, and preacher. In either of these capacities he would have left a name that eternity will not forget; but consider all of these combined in one man and you have a faint conception of the comprehensive mind of Moses. He was

*"The noblest man
That ever lived in the tide of time."*

He was no less honored in death than in life. Enoch was translated that he should not see death; Elijah was carried away in his chariot of fire; but God Himself, with the angels for pall bearers, performed the sepulchral rites for this man.

*"By Nebo's lonely mountain,
By cool Beth-Peor's wave,
In the beautiful land of Moab,
There lies a lonely grave,
And no man knoweth his sepulcher,
And no man saw it o'er,
For the land of God upturned the sod,
and laid the dead man there."*

God sent forth His angels to guard that tomb; and when long afterwards Satan wished his body, it was defended by no less a person than the archangel Michael. Here we leave the sleeping dust of Moses but his memory lives on.

*"He was a man, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again."*

Outlines for Country Preachers by a Country Preacher

Sermon Outlines by Milburn Cockrell

CONVERSION

Acts 3:19

The word "convert" is synonymous with "turn," and "conversion" with "turning." "Convert" means "to turn," "to turn around," "to change about." The Greek word translated convert means "to turn around." The word is sometime translated "convert" and in other places "to turn."

I. WHAT CONVERSION IS NOT AND IS.

1. What it is not—
 - (1) It is not mere outward reformation (II Tim. 3:5; II Pet. 2:20-22) or a temporary conversion (Matt. 13:20-21; I John 2:19).
 - (2) It is not returning from backsliding. A backslider is already converted.
 - (3) It is not being converted from one doctrine to another (Luke 22:32).
 - (4) It is not what some call a physiological conversion—the change from adolescent to adulthood. Spiritual conversion is not a natural process, but a divine work of the Holy Spirit.
2. What is really is—
 - (1) It is a turning of thoughts, desires and affections of the heart from sinful lusts and pleasures toward holy things—God, Christ, and salvation.
 - (2) It is a man turning actively under the power of divine grace (Acts 11:21; II Cor. 3:15-16).
 - (3) It is a turning from idols to God (I Thess. 1:9-10).
 - (4) It is a turning from darkness to light, the power of Satan to God (Acts 26:18).
 - (5) It is a turning from your own righteousness to Christ's righteousness (Dan. 12:3; Phil. 3:9).

II. REGENERATION AND CONVERSION.

1. Some confuse the two, but they are not one and the same. Regeneration is God moving on the heart of the sinner; conversion is the heart of the sinner moving toward God.
2. Conversion is the results of regeneration. It is the human side of regeneration.
3. The new heart is prepared to turn to God and does actually so turn (Jer. 31:18-19; Lam. 5:21; S. of S. 1:4).
4. God is the Giver of the new heart and spirit (Ps. 51:10; Ezek. 11:19-20; 36:26-27).
5. Man is commanded to make himself a new heart and a new spirit (Ezek. 18:31).
6. God turns men to Himself (I Kings 18:37; Ps. 80:3; 85:4; Jer. 30:21; John 6:44).
7. Yet men are exhorted to turn to God (Prov. 1:23; Isa. 55:7; 59:20; Ezek. 14:6; 33:11; Hos. 12:6; Joel 2:13).
8. Without regeneration men will keep away from God (Ps. 10:4; Rom. 1:30; 8:7; Jas. 4:4).
 - (1) By nature man loves pleasures more than God (II Tim. 3:4).
 - (2) "Who mind earthly things" (Phil. 3:19).
 - (3) Man is dead set against being converted (Matt. 13:14-15).

III. HOW CONVERSION IS CONNECTED WITH REPENTANCE AND FAITH.

1. Conversion is the voluntary change in the mind of the sinner in which he turns from sin to Christ.
2. This turning from sin we call repentance. This is the negative element.
3. The turning to Christ we call faith. This is the positive element.
4. Verses which join these two things together (Rom. 6:11; Acts 3:26; 11:21).

IV. THE MEANS OF CONVERSION.

1. The law of God (Ps. 19:7).
2. The minister of God (Dan. 12:3; I Cor. 3:5) and the person who witnesses for Christ (Ps. 51:13; Jas. 5:19-20).
3. The gospel (Acts 26:16-18; 16:14).

V. THE SUBJECTS OF CONVERSION.

1. Sinners (Ps. 51:13; Jas. 5:19-20).
2. Christ died for sinners (Rom. 5:8). He came to save sinners (I Tim. 1:15).
3. He calls sinners to repentance (Mark 2:17). "This man receiveth sinners" (Luke 15:2).
4. A sinner is one who realizes his lost and ruined condition—his guilty state—sees the depravity of his own heart, the damnableness of sin—the justness of divine for deliverance. He turns to Christ for the whole of his salvation.
5. The sinner cannot convert himself, but he can come to hear the law and gospel, the means of grace.

CONCLUSION.

1. A converted man is a Christian believer, a man who has true religion, one who has experienced regeneration. In Christian experience repentance comes before conversion (Acts 3:19).
2. Conversion is something which can be seen and declared (Acts 15:3).
3. There is absolutely no Heaven without conversion (Matt. 18:3).
4. There is no forgiveness of sins without repentance and conversion (Acts 3:19).

Inevitability of Death

Continued from page 461

While we usually apply this to temptations to sin, the testing of our faith, such as the loss of a loved one, are included. How we handle these tests is determined by our relationship with Jesus Christ. Even among those who profess to know Him as Lord and Savior, there will be varying degrees of confidence, hinging on the reality of faith and the spiritual maturity of the one grieving. In these words, if God permit, I would give you all the hope that God has given me, and that supersedes the tears of grief you see me shed, and many of you also shed.

INEVITABILITY MUST BE PREPARED FOR

At a funeral some years ago, I was talking with a mutual friend, and the question came up, "Was the deceased prepared for death?" My friend and I were using the same terms, but it wasn't long until we discovered that *he* was talking about life insurance, while *I* was talking about salvation.

In reference to death our text declares: "**But after this, the judgment.**" We only have one go around in life, and then we must face our Maker. Amos rightly warns, "**Prepare to meet thy God**" (Amos 4:12). No man is ready to meet God, on his own, but by God's sovereign grace, there *is* a way of preparation. We will discuss that later. Stella was prepared.

Christ had touched her life in her teen years, and she gave her life and soul to Jesus Christ as her Lord and Savior. She *believed* what God had clearly said in His Word, both the threatenings and the promises. The only way of salvation is just that—faith/believing. Not blind faith believing in some religious doctrine, some mystic experience, the message of an evangelist, or even in following the *good works* taught in the Scriptures, — as important as *that* is.

But rather in the belief of the gospel message so clearly and simply taught in such passages as Romans 3:23: "**For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.**" "**Behold, all souls are mine; . . . the soul that sinneth, it shall die**" (Ezek. 18:4). Romans 6:23: ". . . the gift of God is eternal life. . . ." And Romans 10:13: "**For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.**"

INEVITABILITY CAN BE FACED IN COMFORT AND SAFETY WHEN PROPERLY PREPARED

She was prepared to die, so we have the comfort of knowing that the cliché, "She's in a better place now,"

is a statement of *truth*, not just hope. I call your attention to verses on the back of your bulletins. Yes, we used verses dealing with sheep because Stella loved sheep, but I especially call your attention to the underlying *theme* of these verses. Please notice these four themes.

1. Christ is the Good Shepherd.

1. Christ calls out His *own* sheep.

3. Christ's sheep *follow* Him.

4. Christ guarantees their resurrection at the last day.

Please notice that these are all indicative statements—that is a statement of fact, as opposed to hope, supposition, possibility, or even command. These are facts to be taken for granted of those thusly described as "His sheep." That very fact forces us to examine our *own* lives to see if we qualify. But my friend, I hasten to advise you that such qualification comes only by grace, through faith (Eph. 2:8-9). This also we will touch on later.

With the assurance that Stella was one of Christ's own sheep, we also have the assurance that her spirit and soul are safely and comfortably resting in the presence of her Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, at this very hour, even as we mourn her loss.

The tears I have shed, the tears my children have shed, and the tears we have yet to shed, can rightly be classified as *selfish* tears, because we are no longer crying over Stella's pain (she is out of pain and better off now than we are), but for *our* pain at the one we have loved for years.

As we celebrate her life and reflect on her memories, we rejoice because we know that she is finally with her Lord, —and that we will see her again.

At this point I think it both needful, and an added blessing to those who really know the Lord, to review a few parts of Stella's last days. Rather than verbally cover that at this time, I call your attention to the insert in your bulletin.

First, there is a sense in which God didn't *give* Dee to me but He *lent* her to me. First and foremost, she was God's.

Second, God didn't give me a slave—someone bound to do my bidding regardless of her dignity, feelings or morality. He gave me someone to love and care for. Someone who's welfare, feelings and opinions I should, could and would always respect.

And third, God didn't give me a supervisor, who would always argue with me, try to make me to things her way, or tell me what to do. He gave me a helpmate, who's counsel I sought, who's opinions and point of view I respected, and who's help I often needed, from the wifely skills

she possessed, who's mothering skills exceeded mine, to even willingly helping me repair the back door on the big truck I drove and installing driveshafts.

This leads us to our last point.

CERTAIN INEVITABLES REQUIRE CERTAIN PREPARATION

The often used reaction of David to the loss of his son (II Sam. 12) teaches several points that we will not touch here, but the pure logic of his statement *must* be used here.

"**I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.**" There was an old Indian proverb which said, "If you want to catch fish, you have to go where the fish are." If you want to see Stella, you have to go where Stella is.

On occasions such as this we too often present the assurance of the saved as if they were universal to all mankind. From either end of the evangelical spectrum we ultimately tend to make salvation either almost automatic and academic, or so far from the reaction of mortal man that we cannot know until eternity if we are saved or not, but only have some hop of possibility that Christ's sacrifice applies to us. But my friend, there *is* a valid promise—and a valid command—pertaining to the salvation of your soul and the hope of eternal life in Heaven.

This last Lord's day, your pastor, here, preached on the reality of Hell. That reality is the alternative to salvation, and it is the knowledge that Stella Bennett both believed the promise and obeyed the command that gives us hope concerning your lost friend or loved one, and my beloved wife. And I hasten to insert here that this is *not* a salvation by works, but by grace alone and seeing the evidence of that grace in Dee's life.

I refer you again to the themes of the quoted verses .

1. Christ is the Good Shepherd.

2. Christ calls out His *own* sheep.

3. Christ's sheep *follow* Him.

4. Christ guarantees their resurrection at the last day.

1. Christ is the Good Shepherd that gave His life for the sheep. Stella's salvation and your salvation is only granted or achieved by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"**Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost**" (Titus 3:5).

"**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**" (Eph. 2:8-9).

2. Christ calls His *own* sheep out.

We don't seek Christ. Christ seeks us. Those thus enlightened by the Holy Spirit, and granted faith to believe the gospel message unto personal application, have been chosen in Christ, according to His eternal plan, from before the very foundation of the world.

"**Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you,** (please notice now) **and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit. . . .**" (John 15:16).

"**According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love**" (Eph. 1:4).

3. Christ's sheep *follow* Him. The proof of the pudding is in the finished product. We have often said, "There is an impalpable line of distinction between working *for* salvation or working *because* of salvation, and failure to discern that line is spiritually fatal." Stella worked *because* she was saved, evidence of the Holy Spirit's presence in her life, and the *natural* production of the seed of God, planted there by the new birth of regeneration mentioned earlier in Titus 3:5.

Please notice—*His* sheep follow Him, implying that there were other sheep than His fold. The sheep will not follow a shepherd they do not know. Following Jesus is the evidence of being His sheep.

"**For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them**" (Eph. 2:10).

4. He will raise His own at the last day.

It is possible to appear to have one without the other, but appearances will not result in the fourth theme. Jesus promised to raise up all that the Father had given Him at the last day, and that He would lose none of them.

But there are many who only have one of the visible qualifications of faith. Yet many of these do not, and are not, following Christ in obedience. To these He says, "**Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven**" (Matt. 7:21).

And there are *also* those who have done many wonderful, kind and righteous deeds, but have placed their trust in those deeds instead of Jesus Christ. To these He says, "**Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then**

Continued on page 470

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit questions on any Bible topic

The Berea Baptist Banner

PO Box 39

Mantachie, Mississippi 38855

Should we practice pulpit affiliation with Primitive Baptists and Southern Baptists? --- Alabama



Jimmie B. Davis

309 Carroll Road
Fulton, MS 38843

Pastor

**Sovereign Grace
Baptist Church**
100 James Street
Fulton, MS 38843

Pulpit affiliation is not to be taken lightly. I have seen division brought about in Baptist churches because someone was allowed to fill the pulpit who introduced false doctrine.

When Sovereign Grace Baptist churches practice pulpit affiliation with Primitive Baptists, Southern Baptists, or any other group of Baptists whose baptism the church cannot accept it is a highly inconsistent practice. I have seen Baptist churches who believe in the doctrines of grace practice pulpit affiliation with Primitive Baptists due to certain points of agreement on sovereign grace, but neither would accept the baptism of the other.

Perhaps you may think it a strange thing, but I have always believed that the reason we hold different designations is because we have different views. If we all hold the same convictions on Bible doctrines there would be no need for us to be called anything but a Baptist. Baptists have the privilege to belong to the group of Baptists that best expresses their belief, and if you are convinced that your church stands on the truth that reason could you give for bringing someone into the pulpit who believes otherwise?

JIMMIE B. DAVIS



Garner Smith

113 Keith Drive
Clarksville, TN 37043

Pastor

Faith Baptist Church
2590 Madison Ext.
Clarksville, TN 37043

Ephesians 4:11-13 tells us that the purpose of God in calling and placing pastors is to edify and unify the Lord's churches. It doesn't make much sense then to invite some one into our pulpit that would tear down, and divide our church.

To have what is referred as a Primitive Baptist come in and teach their doctrine would cause disunity and hurt our church and certainly would not edify it. To be factual the real primitive Baptists are the Old Landmark, Sovereign Grace, Independent Baptists. They are the kind that was first started by our Lord Himself (Matt. 16:18; Luke 1:17; John 1:6, 33; Mark 3:13-14; I Cor. 12:28).

The Primitive Baptists may have some truth, but they also have error in their teaching and we should never allow error to be taught in our pulpits.

I do not invite Southern Baptists to preach in my pulpit because most of them are of the Universal Church persuasion and Arminian which are both heresy. They also belong to organizations that usurp authority over the local church.

I might on a special occasion let a Southern Baptist preacher preach for me when I know he is in agreement with me on the cardinal doctrines of the Landmark, Sovereign Grace, Independent Baptists. This would be a very rare occasion because such Southern Baptist preachers are very rare.

As to judging individual preachers to fulfill pulpits it must be left up to the local church and pastor. We can only judge those preachers we personally know.

We should be very discriminating in pulpit affiliation, but we should strive to have as much fellowship with others as the Scriptures will allow us.

GARNER SMITH



Tom Ross

6339 County Rd. 15
South Point, OH
45680

Pastor

**Mount Pleasant
Baptist Church**
6939 County Rd. 15
Chesapeake, OH
45619

No, we should not practice pulpit affiliation with these two groups because of the marked differences in doctrine and practice. I am a Landmark Missionary Baptist so therefore it would be a complete contradiction of what I believe about the necessity of preaching the Gospel to every creature and the support of missions if I were to have a Primitive

Baptist preach in our church. I have a dear friend who is a Primitive Baptist preacher who I can enjoy Christian fellowship with because we are both saved and we both believe the doctrines of grace. But neither one of us would even think of inviting each other to preach in one another's church because of the difference regarding missions and their support. I am a fervent supporter of Landmark, Independent, Missionary Baptist missionaries who love the Lord, His truth, and are willing to go to their respective fields.

I am sure there are some Southern Baptists out there somewhere that still hold to the old Landmarks. I must admit that I cannot ever remember meeting one in any area where I have pastored or even preached. I am sure that a vast majority of Southern Baptists would feel very uncomfortable having a fiercely Independent Baptist like me in their pulpit. I know that I could not in good conscience invite one to preach in our church. Amos 3:3 asks: "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" The answer is simply, no.

My general criteria for pulpit affiliation is as follows: 1) Is the man saved by the grace of God, baptized by a Scriptural Baptist Church, and called of God to preach the Gospel? 2) Does he believe in church truth, the doctrines of grace, the premillennial coming of Christ, etc? 3) Is he moral and does he love the Lord? 4) Is he devoted to his wife and family?

With all the foregoing said, if a Primitive or a Southern Baptist would ask me to preach in their church and I was able and felt led of the Lord, I would do so. For that matter if I had the opportunity to preach in a Catholic, Campbellite, or Charismatic assembly, I would do so. I believe in preaching the Gospel and the truth to all men regardless of culture, creed, or skin color. Therefore if the opportunity presented itself to preach to those I don't agree with on everything, I would gladly oblige as long as they understand that I would not be inviting them to preach.

TOM ROSS

BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 9-30-2002 to 10-31-2002

Beginning Balance \$193.38

RECEIPTS

Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS 200.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY 2,100.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY 175.00
Berea B. C., West Point, TN 132.00
John Otis, Agra, KS 100.00
Lenos Slusher, Williamsburg, KY 20.00
Calvary Ind. B. C., Everson, WA 200.00
Dividing checks 225.00
..... 3,152.00
TOTAL 3,345.38

EXPENDITURES:

Radio Time 982.00
Postage 14.05
Dividing checks 200.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES 1,196.05
..... 2,149.33
Bank charge - 10.00
BALANCE \$2,139.33

CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT

Beginning Balance \$413.32

RECEIPTS

Grace B. C., Corbin, KY 2,000.00
Total 2,413.32

EXPENDITURES:

WCTT 160.00
Total Expenditures 160.00
ENDING BALANCE \$2,253.32



Inevitability of Death

Continued from page 469

will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:22-23).

One verse from the recitation that goes with our closing hymn fits so well here, not only expressing my emotion, but expressing that hope I would that we all have.

If you go first and I remain,

One thing I'd have you do.

Walk slowly down that lonely road,

For soon I'll follow you.

If we would follow Stella down the path that she now walks, we must be as prepared as Stella was prepared. Always remember the ten virgins. When the Bridegroom came, five were not prepared—and they were shut out. They had claimed to be ready. They had a taste of oil in their lamps. But they had not shown the perseverance and preparedness that marks the true believer.

They had come out at the call, "the Bride Groom cometh," but had not done the works of evidence. Theirs was a half way faith that did not issue in having the needed oil, so they heard the same words as those in Matthew 7, "I never knew you."

May my gracious God work in your hearts today, as you share my grief at Stella's departure. Trust Him. Believe Him. Commit to Him.



The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit questions on any Bible topic

The Berea Baptist Banner

PO Box 39

Mantachie, Mississippi 38855

Whereas it is commonly reported that three people can constitute a church, I would like to know if three women could meet and constitute a church? -- Alabama

Garner Smith, 113 Keith Drive, Clarksville, TN 37043. Pastor Faith Baptist Church, 2590 Madison Ext., Clarksville, TN 37043.

I know of no Scripture reporting that two or three of any kind of people can constitute a church without authority from an already existing church who would be willing to grant letters of dismissal for the purpose of a group of people desiring to covenant themselves together to be organized into a New Testament Baptist church.

No where in the Bible does it speak of two or three becoming a church, men or women. The Scriptures do say in Matthew 18:20 that those who may have problems or offences between them, as already members of the church, may meet together to solve those problems seeking God's approval that God will meet with them to solve those problems. My understanding of these Scriptures is that those involved in this meeting are already a church (Matt. 18:17).

I do not believe any number of women by themselves could constitute themselves into a New Testament Baptist church (I Cor. 14:34-35).

GARNER SMITH

Tom Ross, 6339 County Rd. 15, South Point, OH 45680. Pastor Mount Pleasant Baptist Church, 6939 County Rd. 15, Chesapeake, OH 45619.

No, three women cannot meet and constitute a church. For that matter, three men could not meet and constitute a church. A church must be authorized, organized, and established by a church that is already in existence often referred to as a sponsoring or mother church. I have a hard time believing that a church would organize three women into a church without any male leadership. I am not a chauvinist, but I do believe

in God's order within the church. Since a woman could not speak or preach in a church how would a church with three women really function practically?

I must be frank. I would have a hard time leading our church to organize another church with only three members. I would prefer that they would remain a mission until they grew some and got stronger so they could be autonomous soon after being organized. That is just my preference and opinion. Every church and pastor is free to judge in such matters according to their own conscience, desire, and practice.

TOM ROSS

Jimmie B. Davis, 309 Carroll Road, Fulton, MS 38843. Pastor Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, 100 James Street, Fulton, MS 38843.

In most cases where a hypothetical question is raised hypothesis is almost always used in the answer given. If we look to scripture, which is the proper thing, for an answer as to how many persons it would take to constitute a church we are normally drawn to Matthew 18:20. In my opinion, it would be impossible to give the exact number of persons required to constitute a church unless you believe that Matthew 18:20 can be used to picture the simplest form of a New Testament church. I do not believe that many Baptists would ever adopt the position that "two or three" could agree to discipline a member, and that discipline be scriptural, unless the membership consisted of no more than two or three. Baptists may follow different procedures in the organization of churches, but I believe that most would agree that two or three would be the minimum number required in the constitution of a church.

Three men, three women, or any number of men and women above two or three can be constituted as a church if they follow the pattern which is set forth in the book of Acts. When we study this book, especially

chapter 13, we see a pattern formed. The Holy Spirit called Barnabas and Saul to carry the gospel out from Antioch. The church at Antioch separated them unto this work of ministry. They preached wherever the Lord led them. The elect believed the gospel of their salvation (Eph. 1:13; Acts 13:48). Those receiving the Word were baptized (Acts 2:41a). After this they were added, by the Lord, to the local church (Acts 2:41b). I believe that those who heard the gospel, through the ministry of Barnabas and Saul, were baptized and constituted as true churches in different geographical locations identified in Scripture. I do not believe that any number of unsaved and unbaptized people can ever constitute a true church while in that condition.

Should a church be constituted with only three men or three women as members a situation could exist akin to the one Paul said existed at Crete (Titus 1:5). But just as Titus was left in Crete to set in order the things that were lacking, we believe our Lord can and does send ministers from other true churches to help such a church to be able to walk in gospel order.

JIMMIE B. DAVIS

BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 9-30-2002 to 10-31-2002

Beginning Balance \$4,614.00

RECEIPTS:

- A. D. Richardson, Cedarville, WV 100.00
B.C. of Brimfield, Brimfield, IL 29.04
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS 1,700.00
Berea B. C., Westport, TN 50.00
Berea M. B.C., Mansfield, OH 50.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL 60.00
Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX 30.00
Bethesda B. C., Tarpon Springs, FL 50.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne WV 300.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY 125.00
Cedar Grove B. C., Millport, AL 50.00
Central Avenue B. C., Tampa, FL 25.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL 20.00
Faith B. C., Clarksville, TN 100.00
Faith B. C., Seffner, FL 50.00
Faith M. B. C., Lynn, AR 25.00
Gail Knowles, Scarborough, ME 20.00
Gerald Price, Johnson City, TN 25.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY 100.00
Grace B. M. Marion, IL 25.00
Grace M. B. C., Tulsa, OK 35.00
Harold Flynn, Craigsville, WV 50.00
Hillcrest B. C., Winton-Salem, NC 50.00
Indore B. C., Indore, WV 100.00
Joseph Jurzec, Lake-in-the-Hills, IL 25.00
Landmark M. B. C., Moncks Corner, SC 25.00
Landmark S. G. B. C., Ft. Worth, TX 50.00
Leroy Bullard, Albuquerque, NM 100.00
Letson Farrell, Long Beach, MS 120.00
Morris St. B. C., Hobbs, NM 300.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH 100.00
New Testament B. C., Bristol, TN 10.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN 50.00
Ocoonita M. B. C., Keokee, VA 40.00

Table with 2 columns: Name and Amount. Total: \$5,557.61

EXPENDITURES:

Table with 2 columns: Category and Amount. Total: \$4,773.26

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Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation. Includes fields for Publication Title, Issue Frequency, Circulation, and Distribution.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There will be a Fellowship Meeting at the Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, Northport, Alabama on December 7, 2002. Times are 10:00 a.m., lunch at 12 noon and the last speaker at 2:00 p.m. Speakers are to be Elders Raymond Spann, Steve Martin and Doyal Thomas. All are invited to come.



WORLD SCENE

By G. Russell Evans - Norfolk, Virginia

Jimmy Carter is in 7th Heaven



Jimmy Carter is in 7th heaven, "high cotton" so to speak. Ex-President Carter won the Nobel Peace Prize after having a lifetime of ambition. The Nobel committee used the occasion to signal its displeasure with the Bush Administration's aggressive policy toward Iraq. Ironically, about 70% of the American people stand behind Bush and not behind the "European Way." The Nobel citation read, "Carter has stood by the principles that conflicts must as far as possible be resolved through mediation and international cooperation based on international law, respect for human rights and economic development."

Carter is the third president to receive this award, following in the footsteps of Teddy Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson. With the nomination of statesmen, the standards of the prize obviously changed. Jimmy Carter's alleged achievement as president was the Camp David Peace Agreement between Egyptian President, Anwar el Sadat, and Israeli Prime Minister, Menachem Begin. However, the real legacy of the Carter Administration is the Panama Canal Treaties—Unconstitutional treaties! Patriots understand this! Previous Presidents had refused to surrender this great strategic waterway, but not Carter, who told his First Lady, "Somebody's got to do it!"

FALSE PRETENSES

The Carter-Torrijos Treaties were a swindle because they deprived taxpayers of their property, territory and rights under false pretenses. It was U.S. property, bought and paid for four times: \$40 million to the French for their assets; \$25 million to Columbia from which Panama gained independence in 1903; \$10 million to the new Republic of Panama for the purchase of the 10-by-50 mile strip of the Canal Zone for the construction of the canal; and \$4.7 million total for the purchase of 3,598 plots of land from individual land owners in the zone—probably the most bought and paid for piece of real estate in history. All purchases were in "title, fee simple" which meant "good against the world." Therefore, a total of \$70.7 million of taxpayers' money was spent for the purchase of the Panama Canal Zone—an honest and fair transaction that was ignored. The swindle instigated by Jimmy Carter did indeed

deprive the canal owners, the U. S. taxpayers, of their property, their territory and their rights under false pretenses.

TWO TREATIES

Both nations believed they had ratified the same treaty. They had not. The U. S. version contained the DeConcini Condition guaranteeing the United States the right of unilateral defense of the canal—which Panama never accepted. Panama's version contained the infamous counter-reservation requiring Panama's cooperation for defense of the canal—which the United States never accepted, a principal required in all treaty negotiations.

WALDORF-ASTORIA LIE

Carter presents himself as a Christian, pious and righteous—but had no qualms Oct. 23, 1976, as a presidential candidate, in the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York City, telling listeners and the world on television, "Trust me, I'll never give up control of the Panama Canal (and I'll never lie to you." A few weeks later, on Jan. 21, 1977 in the Oval Office, President Carter, in the very first official act of his presidency, signed National Defense Memorandum No. 1 to commence negotiating away the Panama Canal with treaties that did "give up control"—the exact opposite of Carter's promise.

WELL-PROTECTED

Jimmy Carter is well protected, first as an aging and mellow ex-President, and now as the recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize. But, I ask you, who protected the Panama Canal? Who was there to protect the Patriot's from Carter's disgraceful manipulations of he unconstitutional Panama Canal treaties? The Panama Canal treaties with live on forever—and this unconstitutional legacy will outlive any Nobel Peace Prize.

**This article was dictated to CAN Tamara Adcox by Captain Russell Evans, and edited by his Speech Language Pathologist, Stephanie Hart. Excerpts of this article are quoted from Captain Evans' previous article, "Struggling to Tell Panama Truth" printed in the Thursday April 25th edition of Farm & Dairy. Capt. Evans had a stroke.*



Mini Edition

By Joseph Harris
Chairman of Biblical Studies
Southeastern Baptist College, Laurel, Mississippi



WISDOM FROM WAL- MART ON WORK

Other than going to church, there's nothing like a trip to Wal-Mart for enlightenment. On my latest trip down the paper towel and wrap aisle. I noticed something that is a commentary on the laziness in today's society. You can now buy pre-cut, specific sized plastic wrap tops for bowls, 16 to a box, for about \$3.00. The selling point on the box stated it was the "fastest and easiest way to cover" leftovers for the refrigerator. Just pull a little "topper" out and cover the bowl. Right next to these boxes were other boxes containing 200 sq. feet of plastic wrap, also for about \$3.00 Now really, how much more time does it take and how much more difficult is it to tear off a small piece of wrap from the roll? Maybe another two seconds of life. The pre-cut wraps appeal to frivolous people.

The phone company also has a work saving deal for lazy people—for a small fee of course. Notice when you call directory service, after the computer gives your requested number, you are then offered the service of having the number dialed for you for a fee of anywhere from .30 to .50 cents. Does anyone really take advantage of this bargain? Anyone too lazy to hang up and dial the number ought to be charged \$5.00 for their laziness.

Now I believe in working smarter instead of harder if the same results can be accomplished, but too often the philosophy of today is "don't work smart or hard." Don't work at all if possible. Human nature always desires the easy way, and the easy way is not always necessarily wrong, but this mindset can be reflective of a wrong philosophy. We usually pay more for the easy way out, financially and in quality.

There's nothing wrong with work saving devices, but there's nothing wrong with good old fashioned work either. We usually end up paying a higher price to save time, but then don't wisely use the time we have saved. I know it sounds old fashioned, but that "scripture" from the book of Second Opinions is true: an idle mind is the devil's workshop. A lot of people don't want to work at all, and if they are forced to work, they don't always take pride in their work.

God designed man to work in Eden

before the fall of man in sin, and then God made work for man more difficult after his fall. A strong work ethic should be taught at an early age. The prophet Jeremiah said that it was good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth. Work produces rest, fulfillment, satisfaction and contentment, not to mention a paycheck. Children who are not taught responsibility and how to work become irresponsible adults who expect society and government to provide for their needs.

Imagine, all this from a trip to Wal-Mart.

DON'T PREACH ON HELL

I just heard about a survey taken by the Los Angeles Times. They polled "members of the clergy" asking if they ever preached on the subject of hell. Most said they did not even mention hell. The reason they gave was because most of their members did not want to hear it, since they were more concerned with the here and now. Too bad they didn't interview some REAL men of God. Their results would have been different. Men who are really called by God aren't concerned about preaching a popular message of the people, but are extremely concerned about preaching *Thus saith the Lord*. Modern Robert Shullerism preaching makes everyone feel good, mushy, warm and cozy, while denying the reality of the wrath to come.

But here is another perspective. I don't preach on hell either, yet for a different reason. My philosophy is, if you are going to preach on the wrath of God, go all the way. Don't waste your time preaching on a temporary place called hell, but preach on everlasting punishment in an everlasting lake of fire.

You see, hell is temporary. I realize I am being absolutely technical and picky and am splitting a theological hair, but there is a difference. Hell is a temporary holding place for those who die outside of Christ. Every individual in this category (see Luke 16, the rich man) will eventually be resurrected and judged according to their works as an unbeliever. Then they will begin to experience eternal punishment characterized by everlasting separation from a Holy

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God, after they are cast into the lake of fire (see Revelation 20) along with the beast and the false prophet.

Even so, as the wrath of God is preached, it should never overshadow the love of God manifested at Calvary. It's a matter of priority. Calvary should be the *emphasis* in preaching and soul winning, not hell or the lake of fire. Everlasting torment should be preached as the wages of sin, but more emphasis should be spent on God commending His love toward sinners, as the remedy for the wages of sin.

So preacher, preach the wrath of God, but remember that it is the means and not the end. The end is Calvary. **"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the son of man be lifted up" "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."**

TOLERANCE

Tolerance is the buzz word of the decade. As I look up "toleration" in the dictionary, here is what I find. (1) *allowance given to that which is not wholly approved* and (2) *recognition of the right of private judgment in religion*. Look at the first definition.

By being tolerant of something, there is also an admittance that the "something" is not approved, according to the dictionary definition. Tolerance means to allow that which is by definition, not approved. The hot spot of toleration today is concerning homosexuality. The plea for tolerance of homosexuality is a plea to ask for allowances in an area where most do not give approval. But the real plea is not for tolerance. The real issue is acceptance, disguised in the milder clothes of tolerance.

Homosexuality is already tolerated. Homosexuals who are open about their deviance, enjoy an extremely high degree of tolerance. They can hold public office, vote, go to college, own property, rent properly, own businesses, flaunt their abomination in public parades, teach in public schools, just to name a few freedoms they enjoy. They already enjoy extreme tolerance. What they want is endorsement and validation of their perverseness, which can then be used as a foothold to declare heterosexuality to be abnormal. Notice, when the homo friendly media and entertainment industry portray homosexuals, they are painted as being brighter, warmer, more compassionate, and more lovable than normal people. Let me repeat myself homosexuals could not

have a higher level of endorsement and tolerance than they now experience. And lest we forget, homosexuality is open rebellion against God and His design of distinction of the sexes.

Now notice the second part of the definition: *recognition of the right of private judgment in religion*. If anything, this right is never tolerated by homosexuals, the mainstream media, liberals, and God haters. Tolerance becomes an empty word, if you, the recipient, are conservative and Christian. Sweden is trying to pass a law making it illegal to preach the truth about sin and homosexuality. Some areas in Canada already have a form of this discrimination. I have tolerated until I'm ready to choke on it.

The most effective way of forcing tolerance on the unsuspecting is to rename things. (1) We have tolerated abomination and called it gay. 2) We

have tolerated murder through abortion and called it choice. (3) We tolerate the lies and scare tactics of the liberal Democratic party and call it politics. (4) We tolerate a religion whose holy book produces and promotes terrorism and then call Islam peaceful. (5) We tolerated the pathological lying of a former US president because we couldn't define what constituted having sex.

In practicing wholesale tolerance, we deny the absolute standard of right or wrong, and give approval to that which has not been approved. The Bible has a word on this issue: **"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, for sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!"** (Isa. 5:20-21).

trustee.

The survey compares each state's average adjusted gross income with its average itemized charitable deduction.

But because those numbers don't quite line up—only about one in four taxpayers itemize, although they account for 80 percent of charitable giving—the index compares the states' relative rankings in those categories. Mississippi's score is plus 43 because that's the difference between its "having" and "giving" rankings—49th and sixth.

The authors acknowledge the survey, which is actually compiled by the National Center for Charitable Statistics, is imperfect (it doesn't account for volunteering) and that economists dislike it. But they say it offers a good snapshot of regional variations and believe it "shames" poorly performing states into action.

In Connecticut, for instance, the average itemized filer reported \$3,740 in donations in 2000, up from \$3,321 the year before. Still that was only a slightly greater percentage increase than income, which rose from \$64,900 to \$70,428, the highest in the nation.

Colorado fell the furthest, though only back in line with previous rankings. After finishing 41st in 1997 and 42nd in 1998, it jumped to 28th in 1999 but fell back to 41st in 2000. Nevada fell 11 spots to 40th and Michigan 10 spots to 45th.

(*Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal*, Nov. 3, 2002)

HOUSE REAFFIRMS REFERENCES TO GOD IN PLEDGE, NATIONAL MOTTO

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP)—The U. S. House passed a bill Oct. 8 reaffirming support for the phrase "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance. The measure passed 401-5 vote. The measure also reaffirmed the phrase "In God We Trust" as the national motto.

The measure was prompted by a California law suit in which the 9th U. S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the phrase "under God" in the pledge is a violation of the separation of church and state. The House resolution is non-binding and will have no legal bearing on the lawsuit.

Those members voting against the bill were Reps. Barney Frank (D-Mass.), Michael Honda (D-Calif.), Jim McDermott (D-Wash.), Bobby Scott (D-Va.), and Pete Stark (D-Calif.). In addition, four congressmen—Gary Ackerman (D-N.Y.), Earl Blumanauer (D-Ore.), Nydia Velazquez (D-N.Y.), and Mel Watt (D-N.C.)—voted present rather than voting for or against the measure. A total of 21 congressmen did not vote on the measure.

The Senate is expected to pass the House version, and the bill will then go to the White House for the president's signature.

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

CC

SURVEY: MISSISSIPPI MOST CHARITABLE STATE

State retains lead in latest 'Generosity Index.'

By Justin Pope

The Associated Press

BOSTON – Southerners still take the prize when it comes to charity, though a few Yankee states are making progress shedding their stingy reputations.

Relatively poor Bible Belt states, headed by Mississippi, retain their lead in the latest "Generosity Index," a survey measuring the disparity between what residents of each state earn and what they give away.

Mississippi has finished first in five of the six annual surveys. In the latest, the Magnolia State once again has the greatest disparity between its ranking among the states in wealth—49th—and its ranking in donations: 6th.

Following Mississippi are Arkansas, South Dakota, Tennessee and Louisiana, according to the Catalogue for Philanthropy, a Massachusetts group that encourages giving and which created the study.

The "Generosity Index" has consistently ranked Southern and Midwestern common, the highest, with New England and other northeastern states generally ranking lowest.

"Mississippians recognize that caring for others is a way of caring for the community at large, and the depth of that caring is amazing," said Mississippi Gov. Ronnie Musgrove. "The Generosity Index is further evidence that our caring begins in the heart and moves to the wallet."

The survey doesn't reflect the recent economic downturn because it reflects IRS tax returns from 2000, the most recent year available.

New Hampshire, the sixth wealthiest state per capita but only 45th in charitable contributions, came in dead last, one spot ahead of Rhode Island, followed by New Jersey and Wisconsin.

Still, there were signs that the prosperity of the 1990s and shame after their reputation for stinginess was on prominent display in previous surveys got to some New England residents. Connecticut showed the biggest gain of any state, rising 10 spots from 44th to 34th.

And Massachusetts, a last-place in previous surveys, rose from 48th to 44th, Charitable giving over the late 1990s rose considerably faster than income, more than doubling to \$3.97 billion.

"The economy was good everywhere, but Massachusetts' growth in giving outstrips by far every other state," said George McCully, the group's coordinator

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House Majority Leader Dick Arney (R-Texas) commented on the issue, "During a time when our nation's very ideals are being threatened, it is crazy that the Pledge of Allegiance is under fire by a liberal court. This is not about forcing school children to profess a faith in God. . . . It's about allowing school children and all Americans the freedom to recite the pledge word for word with pride and without fear of consequences."

PAGEANT OFFICIALS CHANGE MIND, SAY MISS AMERICA CAN PROMOTE CHASTITY

CHICAGO (EP)—Erika Harold, who was crowned Miss America several weeks ago, will be able to promote sexual abstinence for young people, an apparent reversal of a decision by pageant organizers that she leave the issues alone during her reign.

Harold said Oct. 9 that a day after pageant organizers had sternly told her to stick to the official Miss America platform of youth violence prevention, they agreed to let her also speak out about sexual-abstinence education.

Harold had complained to the *Washington Times* on Oct. 8 that pageant officials were ordering her not to speak publicly on chastity, despite the fact that she had been a spokesman for Project Reality, an abstinence-centered education program in Illinois, and had made chastity her platform when she was crowned Miss Illinois earlier in the year.

She had told the *Times*, D. C., "Quite frankly, and I'm not going to be specific, there are pressures from some sides to not promote" the issue of abstinence. According to the *Times*, she later told the National Press Club that "I will not be bullied" by officials trying to prevent her from speaking on the issue she has embraced over the last several years.

Harold said on Oct. 9 that Miss America Chief Executive George Bauer removed the restriction after heated discussion on the matter during an official trip to Washington, D.C.

After the change Harold told reporters in suburban Chicago where she was attending a ceremony to crown her successor as Miss Illinois, "I don't think the pageant organizers really understood how much I am identified with the abstinence message." She added, "If I don't speak about it now as Miss America, I will be disappointing the thousands of young people throughout Illinois who need assurance that waiting until marriage for sex is the right thing to do."

Sandy Rios, the president of Concerned Women for America, told the *Times* that the pageant's initial action was "bullying" and "blatant censorship that

betrays religious bigotry among pageant officials." She added, "In an age when beauty queens are regularly disqualified for inappropriate behavior, who would have thought that a virtuous one would be silenced for her virtue?"

Genevieve Wood, a spokesman for the Washington, D.C.-based Family Research Council, said, "If Miss Harold's platform was about the hazards of smoking, most likely there wouldn't be any protest. It's a tragedy that the one message that will help save people's lives and protect their emotional and physical health is being censored."

BIBLE COMMENTARY HAILED BY HOMOSEXUAL ACTIVISTS

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP)—According to a conservative family policy group, a recently released Bible commentary reinterprets key sections of scripture to water down the sinful consequences of homosexuality, the sovereignty of Jesus Christ, and the sanctity of life. The recent edition of the New Revised Standard Version commentary *The New Oxford Annotated Bible (NOAB)*, is popular with homosexual activists, says the Culture and Family Institute (CFI), and for good reason. "The new Annotated Bible—edited in part by pro-gay, feminist scholars—adopts homosexual revisionist interpretations of Holy Scripture such as that God allegedly destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah for the sin of inhospitality—not homosexual sin," CFI observed.

Troy D. Perry, founder of Metropolitan Community Churches, a pro-homosexual fellowship, called the new commentary "one of the most important theological breakthroughs in the 33-year history of Metropolitan Community Churches (MCC)." Perry declared on MCC's Website "The world renowned biblical scholars who prepared *The New Oxford Annotated Bible* have adopted a great deal of MCC's own scholarship and theology. There is no biblical condemnation of homosexuality—only prohibitions against its misuse, just as there is no biblical blanket condemnation of heterosexuality, only prohibitions against misuse of that gift."

Perry commended the new study version of the Bible, saying he believed it will "be used by God to further open the doors of all faith communities to love, embrace, and affirm God's GLBT [gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered] children."

INDIAN STATE PASSES LAW MAKING RELIGIOUS CONVERSIONS ILLEGAL

NEW DELHI (EP)—Christians are speaking out against an ordinance recently approved by the government of the Indian state of Tamil Nadu making religious conversion illegal. The

ordinance makes conversion by force or enticement illegal, but Christians in the state of 40 million people are concerned with the possible legal ramifications the new law might have on their efforts. The National Council of Churches in India (NCCI) published a statement Oct. 8 to protest the ordinances, which it calls a politically motivated decision "rather than a reasoned response against any given situation or trend."

Gospel for Asia, a ministry that sponsors missionary work in India, reported that several incidents of anti-Christian violence have been perpetrated against its workers by both civilians and police during August and September. During one of those attacks, an anti-Christian mob set fire to several huts. A female member of a local Christian congregation burned to death in the blaze. In another incident in August, police arrested a pastor for allegedly damaging an idol, and another GFA missionary was severely beaten when a mob attacked him and a companion after accusing them of stealing idols.

"The present ordinance is not warranted by the social and religious conditions in the State and will not only be harmful while creating mistrust among religious communities, in its interpretation it has the potential of contravening constitutional rights and safeguards of conversion," the NCCI stated in a release Oct. 8 "Even a simple congregation of people for a religious meeting will attract the wrath of the ordinance."

While the government claims that the ordinance is meant to protect the poor and naïve, the NCCI said it will have a crippling effect on their relief efforts to the impoverished in their regions. It will "spell doom to several church workers who are already serving in various specialized areas of service in the State," the NCCI claimed. The organization has called on the Tamil Nadu government to repeal the ordinance and instead work towards encouraging peace between religious groups. "Let the state government help the Calits of Tamil Nadu to live in dignity and be allowed to enjoy their human rights which are denied to them in every day life," the NCCI said of India's Dalits, the poorest caste of people.

OVER ONE MILLION TEENAGE GIRLS PREGNANT WORLDWIDE, ONE THIRD SEEK ABORTIONS

NEW YORK (EP)—Despite being inundated with sex education and contraception, more and more teenage girls throughout the world are getting pregnant. According to the United Nations affiliate UNICEF, each year 1.25 million girls between the ages of 15 and 19 become pregnant. Of those, one in three has an abortion.

Of developed nations, the United

States claims the highest number of teenage abortions, with over 52,000 each year. The United Kingdom is second with nearly 31,000, followed by New Zealand with almost 30,000.

Following those leaders are Austria (14,000), Germany (13,100) and Norway (12,400). At the bottom of the list are Switzerland (5,500), Japan (4,500), and South Korea (2,900).

Idea News Agency reported that in Germany, "the number of teenage birth and abortions has risen sharply within the last years. More than 7,000 girls gave birth in the year 2000, 45 per cent more than in 1998." Abortion rose by 20 per cent within one year to 6,909. According to Germany's Federal Statistics Office, five percent of all recorded abortions in that country are performed on teenagers.

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (EP)—California Governor Gray Davis vetoed a state bill that would have pressured foster parents to attend pro-homosexual "sensitivity training." Foster parents would have been required to accept and support the homosexuality, bisexuality, or transsexuality of children coming into their homes. Additionally, the bill encouraged state and county agencies to recruit homosexual couples to adopt children. A spokesman for Focus on the Family, which helped generate public opinion to defeat the bill, said, "We are pleased that Gov. Davis allowed the interests of California's foster care children to prevail over a radical gay agenda. We hope the governor will remember this outcry the next time California's legislators try to force intolerant views upon those who do not believe that homosexuality is normal and healthy."

MIXED-GAY THEOLOGY DEFINES

THE BELIEFS OF MANY ADULTS
VENTURA, Calif. (EP)—The latest survey from the Barna Research Group reveals that while nine out of ten adult Americans own at least one Bible, a large number of those who attend Protestant or Catholic churches embrace beliefs that conflict with Scripture and the teachings of their church.

Barna's random sampling of 630 adult respondents nationwide found that there are three fundamental Christian teachings that most adults continue to embrace. Nearly 80 percent of adults agree with the statement that "God is one being in three separate and equal persons—God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit."

Additionally, 79 percent agree that "every person has a soul that will live forever, either in God's presence or absence." And, embracing a basic tenet of the Reformation, 76 percent of Americans disagree that "the Bible can

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only be correctly interpreted by people who have years of intense training in theology."

Beyond these three statements, however, Barna found that the theology of most American adults is alarmingly out of touch with simple Bible truths and basic church teachings.

For example, although most adults identify themselves as either Protestant (54 percent) or Catholic (22 percent), a large minority of those polled (42 percent) agreed with the statement that "when he lived on earth, Jesus Christ sinned, like other people."

Similarly, in conflict with the scriptural plan for eternal salvation, 50 percent said that anyone who "is generally good or does enough good things for others during their life will earn a place in Heaven." Noted the Barna researchers, "Although that view is generally considered to be Catholic doctrine and is one of the core beliefs over which the Protestant Reformation was waged, four out of ten Protestants accept this view of salvation ensured by good deeds. Almost half of the non-evangelical born again Christians also adopt this view, in spite of the fact that they have prayed for the forgiveness of their sins and asked Jesus Christ to be their Savior—actions which they believe were the basis of their assurance of salvation."

Barna found it shocking that 74 percent of adults say that "when people are born they are neither good nor evil—they make a choice between the two as they mature." The researchers said that 52 percent of evangelicals agreed with this statement, which Barna identified as an accurate representation of the doctrine of original sin.

Among the survey's other findings:

* Six out of ten American's (59 percent) agree that "the devil, or Satan, is not a living being, but is a symbol of evil."

* While a majority of adults are willing to relegate Satan to symbolic status, 54 percent still agree that "a human being can be under the control or the influence of spiritual forces such as demons."

* Falling to an error that seems particularly pagan, 51 percent of those polled said that "praying to deceased saints can have a positive effect in a person's life." Predictably, Catholics were twice as inclined as Protestants to embrace this idea (80 percent to 41 percent). However, 16 percent of evangelicals and a hefty 50 percent of non-evangelical born-again bought into this notion.

Additionally, 35 percent of adults believe that it is possible "to communicate with others after they die."

* In an alarming indication that Americans are losing their respect for the Bible as God's word, 44 percent of adults

(including 10 percent of evangelicals and 40 percent of non-evangelical born-again Christians) agree that "the Bible, the Koran, and the Book of Mormon are all different expressions of the same spiritual truths."

* Similarly, 54 percent say that "truth can be discovered only through logic, human reasoning, and personal experience." The researchers noted that such a declaration "is at odds with both the traditional Protestant belief that the Bible is the source of truth and the Catholic perspective that the Bible and papal authority convey truth."

* While 53 percent of Americans apparently follow Judeo-Christian tradition by rejecting the idea that "the Bible does not specifically condemn homosexuality," the Barna survey found that nearly that same percentage embrace that statement (27 percent) or aren't sure whether or not homosexuality is condemned in scripture (20 percent).

Lead researcher George Barna, author of *The State of the Church: 2002*, said that the survey's results reflect a nation with an increasing number of faith traditions. "Over the past 20 years we have seen the nation's theological views slowly become less aligned with the Bible," noted Barna. While Americans by and large like to think of themselves as Bible-believing Christians, Barna noted that many "have increasingly been adopting spiritual views that come from Islam, Wicca, secular humanism, the eastern religions, and other sources." He argued that America's slide towards a Bible-illiterate society has caused many to embrace a mixed-bag theology "that blindly combines beliefs from many different faith perspectives."

Barna warned that America's Christian heritage seems to be slowly disappearing as the generations pass. "Our continuing research among teenagers and adolescents show that the trend away from adopting biblical theology in favor of syncretic, culture-based theology is advancing at full gallop," he said, adding that "relatively few adults are alarmed by this trend, since teens and adolescents are merely reflecting the trail that their parent and teachers have already blazed."

SAN MATEO, Calif. (EP)—A California high school announced the introduction of a Satanism club as an on-campus activity, and 35 students attended the club's first lunch-hour meeting, Agape Press reported. David Azzarello, pastor of Redwood Baptist Church in San Mateo, told Agape Press that he warned San Mateo's high school principal of the consequences of allowing the club. "Whenever somebody does not stand up for truth, then of course the devil comes in with his lies," Azzarello said. "That's exactly what's happened today in America—and it's very sad because this was one nation founded upon God, and not just any kind of god, but the true

God." Agape Press noted that not all the community's clergy were as negative as Azzarello about having a club for the devil. Father Harold Snider of Our Lady of Angels Catholic Church was quoted as saying of the club, "The best thing to do about it is not to make a big deal."

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP)—A new bill passed by Congress and signed by President Bush in early October does not go so far as to establish a U. S. embassy in Jerusalem, but does change the city's official status. The Foreign Relations Authorization Act calls on the U.S. government to refer to Jerusalem as the capital of Israel in all official documents referring to that nation. The act also says that U. S. citizens born in Jerusalem can officially list their birthplace as Israel on all passports or document of identification. Official recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel is a controversial subject to Muslims and the Arab world, who claim to have religious rights to the city. Shifting the U. S. embassy to Jerusalem from Tel Aviv, where it is now located, has long been an expressed intention of several U. S. presidential administrations, but has not yet occurred. At the time of the signing, President Bush objected to the provisions in the act that made these revisions toward the treatment of Jerusalem, saying that the administration's policy toward Jerusalem "has not changed."

BONE BOX COULD BE EARLIEST EXTRA-BIBLICAL EVIDENCE OF CHRIST

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP)—It's just a box meant to hold bones, but a stone ossuary dating back to the first century could be the earliest historical evidence of the existence of Jesus Christ outside of ancient texts.

Ossuaries are not uncommon. Hundreds dating back 2,000 years have been discovered in the Middle East. But the particular stone box in question has an inscription that has fascinated archeologists and Bible scholars, and piqued the interest of media worldwide. The ossuary is marked with the ancient Aramaic phrase, *Ya'akov bar Yosef di Yeshua*, which translates, "James, son of Joseph, brother of Jesus." The language is consistent with the form spoken during the time of Jesus.

The box, which measures 20 inches long and 10 inches wide, is part of a private collection by an owner who has remained anonymous since the story broke in mid-October. It caught the eye of paleographer Andre Lemaire of the Sorbonne University in Paris, who was examining the collection in Jerusalem. According to the Biblical Archeology Society, publishers of the *Biblical Archeology Review* magazine, the ossuary dates back to approximately 63 A.D. Afterward, Lemaire verified that the

Aramaic inscription is consistent with writing forms dating back to the first century.

For a 200-year period around the birth and death of Christ, ossuaries were used quite regularly by Jews in and around Jerusalem. Bodies were placed in tombs for about a year, then removed and the bones were placed in stone boxes for keeping elsewhere. Some were carved with ornate designs and had stone legs, while others were left plain with few identifying markings.

The new find is also significant in that it corroborates the existence of Joseph, Jesus' father, and James, Jesus' brother and a leader of the early Christian church in Jerusalem. The family relationship contained on the new find helped experts ascertain that the inscription very likely refers to the biblical James, brother of Jesus (see, for example, Matthew 13:55-56 and Galatians 1:18-19). Although all three names were common in ancient times, the statistical probability of their appearing in that combination is slim. In addition, the mention of a brother is unusual—indicating that this Jesus must have been a well-known figure."

The inscription is also significant because it is the first time that all three names appear together outside of a written manuscript.

Hershel Shanks, editor of *Biblical Archaeology Review*, said, "The James ossuary may be the most important find in the history of New Testament archaeology. . . . It has implications not just for scholarship, but for the world's understanding of the Bible."

Scholars are still debating the authenticity of the ossuary and its inscription. "The object, if real, would be hugely valuable, so anybody interested in forging it would make it as believable as possible," Near Eastern studies specialist Glenn Schwartz of Johns Hopkins University told the *Washington Post*. Scholars at Johns Hopkins reported that the results of numerous examinations of the box and the inscription seem to verify its authenticity.

"This is probably going to be the biggest New Testament find in my lifetime, as big as the Dead sea scrolls," Ben Witherington, a New Testament professor at Asbury Theological Seminary in Lexington, Kentucky, told *National Geographic News*. "This gives us one more piece of evidence outside of the Bible that these are real people, and that they're important people, and provides a small confirmation for the claims made about James as the brother of Jesus."

Mark F. Rooker, professor of Old Testament and Hebrew at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N. C., told Baptist Press. "There are already some who doubt the validity of this archaeological find, and I am sure it will be thoroughly examined by

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archaeologists. . . If it is not a hoax one interesting thing about the description of James is that in addition to mentioning his father, the normal way to identify yourself in biblical times, it is also mentioned that his brother was Jesus. This would make a great deal of sense if, in fact, this was the James, son of Mary and Joseph, who was from the same family of the God incarnate, Jesus Christ."

The James ossuary will likely remain a controversial topic for scholars, many who claim the bone box is circumstantial evidence. A detailed article about the ossuary can be found in the November-December issue of *Biblical Archeology Review*.

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (EP)—In a suit that will determine whether or not a 5,300-pound monument to the Ten Commandments keeps its place of honor in the rotunda of the Alabama Judicial Building, a federal judge is trying to determine the minds of the founding fathers relative to the place of religion in civil government. U. S. District Judge Myron Thompson has heard arguments from opposing sets of experts. One group argued that Thomas Jefferson and other founding fathers would have condemned the presence of such a monument, which Alabama's Chief Justice Roy Moore had moved into the judicial building. Moore and the experts who back him maintain that the monument is an acknowledgement that the Ten Commandments are the "moral foundation" of law and that the founding fathers intended no such separation of faith and government as is strictly enforced today throughout the nation. Moore said he moved the monument into the judicial building in part because of what he sees as a moral decline in the nation over the last half century.

LANSING, Mich. (EP)—A Michigan court ruled that an expectant mother can use deadly force to protect her unborn child. The ruling came from a case in which a pregnant woman stabbed and killed her boyfriend after he punched her in the stomach. While her life was not in danger, the Michigan Court of Appeals ruled that she should be allowed to argue in court that she acted in defense of her unborn child. Ed Rivet of Right to Life of Michigan told *Family News in Focus*, "The maternal instinct is what this case is about. A mother, or even a father or another person, can use deadly force to protect an unborn child from being killed." And Douglas Johnson of the National Right to Life Committee said, "What the court of appeals in Michigan has said is that these unborn children—at any stage of development—are 'other persons,' and

therefore that this right to defend them applies to the unborn child."

HOUSTON, (EP)—A Texas postmistress has steadfastly refused to remove an "In God We Trust" poster displayed in her post office. U. S. Postal Service officials had ordered her to take it down because it was in violation of postal regulations. But according to the Houston Chronicle, Ida Miera declared that the poster, which still hangs in her post office as well as two others in Montgomery County, Texas, would only come down "over my dead body."

TRUCK DRIVER CREDITS PRAYER AFTER HELPING TO CAPTURE SNIPER SUSPECTS

FREDERICK, Md. (EP)—The truck driver who alerted police to the whereabouts of two men later arrested in the "Beltway Sniper" case said he and a group of truck drivers had prayed about the case just prior to his spotting the suspects' car in a rest stop.

Ron Lantz, 61, of Ludlow, Ky., called authorities after seeing a car sought by police in the string of shootings that left 10 dead and three wounded since Oct. 2. The two suspects, John Allen Muhammad, 41, and a 17-year-old traveling companion, were arrested at the Maryland rest stop where Lantz spotted their blue Chevrolet Caprice with New Jersey tags.

Lantz, who is just weeks from retirement after 35 years as an over-the-road driver, told the Associated Press, "Who would have thought that all this would happen just when I'm fixing to retire. I just thank God that I was where I was and that I was able to help. I now know that God answers prayers."

After calling 9-1-1 to report the suspicious car, Lantz was directed by police to block the vehicle from leaving the rest stop until police could arrive. He told reporters he spent several tense minutes waiting for police to arrive. "I just sat there and waited. . . It was a long 15 minutes," he said.

He recalled that at one point he started walking to the restroom, but turned around and went back to his truck when he noticed two people in the car.

As to his part in ending the weeks-long case that terrorized residents of the area surrounding Washington, D.C., he told Reuters News Service, "I'm no hero. I don't even want to be classified as a hero. Just let it go like it is. I did my job."

Lantz was willing to give credit where credit is due, however. "You don't think the Lord works in mysterious ways?" Lantz was quoted by the Cincinnati Enquirer.

As to the possibility of his receiving any of the \$500,000 reward offered for the arrest of the sniper, Lantz said, "I'll probably take it right back to the families

that all this happened to."

ROCHESTER, N.Y. (EP)—An employee with 23 years of service to the Eastman Kodak Co. was fired by the film and camera giant after objecting to a memo promoting "Coming Out Day," a homosexual activist event promoting the gay lifestyle. The employee, Rolf Szabo, was terminated after sending a reply to a supervisor's e-mail about the event. According to WorldNetDaily (WND) Szabo sent the simple e-mail reply: "Please do not send this type of information to me anymore, as I find it disgusting and offensive. Thank you, Rolf Szabo." Szabo's response was sent to some 1,000 Kodak employees who had received the original e-mail regarding the event. His manager sent apologies to employees for Szabo's remarks, and the company gave Szabo an ultimatum; either sign an employee commitment plan apologizing for what he had written and promising that it would not happen again, or be terminated from his job. Szabo chose the latter. Jim Blamphin, Kodak's manager of corporate media relations, told WND, "The whole thing is true. This chap was asked to take part in a program that fosters inclusion, and he refused." Blamphin added, "Every possible definition of diversity is embraced by Kodak." Apparently not.

AUGUSTA, Maine (EP)—Two groups of parents in Maine are suing the state's education department, charging that it discriminates against religious institutions in its school-choice program. The parents, whose children attend private religious schools in Maine, are hoping a federal court will rule Maine's program unconstitutional in light of the U. S. Supreme Court's recent ruling in *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris*, which makes school vouchers legal for religious schools. "The Supreme Court made it clear that religious schools must be treated in the same manner as other schools with respect to tuition funding," said Vincent McCarthy, an attorney with the American Center for Law and Justice, which is representing the parents. He added, "Maine discriminates against religious education in favor of non-religious education. The Supreme Court held in the *Zelman* case that it is in violation of the Establishment Clause [of the Constitution] to discriminate against religious education."

DALLAS (EP)—The maker of an implantable human identification chip is offering a \$50 discount to the first 100,000 people to register for a chip implantation. The \$200 chip is the size of a grain of rice and is implanted under the skin of the subject. The company is marketing the device, which can hold a sizeable amount of important personal data, for such uses as controlling access to buildings and offices (the chip would replace a "smart"

card key); financial transactions (the chip would replace an ATM card); identification (the chip would replace the old-fashioned identification card). The chip has alarmed both privacy advocates, who see the potential of controlling populations through forced implantation, and some evangelical Christians, who see eerie parallels between the chip and the biblical "Mark of the Beast" which will ultimately be required of all non-believers in a post-Christian dispensation.

* *Partial-Birth Returns*: Careful not to neglect social conservatives, Senate Minority (soon to be Majority) Leader Trent Lott (R-Miss.) made the passage of the *partial-birth abortion ban* one of his top priorities just one day after Republicans' stunning election victory. Lott said in an interview with American family Radio, "I will call it up, *we will pass it*, and the President will sign it. I'm making that commitment—you can write it down." The Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act has passed Congress in the past, only to be vetoed twice by *Bill Clinton*. In the latest congressional session, it passed the House but was bottled up in the Democratic Senate (along with many other major pieces of legislation).

* *Gizzi Had It Right (Almost!)* One of the pundit who came the closest to accurately forecasting the historic return last week was *Human Event* own Political Editor John Gizzi. "Gizzi Predicts: A Republican Senate By 51 to 49" was the conclusion of his analysis of all 34 Senate races (see *Human Events*, October 15). That's exactly what the line-up in the new Senate will be unless Republican John Thune wins the recount in South Dakota and hikes GOP Senate ranks to 52.

After painstakingly going through all 435 House races, Gizzi in our October 22 issues predicted a net gain of ten seats for House Republicans. With one race still up in the air (Colorado 7th, where the Republican candidate is narrowly ahead) and assuming he GOP takes Louisiana's very Republican 5th District in the December 7 run-off, the net gain for the GOP is six seats so far.

* *And Good Judges*: Now that *Tom Daschle* and his obstructionist colleagues are about to be pushed—gently but firmly—aside, the *nation's federal benches* will once again be filled. In a press conference November 7, President Bush mentioned that he hoped his plan for *efficient Senate consideration* of judicial nominees would soon be adopted. Not even waiting for this, however, Senate Republicans plan to move soon to confirm a large number of Bush's appeals court nominees held up by the Daschle Democrats—including two rejected by the Senate Judiciary Committee, *Charles Pickering* and *Priscilla Owen*, and another not voted upon, *Miguel Estrada* (*Human Events*, (11/11/02)).



GLEANINGS

LEADING THOUGHTS
ON SERMONS

By Jesse B. Thomas

“Peace in believing” (Rom. 15:13).

Let no man fancy that he believes nothing. What we are offered in Christianity is not the beginning of belief—it is the end of it. It offers us balm for the wound that already makes us suffer, rest from the strife that all have to undergo. There are beliefs that give us pain rather than comfort. There are many things that we cannot help believing. We cannot help believing that there is something of space stretching out beyond us, and that time reaches out to an infinity. We cannot conceive of the cessation of time. We cannot think of a day and then nothing, and then a day again. These are things that we cannot help believing without chaos in the mind. We must, unless we let go of everything, believe in this immensity of time and space. These we cannot escape—time reaching out into the immeasurable, space reaching out into the infinite.

Then there are things in which we believe instinctively, we know not how. A sick man lying on his couch looks at the pattern of the paper on the wall and sees at first only a maze of disconnected lines. But, looking closer, by constantly watching, he finds that they are arranged in regular figures. So they that look upon this universe see the stars first as sand heaps upon the shore. But when Kepler aids them to reach a knowledge of their laws, they appear arranged in order. And when we find that what appear mysterious substances are only combinations in regular and simple proportions of simpler substances, we see again the same order of nature. And when we can even measure the movements of the stars in their courses, the order becomes more apparent. There are many things that the child believes. It knows that the place where it once fell must be guarded against if it would not fall again. It knows that certain things that in one case accomplish certain ends will in another case do the same. The child sees a man with a broken leg, or a bird attempting with a broken wing a feeble flight, and it knows that something has happened, that this is not in accordance with the order of nature. And we must believe that there is One who directs this

order.

Our heart beats, and while we are awake we perhaps can watch it, but who watches over our heart in the night-time when we can feel nothing? We look out of the train in motion and we see the valleys spread out wide below us; we see fields over which we are going and we cannot see what keeps us safe from falling. But we do not fear. We know that there is a track under us and an engineer guiding us, and though we can see neither, yet we believe that both are in their place and we have peace. And how could you have peace if you did not believe? If you did not today believe that as this would go whirling in fantastic curves through space, among the countless bodies of the universe, there is a hand that guides and an eye that watches, you could not sleep quietly in your beds tonight. We see the law and other of nature made continuous. Not even the child can help believing that brokenness or suffering comes from a violation of this order. When the child sees the man with the broken leg or the bird with the injured wing, it feels that there has been something done by some one in violation of the law of order.

Whenever death comes I shrink from it, I cannot help it. I see my friend lying dead. Why is it I shrink from him? He does not move or recognize me, but that would be the case if he were in a sleep or in a trance. I cannot communicate with him, but that would be so if he were alive and in the next room. Why am I afraid? It is not the thought of infinity, for I see that all the while. I look out into space and I think of it as infinite, stretching out with weary wings to find the end it cannot reach, and I am not afraid. I shrink from death because I believe it to be in some measure unnatural.

There is a life beyond, and death is the cutting off of life. The inferior animals replace sometimes a lost limb or covering. Oh, if we could only feel that such a replacing of life would come to us after death! How it would help us if we could find some promise of this good! We look to nature for it and we do not find it. We see no peace there. The universe cannot help us; it is only anxious to fasten our own guilt upon us. Where shall we get this peace? There is a something called agnosticism, or in plainer English, “know nothingism,” that answers simply, “We do not know.” As the proverb says, “They make a solitude and call it peace.” If you by agnosticism mean simply that it is impossible to know anything really in this world, that is a childish idea. If a father were about to punish his child, the child might say, “Hold on, father,

I am an agnostic. No one really knows what is the difference between right and wrong and as you cannot know that how can you punish me for doing anything?” Would that stop the father from inflicting the punishment? You do not look for the analysis of your mother’s heart before you believe that she loves you.

You remember the unbelieving disciple who exclaimed, “**Unless I put my hands in His side and my finger in the print of the nails, I will not believe.**” Yet when the loving Saviour came to him and invited him to prove that it was He, the disciple simply said: “**Lord, I believe.**” He did not need to touch the wounds; the spirit of love showed that it was the Master. There came a man to me since my father’s death, who said: “I have a communication from the spirit of your father,” and he sat down and wrote on a paper. But I knew well that, though he might imitate my father’s writing, he could never imitate my father’s heart as it found expression in the words.

But there are others who do not say all this. They say that there is nothing to do in this world but to fight it out as well as possible; that all the world is at war with us and we must keep up the battle as best we may. The petition that would bring them to their knees they will not listen to, but set themselves against it. Woe to the man who sets himself against his Maker! The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. The young soldier goes forth to the battle with joy, not thinking that the dreadful artillery cares nothing for his mother’s love or the pride of his young strength, but goes on sweeping him down with the rest. The soul that fights against its God will be overwhelmed at the last.

Others say: “We solve the enigma by ignoring it. Let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die. We take no responsibility for this life. We are here in this life, and we will not stop to think what comes next.” And so they go on with their toys and sports. You remember the story of the baron who was told that his tower would not stand secure unless a child was built up in its walls. He brought the child and placed it in a recess and gave it toys to play with, and it sat there playing while the masons built up the wall imprisoning it in its hopeless dungeon. So the architects of time are building up the walls about you as you sit with your worldly toys about you, and you do not know it till it is too late. All thoughts of the future will leave you restless, unless there comes a message of peace from without. And that message is brought by Christianity.

(*The Pulpit Treasury*, Feb. 1887).

“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope” (Romans 15:4).

“Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall” (I Corinthians 10:1-12).

“So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief. Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. . . . Let us labour, therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief” (Hebrews 3:19; 4:1-11)

(Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1902, by F. C. Gilbert, in the Office of the Librarian of Congress, Washington, D.C.)

THOROUGHNESS IN
STUDY

By J. A. Broadus

Two leading desires govern every real student. He desires to know truth. A thousand times one must remind himself that truth, in every direction, is better than error—more powerful, more ennobling, more delightful. How can a human soul ever be

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Gleanings

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satisfied without constant and diligent search for truth? Not the views of the text-books, nor even of the honored professor, not—what is often mightier far—the views that prevail among young associates; not the explanation that is easy, the theory that is famous, the side that will promote one's social or political or financial interest; no, the question must always be, about everything, what is the truth? A thousand contemporaries may hold on, without inquiry, to what has been long established among men, and ten thousand may fling us their hats in honor of any real or supposed novelty that is nicknamed "science" or "modern thought"; the real student will strive independently, humbly, patiently, to find out what is the real truth. Youthful presumption and arrogance on the one hand, and on the other hand an indolent acceptance of fashionable opinion, are alike unfavorable to genuine study.

The other great desire of a student is mental improvement. In seeking to know, he is seeking to be. Knowledge is nowhere to be regarded as an end, but only as a means: first, a means of discipline; secondly, a means of influence, and throughout incidentally a means of enjoyment. After all that is said upon this point, few youthful students half understand its importance. Even professional studies, which are often treated like learning a trade, should be so pursued as to develop and discipline one's mental powers. For pray remember that not only development is needed, and symmetrical development of all our faculties, but also discipline. A man must learn to fix his mind upon a subject, and hold it there at will. The general who has to organize and discipline an army of recruits, so that he can send them forth to marshaled conflict whenever his trumpet sounds, and make them stand in line of battle till he bids them advance as conquerors or retreat in good order, presents but a faint illustration of the task every student ought to perform with his own faculties. Teachers and text-books may help, kind words from friends and secret dreams of ambition may stimulate, but the student must himself do the work of self-development and self-discipline. There is difference in advantages, and we cannot be thankful enough if we possess them in a high degree, but every educated man is self-educated.

The student who is to amount to much must be capable of subordinating the present to the future. He must know how "to scorn

delights, and live laborious days." The importance of will in study is perhaps seldom appreciated. Regular tasks appointed by recognized authority, and shared with nobly emulous comrades, give extremely valuable assistance. Often in later life, when compelled to make some difficult acquisition or investigation, one feels lonely, and pines for the help of a teacher, or at least a single fellow-student. But it is utterly fatal to be merely passive, doing only what is required, and only because it is required, or stirred simply by passing emulation; the student must bring to bear a determined will. You can understand a thing far more quickly and more thoroughly, if you are really determined to understand it. You can remember far more readily and accurately, what you distinctly intended to remember when it was first acquired. And nowhere in practical life is there greater need than the student has of unconquerable perseverance. That original and able thinker, Dr. Tiberius Gracchus Jones, once spoke in a sermon, as reported by a thoughtful hearer, of "the love of completeness" as one of our most wholesome passions. When a young student has fairly undertaken to master a certain subject, or to perform any defined amount of mental work, he ought to feel a passionate desire to complete the task, for the sake of his mental habits, if for no other reason.

(The Pulpit Treasury, July 1886, pp. 183-184).

SANCTIFICATION

By R. S. MacArthur

"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17).

Progressive sanctification is a divine grace. The disciples already possessed it in part. To sanctify has in Scripture two meanings. The first is to separate from a secular to a sacred use. The second and more exalted meaning is to make holy. Men in God's service need both consecration and holiness. The two senses of the word are always the same in human experience. Christ's prayer is that this grace may be continued, confirmed and completed. The Author of the good work of grace in a man's soul will gloriously complete that which he has so graciously begun. To grow in grace is both a duty and a privilege. The man who ceases to grow either intellectually or spiritually has begun to die. All the figures used by Christ and the Apostles as applied to the Christian life imply continued growth. Young believers are to desire the sincere milk of the Word in order that

they may grow thereby. Christians are to press on in the path of the just until they reach the perfect day. God's people shall be without spot or wrinkle or any such things. Christ shall present them blameless in the presence of His Father and ours. Even now they are to gain the victory over the world; it is to be beneath their feet. The head of the Christian ought to be among the stars. This transcendent victory is to be theirs even here and now. Body, soul and spirit ought to be wholly sanctified unto God.

This work is to be done through the instrumentality of truth. God has unexhausted and inexhaustible resources. His Word is the channel through which the consecrating graces of the Holy Spirit come. "It is the seed of the new birth; it is the food of the new life." The Psalmist hid God's Word in his heart that he might not sin against Him. God's word is true.

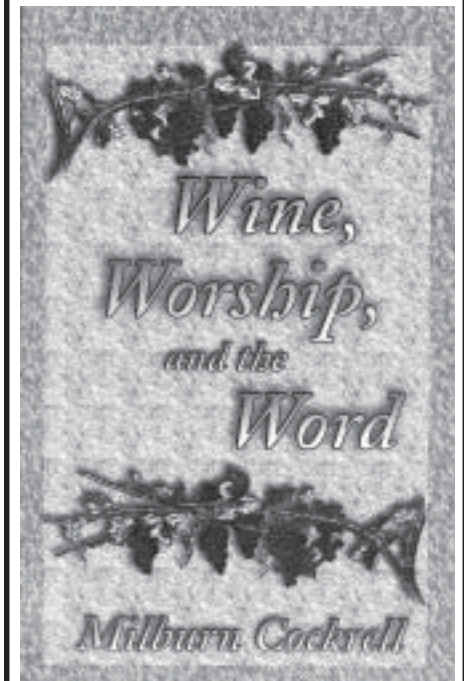
The Son of God is the Word of God in the highest and fullest sense. I am simple-minded to take this Word at its face value. Christ meant just what He said when He declared that God's Word is truth. This Word is the end of all strife. This Word must be true though all interpreters and opposers be false. We stand on this everlasting Word as on an eternal rock. With the Rock of Ages behind us and this Word beneath us we defy all powers of opposition on earth or in Hell. We have no apology to offer for God. Our business is simply to declare His eternal truth. That Word is its own witness and its own best defense.

Today in the presence of angels and of men I beseech you to submit to Jesus Christ who is the true Word of

God. Yield Him the homage of your heart and give Him the obedience of your life, and the sanctifying grace of God will flow through your heart now, and at the last, purified from every moral stain and crowned with eternal victory, you shall stand in His presence.

(The Pulpit Treasury, Dec. 1886).

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