

The Berea Baptist Banner

XVV, Number 1

Mantachie, Mississippi, January 5, 2000

Whole Number 250

Why Don't You Invite Us?

By James M. Pendleton

(1811 - 1891)

This question is often asked of Baptists by Pedobaptists. It has reference to inviting them to the Lord's Table. It is a fair question, and deserves an answer. The invitation is not given, and there are reasons why it is not. Before naming some of these reasons, it may be said that the failure to invite by no means implies a denial of the piety of Pedobaptists. So far from denying their piety, we gladly concede it. We admit that they love the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the various departments of Christian work in which they are engaged, they are entitled to commendation for their zeal and activity. But we do not give the invitation referred to for the following reasons:



J. M. Pendleton

That is, the Lord Jesus instituted the ordinance of the Supper, and it is called "the Lord's Supper," because He appointed it, and because

it is a commemoration of His death. If the Supper is the Lord's, if the table on which it is served is His, then it must be His prerogative to say who shall partake of the sacred feast, and in what manner His table shall be approached. Baptists claim no discre-

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Signs of A Dying Age

By Roy Mason

(1894 - 1978)

(MATT. 24:7-12)

I want to speak today on the subject, "Signs of a Dying Age," and I want to read from the 24th chapter of Matthew, beginning with verse 7, "For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold."



Roy Mason

Now I want to use for a text that 8th verse, "All these are but the beginning of sorrows." My text does not have an adequate rendering in our King James version. Here it says, "All these are but the beginning of sorrows," but in the Greek, of which this is but the translation, it says, "All of these are but the beginning of birth pangs." The picture drawn here in this passage is

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Repent or Perish!

By Rosco Brong

(1908 - 1985)

Old-Fashioned Doctrine of Repentance, Though Much Neglected, Is Still in the Bible!



Rosco Brong

"Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:2-5).

Millions of people confuse repen-

tance with penance, a Romish invention entirely foreign to the Bible. Many others confuse repentance with penitence or sorrow for sin, so that

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His People

Part 2

By William Tiptaft

(1803 - 1864)

The true ministers of Christ bring men to the law; now this condemns them, and shows them to be under the curse: He that offendeth in one point is guilty of all (James 2:10). As



William Tiptaft

many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them (Gal. 3:10). If, then, a man offend against the law of God in one point, either in word, thought, or deed, he is under the curse. Now it is certain that no man can keep the law of God without offense, "for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain" (Gal. 2:21). "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto

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The Slain Lamb

By Milburn Cockrell

Mantachie, Mississippi

"And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth" (Rev. 5:6).

John wept because no man in Heaven could open the book of redemption and loose its seals (Rev. 5:1-4). Then one of the twenty-four elders

said to him: "Weep not; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof" (Rev. 5:4-5).

John looked for a lion and saw a lamb. These are symbols of the same person—Jesus Christ. He is the lion in His mighty power; the Lamb in His gentleness of atoning sacrifice. By His sacrifice as a Lamb He became a Lion.

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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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THE BEREA BAPTIST BANNER (UPS 546470) is published monthly for \$3.00 per year by the authority of the Berea Baptist Church, 3881 Highway 363, Mantachie, Mississippi 38855. Periodical Publication postage paid at Mantachie, Mississippi.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE BEREA BAPTIST BANNER, P. O. Box 39, Mantachie, Mississippi 38855-0039.

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PUBLISHED MONTHLY with paid circulation in most states in the U.S.A. and some foreign countries.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

One year.....	\$3.00
Two years.....	\$5.00
Five years.....	\$12.00

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BUNDLES TO ONE ADDRESS: These are sent for \$2 per paper for a year. An example: 10 papers for one year at \$20 or 20 papers for one year at \$40.00.

LOCATION OF PUBLISHING CHURCH: Our church is located on state highway 363 about one mile south of Mantachie, Mississippi. Readers are always welcome to visit our services.

CHURCH PHONE: 1-662-282-7794.

EDITOR'S PHONE: 1-662-282-7233.

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His People

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Christ" (Gal. 3:24). Thus the law of God writes death in the consciences of those who are "**ordained to eternal life**" (Acts 13:48). They see their sins standing in array before them; they endeavour, through ignorance, to amend their lives; they labour in vain; their hearts are broken by God; for the preparations of the heart are from the Lord (Prov. 16:1). They can find no rest nor consolation, and are almost in despair. Harassed and tormented by Satan, they know not what to do, and cry out, with the jailer at Philippi, "**Sirs, what must I do to be saved?**" (Acts 16:30).

If they have been Pharisees, their eyes are open to see the pride and hypocrisy of their religion, and they confess that all their righteousnesses are as filthy rages (Isa. 64:6). If they have been notorious sinners, they think that the Lord never came to seek such vile wretches as they are. Thus troubled and distressed, they hear the Gospel, which is "**glad tidings of good things**" (Rom. 10:15) to those who feel themselves lost sinners. They hear Christ set forth in all His fullness

and in all His glory; they hear that the more vile they are in their own sight, the more precious will Christ be to them; they hear that if they go to Christ naked, He will clothe them; if they go unto Him hungry, He will feed them; and if they go unto Him thirsty, He will give them of the living waters, so that they shall not thirst again.

They are unwilling to go to Christ, because they have nothing to offer Him; they hear with joy that the Lord will accept nothing from men but the sacrifices of broken and contrite hearts. Thus the Lord generally calls His people. He takes from them everything in which they trusted for salvation, and then they are obliged to fly to the refuge set before them in the Gospel; they believe in Christ, and He is made unto them "**wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption**" (I Cor. 1:30). This is very humbling doctrine to the pride of man, that Christ is to be everything and man to be nothing, yea, worse than nothing, for he will never do anything but sin. Whether we be converted or not, our flesh will never do anything good. "**In my flesh dwelleth no good thing**" (Rom. 7:18). They who are chosen in Christ have His Spirit to dwell in them. This Spirit of Christ dwelling in a man makes him a "**new creature**," so that old things pass away, and all things become new (II Cor. 5:17).

Now, observe, we can do nothing to obtain this Spirit, for all we do, or ever shall do, in the flesh, is sin, as the Xth Article of our Church clearly states: "the condition of man, after the fall of Adam, is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and good works to faith, and calling upon God." We are cautioned by Solomon not to give "**the sacrifice of fools, for they consider not that they do evil**" (Eccl. 5:1). We cannot turn to God of ourselves; we cannot repent of ourselves, for Christ is exalted a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance (Acts 5:31; II Tim. 2:25); and thus the Scriptures, as well as the Xth and XIIIth Articles of our Church, plainly show us all to be under the curse, without the slightest power of delivering ourselves.

We ministers of the Gospel must not deceive you; all who have not the Spirit of Christ are in this state, whether they know it or not, whether they believe it or not. "**By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them**" (Eph. 2:8-10); and

Paul saith: "**There is a remnant according to the election of grace**" (Rom. 11:5). God hath loved His people with an everlasting love, and therefore with lovingkindness will He draw them (Jer. 31:3).

As long as a man believes that he can do anything of himself to prepare his heart to receive grace or merit salvation, I cannot give him any present scriptural hope of being saved. If the heart be not prepared of God to receive it "**without money and without price**" (Isa. 55:1), he will never have it. Whilst man thinks any good dwells in his human nature, no good ever will dwell in it; for till a man is taught of God to see himself a lost and undone sinner, his body will never be the temple of the Spirit of Christ; and if he have not Christ's Spirit, he is none of His. All must be humbled to receive salvation as a free gift, or they will never have it: "**Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein**" (Mark 10:15). It is God that maketh us to differ; and having Christ's Spirit given to us, with the mind we serve the law of God, though with the flesh the law of sin (Rom. 7:25). And Paul saith: "**By the grace of God I am what I am.**" "**I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me**" (I Cor. 15:10). It is my belief, and Scripture warrants me in saying so, that no man will ever go to Heaven who is not taught of God to rest so entirely on Christ for salvation as to say: "**By the grace of God, I am what I am.**" This is humbling to the pride of man, but salvation is of grace, and grace alone.

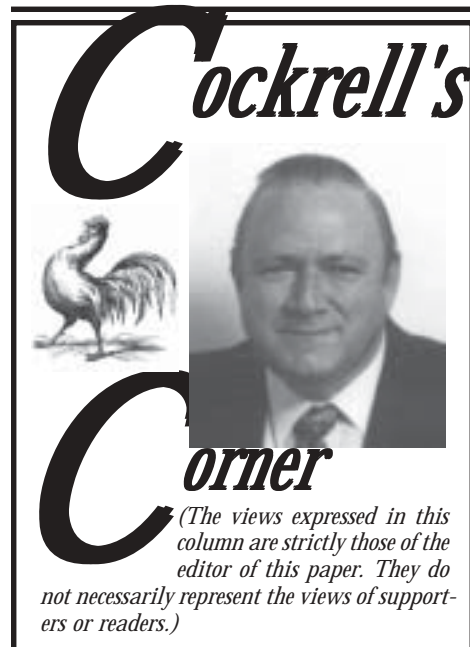
I will now address myself to those of this congregation who are ignorant of Christ as the true way of salvation, who have never been taught of God the truths of the Gospel, whose hearts are at enmity against God, and who hate the true doctrines of the Gospel. God grant that the warnings I am about to give you may be instrumental in converting some present who "**are ordained to eternal life.**" I am thoroughly convinced that you, in your present state, hate to hear the Gospel. Your minds rise in rebellion against God's sovereignty, and you disbelieve His Word of truth. You cannot understand it, for it is foolishness to you (I Cor. 2:14); and whilst you remain in your present state, you will fight against Christ and His true Church; and if the Lord should not convert you, you will hate Him and His Gospel to the day of your death. Now I well know that you would rather hear any other doctrine than the true Gospel. The "**truth as it is in Jesus**" must offend you. You love

to have ministers to feed your pride and flatter your vanity, by preaching to you reformation instead of regeneration; free will instead of free grace; the righteousness of man instead of the imputed righteousness of Christ. You do not like to hear the law preached faithfully, for that condemns you; you do not like to hear the Gospel preached faithfully, for that offends you; but you like to have the law and the Gospel mixed, which spoils both, and only makes men rest contentedly in a fatal security.

You cannot be saved by your own righteousness, for "**then Christ is dead in vain.**" So you must be saved by either Christ's righteousness, or your own righteousness and Christ's mixed. Consider whether your pride is great enough to make you think that your own righteousnesses, which are "**as filthy rags**" (Isa. 64:6), will be required to adorn the wedding garment prepared by Christ Himself. You may be ready to say to me that Christ told the young man who asked Him, "**What good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?**" "**If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments**" (Matt. 19:16, 17). Here Christ brought him to the law, that he might be condemned. And so I say to you: "If you will enter into life, keep the commandments," and then you will have fulfilled the law as well as Christ; but remember, if you offend in one point you are guilty of all, and are under the curse. Therefore, bring yourselves to this test, and, like the young man, you will be convinced that you cannot gain Heaven in that way; for the law condemns every man; and Christ saith: "**I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me**" (John 14:6).

Do you believe in Christ? Are you sure that you do? Perhaps you think that you believe, because you have never doubted. "**He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself**" (I John 5:10). What witness have you? "**The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him**" (Ps. 25:14). What secret of the Lord do you know? Christ saith: "**I know my sheep, and am known of mine**" (John 10:14). Do you know Christ? Paul saith: "**All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution**" (II Tim. 3:12). What persecution have you suffered? "**We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren**" (I John 3:14). You cannot say that you have passed from death unto life, because you do not believe that man is dead in sins. Do you love the brethren? Do you love Jesus Christ? Are you willing to endure

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Cockrell's
Corner

(The views expressed in this column are strictly those of the editor of this paper. They do not necessarily represent the views of supporters or readers.)

DOES GOD CHASTISE THE DEVIL'S CHILDREN?

Please note that I am not asking if God punishes the wicked. This the Bible plainly declares: **"Fools because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted"** (Ps. 107:17). **"Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him"** (Isa. 3:11).

My question is this: Does God chastise the Devil's children as He does His own children? The answer is found in Job 21:9. There this is said of the wicked: **". . .neither is the rod of God upon them."** Of the wicked Psalm 73:5 declares: **"They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued** (Heb. literally means "smitten" as in Isaiah 53:4, a word used especially of Divine chastisement) **like other men."**

God does chastise His own elect: **"If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons"** (Heb. 12:7-8). God allows not spoiled brats in His family. Those who escape chastisement are the spurious offspring of another father (John 8:44).

Chastisement proves we are in the covenant (Ps. 89:30-34). It is a mark of God's love: **"For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth"** (Heb. 12:6). Jesus Christ told the church at Laodicea: **"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent"** (Rev. 3:19). From this it seems that God neither loves or chastens the Devil's children. Divine chastisement is a sign of sonship. Not all men are sons of God.

WHAT CAN YOU BELIEVE AND STILL CLAIM TO BE A BAPTIST?

I have been reading a book called *Baptist Theologians*, edited by Timothy George and David S. Dockery, published by Broadman Press, Nashville, Tenn. (publishing house of the Southern Baptist Convention). All the men in the book are described as "outstanding Baptist minds" and "creative Baptist theologians." It is a mixture of conservatives and liberals, for these all claim to be Baptists.

I see in the list of scholars the name of John Bunyan who taught and practiced open communion. I see Andrew Fuller who was off on the atonement. I see James M. Pendleton who believed in a universal church and a universal redemption. There is also J. R. Graves who denied the eternal sonship of Christ. I see also Charles H. Spurgeon who practiced open communion but claimed to believe in closed communion. Then there is Augustus H. Strong who was a theistic evolutionist.

On the list is Eric Rust. He is well known for saying: "We can no longer treat the Bible as a purely supernatural book, every word of which is divinely inspired, a repository of certain propositional truths to which faith must assent" (*Nature and Man in Biblical Thought*, p. 2). Again he wrote: "The Old Testament begins with two myths of creation. . ." (p. 20).

There also appears the name of Dale Moody. He denies the historicity of much of the Old Testament, defends evolution, denies eternal security, etc. Moody was Professor of Christian Theology at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., from 1948 to 1983.

Some other Baptist leaders I would add to this list (though not found in this book) such as Harry Emerson Fosdick, Billy Graham, Martin Luther King, Jr., President Bill Clinton, Vice-President Al Gore, Jesse Jackson, etc. Don't forget the hundreds of women preachers in both the Southern Baptist Convention as well as the American Baptist Convention who all claim to be Baptist preachers. Please also add to this list some of our own rank who believe Christ returned in A.D. 70 and who deny any future return of Christ. Even Judas Iscariot, who was **"a devil"** (John 6:70), was an apostle in the Baptist church. Alexander Campbell and Herbert W. Armstrong for a time were with the Baptists.

OBSERVATIONS

1. Even the best of men are but men at best. No human theologian is an

infallible guide when it comes to the teachings of the Word of God. All fallible men must be examined by the infallible Word (Acts 17:11). I did not call the church I pastor "Berea" without a reason.

2. You can believe anything you want to and be called a Baptist as the above list proves. This is why we must be careful to distinguish between true New Testament Baptists and some who wear the name "Baptists." Some things can be called what they are not (Rev. 2:2; 3:1).

3. Let us rejoice in the truths that Baptist leaders and theologians believe and teach which are found in the Bible. But let us reject those things which they hold that cannot be found in the Bible. Our rule of faith and practice is, not what the theologians have said, but what has God said in His Word. Quote Baptist theologians to prove what some Baptists have believed. This is well and good. But do not ever exalt the greatest Baptist theologians above the Bible. If it is in the Bible, it is Baptist doctrine. If it is not in the Bible, it is not Baptist doctrine.

His People

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much persecution for Him? Would you die for Him? Do you love the blessed truths of the Gospel? Do you find the doctrine of predestination and election in Christ to be **"full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort,"** as the XVIIth Article saith it is? Do you like to hear of election and free grace, or do you like to hear ministers lower God by making Him man's equal, so that man may make conditions with him in this manner—that man is to do all the good he can, by attending church and the sacrament, giving alms, being just in his dealings, and leading a good moral life; and that God, on his part, must grant Heaven on such terms? This is the vain religion of millions (a mere mercenary bargain for Heaven), who serve God for a slavish fear of Hell, as a hard task-master. This is what man calls a reasonable religion, and what thousands of strict professors will advocate.

I tell you plainly again, to the praise and glory of God, that He chose in Christ, before the world began, those whom He intended to deliver from curse and damnation. God so loved them that Christ died for them; but no one will come to Christ of his own free will, and yet all shall come; for Christ saith: **"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in**

no wise cast out" (John 6:37). They were ordained to do good works; the Lord calls them and sanctifies them, and prepares them for the mansions already prepared for them in Heaven; and not one will be lost.

This doctrine is not mine, but God's; if you will read Romans 8 and 9, Ephesians 1-3, and John 10 and 17, you will acknowledge the truths are there, if you cannot believe and love them; and compare the Xth, XIth, XIIth and XVIIth Articles of our Church with them and the doctrines which I have delivered this evening, and you will be obliged to say that you, as Churchmen, profess to believe them. Satan will help you to explain them away, if it were possible. But if ye will not hear Paul, hear Solomon: **"The LORD hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil"** (Prov. 16:4). Some, who know these truths to be there, but cannot love them, may be ready to say that ministers ought to guard them. God has not told me to do so, and if He did not think proper to guard His own pure Word, He does not want vain man to guard it for Him. Satan loves to have it guarded, for he well knows that Gospel-guarders never did and never will disturb his kingdom. We know that Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead for keeping back part of the price. What, then, may we ministers expect if we keep back part of His blessed Gospel? Many present will say, that the true doctrines of the Gospel are foolish, unreasonable, and absurd; therefore you, whosoever you may be, bear a strong testimony to the truth of them; for **"the preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness."** When Paul and Silas preached the Gospel to the Thessalonians, they cried out: **"These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also"** (Acts 17:6). But the Bereans **"searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed"** (Acts 17:11, 12). Alas! you think yourselves **"rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing;"** and know not that you are **"wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked"** (Rev. 3:17).

Now I will speak a few words to you, my brethren, who know Jesus. You can bear testimony to the truth of what I have said. **"We love him, because he first loved us"** (I John 4:19). The doctrines which the natural man hates, you love to hear; they are the comfort and delight of your souls; and when you hear self-righteous doctrines, you are grieved, and pity the preacher and his hearers. You

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can say with the Reformers: "That we are justified by faith only, is most wholesome doctrine" (XIth Article); for you well know that in your flesh nothing but sin dwells; you say with David to God: "**All things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee**" (I Chron. 29:14). And if the Lord required even a single good thought of you, of yourselves, you certainly would be damned. You know that you were blind, and the Lord hath opened your eyes to see your lost state by nature, that you might be brought to Christ, and be found in Him, not having your own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith (Phil. 3:9). You acknowledge that if the Lord had not chosen you, you would never have chosen Him, and you would still have been fighting with the world and the devil against Christ. You once hated to hear of election, as natural men must do. You know when Christ preached it, it always gave offense. In Luke, when He preached election, they endeavoured to cast Him down headlong from the brow of a hill. When He preached it again, "**many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him**" (John 6:65-66). When he clearly stated it again, the Jews said: "**He hath a devil, and is mad**" (John 10:20). Paul, who boldly declared the truth as it is in Jesus, caused his hearers to say of him: "**Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live**" (Acts 22:22); and, "**This fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law**" (Acts 18:13). They considered him a fool, and counted him "**as the filth of the earth, and the off-scouring of all things**" (I Cor. 4:10, 13). And if ministers preached as faithfully now as Paul did, would natural men like to hear them? Nature is not changed, the Gospel is not changed, and Christ is not changed. Therefore, when the Gospel is faithfully preached now, all who are not taught of God to receive it, of whatever sect or denomination they may be, will speak against and condemn it, if it be the same which Paul preached. As God said to Jeremiah: "**Mine heritage is unto me as a speckled bird, the birds round about are against her**" (Jer. 12:9). Yes, everyone is against the true Church of Christ who are not of it, as Christ saith: "**Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake**" (Matt. 10:22); and they said to Paul, as "**concerning this sect, we know that**

everywhere it is spoken against" (Acts 28:22). Shall we grieve, my brethren, at this? No. Christ saith, "**Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven**" (Matt. 5:12).

The Scriptures abound with words of consolation to the persecuted; for a Christian without persecution is as great a contradiction as a fire without heat. The stronger your faith is, the more you will be hated. You, my brethren, who have the Spirit of God bearing witness with your spirit that you are the children of God (Rom. 8:16), may you never be ashamed of Christ dwelling in you; for if you have not His Spirit, you are none of His; and if you have His Spirit, your salvation is as certain as if you were in Heaven. But the fruits of your faith will as evidently appear and be known as a tree is known by its fruit. If your faith does not influence your lives, and work by love, it is dead, and will profit you nothing. You are only Judases and hypocrites. "**Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him**" (I John 2:3, 4). You serve God as sons, not as a taskmaster, like slaves. Love makes you rich in good works in Christ. Love constrains you to be holy; your joy and happiness must be great; your sins are pardoned; your righteousness and sanctification are in Christ; the work has been done for you, and Christ hath told you so when He said, with His expiring breath, "**It is finished!**" (John 19:30). Though you must be vile and worthless in the world's esteem, you are precious in God's sight, and "**he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye**" (Zech. 2:8). No one can injure you without God's permission, and all things shall work together for your good (Rom. 8:28). May the world bring no other charge against you than they did against Daniel, which was his religion. If you will reign with Christ, you must first suffer with Him. You must bear the cross before you can wear the crown; but this life will soon pass away, and then you shall receive those blessed mansions which were prepared for you before the foundation of the world, and enjoy unutterable pleasures at God's right hand for evermore.



Repent or Perish!

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even Webster's dictionary, following common usage, wrongly defines repentance as "contrition for sins with amendment of life." Most Protestants today, and modernistic Baptists along with them, either ignore the doctrine of repentance or explain it away as nothing more than a momentary "decision for Christ."

1. Definition of Repentance. If we accept the English words "repent" and "repentance" as translations of Greek *metanoeo* and *metanoia*, respectively, it will not be hard to learn the New Testament meaning of these words. Even a reader who knows no Greek can easily check the information given here by reference to the *Englishman's Greek Concordance* or to *Young's Analytical Concordance*.

The question is confused a little for the English reader of the common version because the same words "repent," "not to be repented of," and "without repentance" are misused for the Greek *metamelomai* and *ametameletos*, which could better be translated by forms of English "regret."

WHAT IS REPENTANCE?

Repentance is sometimes defined as "a change of mind." The trouble with this definition is that it in turn can easily be misunderstood. Bible repentance is not a mere change of mind in the sense of momentary opinion or desire, as if a man should order pork chops for dinner and then, seeing his neighbor with an appetizing steak, "change his mind" and order a steak for himself. Rather, repentance is a change of mind in the sense of fundamental conceptions and attitudes, such as those Americans who now trust the promises of atheistic Communists and want to do business with Russia will experience when the bombs begin to fall on our cities—if they live long enough to learn from the disaster.

"Repent," as stated above, is English for Greek *metanoeo*. This word, in turn, is a compound of *noeo*, meaning "think," "understand," or "be minded" and the prefix *meta*, which may mean "after" and often denotes a change. Thus the word could be rendered "think again" or "have a different mind."

The simple verb *noeo* appears 14 times in the Greek New Testament. The King James translators rendered it ten times "understand," twice "perceive," once "think," and once "consider." Thus the compound *metanoeo*, "repent," might well be rendered, "have a different understanding."

2. Repentance and Faith. A right

understanding of repentance will save us from the erroneous idea that faith is something separate and apart from repentance, and from the false teaching that saving faith precedes repentance. When the Scriptures mention repentance and faith together, the order is "repent and believe," never "believe and repent."

REPENT AND BELIEVE

The reason for the scriptural order is obvious. The natural mind is incapable of saving faith. But when a man has a changed mind, a spiritual mind, even the mind of Christ, then he believes God's Word, he agrees with God's judgment upon him, he accepts God's provision for him in Christ—and this is saving faith.

As repentance is a radical change of mind from unbelief to belief, so faith is the attitude of the mind changed. This is why repentance and faith have been described as inseparable graces. And this is why in the Scriptures we usually find either word used without mention of the other, since either word necessarily implies the other.

3. Command to Repentance. "**The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead**" (Acts 17:30-31).

ALL MUST REPENT

It might be supposed that only exceptional sinners would be called on to repent, but not so. God "**now commandeth all men everywhere to repent.**" Repentance is not merely a desirable change of mental conceptions and attitudes; it is an imperative change—a direct command of God.

Not only lost sinners but Christians are commanded to repent when they have sinned. In Revelation 2 and 3 we read letters from Jesus to seven churches. Five letters out of the seven contain calls to repentance. Not to lost sinners, but to the church at Corinth, Paul wrote:

"**Though I made you sorry in the letter, I do not regret, even if I did regret; for I perceive that that letter, even if for an hour, made you sorry. Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye were made sorry to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage from us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be regretted: but the sorrow of the world worketh death**" (II Cor. 7:8-10, cor-

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Repent or Perish!

rected translation).

4. Need of Repentance. To be acceptable to God, man must have a changed mind because the mind with which he was born in the flesh is at enmity against God and cannot receive the things of God.

In Noah's day **"God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually"** (Gen. 6:5).

David by inspiration declared: **"The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts"** (Ps. 10:4).

Paul tells us that **"the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned"** (I Cor. 2:14).

"Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. 8:7-8).

A SOUND MIND

False religions may drive people crazy, or crazy people may have false religions, but not so with the true religion of Jesus Christ. **"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind"** (II Tim. 1:7).

Sometimes it may be a matter of opinion as to whom is sane and who is insane, but we need have no doubts if we accept the Word of God, for the inspired apostle assures us that **"we have the mind of Christ"** (I Cor. 2:16).

5. Repentance From and Toward. As repentance is a change of mental attitude, it must be from one attitude to another. And so we find:

Repentance is from sins: **"I gave her time that she might repent from her fornication"** (Rev. 2:21, corrected trans.).

"And the rest of the man, who were not killed in these plagues,

did not even repent from the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, and of silver, and of brass, and of stone, and of wood: which can neither see, nor hear, nor walk. And they did not repent from their murders, or from their sorceries, or from their fornications, or from their thefts" (Rev. 9:20-21, corrected trans.)

FROM DEAD WORKS TO GOD

Repentance is from dead works: **"The foundation of repentance from dead works"** (Heb. 6:1). "Dead works" are the outwardly good deeds that sinners do in trying to establish their own righteousness. The sinner must give up trying to save himself before he can be saved by Christ.

Repentance is toward God: **"Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ"** (Acts 20:21). In repentance the mind that was once disobedient and rebellious becomes reconciled to God.

6. Alternative to Repentance. **"Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish"** (Luke 13:3). Human nature has not changed. In the days when Jesus walked upon this earth, people liked to point to the calamities of others as visitations of divine justice. Jesus declared that these were only examples of greater judgments to come upon all who fail to repent.

EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT

The sinner who does not repent will perish not merely in this life, but in eternity: **"These shall go away into everlasting punishment"** (Matt. 25:46). **"Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction"** (II Thess. 1:9).

Mark gives us these words from the lips of Jesus Himself: **"If thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched"** (Mark 9:43-44).

We are reminded of Isaiah's prophecy: **"As the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord,**

so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord. And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh" (Isa. 66:22-24).

REPENT OR PERISH

7. Conclusion. God's Word is sure and will certainly come to pass. He is not a man that He should lie or repent. If we are in disagreement with Him, the only way we can become agreed with him is for us to change, for He changes not.

God **"NOW commandeth all men everywhere to repent."** Not tomorrow or any other time but **"NOW is the day of salvation"** (II Cor. 6:2).

If you are not saved by His grace, may God now grant you **"repentance unto life"** (Acts 11:18).

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He is One mighty to save and to claim the inheritance of the saints.

HIS FORM—"A LAMB"

There are symbols in the Book of Revelation. Chapter 1, verse 1, says: **"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John."** Note the words **"signified it."** Two errors are made in studying the book. The first is to deny that it contains some symbols, for it surely does as Revelation 1:1 declares. The second is to make it so symbolic that the book is robbed of all truth.

"Lamb" is a symbol of Christ in the Book of Revelation. The word for "Lamb" in Revelation is (*arnion*—little or young lamb) differs from the word "Lamb" (*amnos*—sacrificial lamb) in the Gospel of John (John 1:29, 36) and in Peter's epistle (I Pet. 1:19). Christ is called "Lamb" 28 times in the Book of Revelation.

In the eternal purpose of God Christ was **"the lamb slain from the foundation of the world"** (Rev. 13:8). In the decree of God Christ was appointed to redeem the elect by His blood. The Bible teaches blood redemption by Jesus Christ, God's Lamb.

A lamb was used in the legal sacrifices of the Old Testament. The first

sacrifice ever offered by a man was a lamb: **"And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering"** (Gen. 4:4). God accepted the sacrifice of Abel because it was typical of the future sacrifice of Christ. A lamb was used in the Passover: **"Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house"** (Ex. 12:3). The pascal lamb was typical of the death of Christ as the Lamb of God. **"For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us"** (I Cor. 5:7; cf. I Pet. 1:19). A lamb was used in the daily sacrifice of the tabernacle (Ex. 29:38-39) and other sacrifices (Num. 28:3, 9, 13).

Christ was called a Lamb in Old Testament prophecy. Speaking some 700 years before the birth of the Savior, the Prophet Isaiah said: **"He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter"** (Isa. 53:7; cf. Jer. 11:19). The New Testament commentary on this verse is found in Acts 8. **"The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth"** (Acts 8:32). When the eunuch asked Philip of whom the prophet spoke Acts 8:35 reads: **"Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus."**

John the Baptist, the son of a priest, called our Lord a sacrificial Lamb: **"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world"** (John 1:29). **"And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!"** (John 1:36). John had seen other lambs furnished by men, but this One was provided by God. The words of Abraham were true when he said to Isaac: **"My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering"** (Gen. 22:8). Jesus Christ told the Jews of His day: **"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad"** (John 8:56).

Hence we must not marvel that when John had a vision of Christ he saw **"a lamb."** This lamb is in contrast to all the wild beasts elsewhere mentioned in the Book of Revelation. When on earth Christ was as innocent and pure as a lamb; He was as inoffensive and harmless as a lamb. The Greek word of "lamb" in Revelation (*arnion*) means "a young lamb" or "little lamb" (Lev. 9:3). Such crea-

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Berea Baptist Broadcast

STATION	TIME	DIAL	WATTS
WFTA, Tupelo, MS	Sunday 9:30 - 10:00 a.m.	101.9	3,000 FM
WJOR, Saint Joseph, TN	Sunday 1:00 - 1:30 p.m.	101.5	1,000 FM
WLZA, Starkville, MS	Sunday 1:00 - 1:30 p.m.	710	2,500 AM
WCNA, Myrtle, MS	Sunday 1:00 - 1:30 p.m.	95.9	3,000 FM
WYWY, Barbourville, KY ..	Sunday 7:30 - 8:00 a.m.	950	1,000 AM
KARI, Blaine, WA	Saturday 10:30 - 11:00 a.m. ..	550	5,000 AM
DXRA, Davao City, Philippines	Sunday 8:15 - 8:45 a.m.	783 Khz ...	10,000 AM
DWSS, Manila, Philippines .	Sunday 5:30 - 6:00 p.m.	1494	16,000 AM

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tures were cherished by the Israelites and kept in the house as much loved pets (II Sam. 12:3-4). In a manner of speaking, men murdered the young pet Lamb of the family of God at Golgotha.

HIS MARKS—"AS IT HAD BEEN SLAIN"

Who were the murderers of this Lamb of God? A first degree murder charge was laid at the feet of the Jewish leaders in the first century. On the day of Pentecost Peter said: "**Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain**" (Acts 2:22-23). Peter renewed this charge later: "**But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; wherof we are witnesses**" (Acts 3:14-15). It is little wonder that the high priest said, "**Did we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us**" (Acts 5:28). Hear Peter still once more in Acts 10:39: "**And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree.**" The death of Christ was by wicked hands, but it was the fulfillment of what God's "**hand and thy counsel determined before to be done**" (Acts 2:23; 4:28), and what the prophets had foretold (Acts 3:18).

According to Old Testament law, the sacrificial lamb had to be slain. This is why Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God "**became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross**" (Phil. 2:8). This is why our Savior "**endured the cross, despising the shame**" (Heb. 12:2). There is no remission of sins without the shedding of blood (Heb. 9:22). Our Lord "**put away sin by the sacrifice of himself**" (Heb. 9:26).

Greek scholars tell me in Revelation 5:6 it literally reads "**as having been slain.**" It might possibly be translated "with its throat cut." The knife-wound was familiar to all who stood at an Israelitish altar and had seen a lamb die. In the vision John sees Christ in Heaven with the evi-

dences that He had come by the way of the altar of sacrifice, had been dead and become alive by resurrection. This once slain Lamb, by whose blood the elect's inheritance had been purchased, is seen with power to take and open the seven-sealed book.

This Lamb John saw in Heaven was covered with blood and had wounds upon it. Here we see Christ in Heaven with His atoning blood. He stands in the presence of His Father with His blood: "**Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us**" (Heb. 9:12). This event was typified by the living bird who flew away to Heaven with the blood of the slain bird upon its wings (Lev. 14:51-53).

In the post-resurrection appearances Christ bore the marks of His death: "**And when he had thus spoken, he shows them his hands and his feet**" (Luke 24:40). "**And when he had so said, he showed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord**" (John 20:20). Our Lord told Thomas: "**Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing**" (John 20:27). Today Christ, as He sits at the right hand of His Father in Heaven, still bears the marks of His death. When He returns to the Mount of Olives the remnant of Israel shall look on Him as the slain Lamb. "**They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him**" (Zech. 12:10; cf. 1:7).

Many preachers of this generation ridicule and make fun of the idea that Christ took His blood to Heaven—that He bears in His body for eternity His wounds—that He is the slain Lamb up in Heaven. According to them, John merely thought he saw a Lamb as it had been slain in Heaven. These people throw the typology of the Old Testament to the wind. They seem to have a problem with a memorial of the cross abiding in Heaven, and of it being owned and felt throughout eternity. I have no such problem.

Unlike them, I believe Christ is in Heaven bearing the marks and scars of His slaughter. I believe we need a constant sight of the slain Lamb. Christ in His sacrificial character is the most prominent object in the heavenly world. This should be the most prominent thing in our preaching on earth: "**For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified**" (I Cor. 2:2). God's people in Heaven sing of the slain Lamb: "**And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art**

worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation" (Rev. 5:9). The elect on earth should sing of the slain Lamb. Revelation 5 concludes with all Heaven worshipping Christ because of redemption: "**Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing**" (Rev. 5:12).

Some Greek scholars point out that in Revelation 5:6 the slain Lamb means "newly" or "lately slain" (See Chadwick and Gill). This declares the perpetual freshness of the offering of Jesus Christ before the throne of God. Here is the continual efficacy of the blood of Jesus to cleanse from all sin. I John 1:7 says: "**And the blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all sin.**" "Cleanseth" is in a continuous tense. The efficacy of His precious blood is perpetually available to cleanse from every sin past, present and future. William Cowper saw this truth and crystallized it in that line of his hymn—

Dear dying Lamb

Thy precious blood

Shall never lose its power,

Till all the ransomed Church of God

Be saved to sin no more.

HIS ATTITUDE—"STOOD"

After the ascension of Christ our Lord is often said to be sitting down. "**So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God**" (Mark 16:19). ". . . **when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high**"

(Heb. 1:3). But in Revelation 5:6 Christ is not seen sitting down. He is not merely seen slaughtered and dead, but raised again with sacrificial marks upon Him. He stands before the throne of the Father in all the vigor of His eternal life. The resurrection of Christ is not a fiction, but a fact. At present He sits with the Father upon the Father's throne (Rev. 3:21) and at His Father's right hand (Ps. 110:1; Heb. 8:1). In the vision John sees that Christ has vacated the throne and the right hand, and He stands ready to take His great power and act. Standing indicates a readiness for action.

We believe not in a dead Christ only. Our faith does not terminate at the garden tomb. We believe in a resurrected Redeemer, standing in Heaven full of energy. John sees Christ as He stands to take to Himself His rights, purchased by His death on the cross, about to usher in His reign. Christ is about to rid the world of its usurpers and to put down all false authority. "**And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne**" (Rev. 5:7). His purpose in taking the seven-sealed book is to open it and to reveal its contents. The book contains the foreordained process by which our Lord will claim our inheritance for us. This is the revelation proper and covers the things from here to the end of the Book of Revelation.

HIS PLACE—"IN THE MIDST"

Christ stands in the midst of the company around the throne. This means in the middle or center. The center of attraction in Heaven is Jesus bleeding and dying in our room and stead. Christ is the center of heavenly worship. He is worshipped by men and angels as the slain Lamb. The memories of Calvary are treasured in

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F u n n y b o n e

"... A time to laugh..." (Eccl. 3:4).

Pastor Brown had some expensive repairs done on his old Ford. When the mechanic started to make out the bill, Pastor Brown reminded, "Remember, I am a poor Baptist preacher."

The mechanic retorted, "Yes, I know—I heard you last Sunday on the radio."

The waitress was wondering why Deacon Jones was eating while his wife merely stared out of the window. "Aren't you hungry?" she asked Mrs. Jones.

"Sure am," she replied. "I'm just waiting till the deacon gets through with the teeth."

Jimmie Johnson was told by his mother to telephone the dentist's office. He made the call. When a woman answered, he said, "I'm supposed to make an appointment."

"I am sorry," replied the nurse, "but the doctor is out of town."

"Thank you," Jimmie came back. "When will he be out of town again?"

Jimmie Johnson came home from school with his report card, and Mr. Johnson implored, "Why are your grades so poor?"

Jimmie answered, "Dad, don't feel so badly—I got the highest mark of anybody that failed."

The Slain Lamb

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Heaven.

The Holy Spirit seems to always put Jesus in the center place. In the before-time covenant He is in the bosom of the Father as the center of Divine affection (Prov. 8:30). At the age of 12 we find Him **“in the temple, setting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking questions”** (Luke 2:46). Speaking to His church Christ said: **“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them”** (Matt. 18:20). After the institution of the memorial supper we see Christ **“in the midst of the church”** (Heb. 2:12) singing a hymn. On the cross, a malefactor on each side, we see **“Jesus in the midst”** (John 19:18). Prior to His ascension into Heaven, **“Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you”** (Luke 24:36; cf. John 20:19, 26).

Some believe that Christ stood between the elders and the Father who sat on the throne. Here is the mediatorial work of our Lord. As the God man, He mediates between God and redeemed men. He is our go-between. **“For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus”** (I Tim. 2:5; cf. Heb. 9:24; I John 2:1). The slain Lamb is a **“daysman betwixt us”** and God (Job 9:33).

HIS DIVINITY

The text concludes with the words: **“. . . having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.”** In the Bible horns are a symbol of power. Daniel 7:24 declares: **“And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise. . .”** Kings are people with power. The little horn (Antichrist) in Daniel is seen to have great power (Dan. 7:24-25). In Daniel 8:20-21 Alexander the Great is symbolized by **“the great horn.”** The beast out of the sea (the Antichrist) has ten horns, and he has power over the nations on earth (Rev. 13:7). The power of Christ to save us in Luke 1:69 is called **“an horn of salvation for us.”** The seven horns on the Lamb are symbolic of power, and joined with the number seven it means complete and perfect power.

This can only be said of God, and Jesus Christ is God. Psalm 62:11 says: **“God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God.”** There is no power in the entire universe save what God delegates. The slain Lamb did not acquire this power. Rather it belongs to Him inherently. His complete

and perfect power is self-existent and self-sustained. No man nor angel can add to as much as a shadow of increase to the power of Jesus Christ.

The **“seven eyes”** are symbolic of omniscience. The language of Revelation 5:6 is reminiscent of Zechariah 4:10 which speaks of **“the eyes of the LORD (Jehovah) which run to and fro through the whole earth.”** In II Chronicles 16:9 it is written: **“for the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him.”** Proverbs 15:3 says: **“the eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.”** In Revelation 5:6 omniscience is ascribed to Christ, showing Jesus is Jehovah and qualified to take the book of future events and explain it.

Liberals and cultists deny the divinity of Jesus Christ. They make the slain Lamb a mere man for the homage of the redeemed and the adoration of the angels. In contradiction of the prophets and apostles and Jesus Himself, they deny the Lamb was God in the flesh. But in Revelation 5:6 the slain Lamb is seen as Jehovah God.

CONCLUSION

1. The center of heavenly worship is the slain Lamb who is Jehovah-Jesus. Men and women on earth may doubt the divinity of Jesus Christ. They may preach against it and write books against it. But Heaven is not such a place of doubtful questions. The angels in Heaven and redeemed saints are certain the slain Lamb is Omnipotent and omniscient. The departed who are of the contrary mind are not seen in Heaven; they are in Hell!

2. A lamb is an approachable being. No one should fear to come to the Lamb of God who died for sinners. Have you come to Christ, weak and heavy laden with sin, for spiritual rest and refreshment? Have you received Him as your Savior?

3. One has so well written:

*If you from sin are longing to be free,
Look to the Lamb of God;
He, to redeem you, died on Calvary,
Look to the Lamb of God.*



Signs of A Dying Age

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the picture of an old age dying and a new age being born, and it says that the things that are mentioned here as to take place are to be to us not only signs of a passing age, but the birth pangs of a new age that is to come into existence.

Now, God has divided time, all time, into orderly ages. We speak of the end of time, but I do not find anything of that kind mentioned here in the Bible. It is true that we have such a thing mentioned once in a very bad translation, mistranslation, I might say, in the Book of Revelation, but when you look on the margin of the Bible and get the marginal rendering, you'll find that it is not the end of time that is referred to at all. So far as I know, and so far as the Bible discloses, duration may be measured in terms of time forever and ever. The longest period of duration that the Bible speaks of is “ages rolled upon top of ages.” And let me repeat that God has divided time into ages.

There was the age of innocence back there in the Garden, there was the age of the Law, and we're now living in the Age of Grace, but this age was predicted by the Lord Jesus Himself to come to an end. He said to His Disciples, and He was speaking to them in organized capacity as His church, **“Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age.”** That signified that the age begun back at the cross would one day come to a conclusion, and that conclusion is to be at the return of Christ to this earth.

Now God's purpose and plan for this age in which we live is for His people to spread the Gospel throughout the world. This is the age of out-calling, during which God is calling out of the world a people for His name, who will live with Him and rule the earth in the age to come. And the next age that is to come we might call the Kingdom age. It will be earth's Golden Age of perfect peace and contentment and plenty, during which this old world will be restored to what the Lord wants it to be, and Jesus foretells here in this Scripture the signs that would accompany the end of the age.

I read something a few months ago, to the effect that the age might be illustrated by the body of a man, first, strong and stalwart and youthful, but declining until finally a condition of decrepitude is reached. This age started out strong and vigorous, Christianity in a short time had penetrated to the length and breadth of the great Roman Empire, and during this age, we have had great governments to rise and great things to take place, but the age has grown old, and it looks as if we have just about reached the twilight, the period of decline and decay. I believe that we are living in a fast-dying age. I believe that we are swiftly coming to the closing days of this dispensation, and to the dawn of a new day for this old world. And my belief is based upon the correspondence

between the signs that are mentioned here in the Bible, and the things that I see taking place out here in the world about me.

Now let us go to the Scriptures and let us note some of the signs of the end of the age. The first thing that I mention is wars. In Matthew 24:7, we read, **“For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.”** But someone immediately points out that we have had wars all along down through the centuries, and that's quite true, and that's exactly what Jesus predicted as the whole course of this age to the very end. In the last three centuries, there have been 286 wars in Europe, from the year 1500 B. C. to 1860 A.D. more than 8,000 treaties of peace have been signed, and these were supposed to be forever, and yet they remained in force for an average of two years. It's just foolish nonsense for men today to talk of having permanent, universal peace. People are babbling that sort of stuff today in the light of the fact that over 8,000 peace treaties have been in vain. When people talk about the world abolishing war, and having permanent peace by human means, they are not only going contrary to what the Bible says, but contrary to reason; to reason, and I might add, experience and plain common sense. No, there will never be permanent peace until the Prince of Peace comes and takes charge. Leaving behind the many wars of times gone by, let us come down to the climactic wars of our day.

The four years of war from 1914 through 1918, cost approximately four hundred billion dollars. That's simply more than our little brains can take in unless we compute it in terms to make it more concrete. We'll have to be like my children when they were very small, and they came to realize that a nickel would buy an ice cream cone, and an ice cream cone became their standard of measurement in value. When we got to talking about the worth of money, they couldn't understand unless I translated it into ice cream cones. If I spoke about a dollar, they'd say, “How much is that, Daddy.” “Well, children, it's worth twenty ice cream cones.” Then they could understand. And now let's see what four hundred billion dollars would do. That would build a house worth \$2,500.00, equip it with \$1,000.00 worth of furniture, and place it on five acres of land worth \$100.00 an acre, for every family in eleven countries, I'd say, of the leading countries of the world. Not only that, but there would be enough left over to present every city in these countries of twenty thousand or more

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Signs of A Dying Age

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population, with a five million dollar library and a ten million dollar university. Think of that, will you? That first World War cost enough to put every family in the leading nations of the world in good financial condition. What folly, what Devilish folly is war, when it saps the wealth of the world and reduces people to poverty and utter want! And World War I didn't cost anything compared to World War II, and didn't stop with that. Since the war, we've poured billions and billions of dollars into Europe, and now we're embarking on the business of seeking to finance a good portion of the world. Personally, I just don't see how this country can stand up under it. We have already the biggest national debt that any country has ever had in human history.

But now, the second sign of the dying of this age is earthquakes. Verse 7 says, "**earthquakes in divers places.**" We've surely had these through this age, and as the age has run along towards its close, I believe the number of these has greatly increased. I believe that while the signs mentioned here are to characterize this whole Gospel age, or age of Grace, they are to increase in size and proportion, and are to find their climax as the age comes to an end. I have here a table that gives the increase in earthquakes since the 14th century. Let me read it. In the 14th century, 137 earthquakes; 15th century, 174; 16th century 253; 17th century 378; 18th century 640; 19th century 2,119.

But now reading on down into the 24th chapter of Matthew, we find other signs of the end of the age. One of these signs is, conditions such as existed in Noah's day. We know that these conditions must have been bad indeed, for God sent the flood and swept corrupt humanity from the face of the earth. What are some of the conditions that exist today that serve to give us the characteristics of Noah's day?

One thing, I am sure, is drunkenness. We can see the wreckage caused by drink all around us all the time. Now in the light of this, people can be found that justify the sale of liquor is more than I can possibly understand. Judge Joseph Kitali, of Boston Municipal Court, made the statement back some time ago that for every dollar taken in for liquor, we have to spend \$8.00 to take care of what liquor does for those who drink it. In other words, when a dealer sells a dollar's worth of liquor, the rest of us who compose society are taxed \$8.00

to take care of the wreckage caused by that one dollar's worth of drink, because in the final analysis, it's the general public that pays, always.

What conditions existed in Noah's day, I ask again? And I answer by saying, widespread crime. The Bible tells us that back there violence filled the earth. Do we have anything like that now? The answer is found in the fact that in the past thirty years, crime has increased 500%, and it's claimed that 40% of the crime is caused by drink. How can we expect anything different when we have turned our dollars into foreign aids? The last time I saw any statistics back several years ago, there were 440,000 American girls in Colleges, and 1,350,000 tending bars, selling liquor, and you can look in the want ads in our city papers and you can find that liquor places openly advertise for bar maids. As it was in the days of Noah!

What else characterized the days of Noah that's common today? Well, I'm sure that immorality was one of the things. Dr. William Carey, a noted physical who specializes in women's diseases, made the statement some-time ago that girls are becoming less chaste than men, and alcohol is largely responsible for increased feminine immorality.

As in the days of Noah, says the Scriptures. What were they doing back there? Well, it says, they were marrying and giving in marriage until the day that God swept them away with the flood. And I dare say that along with the marrying, went divorce, and today that's one of the evils that's sweeping our nation to ruin. This loose idea of marriage and divorce results in people having no constancy, no trueness to anybody.

I recall the account that appeared in the newspapers back during the last war. I read about a young woman who was on the way to Tampa to marry a young lieutenant, and she met another soldier on the train, and when she got to Tampa, she married this fellow instead. Some friends coming down on the train from Tennessee told me about seeing a young woman who'd been to an army camp to see her husband, and she was returning, and while on the train, she got into conversation with a soldier and soon they were drinking whiskey and beer together, and she was half drunk, and there she was kissing that man whom she'd never met until a few hours before, sleeping on his shoulder. There you have two illustrations of what I'm talking about, exactly. We are in a time when marriage doesn't mean anything to many people, and this means the whole structure of society is undermined.

Let me give you some statistics on

the divorce question. In 1870, there was one divorce to every 32 marriages; in 1900, one divorce to every twelve marriages; in 1928, one divorce to every six marriages; in 1935, one divorce to every five marriages, and now the divorce rate is about one to every four marriages. Excuse me for being plain—somebody needs to be plain right here. In addition to these conditions which I've just mentioned, we have this to think about. Every year, 65,000 or more girls are swept into the red light districts of our cities. Institutions report 50,000 unmarried mothers. As it was in the days of Noah! All of this means that society has rotted. The termites of sin and wickedness are eating down the structure. These things are all symptoms of a dying age.

In our nation, we are coming more and more under dictatorship, you all know that, and soon we'll be almost as completely dominated as were the countries of Europe back several years ago. In trying to save democracy, we shall give up democracy and go to dictatorship ourselves. Whether this is necessary or not, I'm not taking the time now to say, but the thing that I'm pointing out is that we're getting into such a condition that it will make possible for Antichrist to come and to completely dominate and dictate everything, until none can do anything without his mark. This earth is going to go on becoming more and more putrid. The evil things that have been in existence throughout all this age will wax worse and worse in their manifestation until when the cup of iniquity is full, the God of Heaven will take a hand. He will send back His Son, who when He was here before, was despised and rejected, and that Son will completely smash and overthrow the governments of men and the order of society that they've built, and will begin His own reign. Read in the Book of Daniel the story of the smiting stone, and if you want to picture this, read the 19th chapter of the Revelation. God has written it, and it's as certain to come to pass as that God lives.

The great question is, what are we going to do about all this? We are living in a dying age, we are living in a time when sin and wickedness is reaching a climax, we are living in a time when it is the popular thing to drink and carouse and revel and curse God and belittle religion, and go to the Devil generally. Are we going to join the procession? Honestly, people are more interested in most anything today than they are in eternal life. The things of the body have taken the place of that which is for the welfare of the soul. I say, are we joining in that procession? Listen, there are two

things that everyone of us need to do. What are they?

First, we need to make sure of the salvation of our own souls. We are living in a dying age that will soon be over, we are living in a body that shall soon be in the grave, soon Hell shall dawn for every soul out of Christ. What about your condition? Do you know that you're a Christian, do you know you're saved? In these times of dread uncertainty, you can't afford to fail to know that you're a Christian. How can you know it? You can know it by turning to Christ, by committing the welfare and future of your soul into His hands, such that you can say at any moment, "I know that Christ is my Savior, and that He is my Sinbearer, for I have all of my trust and faith in Him." You can't know all the time that you're a Christian by your feelings, you can't know that you're a Christian all the time by this or that sign, but you *can* know by knowing in Whom your trust is reposed. Oh, if today, you're not a Christian, you need the Lord so badly, and I want to urge you to receive Him. Don't let anything hold you back from becoming a Christian, for if you fail, that spells your doom.

But I've said there are two things that we need to do, and I've mentioned the first one. What is the second? It's this. Every one of us ought to separate ourselves from this world of sin and madness. We're in the world, but that doesn't mean that we're to be of the world. The sponge diver is down there in the water, but he's not of the water, for he gets oxygen that he breathes through the tube that comes down into the water from above. He literally breathes the atmosphere that comes from above, and that's how it ought to be with every one of us. We while here in the world, can be sustained by the atmosphere of Heaven that God gives.

Listen, we're living in a dying age, but let it die! God has a bright, glorious, new age ahead for His people. Did you ever see a day filled with dark gloom, covered over with dark clouds? As the evening approached, the clouds seemed to get thicker. A thick fog crept in over the landscape and twilight came dismal and dull, but the next morning when you awoke, it was to behold a new world entirely. In the night time the clouds had cleared away, the fog had been dispelled, and when the golden sun broke over the horizon, it was a sky that was perfect. Now, the clouds are gathering thick. The fog is around us, the twilight of this age is creeping in upon us, but if we are Christians, we can know that when God's tomorrow dawns, the sky will be cloudless, and

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our very hearts will sing for joy.

Folks, I want you to have a share in God's great tomorrow. I want you to be there when the sun rises, I want you to live in that morning without clouds. There isn't any such future for you apart from Christ, who makes such possible. Therefore, I am pointing you to Him. That's what I want to be throughout life, a sign-post to point men and women to Christ. Oh, let me point you to Him. Let me point you to Him, and say, "There's the one who can make you live forever." Let me point you to Him and say, "There's the One who will rule our world in the age to come." Let me point you to Him and say, "There's One who can save you and give your life meaning and purpose if you'll but receive Him." Will you let me point you to Him? Not to myself, but to Him! Forget me, but please, for the good of your own soul, see Christ, and give your soul into His keeping.

Why Don't You Invite Us?

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tionary authority. If the table were theirs, they could give invitations according to their pleasure. But now, they have no option in the case. The table is the Lord's; invitations to it must therefore be given in accordance with His will; and His will must be ascertained from His Word. It cannot be ascertained from the reasonings of the most acute intellect, nor from the feelings of the most devout heart. The inspired Word is the Word of the Lord of the table.

The term "communion" has been used, and it is to be remembered that communion at the Lord's Table is, primarily and supremely, communion with the Lord. Paul, therefore, says: **"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?"** Evidently the communion is with Christ; this is the prominent matter, and communion with fellow Christians is secondary and incidental.

II. UNBAPTIZED PERSONS CANNOT SCRIPTURALLY COME TO THE LORD'S TABLE.

Here, as on the point just presented, there is not only substantial, but perfect agreement between Baptists and Pedobaptists. That is to say, both parties in this long mooted question believe that the table is the Lord's, and

that unbaptized persons have no Scriptural right to come to it. That this right is denied by Pedobaptists, will appear from the following quotations from distinguished men:

Dr. Wall, of the Church of England, in his *History of Infant Baptism*, says: "No church ever gave the communion to any persons before they were baptized. Among all the absurdities that ever were held, none ever maintained that any persons should partake of the communion before they were baptized."

Dr. Doodridge, Independent, says: "As far as our knowledge of primitive antiquity extends, no unbaptized person received the Lord's Supper."

Dr. E. D. Griffin, claimed by both Presbyterians and Congregationalists as one of their great men, says: "I agree with the advocates of close communion in two points: 1. That baptism is the initiatory ordinance which introduces us into the visible church; of course, where there is no baptism, there are no visible churches. 2. That we ought not to commune with those that are not baptized, and, of course, are not church-members, even if we regard them as Christians. Should a pious Quaker so far depart from his principles as to wish to commune with me at the Lord's Table, while he yet refused to be baptized, I could not receive him; because there is such a relationship established between the ordinances, that I have no right to separate them; in other words, I have no right to send the sacred elements out of the church. The only question, then, is, whether those associations of evangelical Christians that call themselves churches, and that practice sprinkling, are real churches of Christ; in other words, whether baptism by

sprinkling is valid baptism."

Dr. Hibbard, good Methodist authority, in his work on *Christian Baptism*, says: "Valid baptism they [Baptists] consider as essential to constitute visible church-membership. This also we hold. The only question that here divides us, is, What is essential to valid baptism?"

Now it is plain, in view of the foregoing statements, that Baptists and Pedobaptists are fully agreed in these two points: That the communion table is the Lord's Table, and that unbaptized persons have no Scriptural right to come to it. Wherein, then, do they differ? The answer is, In regard to baptism. They differ as to who should be baptized, and they differ as to the baptismal act. Baptists say that believers in Christ, and believers alone, are Scriptural subjects of baptism. They believe, also, that immersion is the baptismal act, to the exclusion of every other act. No proofs are here presented to show that baptize means immerse.

Whether it does or not, *Baptists believe it does*, and they are obliged to act on their belief. Thus they are compelled to consider Pedobaptists unbaptized. What, then, are Baptists to do? They believe, without a doubt, that Pedobaptists are unbaptized; they also believe, in common with Pedobaptists, that the unbaptized lack the Scriptural qualification, for the Supper; hence they cannot invite them to the Lord's Table. They would like to do it, but dare not. To do so, would be to change the order which the Lord has appointed. This they cannot conscientiously do. The thing is impossible. So much in answer to the question, "Why don't you invite us?"

Consistent Strict Communion and Inconsistent Loose Communion

By William Ashmore

(1821 - 1898?)

Editor's Note: William Ashmore was born at Putnam, Ohio, Dec. 25, 1821. He was graduated at Granville, Ohio, and completed his theological studies at Covington Theological Institute, Ky. In 1848, he was ordained pastor of the Baptist Church of Hamilton, Ohio. He went out to Bangkok in 1851. In January, 1858 he was transferred to Hong-Kong. In 1860 ill health compelled him to return to the United States. In July, 1864, he returned to southern China, and established a mission at Kak-Chie. In 1884, Bro. Ashmore had translated four parts of the New Testament into the language of the common people. In 1885, he returned to America, where Mrs. Ashmore departed this life. He visited Siam, Japan and the Telugu mission. He also visited Burma. In March, 1891, he resumed his work in Swatow, China. I cannot tell the rest of the

story, for it is unknown to the editor of this paper. He was for 30 years a Baptist missionary in Southern China. He was a hard-working and a sound Baptist.

The Communion was instituted by Christ as the second witness of His death—baptism being the first witness. It is a memorial service—to show forth His death—and to be kept up till He come. It was instituted not for the world, but for the church—not outside of the church, but inside of the church—for those who had come in at the door appointed. It is the most tender, the most sacred, and the most impressive of all the services of the house of God. Other services were for the multitude, this one was for the

family; others were held in public, this was observed in retirement.

2. The Communion as an ordinance was committed to the custody of the visible church. Each individual church is responsible for its proper observance, for its due protection, and for the faithful maintenance of its witnessing character within its own borders.

It is a church ordinance, and therefore it is not for private observance. **"When ye come together in the church"—"When ye come together in one place"**—and then follows the manner in which it shall be done. Being an ordinance within the church, the approach to it was of necessity through the baptismal door, the one solitary and exclusive door to the visible church. On the day of Pentecost the three thousand were first baptized; after that they continued in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship and breaking of bread. Throughout the New Testament confirmation is multiplied, so that beyond question this was the order of the apostolic church from which a single deviation cannot be found. Baptism first and the Communion afterward. Since then in all the ages in all the church the symbolical supper has been surrounded by the protecting walls of the church. Baptism administered according to its own accepted standard—not to be superseded by the standard of somebody else—is the only orderly way of coming to the communion table.

3. Close communion or strict communion is simply a close and strict adherence to the above-named principle and practice handed down from apostolic times. Every church which regards its own section of the Lord's table as a sacred trust, for the proper management of which itself is responsible—as the Corinthians were for theirs—and which holds that baptism (without saying now what that is) is the door of access to church privileges—the Communion chiefest among them, and which also has a defined standard of what baptism is, and professes to live up to it, requiring its members and its visitors alike to respect and conform to that standard—every such church is constructively a close communion church. It is all the same whether it is known as Presbyterian, Congregational, Methodist, Episcopalian, or Baptist; and whether it recognizes baptism as valid under three forms, or only under one form, it matters not, the principle is the same—baptism before communion.

4. Open communion or free communion is a free and open departure from the practice thus set forth of well-

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What is the sin unto death in 1 John 5:16? If we don't know what it is, how can we not pray for it? --- Missouri



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There are many that believe that the apostle is referring to the unpardonable sin that our Lord spoke of in Matthew 12:32. B. H. Carroll said, "This is the author's answer to the question raised. It means that no regenerate man sinneth in a way, or to the extent, that his eternal life is disturbed. He sinneth not unto death" (*An Interpretation of the English Bible*).

I do not believe that 1 John 5:16 is speaking of the unpardonable sin. One who is guilty of committing the unpardonable sin can never be forgiven, neither in this world nor in the world to come. A child of God could never be guilty of committing this sin, for it would contradict every Scripture that teaches the eternal security of the believer.

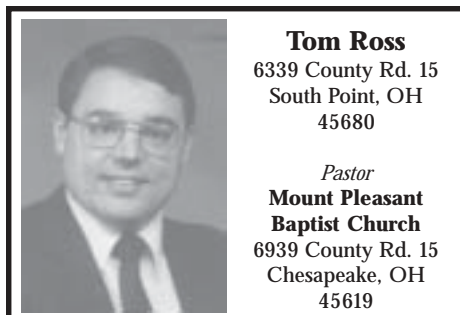
In 1 John 5:14-16, we are told that if we pray according to His will, He will hear us and grant our petitions. In verse 16, we are instructed to pray for a brother who has sinned. The term "brother" is used by the apostle to refer to one who is born of the same parents (1 John 3:12), but we find that it is more often used to refer to a fellow believer, a brother in Christ. The apostle states that we should pray for a brother that has committed a sin not unto death and God will give him life, but that there is a sin unto death and we should not pray for one who has committed this sin that they might be delivered from the penalty of death. First, our prayers could never be the reason that someone is given eternal life regardless of what sin they may or may not have committed. Secondly, a brother in Christ can never sin in such a way that he would lose his salvation and once again be dead in trespasses and sins.

There are laws of punitive justice which must be executed for the common good of all mankind. Abimelech was told by God to restore Sarah to Abraham "...and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou restore her not, know thou

that thou shalt surely die. . . ." (Gen. 20:7). God has commanded the putting to death of those who are guilty of certain sins (Deut. 17:1-13; 22:22 & 25). When David sinned and had broken the commandment of the Lord, death was required. Nathan, God's prophet, confronted him, "**And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die**" (II Sam. 12:13). God forgave David in that he was not required to die for his sins, but the sword never departed from his house.

When a brother is guilty of a sin that requires the death penalty, we are not instructed to pray that he escape. We can pray for his repentance. We can pray for God to be merciful, but if he has sinned a sin unto death it is necessary that he pay the penalty. Capital punishment is a Bible doctrine.

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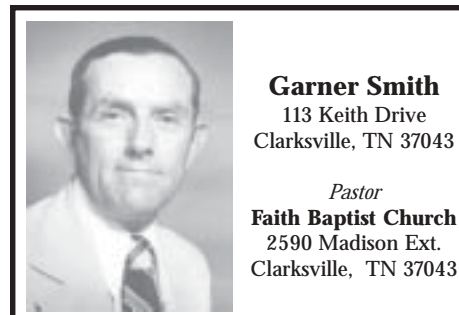
"If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it" (1 John 5:16).

Since this is the only place where the sin unto death is specifically mentioned in Scripture it is difficult to pinpoint exactly what it is. Speaking in general terms, I believe that the sin unto death follows a course of defiant rebellion on the part of a believer. Lot and Samson are both examples of believers who followed a course of rebellion against the Lord that ultimately resulted in shame and infamy. They were so self-willed and bent on fulfilling their fleshly lusts that their behavior led to their death. Lot died in infamy, forever to be identified as the epitome of a worldly Christian. Samson died after he had been deceived by the harlot Delilah, then was

captured, enslaved, blinded, and mocked by the Philistines. At least Samson in death went out on a more victorious note by killing a large number of Philistines.

I believe there is a point in a backslidden Christian's life when they become so worldly and out of fellowship with God that they lose their usefulness because of a lack of self-control. Rather than allowing them to live and further tarnish the good name of the Lord Jesus and bring reproach upon His cause, the Lord chastens them to death. 1 Corinthians 9:27 declares: "**But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.**" A castaway is not someone who loses their salvation, but one whose testimony is no longer useful. They are set on a shelf by the Lord, so to speak. The way to prevent being a castaway and committing the sin unto death is to live a life of self-denial, putting to death self-will in order to consecrate yourself wholly to the glory of God.

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Death here in this verse is having reference to physical death. The scripture is referring to believers who have eternal life; therefore, death here does not mean a believer can lose their salvation or spiritual life, but he will die physically.

I do not believe that there is one particular sin that if any believer commits he will die, but it could be different sins that different believers may commit that God says will bring forth death to that particular individual.

We have several examples in the Bible of some that committed different sins yet were guilty of committing the sin unto death, according to God's standard. God is the only one who determines what the sin is for each individual and why it is a sin unto death for that individual and no one

has the right to question His will. I do not say that every believer that commits such sins as shown in the scriptures in these examples will die because of that particular sin, but we must say that there is always that possibility. I believe that if a child of God goes on disgracing God here on earth God will take him by death from this earth.

In Numbers 20:8-12 Moses struck the rock instead of speaking to it as God told him to and Moses died without entering the promised land. Moses' sin distorted the picture of the gospel, that Christ died once for all for the sins of His people (Heb. 9:12, 26).

In Leviticus 10:1-2 Nadab and Abihu used strange fire in trying to worship the Lord and God destroyed them. They were guilty of changing God's way of worship, using man's ideas and means.

In Numbers 16:1-3 God destroyed Korah, Dathan, and Abiram for fighting or going against God's appointed leader.

In 1 Samuel 28 it tells us King Saul died for seeking advice from a witch which God had forbidden His people to do.

In the New Testament in Acts 5:1-10 Ananias and Sapphira died because they played the hypocrite and lied to the Holy Spirit.

In 1 Corinthians 3:17 it tells us that those who defile the Lord's church him God will destroy.

1 Corinthians 5:1-5 shows us a man guilty of adultery and God said for the church to exclude him that his sinful flesh be destroyed and his soul saved.

In 1 Corinthians 11:30 Paul said as a result of some taking the Lord's Supper in the wrong manner some were sick and some had died.

There are other scriptures that refer to the death of some that were guilty of different sins. I do not believe that there is one specific identified sin that brings immediate death, but it has to do with the guilty ones attitude and response to God's dealing with them in a specific way. It is not the unpardonable sin, but one by the determination of God who answers to no man and who owes no explanation results in death.

We do not know when a believer has committed such a sin, but we can with reasonable observation see that it could be possible for anyone to commit such a sin in rebellion to God.

We must never pray contrary to God's will. When a believer deliberately sins and refuses to repent to God and make things right with the Lord's church we should not pray that God would bless him in spite of his sins, but that God's will be done in that

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When a church calls a deacon, is it essential for him to be ordained? Please give Scripture to explain why. -- West Virginia




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The office of a deacon is a very important office of the church. It is the deacon's responsibility to look after those of the church that have a need, such as the poor and widows, and to take care of the temporal affairs of the church (Acts 6:1-6). They were first chosen to take over this physical burden of the church so the pastors could be free to give themselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word.

The Greek word *cheirotoneo* that is translated "ordained" is found in Acts 14:23, where it speaks of ordaining elders, in II Timothy 4:22 (scrp.), where Timotheus is said to be ordained the first bishop of the church of Ephesians; and in Titus 3:15, where Titus is said to be ordained the first bishop of the church of the Cretians. It is also used in II Corinthians 8:19, where it speaks of a brother who was "chosen" by the churches to travel with Paul. The word is defined as, "to vote by stretching out the hand; to create or appoint by vote: one to have charge of some office or duty; to elect, create, appoint" (Strong). When a church calls someone to be a deacon by vote of the church they have in reality already ordained him. In Acts 6:6 after the church had chosen the first deacons, they set them before the apostles; and they were set apart for the office by prayer and the laying on of hands. The church had chosen these men to the office of a deacon, and the apostles formally set them apart to the work of that office.

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whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicholas a proselyte of Antioch: Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them" (Acts 6:5-6).

This is the first mention in the New Testament of the office of the deacon. It is obvious from the context that the elders of the Jerusalem church ordained seven men who had been selected by the church to fulfill the office of the deacon. The requirements for the office of the deacon are listed along with the qualifications for a Pastor in I Timothy 3. Both the office of the Pastor/Elder and that of the deacon require ordination for the following reasons:

First, the very first time the office of a deacon is mentioned in Scripture they were ordained by the elders of the church at Jerusalem. A Scriptural pattern is set forth. If the first New Testament Baptist church saw the need for the ordination of deacons, then there is no reason for Baptists from that time forward to depart from the pattern that was established. Second, ordination signifies the authorization by the church to fulfill a specific office, whether it be that of Pastor or deacon. Third, ordination signifies that the local church recognizes that the man appointed to the office of the deacon is qualified to fulfill the office. Fourth, ordination is the church's stamp of approval on the man appointed to office. Fifth, there is no record in Scripture of someone being selected and appointed to the office of deacon without ordination, whereas there is a specific reference where deacons were appointed and ordained by the authority of the church.

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The title deacon means a servant. The Greek word for deacon is *diakonos*

and means "to wait on, minister to, an attendant, or servant."

In Acts 6:1-6 we read where the apostle recommended to the church to select seven men to take care of the problems with the widows etc. Though they are not called deacons here in the Scripture, we refer to them as deacons because they were to serve the church in this matter and attend to or minister to this problem hence a deacon or servant.

I believe the laying on of the hands of these men simply meant they were appointed and approved by the church and apostles. This is all ordination had ever meant. Ordination does not give certain powers or authority not already given by God. Ordination simply shows that the church believes that certain ones have demonstrated God given abilities to carry on certain services in the church.


I do not believe one selected for any position in the church has to be ordained in the sense that they are more special than anyone else but only that they meet the requirements for a certain position.

There is certainly nothing wrong with ordaining qualified men for deacons, but I know of no Scripture that requires one to be ordained to serve the church. I believe this should be left to the discretion of the local church.

Our church does not have deacons because we at the present do not see the need for them. We have trustees to fill the necessity of legal matters, and they also take care of other matters the church may call on them to do.

I know of no Scripture that commands a church to have deacons in the sense of Acts 6:1-6 refers to, nor that they should go through some formal ritual that would qualify them to serve the church other than by the approval of the local congregation.

GARNER SMITH



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In the New Testament we read of the ordaining of Elders (preachers) who are to serve in the church (Titus

1:5; I Tim. 2:7; Acts 14:23--apostles and elders, Mark 3:14; John 15:16). We do not ever read where deacons were ordained who never served as elders.

I suppose the idea of ordaining deacons came about because the Bible refers to two offices in a New Testament Church, the office of a bishop (I Tim. 3:1) and the office of a deacon (I Tim. 3:10). There is no indication that a formal ordination service was held for deacons without one believes that the laying on of hands by the apostles upon the seven who were selected by the church to be their helpers would constitute such. However, it should be pointed out that not all Bible scholars are in agreement that the seven men selected by the church in Acts 6 were ever called deacons.

No doubt many things practiced by churches come more from tradition than from a clear mandate in the Word of God. In saying this I do not mean to censure churches which ordain deacons, for while I cannot give a scripture which demands it, I cannot offer a verse which would prohibit it.

JIMMIE B. DAVIS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Elder Marion G. Lawson of Jonesboro, Ga., departed this life on Dec. 10, 1999. Bro. Lawson, who was 68 at the time of his death, was pastor of Sovereign Grace Assembly in Jonesboro, Ga. He leaves his wife Mandi, and two sons, Grant and Bryon. Other pastorates were in Arkansas, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, and Oregon.

On Jan. 8, 2000, the Memorial Heights Baptist Church of Perry, Georgia, and Pastor Gordon Buchanan will organize their mission in LaCross, Ga., into a New Testament Baptist Church. The mission presently has 16 members and about 30 in attendance.

The Trail of Blood

(video lectures)

by Milburn Cockrell

\$59.95

These are six lectures on the history of the Baptists, on three video cassettes. Shipped postage paid priority shipping to you by the post office. Order from our bookstore.

"And the saying pleased the

Consistent Strict

Continued from page 249

regulated churches and a practical renunciation of the principle common to them all, that baptism is an essential prerequisite to communion. Every church which recognizes its section of the Lord's table as a sacred trust to be carefully guarded, yet throws it open to the miscellaneous professing Christian public; which has a baptism which it regards as the proper doorway to the visible church, and to the Lord's communion service; which has a standard of baptism which it is perpetually setting aside to please outsiders; which demands that its own converts shall come in through the only door recognized by them, but which deliberately breaks down its own walls at the call of transient and passing strangers in order that they may come in without regard to the door; which claims to be the exclusive judge of qualifications requisite for its own ordinances, but which surrenders its right of judgment to its neighbors who, it asserts, are mistaken on the whole question of baptism—every church that does these things is an open, and a very open, and a very free communion church, no matter where it is found.

In their relations to each other on the subject of close and open communion the various denominations may be divided into three classes:

5. (a) *Other denominations than Baptists.*—Among themselves they have no trouble about open and close communion. The reason is that they have no difference on baptism. They all believe in immersion, pouring, and sprinkling. So they all agree upon the same door, or rather the same three doors. They can invite each other, for they have all passed through pouring or sprinkling, both recognized doors among them, and they can invite Baptists because they have passed in through immersion, the original door of all, opened by John and used by Christ and His apostles, and thousands and thousands of others, generations and generations before the other two doors were ever heard of or dreamed of. When they invite the passing stranger they know pretty surely that he has come in through a door they recognize, and so they do no violence to their own convictions and bring no suspicions on their own fidelity.

But when they come to speak about Baptists they feel hurt because they do not do what they themselves never do—dishonor their own standards; to affix a stigma on their own gateway; to break down their own protection walls, and go contrary to

their own understanding of the Word of God. They ask Baptists to affirm what they never believe, to practice what they never preach, and to surrender their own convictions to be ruled over by the convictions of their neighbors, not a single one of which they have to do themselves. In all frankness and brotherly kindness, without a word of harshness, let it be pointed out that this is very unfair toward the Baptists.

6. (b) *English Baptists.*—With a few in America called Free Baptists, they yield to this pressure and fall in with the policy marked out for them. They teach that immersion only is baptism; but in practical working they accept as baptism that which they declare to be no baptism. If any one of their own children should be converted they will insist on his immersion before he comes to the Lord's table; but if an unknown stranger comes along who has not been immersed, but only poured or sprinkled, they will allow him to come without proper baptism. Their own converts must go through the regular door, but other people's converts may climb over the wall, or rather, have the wall pulled down to make it easy for them to get in over it. If some new-made Christian desiring to commune with them should say he dislikes immersion, but is willing to accept pouring or sprinkling at their hands, they will refuse, telling him that pouring and sprinkling are not baptism. If he should go away to a church of another denomination and be sprinkled or poured, he could come back the next Sunday and they would receive him on the strength of a baptism which the Sunday before they had pronounced no baptism at all. Thus this practice tends to self-stultification. They preach one thing and have to practice another. They say they have a door, and yet allow that practically it is no door. They have a standard, but an actual working, it is not a standard. They put forward immersion as a witness, and yet they themselves contradict the testimony of that witness. They declare that though immersion is the only baptism, yet as soon as the others are performed they will answer the purpose just as well. They let it be understood that though there is only one door into the church, yet there are two other doors to the Lord's table inside of the church. And so the subject might be continued. In a word, there is not another church in all England that will do what it is expected an English Baptist church will do, and what it does do on a basis of so-called liberality.

(c) *American Baptists.*—They maintain that the Communion is a church ordinance, and that each church is bound to administer faithfully and consis-

tently its own table; they hold that baptism must precede communion; that immersion only is baptism, and therefore immersion at the door of the church is a prerequisite to communion within the church. Holding these things, they hold them consistently throughout.

The two ordinances are two witnesses. They corroborate each other. After the first one—immersion—has borne its faithful testimony, they refuse to allow the second one to put it to an open shame by neutralizing its testimony, in order to propitiate men. It is not a question of a little water any more than the offense for which Adam was driven out of Eden was a question about a little apple. It is a question of obedience. Close communion, with American Baptists, is a denial of the right of men to change laws and customs in the church of Christ; it is an affirmation of Christ's exclusive headship; it is a refusal to admit that once an error is committed it then becomes a right; it is the continuation of a refusal to admit that pouring and sprinkling are New Testament baptism; it is a protest against the legitimacy of usages received from the Church of Rome.

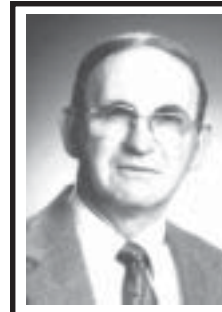
Forum 1

Continued from page 250

person's life or death.

I came to this conviction many years ago. While pastoring, I found people wanting me to pray for them to be healed or be blessed of the Lord when they were unwilling to confess their sins and repent of them still in rebellion to God. To me this was praying contrary to the will of God (James 5:13-20). I believe we should pray for other believers when we see them going astray before they may commit the sin unto death and not pray for God to overlook their stubborn rebellious spirit and bless in spite of their sin.

GARNER SMITH



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Two facts are set before us in I John 5:16-17. (1) There is a sin not unto death. (2) There is a sin unto death. The two questions that we have for the Forum writers have been on the minds of Bible students for centuries—What is the sin?—How do we know

when to pray for a brother who sins, and when not to pray for him?

Since the Holy Spirit did not mention, or cause John to mention a specific sin, much speculation has arisen. Commentaries on the Bible give answers that are widely diverse, and oftentimes very confusing. Since the sin unto death is not specifically identified it is my opinion that whatever we give in answer must be received as a personal view.

During the early days of my ministry I knew a preacher who said that the passage meant that Christ would not pray for those who sin unto death. He said the phrase, "**I do not say that he shall pray for it,**" referred to Christ. However, I found it to be very difficult to connect the pronoun "he" to Christ in light of the phrase "**If any man see his brother sin. . .**", etc.

Some have suggested that "**a sin unto death**" has reference to our sin in our federal head, Adam. Thus, no need to pray for the removal of the sentence of physical death. But it seems to me that this interpretation is a stretching of the point. The distinction between a sin not unto death and a sin unto death, in my view, would not permit such an exegesis.

It is my personal view that any willful sin which a brother continues to engage in, while knowing better, would constitute a sin unto death. I have seen individuals who have entered into a conspiracy to do something in one of the Lord's churches unscripturally, (knowing it to be unscriptural) die suddenly, some of them at an unusually early age. In Acts 5:1-10 we have the record of the conspiracy Ananias and Sapphira entered into and how it resulted in their sudden departure from this world. They found out, too late, that it is not wise to lie to the Holy Spirit!

JIMMIE B. DAVIS



COOLIDGE ON NEEDS

We do not need more material development; we need more spiritual development.

We do not need more intellectual power; we need more moral power.

We do not need more knowledge; we need more character.

We do not need more government; we need more culture.

We do not need more law; we need more religion.

We do not need more of the things that are seen; we need more of the things that are unseen.

—President Calvin Coolidge
Quoted in the *Washington Times*,
January 13, 1994

Bible & the Newspaper

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the debt for fiscal 1999 was more than \$353 billion—gobbling up 40 million tax dollars an hour. If your congressman or senators are part of the bogus surplus crowd, ask them how we can have a surplus if the national debt is growing by \$130 billion a year—then step back quickly so you aren't injured by the buzz-saw flurry of frantic tap dancing (*The New American*, 11-22-99).

On November 8th, Darryl E. Gray, a 35-year-old janitor from Albany, New York, was charged with two counts of second-degree aggravated harassment for leaving "hate notes signed by the Ku Klux Klan on the doors of two black lawmakers," reported the AP. If convicted, the janitor faces two years in prison. The notes were found on November 3rd by state Senator Velmanette Montgomery and Assemblywoman Vivian Cook. The notes included such phrases as, "Kill all n—s because they don't belong here." The notes were signed, "Yours truly KKK." Gray, who claimed to have found the notes on the third floor offices, admitted to police that he had actually typed them. "Police did not know of a motive," concludes the AP report. The search for a motive is complicated by the fact that Mr. Gray is black" (*The New American*, 12-20-99).

I am a strong believer in prayer. There are three ways that men get what they want: by planning, by working, and by praying. Any great military operation takes careful planning. . . . But between the plan and the operation there is always the unknown. . . . Some people call that getting the breaks: I call it God (General George S. Patton).

On Friday, December 3, 1999, Edmond Safra, once the world's richest man, was killed in a horrifying attack by two knife-wielding, hooded intruders in his Riviera Penthouse in Monte Carlo, Monaco. He was believed to control more than \$2.5 billion. Some person may ask, "How much did he leave?" I would answer that he left it all. **"For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out"** (I Tim. 6:7).

TAX BREAK FOR THE RICH: Rep. Patrick Kennedy (D.-R.I.), a member of that clan of rich folk that always has the little people in his hearts, want a tax break for purchasers of yachts. His Building Investment Act would give a 20% tax credit to buyers of yachts 50 feet or more in length—boats beyond the means of even welfare queens. The credit would top out at \$2 million, so only the first \$10 million a buyer pays for a yacht would be eligible

(*Human Events*, 11-5-99).

AMERICAN SERFS: The Census Bureau reports that two-earner families in the United States in 1998 earned a median income of \$57,388. Of that income, 39%, or about \$22,381, was paid in all forms of taxes to local, state and federal governments—the largest chunk going to Uncle Sam in the form of income and Social Security taxes. If Mom and Dad make exactly the same pay—\$28,694 each—that means that the job of the second working parent netted the family a piddling \$6,313 after taxes (much of which was immediately absorbed by child-care costs). If one parent earned 61% of the family income, and the other parent earned 39% of the family income, the second parent's job netted the family exactly nothing after taxes (and less than nothing after child-care costs). All that the second working parent could do was compensate the family for money paid in taxes by the first working parent (*ibid.*).

THE DECLINE OF COLLEGE REQUIREMENTS				
	Percentage of Institutions with Course Requirements			
	1914	1939	1964	1993
English Composition	98%	96%	80%	30%
Rhetoric	33	18	10	0
Foreign Language	96	80	96	61
History	90	50	50	1
Literature	75	51	52	0
Philosophy	76	44	46	4
Religion	34	30	38	0
Natural Science	86	72	90	34
Mathematics	83	36	36	12

— National Association of Scholars, *The Dissolution of General Education: 1914-1993*, 375 Easting Street, Princeton, N.J. 08540

IGNORED IN ARKANSAS: The media have devoted an enormous amount of time to the certainly terrible murder in Texas of homosexual Matthew Sheppard, particularly in connection with the recent debate on hate-crimes legislation. Almost ignored has been the sodomization and killing of a 13-year-old boy in Arkansas by two homosexual men on September 26. The boy worked part-time with one of the men at a hairdressing salon. Police charge that the men bound Jesse Dirkhising to a mattress in their apartment and sodomized him. The boy choked to death on his own underwear, which, police say, had been stuffed into his mouth as a gag by one of the men, who had pleaded not guilty to murder charges. Apparently, since this is not a "hate crime" against an official victim group, the national media do not care to report it (*Human Events*, 10-29-99).

GORE & THE RUSSIAN MAFIA: The Clinton-Gore policy toward Russia has supported a corrupt regime that is hurting the Russian people and killing their chance to live under a democracy, says Rep. Chris Cox (R.-Calif.) in a new analysis of that Clinton-Gore policy. The Russian economic system is a kleptocracy

with \$20 billion in the IMF loans gone unaccounted for since 1992, Cox says. The Russian Mafia has organizations to funnel massive amounts of money through foreign banks (*ibid.*).

The shooters in Colorado also had bombs made of propane. Should we outlaw propane? Or gasoline? It makes Molotov cocktails and napalm.

What's this about China trade is good for the U.S.? The U.S. sells \$14 billion to them and buys \$71 billion from them. They need the West; the West doesn't need them. Stop China trade and save \$57 billion a year. . . .

Americans gamble \$600 billion a year on lotteries, casinos, horse racing, and bingo, more than they spend on groceries (*Straight Talk*, 10-14-99).

Few Americans might have thought that having schoolchildren recite part of the Declaration of Independence, along with the Pledge of Allegiance, each morning would not generate tremendous controversy. But in New Jersey, it has. The offending passage: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed." "Incorporating the Declaration of Independence into students daily routines will only benefit them and society," said Rabbi Daniel Lapin, president of Toward Tradition. "Opposition to the Declaration of Independence predictably comes from those who wish to portray this country as an anti-God establishment. They want students to think that their rights are guaranteed to them by government bureaucrats, not their Creator" (*Human Events*, 11-19-99).

An Indiana church has dropped ties with the Southern Baptist Convention, anticipating censure by the state convention for having a woman as pastor. In a similar dispute, a church in Savannah, Ga., has been kicked out of its local association. University Baptist Church in Bloomington, Ind., voted to withdraw from the SBC and to align instead with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. The Baptist State Convention of Baptists in Indiana was poised to consider a recommendation declaring the church unscriptural. In Georgia, Savannah Baptist Association voted 181-96 to dismiss Memorial Baptist Church for "practices contrary to the association" in calling a woman pastor (*Western Recorder*, 11-2-99).

Since 1993, did you know that 99 children have died in airbag deployments and only 83 children have been murdered in school shootings? Why is there no cru-

sade against airbags by the liberals? I guess the answer is simple. Airbags can't stop oppressive dictators while guns can.

"You wouldn't have to be getting what's yours from government, if government hadn't taken from you what was yours" (Tom Anderson, 11-11-99).

A restructuring plan for the troubled Baptist Foundation of Arizona includes filing for a Chapter 11 bankruptcy reorganization. Under the plan, more than 13,000 investors can choose options of 20 cents on the dollar of their investments or shares in a soon-to-be-created for-profit company. The embattled BFA, an agency of the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention, held more than \$500 million in investment products. Upon successful completion of the restructuring, BFA will no longer exist. Instead, a new nonprofit Baptist charitable organization will be established (*Western Recorder*, 11-16-99).

"Today a Baptist church is one of the easiest things to get into and the hardest to get out of. Maybe just the reverse ought to be so" (C. R. Daley, SBC journalist, 1918-1999).

Guns are used more frequently in the U.S. by law-abiding citizens to deter crimes than by criminals to commit crimes. Defensive uses of firearms by citizens total 2 to 2.5 million times per year and between 25 to 75 lives are saved by a gun for every life lost to a gun (*The New American*, 11-22-99).

A 1960s American Tract Society's pamphlet, *I've Made My Choice* (good arminianism - MRC) was by NY Kick star Bill Bradley. He wrote of giving his life to Christ and was active in the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. He now disavows his Christian beliefs and is running for president. He still considers himself a Presbyterian, but has a more liberal creed (*World*, 10-30-99). Per *Investor's Business Daily*, he says he "now embraces all religions" from Buddhism to Islam, if they seek "inner peace." Chuck Colson says he "has either renounced his faith entirely, or he has decided for political reasons to renounce it publicly" (*Breakpoint Comm.* #91005, 10-5-99).

A Senator opposes tuition tax credits "because public education is the keystone of our democratic government and it is the duty of all individuals, whether parents or not, to support it." Demagoguery or ignorance? Or both? In the first place, this is not a democracy but a Republic. Secondly, no government-operated schools existed in America prior to 1819. Most grade schools and high schools were church-run. Private schools have always provided better education at less cost (*Straight Talk*, 1-18-99).

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Bible & the Newspaper

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Georgia Baptist messengers voted Nov. 16 by a nearly 2,000 vote margin to remove two congregations from convention fellowship over the issue of homosexuality. The votes on Oakhurst Baptist Church in Decatur and Virginia-Highland Baptist Church of Atlanta followed a constitutional amendment approved by messengers last year that states friendly cooperation with the state convention excludes congregations that knowingly take action "to affirm, approve, or endorse homosexual behavior." Both Oakhurst and Virginia-Highland churches have ordained openly homosexual people as deacons, according to media accounts. Oakhurst also has a homosexual associate pastor, while Virginia-Highland has allowed its facilities to be used for a marriage-like same-sex blessing. The ballot totals were 2,086 - 262 for removing Oakhurst from the convention and 2,111 - 228 for removing Virginia-Highland (*Western Recorder*, 11-23-99).

Despite Rep. Barney Frank's (D.-Mass.) denunciation of him as "1000% anti-gay," Sen. John McCain (R.-Ariz.) is still making the boldest effort of any Republican presidential hopeful to cultivate homosexual support. McCain has even met with leaders of the Log Cabin Republican Club, a group that supports homosexual causes (*Human Events*, 12-3-99).

Why a new budget balancing law when the President and the Congress ignores the law we already have? A 1979 law requires that the President submit a balanced budget to the Congress each year. No recent President has presented a balanced budget and the Congress doesn't want them to. Big Brother demands that we respect the laws of his land, no matter how unfair. But he violates his own laws openly and repeatedly. "Do as I say, not as I do" (*Straight Talk*, 11-25-99).

Congress' program of National deficit spending finances such pork barrel projects as:

- * \$200,000 to study the mating habits of mink.
- * \$3.1 million for an unnecessary poultry center in Arkansas.
- * \$250,000 to prevent wild pigs from attacking exotic plants in Hawaii.
- * \$100,000 for asparagus research.
- * \$25,000 to see how people would react to a picture of an octopus in a barnyard.
- * \$31,000 to study the hearing ability of parakeets.
- * \$43,000 to study the taste preferences of sheep.
- * \$68,000 to study differences between men and women. A lot of people would

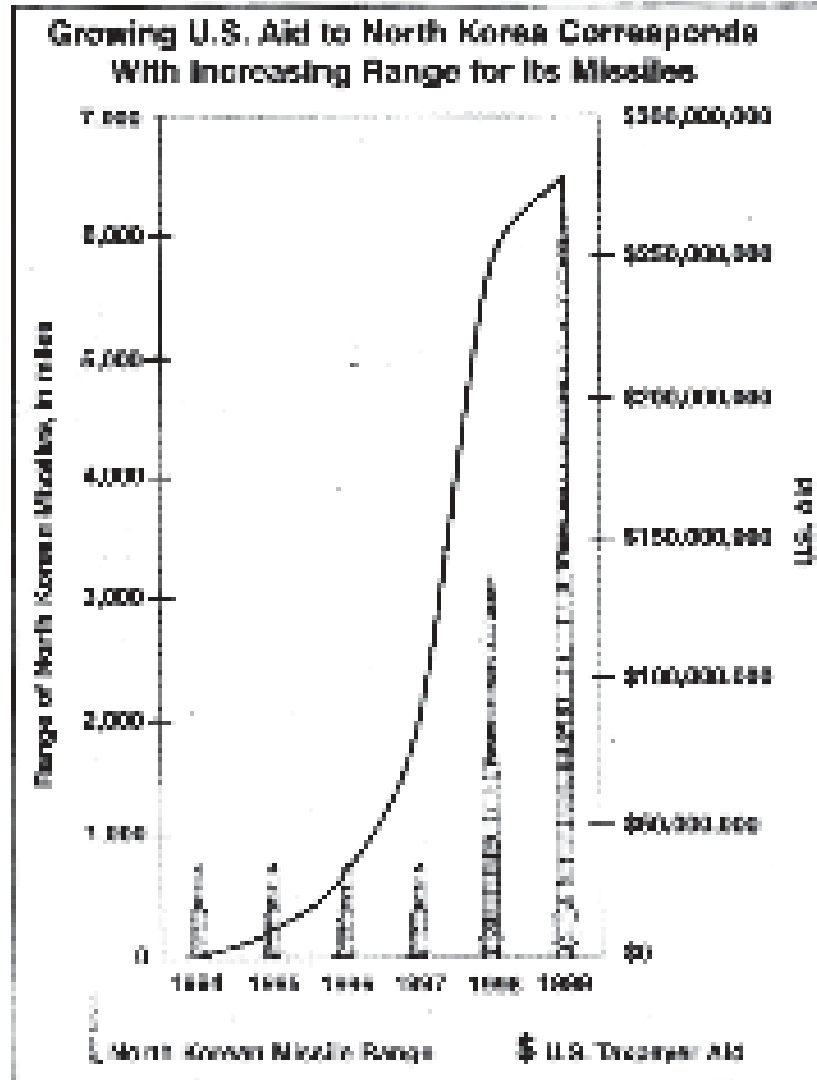
have volunteered to do that for nothing.

* \$84,000 to study lawyers social activities.

* \$90,000 to study facial expressions. Whose? Doing what?

* \$1 billion to study global climate change.

* \$1.9 billion to the State Dept. to help them celebrate the Columbus Jubilee (*Straight Talk*, 12-2-99).



LONDON, England (EP)—Ten people were injured when a naked man entered St. Andrews Roman Catholic church in London and randomly slashed at members of the congregation with a sword. Six of the people suffered from stab wounds while four others were injured as people rushed for the exits during the attack. The most serious wounds were inflicted on a middle-aged man who lost two fingers and suffered from several deep stab wounds in the neck. Men who were attending the service managed to disarm the man wielding the three-foot-long sword and wrestled him to the ground. Police later arrested the 35-year-old man, who lived in a neighborhood near the church. No motive for the attack was released. Priests from St. Andrews said the man had connections to the church.

NEW YORK, N.Y. (EP)—About half of all Americans believe the world will end in a final battle between Jesus Christ

and the Anti-Christ at Armageddon, according to a survey conducted by *Newsweek* magazine. The poll of 755 adults found that 40 percent of all Americans and 45 percent of mainline Protestants and 18 percent of Catholics share this belief. About 45 percent of those who expect a final battle believe that Jesus will return before they die.

NEW YORK, N.Y. (EP)—What kind of a legacy will U.S. President Bill Clinton leave behind? As the Clinton era draws to a close his administration can be seen engaging in a number of "legacy building" activities. But according to an on-line poll conducted by the *New York Post*, Clinton's place in history is secure—as the second most evil person of all time.

Nearly 20,000 votes were recorded in the on-line poll, which was conducted from September 30 to Nov. 1. Adolph Hitler was the top vote-getter with 1,664 votes, or 8.67 percent of all votes cast. Although Clinton's name did not appear on the ballot, he ran a close second to Hitler as a write-in candidate with 1,625 votes, or 8.47 percent of votes cast. Clinton's wife, Hillary, placed sixth, trailing Josef Stalin, Pol Pot and Dr. Josef Mengele. The Clintons were the only write-in candidates to make the "Top 25 most Evil People of the Millennium" list, and placed ahead of such evil figures as Saddam Hussein, Charles Manson and Jeffrey Dahmer.

LOS ANGELES, Calif. (EP)—Southern Baptists in California have voted to keep their name. A proposal to drop the word "southern" fell six percent short of the two-thirds majority needed for passage. Conservatives argued that the denomination's name has a positive image. Pastor Wiley Drake said the name "brings to mind the

persona of a conservative, Bible-believing, mission-minded, concerned individual." Liberals said the name has overtones of racism. The denomination adopted the label "Southern" when it split with a larger Baptist group over the slavery issue before the Civil War.

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP)—The Omni Hotel chain will no longer offer X-rated films in its rooms. The new pro-family policy will cost the 43-hotel chain \$3 million per year in revenues, plus an additional \$3 million to equip its 9,100 guest rooms with new televisions. A spokesman for the chain said owner Robert Rowlings made the change because "he didn't want to profit from adult movies." In-room pornography in hotels was a \$175 million industry in 1996.

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. (EP)—The number of radio and television stations carrying Christian programming is at a record high, according to the National Religious Broadcasters (NRB). According to the group's latest figures, there are 1,731 domestic and international AM, FM, and short-wave radio stations, up from 1,616 in 1998. There are also 285 television stations broadcasting Christian programs, up from 242 in 1998, but down from the record 346 in 1989. "People are searching for God," said Brandt Gustafson, NRB president.

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (EP)—Bernice Edwards, former employee of the National Baptist Convention USA (NBC-USA), was sentenced to two years in jail for tax evasion. Edwards, an associate of disgraced former NBC-USA President Henry Lyons, was also ordered to pay \$190,000 to the IRS, serve three years of supervised release, and undergo mental health treatment. Edwards, 42, could have received 10 years in prison and a \$500,000 fine for failing to pay taxes on \$500,000 she received while working as a publicist for the denomination. She was a co-defendant with Lyons on charges of stealing millions of dollars from companies that were doing business with the African-American denomination.

JERUSALEM, Israel (EP)—A new bill being considered by the Israeli government could severely restrict missionary activity within Israel. The bill calls for a minimum five-year prison sentence for anyone caught "soliciting or persuading another person, even indirectly, to change his religion." The sentence could be doubled to 10 years if the conversion took place, if the person witnessed to is a minor or impoverished person, or if the missionary "used deception" to coerce the person to convert. The law would also restrict religious advertising and punish people who are in possession of such advertising.

LONDON, England (EP)—New research suggests that attendance at the

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Update Romania - Get Involved!

By Curtis Pugh

Romania

Debate may begin at almost any time on the proposed new law regulating religious groups in Romania. Romania law is a mixture of civil law mixed with communist theory patterned after the French system. Under cover of adding the word "National" to the name of the Romanian Orthodox Church are hidden several articles which would infringe on the freedoms of Romanians and others living within Romania. It is obvious that this proposed legislation surpasses in cruelty even the present law, which was passed under communism. When I first arrived in Romania, one pastor told me that he feared the Orthodox Church would oppose and persecute Baptists more than even the Communists had done. We are seeing the kind of thing he was concerned about coming to pass even now.

Romanian Baptists and other religious groups oppose the name change because giving the Romanian Orthodox Church status as the "National" Church would imply that other groups are foreign imports into Romania and do not really, legally belong. But the addition of the word "National" to the name of the Romanian Orthodox Church is not the greatest of concerns. It is just the tip of the iceberg! It gets worse!

Article 15; paragraph 3 of the proposed law states that "starting local units of cults (i.e. churches other than the Romanian Orthodox Church) and receiving the judicial personality (legal recognition of their existence) is achieved through the State Secretariat." Thus for a new church or religious entity to legally exist, it must obtain approval from the government. Presently in Romania individual churches do not have to deal with the government to be recognized as legitimate entities. This provision would allow the government bureaucracy the power to determine who is and who is not a legal church or religious organization.

The same Article 15 continues: "parishes and cult entities similar to cults may acquire legal personality providing that they have at least 5% of the population registered with the City Hall of the respective localities." Thus, as an example, for a Baptist Church to be started in a town or village, 5% of the people must be registered as Baptists in the previous census. This makes it almost impossible for new churches to be started openly and officially. Reader, apply this to your city or town. Could a Baptist

Church exist under this law where you live? Are 5% of the people willing to register as Baptists? In some areas this might be possible, but even in some parts of the United States, if such a law existed there, no Baptist Churches could be started.

Article 16 states that each religious denomination has the obligation to notify the local Mayor's office about any newly started church in his jurisdiction. Although this exists in the present law, I am informed that it has never been universally applied. The problem will come as to how this part of the law is applied for it can be used to stop the formation of new congregations. In one instance already such an abuse of the law has taken place. The local authority in Mizil refused to give a church a building permit in 1999. Why? Because the town had no Baptists registered in the 1992 census!

Article 23 states that one of the requirements necessary for a congregation with their own doctrinal identity to establish a "religious cult" is that they must have at least 0.5% of the TOTAL POPULATION OF THE COUNTRY! This provision is discriminatory towards minority groups and makes it in practice often impossible to legally start an officially recognized religious group.

But the worst possible provision in this proposed legislation is in Article 26, paragraph 2. It states that the proceedings for withdrawing the official recognition for an existing denomination can be started by "any person whose rights and interests are affected." Imagine what an antagonistic, unbelieving father or husband could do with this provision upon the conversion of a child or wife which he opposed! Or imagine what the owner of a bar could do to a denomination or local church whose music, traffic or doctrine affected his "interests"! Or on a larger scale, imagine what the Orthodox Church could do since her income is "affected" when persons convert to Baptist or Protestant groups. Even the terms "any" and "interests" are ambiguous to the point of making this a bad law for it can be interpreted far too broadly. These provisions are all clearly aimed at denying true religious freedom to individuals and groups other than the Romanian Orthodox Church.

WHAT CAN YOU DO? First and foremost, you can **PRAY!** It may be the will of God to make Biblical missionary work more difficult in Romania. It may be that it is the will of

God to return Romanian Baptists to worse religious bondage than they endured before the 1989 revolution, but let us pray earnestly that God's will be done in this matter. Surely we can do that much for our own Brothers and Sisters in Christ!

Secondly, you can **WRITE LETTERS and send E-MAIL MESSAGES** to the various leaders of the governments involved. The United States government has much influence with the government of Romania. Certainly your Congressmen and Senators should be informed of your concerns. Tell them you oppose the upcoming Romanian legislation because it denies people basic human rights. The Romanian Embassy in Washington, D.C. and the Romanian Consulate in Canada ought to hear from us. The Romanian Ambassador to the U.S. can be addressed as follows:

*Embassy of Romania,
ATTN: Ambassador Mircea Dan
GEOANA,
1607 23rd Street N.W.,
Washington, D.C. 20008.*

Romania wants to join The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Letters and e-mail messages of concern to them might bring pressure to bear on the Romanian Parliament. Remember that this legislation is not being proposed because it is right or good, but because of political pressure being brought by the Romanian Orthodox Church! While we have a voice, let us bring pressure to bear on the Romanian government from other viewpoints. The President of the United States should be informed of your concerns over the human rights violations this law will bring about. Write

*Wm. Jefferson Clinton,
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue,
Washington, D.C. 20500.*

Please, obtain addresses for your Congressmen and Senators and write or e-mail them opposing the proposed religious legislation in Romania. Be polite and respectful. Point out to them that several articles are clearly discriminatory and that they violate basic human rights. Ask them to do

whatever they can to exert their influence against this soon-to-be-debated law in the Romanian Parliament. Remind them that the most-favored nations trading status enjoyed by Romania at present could be revoked and that this is one pressure the U.S. government can bring to bear on Romania. Invest a little time and postage on behalf of the religious freedoms of your Brethren in Romania! The President and Prime Minister of Romania should hear from us, strongly opposing this legislation. Write to the President of Romania, as follows:

*His Excellency Emil Constantinescu,
President of Romania,
Cotroceni Palace
Bulevardul Geniului nr. 1-3
Bucharest, Romania*

Write also to the Prime Minister of Romania:

*Mr. Radu Vasile,
Prime Minister of Romania
Victoria Palace
Bucharest, Romania*

Tell them of the opposition of freedom-loving peoples in the west to this proposed law. Tell them that legislation needs to be passed which gives unlimited freedom of religion to all religions. Whole Churches could write as individuals or sign one letter as a sort of petition. Bible study classes could do the same. Such a letter could be a school project or a class project for Christian schools and for home-schoolers. Share this information and need with others who might help by also writing letters.

I write this article from Romania. I wish each of you could visit this country and see the awful effects of 40 years of Communism and Romanian Orthodoxy. (The two have worked hand in glove during the Communist years.) That visit alone would cause you to want to do something for these people, but surely the love of Christ ought to motivate us to do what we can, while we can for religious freedom and especially for our Brothers and Sisters in Christ in Romania. Don't put it off - let your voice be heard on behalf of religious freedom for these Brethren! Pray and write!

The Sleeping Servant

(Studies in the Book of Jonah)

By Milburn Cockrell

Mantachie, Mississippi

As I concluded the message last time Jonah had set sail for Tarshish. God has commanded him to go to Nineveh and preach to the Gentiles. The prophet refused to obey God's command. In attempting to flee the special presence of God, he has joined himself to a Gentile captain and crew

on the way to Tarshish. At this time Jonah should have been in Nineveh preaching repentance, but instead he has become a tourist on a Mediterranean cruise.

Jonah has chosen a downward course. He went "**down to Joppa**"

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The Sleeping Servant

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and **“down into”** the ship going to Tarshish (1:3). He will soon go **“down into the sides of the ship”** (1:5). Soon the sailors will throw him overboard and he will go down into the sea. He will not stop there as he will soon go **“down to the bottoms of the mountains”** (2:6). For some time Jonah was going down literally and spiritually. A downward course is an easy course, for it takes little effort to walk down hill. A sinful way is always a downward way; disobedience is debasing.

THE WEATHER WARNING

Today we look at verse 4 of chapter 1 which says: **“But the LORD sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken.”**

First, I see in this verse the teaching that God controls the weather. The Hebrew verb rendered **“sent”** is an inherently strong word in the causative stem. What is said is that God cast forth with force and violence this tempest of mighty madness upon the Mediterranean Sea. This was no common squall but a **“mighty tempest”** which fiercely tossed the ship. Truly, God gathers **“the wind in his fists”** (Prov. 30:4), and He **“bringeth the wind out of his treasures”** (Ps. 135:7). Even the **“stormy wind”** fulfills **“his word”** (Ps. 148:8).

Second, there is seen the moral significance of the weather. God sent this wind because of the disobedience of Jonah. The rebellion of the forces of nature are caused by the rebellion of man. Jonah's rebellion brought a mighty tempest upon his soul. Hence God sent a mighty storm to pursue and bring him to repentance. This wind was the chastening hand of the Lord. God has a controversy with this runaway prophet; He is angry with him. It was mercy on God's part to reclaim and restore one of His straying sheep, although it was by a **“mighty tempest.”**

Third, I see from the words of verse 4 that the guilt of one man endangers the safety of others. There is such a thing as vicarious suffering. The misconduct of the president of the United States may lay waste this nation. The folly of the mayor of a city may bring disorder and disaster to a city. The prodigality of a son may ruin the name of his family. The captain of a ship by a wrong command may sink his ship with its crew and passengers. The hypocrisy of one church member may bring disgrace upon the church and give it a bad name in the community. Jonah's presence on the ship to

Tarshish endangered the lives of all on board (Rom. 14:7).

THE MORAL EFFECTS OF THE STORM

Verse 5 reads: **“Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his god, and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it of them. But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep.”**

The sailors believed that the ship was about to be broken apart and their lives lost. The root idea of the Hebrew word rendered **“mariners”** is salt. This points to the salt-encrusted clothing of men occupied with boats and constantly splashed by the briny sea. These seamen were not novices at their trade; they were **“old salts,”** seasoned veterans of many strong winds and rough tides. But this mighty tempest made these men afraid who seldom knew fear.

We cannot be certain of the national identity of these seamen who manned Jonah's flight ship. In all probability they were Phoenicians, who lived in the main on the coast of Palestine. For centuries it has been their custom to **“go down to the sea in ships”** and to **“do business in great waters”** (Ps. 107:23). The Phoenicians were people of rich commerce and sea travel. They probably knew little of Jonah's God and held to polytheistic religious beliefs. The storm inspired their reverence for their many gods, and so every man cried **“unto his god.”** They were frightened into prayer. It is not said that some of them prayed while others reviled. There was no mutiny as every man prayed to his god.

Some men who seldom pray in prosperous circumstances are generally the first to call upon God when adversity comes. Did these sailors engage in a selfish outcry for help, or was there real repentance and strong feelings in their hearts? God only knows; we do not know. At least it would seem that their prayers were earnest. It is said that they **“cried”** every man to his god. They were doing what their religion had taught them to do, despite the fact that their prayers were misdirected. There was not one unbent knee among them that day. Oh, that Christians would all join in such united, earnest prayer when we are assailed with difficulties. What we need in view of the present moral storm upon the earth is collective supplication.

These seamen **“cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it of them.”** They were afraid but they did not panic. They prayed and put forth an effort to save themselves. They gave up

their cargo in hope of saving their lives. **“Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life”** (Job 2:4). Oh, that men would be as concerned about their souls as their bodies! If they were they would gladly part with their possessions and pleasure which may shipwreck their immortal souls!

THE SILENT PROPHET

“Then the mariners. . .cried every man unto his god. . .But Jonah. . .was fast asleep.” It should have been Jonah calling upon God, but he was asleep! Every man was praying on board this ship but the preacher! What a strange spectacle! A sleeping runaway prophet in a storm-distressed ship! Why is he asleep? Probably because he was exhausted by the fatigue and grief of the last few days. His ship-cradle is being rocked by the mighty tempest into total unconsciousness of his danger.

The adjective **“fast,”** used in our English Bibles to describe his sleep, is made an auxiliary in rendering the verb in the original text which means **“to fall into heavy sleep.”** The root word is the same which describes the deep sleep that God caused to fall upon Adam before He removed a rib for making woman (Gen. 2:21).

Jonah is not asleep in his cabin nor some place on the deck. He sleeps in **“the sides of the ship,”** or in the innermost part of the ship. He had chosen a place of seclusion in which to sleep. This speaks of his desire for deep, undisturbed slumber of sweet forgetfulness. He wanted to sleep and forget the call of God to Nineveh! The prophet hoped to silence the Divine voice. Satan delights in drawing men away from God and their duty. He seeks to rock them to sleep in carnal security that they may not be sensible of their misery and danger.

Here we see a picture of our modern world and the present-day church. The world is alarmed about conditions and the church is asleep. There is a mighty storm raging among the masses of earth. We are on the verge of nuclear destruction. Communism, socialism, one-worldism, atheism, secular humanism, modernism, immorality, crime, drugs, divorce, and other things are engulfing the whole world. But the church, like Jonah of old, is sound asleep. Millions are dying without hearing the gospel of grace, but the church continues in its slumber. I marvel that Jonah could sleep while this storm was going on, but I marvel more that our churches can sleep in a state of rebellion to God.

Most Christians would deny that they are asleep in Satan's lap. A person does not know he is asleep until he wakes up. Most people have no intention of waking up, for to wake

up is to admit they have been asleep. Too many seem determined to continue in their repose while the world rushes down the broad road to Hell. It is so cool and comfortable in Satan's cradle! One clear proof that the modern church is asleep is that many church members condone things they denounced ten years ago. We do things we would not have done twenty years ago. We attempt to justify ourselves before the world. Why? Because we are in a state of sleep while the storm is raging. God help us!

THE STIRRING SKIPPER

“So the shipmaster came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not” (Jonah 1:6).

Jonah should have been reproving the heathen king of Nineveh, but, being backslidden, he is reproved by the heathen captain of the ship. God not only sent a mighty tempest to bring Jonah back, but also a shipmaster to convince him of his folly. The skipper could not understand why Jonah was not praying. So a prophet of Israel is now about to be rebuked by a Gentile pilot. The shipmaster became the prophet, rebuking Jonah for his disobedience. Perhaps the shipmaster grasps the prophet by the arm and shakes him as he shouted: **“What meanest thou, O sleeper?”** The skipper is saying: What is wrong with you? Are you deaf? Are you mad? Are you sick? Don't you hear the noise of the wind and the waves outside the ship? Listen to the cries of the crew on deck. What aileth thee, O sleeper?

This man was a good captain. He had concern for his crew and passengers. He may have looked for Jonah at first without finding him. He then goes below in search of him and finds him in the innermost part of the ship asleep. The captain knew that Jonah was asleep before the prophet realized he was asleep.

Often the people of the world are more conscious of the church being asleep than the church is of its own condition. The ungodly can tell from the little interest which church members have in their church that the church is asleep. Oh, how we need to awake out of sleep and realize we have been asleep as others have already noticed. While the church sleeps the world moves. While the church sleeps Satan works. The heathen captain had to wake up Jonah. Will God use lost men to wake up the church? Will such men ever desire to wake up a sleeping church? Something must do it, for the storm is rag-

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The Sleeping Servant

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ing and we are asleep!

THE COMMAND TO PRAY

This heathen skipper believed in the doctrine of prayer. He said to Jonah: **“Arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not.”** The shipmaster wanted Jonah to add his prayer to those of the seamen. He desired to see every person on board his ship in prayer to God. He believed that prayer could prevail with God, and he wanted to see all people be a praying people.

How this heathen skipper shames modern Christians. Oh, that all Christians would pray to God more. Oh, that a feeling prevailed among our pastors, church officers, and church members that is here seen in this sea captain! Let us not be indifferent to those who are absent from our prayer meetings. All too many times some church members are praying while others are sleeping. Every one of these sleepers should be sought out and aroused to a sense of duty by those who are awake and have the welfare of the church at heart.

How do you think Jonah felt when this pagan skipper commanded him to pray to his God for mercy on their imperiled state? That runaway prophet is not fit to pray. He needs someone to pray for him. The Divine Chronicle does not tell us that Jonah actually prayed, although he may have done so to escape suspicion. I can imagine that Jonah stood speechless for a time as he heard the storm beating against the ship and saw the waves leaping from their depths.

One of the most embarrassing things in the world is for an unsaved person to ask a backslider to pray for him. Jonah was embarrassed when the skipper asked him to pray to his God. In reality, Jonah should have been the first one to pray and should have urged all others to do so. Jonah's God was the only prayer-hearing God on board that ship. Some of us are like Jonah. We ought to be praying but we are sleeping. The world wonders why we do this as the captain wondered why Jonah slept. If a lost sinner asked you to pray for him, would you be on praying grounds? Or, would the lost sinner find you asleep spiritually?

THE GUILTY PARTY IS SOUGHT

Prayer having apparently failed, the seamen think it is time to employ another measure. They believe the storm has come because someone of them is guilty of a terrible crime. The culprit must be detected. The guilty party must be discovered and as-

signed responsibility for their plight. **“And they said every one to his fellow, Come, and let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us. So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah”** (Jonah 1:7). Jonah may not have been a party to this event, nor even have known what was done. But it mattered not. The lot fell on Jonah!

I see here the fact that human suffering is caused by sin. The sailors said: **“. . .that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us.”** These men were better theologians than some present-day preachers. They did not attribute their danger to the mishap of some uncontrollable forces, or to the indifference of God. They knew full well that human suffering is caused by human sin. Pain is not a demon from Hell to bring tears to our eyes, but a messenger from God to teach us the depravity of our nature and the magnitude of sin.

In this verse I also see the proof of God's overruling providence: **“The lot fell on Jonah.”** God always put the cap on the right head. The old proverb is emphatically true that in all ages and circumstances **“the lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD”** (Prov. 16:33). There is no such thing as chance. The God of providence rules in the world. All events and all things are under His control at all times.

It is a terrible thing for a prophet of God to stand before those heathen sailors, detected, exposed, convicted, covered with confusion and shame. But how easily the God of providence accomplished this. Numbers 32:23 declares: **“. . .be sure your sin will find you out.”** You may conceal your sin, forget it, deny it, but God will bring it to light sooner or later. The sweep of time cannot prevent the discovery of your crime. The Lord God Almighty is better at uncovering sin than the FBI. Don't deceive yourself. Rebellion against God cannot long be successfully hidden from others or impassively ignored by the rebel himself.

The seamen discovered Jonah's sin before he did. This is almost always the case. Men generally see the faults of others before they see their own. Each sailor thought the storm was caused by someone other than himself. No one wants to take the blame for the sin. It is our nature to act thusly. We are all apt to behold the mote in our brother's eye sooner than to consider the beam in our own eye.

PRACTICAL POINTS

Once again before I close this discourse I wish to make some practical observations upon this lesson.

1. Runaway souls want to sleep and

slumber in seclusion. They long for complete insensibility to their sins. They attempt to drown convictions in a bottle of booze. They seek to make their bed in Hell, or flee to the uttermost parts of the earth to escape God's special presence. They are determined to smother conscience by association with the ungodly. But let us remember insensibility is not security. A man may never be more in danger than when he is asleep.

2. Jonah lost something by going to Tarshish. It was not his salvation. It was the special presence of God. This is what the church has lost today. By running from God we have lost the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. That is why lost sinners can come in and go out of our services untouched and undisturbed. God is not working in our midst. We are asleep in the Devil's cradle.

3. A sleeping church is not only helpless and useless, but it is a positive hindrance to lost sinners. Jonah's sin caused his fellow-voyagers to lose their cargo and almost their lives. A disobedient church endangers the souls of others by her uncharitable behavior toward God. Such a church stands in the way of sinners and hurts the cause of Christ. It was because Achan was in the camp that the Israelites were defeated by their foes. Our prayer should be: God, help me not to be the one person who may endanger my family and hold back the progress of my church.

4. Many people, like the skipper of the ship to Tarshish, believe in God and prayer when the waves of death are wildly dashing about them. They pray only in foul weather. Such fair-weather sailors are quite common today. An infidel, who scoffed at a minister of Christ, prayed: **“O God, if there be a God, have mercy on me,”** when the storm came. I heard of another man who prayed in a storm: **“Dear Lord, I have never called upon you before, and if you will save me from this storm, I will never call upon you any more.”**

5. What a spiritual weakling Jonah was in the presence of these heathen sailors. Instead of being a lighthouse and a tower of strength to help them, he was a source of sorrow and perplexity. How sad to see a prophet of God confused and confounded before the ungodly! A powerless Christian is a tragic sight. Salt without savor is a worthless thing. A Christian ought to be a man of fearless courage and irresistible power. He is so if he were not like Jonah, cowardly and disobedient. Our strength lies in nearness to God—remaining in His special presence. Samson in the power of the Holy spirit was more mighty than the host of the Philistines, but as a runaway from his

God, he became a miserable laughing-stock.

6. When a son of God does a wrong thing, or goes to the wrong place, or associates with the wrong people, God will chasten him for his disobedience. He may tolerate sin in the Devil's family, but He never will in His own family. God always causes sin to embarrass and mock a disobedient child. Even ungodly men will reproachfully say to him, **“If I believed what you say you believe, I wouldn't be here, I wouldn't do this.”** Sin mocks the sinner. Here is a stern warning against wavering in our profession of faith.

7. Are the winds blowing upon your ship on the sea of life? Do you have a rocky marriage? Are you in financial trouble? Are you making life miserable for everybody else? Is God speaking to you? Are the winds blowing? Is your ship tossed to and fro? Don't wait to be thrown overboard! Come to your senses. Awake out of sleep. Come back to God. By God's help you can do it, and should do it now.

GLEANINGS



THE PROPER ADMINISTRATOR OF BAPTISM

By Jonathan Gaines Bow
(1847 - 1922)

In chapter X, the statement is made: **“Baptists believe that baptism is the dipping, immersion in water, in the name of the Trinity, of a believer upon profession of faith, by one duly authorized by a church of Jesus Christ to perform such service.”**

Bear in mind they believe that scriptural baptism is only properly, scripturally administered by one duly authorized by a church of Jesus Christ.

The Scriptures require a certain act—immersion; a proper subject—a penitent, believing person professing faith in Christ; and the ordinance administered by one duly authorized by a church of Christ.

An improper act, an improper candidate, an improper administrator, or an improper design renders the baptism improper, unscriptural, invalid.

Christ is the head of the church, the one law-giver in Zion. The churches are the executors of His will and law. Christ gave the law and obeyed it, established the ordinances and kept

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them; setting us an example, saying, "Follow me."

Baptists are charged with being sticklers for forms. Yes, but the form for which we contend is a divine form, ordained by God, observed by Christ, and enjoined upon his followers. To His churches He has committed the ordinances. These ordinances (baptism and the Lord's Supper) are holy symbols of God's own appointment, setting forth in object lessons the fundamental principles and doctrine of the gospel of salvation through Christ Jesus. Now if God punished His people, blotted out Israel, scattering them among the nations, because they kept not His ordinances and refused to walk in His statutes, who shall dare to change and trifle with these simple, sublime ordinances, which reflect the glory of Christ's work, life, death, burial, and resurrection? The condition of God's blessings upon ancient Israel was: "That ye keep mine ordinances." And under His dire punishment He stoops to explain, saying: "Ye have gone away from mine ordinances and have not kept them," and even compassionately to invite them, saying, "Return unto me and I will return unto you." Surely God in His holiness, justice, and consistency is not less concerned about these ordinances, which set before men the finished work of Christ, than the temporary ordinances which shadowed forth His coming.

But who shall administer them? If they are church ordinances, then they are necessarily under the control of the churches, and only such as the churches appoint (ordain) are qualified for this service.

Baptists believe that since in its introduction baptism was administered by divine authority, and since there is no declaration of a change in the method of administering the ordinance, there should be a commission from God to administer the ordinance now. John said He was sent to baptize with water (John 1:33). True, there has been no direct personal command to the preachers of this day from God, but Jesus commands His church, in Matthew 28:19, to teach (make disciples) all nations, baptizing them, etc. It is, of course, not expected that a church as an organization does the baptizing, but that it is done by the order of and under the direction of the church; and hence one is thus authorized to baptize by the church and for the church, which has a commission from Jesus to go, to teach, to baptize. As Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John (though Jesus him-

self baptized not, but His disciples—John 4:1-2), so a church in obedience to the Commission (Matt. 28:19) makes and baptizes disciples, though the church baptizes not, but her selected and duly appointed ministry. If the Commission to evangelize the world is to the church, then the command to baptize is to the church, and hence baptism administered by the authority of a scriptural church is by divine commandment as truly as was that of John the Baptist. If the command is to the church, then one not under the direction of and authorized by a scriptural church is not a scriptural administrator of baptism.

Surely Jesus knew it was necessary to have a divinely appointed, proper administrator, hence He "came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan."

(What Baptists Believe and Why They Believe It, pp. 38-40).

By J. L. Waller
(1809 - 1854)

Did God then leave Himself without a witness? Did the gates of Hell prevail against His church? Were the foundations of His kingdom laid in sand, that it yielded to the storms of persecution which befell it during the reign of the Man of Sin? Or did the church exist and stand, as firm as the rock of its foundation? And where was it in the long and dreary night, from the revelation of the Son of Perdition until the Reformation of the sixteenth century? These inquiries demand serious consideration and satisfactory answers.

It will not do, by way of response, to urge the existence of an "invisible church." This is to evade and not to meet the difficulty. The Savior did not build an "invisible church" upon the "rock" confessed by Peter. The Church of Christ on earth is visible. The light of the gospel was not given to be put under a bushel. The Church of the Redeemer is as a city set upon a hill, whose light cannot be hid. It stands upon Mount Zion with the ceaseless and exhaustless effulgence of the gospel day pouring perpetually upon it glittering and glorious turrets. And he is wonderfully endowed, to whose vision that is visible which is invisible! Besides, it is certain from the positive testimony of the Scriptures, that the adherents of Popery from the beginning, SAW, and hence pursued and persecuted the saints of the Most High—the people or church of the Redeemer—those who followed the Lamb whithersoever He went—who would not worship the beast, neither his image—and who refused to receive his mark upon their foreheads or in their hands" (*The Southern Baptist Review*, Aug. & Sept., pp. 560-561).

Bible & the Newspaper

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Church of England has dropped over 40 percent in the last 20 years. The research, based on a wide-ranging survey sent to over 37,000 English churches in 1998, has been disputed by religious officials who claim that not enough of the surveys were returned to yield convincing evidence. The surveys also found that Methodist congregations decreased by 26 percent, and Catholic congregations by 22 percent during the '90s. Research estimates that only 7.5 percent of England's population attends church on a regular basis, down from almost 10 percent a decade ago. The surveys determined that England's young adult population is leaving church pews faster than other age groups.

FORT GIBSON, Okla. (EP)—Four middle-school students were shot by a classmate in Fort Gibson, Okla. Dec. 6. All of the wounded students are expected to fully recover. Witnesses said 13-year-old Seth Trickey pulled a 9mm handgun out of his backpack, fired twice into the ground then several times into a crowd of students. One student reported that Trickey said, "I'm crazy, I'm crazy," before opening fire. A teacher took the gun from Trickey, who was reportedly still pulling the trigger after all the rounds were fired.

The wounded students were Savana Knowles, 12, shot in the cheek; Bradley Schindel, 12, shot once in each arm; Cody Chronister, 13, shot once in his forearm, and William "Billy" Railey, 13, shot in his leg. Carol Cook, a member of First Baptist Church of Fort Gibson, works in the administration building as a financial secretary. She told Associated Baptist Press that the Knowles girl is very active at First Baptist. Her father is a member of Promise Keepers, and Cook described the whole family as "strong Christian people." Gary Sparks, a deacon at First Baptist, is also the high school principal. He said he was unaware of the shooting until afterwards. "We're just keeping them in our prayers," he said. "We're thankful that there weren't any killed."

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP)—Ministers who previously opted out of the Social Security system have an opportunity to get back in. Clergy may exempt themselves from paying Social Security taxes if they object to the program on religious grounds. Such a decision is usually irrevocable, but in November Congress opened a two-year window to help ministers who changed their minds and want back in. To qualify, ministers must apply by April 15, 2002. They will have to pay into the program for 10 years before they are eligible to receive any benefits.

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP)—Racism was the motive for 55 percent of the hate

crimes reported to the FBI last year, according to new statistics from the bureau. Blacks suffered the most race-related hate crimes, and of those 58 percent involved white perpetrators. Of anti-white offenses, 58 percent involved black perpetrators. Religion was a factor in 1,390 of 7,755 total hate crimes. Of those, 1,081 were against Jews, 61 against Catholics and 59 against Protestants.

BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 10-31-99 to 11-30-99

Beginning Balance	\$1,557.03
RECEIPTS:	
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	60.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne WV	300.00
Central Avenue B. C., Tampa, FL	25.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Silsbee, TX	30.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Fulton, MS	100.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	125.00
Portland B. C., Plumerville, AR	50.00
Berea B.C., Mansfield, OH	50.00
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	200.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Columbus, MS	50.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL	50.00
Morris St. B. C., Hobbs, NM	50.00
Mt Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH	100.00
Temple Baptist Mission, Johnson City, TN	30.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL	100.00
South Park M. B. C., Seattle, WA	25.00
New Testament B. C., Bristol, TN	10.00
Grace B. Mission, Marion, IL	25.00
Ocoonita M. B. C., Keokee, VA	40.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Raleigh, NC	100.00
Faith B. C., Seffner, FL	100.00
Berea B. C., Westpoint, TN	50.00
Esther Thorne, Fayetteville, AR	38.00
Leroy Bullard, Albuquerque, NM	50.00
Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX	15.00
Letson H. Ferrell, Long Beach, MS	150.00
Bethesda B. C., Odessa, FL	100.00
Dessie Harrelson, McLeansboro, IL	25.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Warren, OH	50.00
Landmark M. B. C., Moncks Corner, SC	25.00
Anonymous	1,215.00
Subscriptions	284.00
BBC - Pugh Account paying 2 invoices	151.03
Sub Total	\$3,373.03
TOTAL	\$5,330.06

EXPENDITURES:

Wages:	
Milburn Cockrell	675.00
Sharon Cockrell	800.00
Christopher Cockrell	300.00
Derek Cockrell	200.00
Total Wages	1,975.00
Postage	749.14
Printing	537.14
FICA taxes	151.09
Total Expenditure	3,412.37
.....	1,917.69
Bank charge	-10.09
ENDING BALANCE	\$1,907.60

BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 10-31-99 to 11-30-99

Beginning Balance	\$ 2,016.52
RECEIPTS	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	100.00
Grace B.C., Corbin, KY	2,100.00
Livingstone B. C., Barboursville, WV	297.60
Oakvale B. C., Danese, WV	50.00
Berea B.C., Westpoint, TN	132.00
Briar Creek, B. C., Williamsburg, KY	75.00
Dividing checks	275.00
.....	3,029.60
TOTAL RECEIPTS	5,046.12
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio Time	819.55
Postage	22.66
Tapes	44.06
Dividing checks	375.00
Total Expenditures	1,261.27
Sub Total	3,784.85
Bank Charge	- 4.57
ENDING BALANCE	\$3,780.28

CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT

Beginning Balance	\$28.32
RECEIPTS	
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	2,000.00
Total	2,028.32
EXPENDITURES:	
WYWY	140.00
Total Expenditures	140.00
ENDING BALANCE	\$1,888.32



World Scene

By G. Russell Evans - Norfolk, Virginia

Hillary for US Senate: The Real McCoy



Hillary wants to be US senator from New York. She wants it bad. She's willing to step down from First Lady to junior senator—enroute to her real goal: President of the United States and Commander-in-Chief.

I don't believe she'll make it. Either goal. I lived in New York and know the fine people there: sophisticated, shrewd and street-wise. Never will they be bamboozled by an opportunist carpetbagger-Cub fan today, Yankee fan tomorrow; anti-Israel yesterday, pro-Israel today. Whatever it takes for New York votes, she'll do!

New Yorkers need reminders of the real McCoy, the real Hillary Rodham Clinton, long-suffering wife and defender of the only elected president to be impeached. Here are some particulars:

TWO-FACED JEWISH POLICY

In 1988, Mrs. Clinton was chairman of the New York-based New World Foundation (NWF) that funded many left-wing causes, including the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES), a communist group dedicated to seizing the government. The NWF gave \$15,000 to Grassroots International, an anti-Israel organization funding the terrorist Palestine Liberation Organization. When challenged for her two-faced shift, Mrs. Clinton claimed "she didn't vote on the grant." But, she was chairman and never a shrinking violet, always a take-charge woman.

CAMPAIGNER EXTRAORDINAIRE

Ann Lewis, Clinton spokeswoman extra-ordinaire, now works on Hillary's Senate campaign while employed as White House Communications Director—a violation of federal law, but OK for Clinton aides who see laws as applicable to others. "On her own time" is the claim, but undenied is her use of facilities "purchased with government funds"—strictly prohibited for others.

FILEGATE

This 1996 scandal was Hillary's brainchild for which she hired former salon bouncer Craig Livingstone to collect 1,000 FBI files on Republican "opponents"—a felony never prosecuted. Clinton aides then constructed a computer data base of 300,000 names for later smears. It worked. To counter the Bill-Monica sex scandal, Livingstone and James Carville delighted media pals with sex lives of prominent Republicans—re-

portedly on orders of Hillary. This date base "was intended to make FBI information useful to the Clinton Administration."

TRAVELGATE

Hillary's true colors were flying early on—in 1993, when she ordered the entire White House Travel Office replaced with cousin Catherine Cornelius's crew from Little Rock. Then, Hillary initiated an FBI criminal investigation of Director Billy Dale with trumped-up charges of embezzlement—all later disproved in court but not before extensive legal fees. Disgruntled aide David Watkins, after being caught using a government helicopter, reported that Hillary lied in denying that she directed firing of the Travel Office staff.

HEALTHCARE

Hillary may be most remembered for her convoluted and illegal efforts to put all health care under the government—one seventh of our entire economy. The Hillary Socialized Health Plan would fine doctors \$10,000 a day for billing errors and \$50,000 for unauthorized treatment. Said Hillary to critics: "It's time to put the national interest ahead of individuals."

Her planning featured illegalities galore: secret sessions, secret participants, fraudulent affidavits by "Health Czar" Ira Magaziner who was called "dishonest and reprehensible" by Federal Judge Royce Lamberth in an ensuing lawsuit. Even so, President Clinton announced that taxpayers would pay the \$285,000 fine and that Magaziner would keep his job.

LET US NOT FORGET

The mysterious billing records, with Hillary's finger prints, disclosing the multimillion dollar frauds "Whitewater" and "Castle Grande"—Hillary's "cattlegate" windfall—cover-up after Vincent Foster's mysterious death—Webster Hubbell's "Money for Silence"—Chinagate—bed and breakfast in the Lincoln bedroom—use of Air Force planes on Hillary's book tour and in shuttling back and forth for her New York campaign.

Hillary Rodham Clinton was deeply involved in every one of these major scandals—all of which should disqualify her for serious consideration for US senator. In all, there were 38 major scandals in the Clinton White House in the most corrupt administration in U.S. history. Almost without exception, Hillary was in the forefront.

These are examples of the Clinton character and the followers who do their sleazy bidding. With a Hillary senatorship, expect to see dozens of them ensconced on Capital Hill, flaunting the rules, double-dealing and bullying their way through—a way of life for Clintonites, now with seven years experience at fooling the people and trashing our Constitution.

New Yorkers are not going to allow this!

(Captain Evans is author of *Death Knell of the Panama Canal?* (National Security Center, 1998), available on the Internet at Amazon.com.)

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