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Demonstrating Our Sonship

By Tom Ross

South Point, Ohio

After exhorting the Philippian believers to emulate the example of Christ by way of humility, submission, obedience, and sacrifice, Paul now (Phil. 2:12-18) admonishes them to demonstrate their sonship in a very practical way. Those who have been united to the risen Christ by faith are called the sons of God (John 1:12) and are expected to demonstrate their spiritual union by the way in which they live. God calls upon all His children to give evidence of their relationship to Him through a changed and sanctified life. The exhortation before us is similar to the one stated previously in Philippians 1:27: **"Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ. . ."**

THROUGH PERSEVERANCE



Tom Ross

"Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Phil. 2:12-13).

1. Paul uses a term of endearment to address the Philippian believers. He did not regard them as merely lay church members. Rather, they were

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Why I Preach the Word of God

By Timothy Hille

Ashland, Illinois

Read II Timothy 3:13-17; 4:1,2

There are many things going on in churches today, but the greatest need of the hour in which you and I are living is that the Word of the Lord be preached. A sermon in and of itself can do nothing. A message from THUS SAITH THE LORD that is preached by the enabling power of the Holy Spirit and is accompanied by the effectual working of the Spirit will impart faith to those who hear it. Preaching is not an occupation, it is a calling, and God calls men to preach His Word. Paul said: **"It pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen"** (Gal. 1:15,16). When God calls a man to preach, He makes that



Timothy Hille

man His mouth-piece to proclaim His wonderful Word. When God calls someone to preach, He calls that person for life: **"For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance,"** (Rom. 11:29). **"Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate"** (Isa. 6:11).

Something that we must remember is that we have to do with the means

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The Ninth Commandment

By Milburn Cockrell

Mantachie, Mississippi



"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour" (Ex. 20:16).

"Thou shalt not bear false witness" (Matt. 19:18).

"Thou shalt not bear false witness" (Rom. 13:9).

The Third Commandment condemns the sin of the tongue against God, but the Ninth Commandment denounces the sin of the tongue against our neighbor. The Ninth Commandment differs from the Third Commandment in that the Third Commandment forbids perjury against God while the Ninth Commandment forbids perjury against man. This Ninth

Commandment concerns the defaming of our neighbor. It forbids any word of ours, which would injure the reputation of our neighbor,

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The Prayers of the Saints

By Milburn Cockrell

Mantachie, Mississippi

"And the angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there were given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came up with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand" (Rev. 8:3-4).

The seven trumpet angels are about

(Being the substance of a sermon preached in various locations in Romania.)

Our text is this: **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine**



Curtis Pugh

heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they

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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).



The Berea Baptist Banner

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Prayers of the Saints

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THE IDENTITY OF THE ANGEL PRIEST

Many modern-day scholars take the words "another angel" to mean no more than another angel of the same class distinguished from the seven trumpet angels already mentioned. Because this angel has an intercessory office, some say it is an angel who represents the intercessory office as discharged by our Lord Jesus Christ. Nearly all the old commentators, as well as many in more modern times (J. A. Seiss, Walter Scott, Henry Morris, Ford Ottman, etc.), believe this Angel is Christ.

I believe this Angel is Christ, the Angel of the covenant (Mal. 3:1), the Angel of His presence (Isa. 63:9), the Angel of the LORD (Ex. 3:2; Isa. 37:36). Christ may possibly be seen as an angel in other places in Revelation (10:1; 18:1; 20:1). Christ is appearing in Revelation 8 in Old Testament relation to the people of

Israel as the Angel of the covenant. I give the following reasons for my position.

First, the high priest on the day of atonement was called an angel or messenger (See Gill's Com. on this verse).

Second, the Angel does the work of a priest, and a priest was a messenger: **"For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts"** (Mal. 2:7).

Third, the Bible does not speak of angel priests or angel intercessors. This Angel offers the prayers of the saints, and He renders them acceptable to God. Such an office is nowhere in Scripture assigned to mere angels. This is the work of Jesus Christ. **"For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father"** (Eph. 2:18). **"In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him"** (Eph. 3:12). **"By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually. . ."** (Heb. 13:15). **"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ"** (I Pet. 2:5).

Fourth, this Angel stood **"at the altar"** (some translated "over the altar" or "upon the altar"). This is the brazen altar of sacrifice. The earthly tabernacle and temple were copies of the realities of Heaven, **"figures of the true," "the pattern of things in the heavens"** (Heb. 9:23-24). This must be Christ our great High Priest presenting His sacrifice which He had offered up for the sins of His people. Christ is both altar, sacrifice, and Priest.

Fifth, in Revelation 8:5 the Angel cast fire into the earth. This is what Christ does: **"I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?"** (Luke 12:49).

The Angel has a golden censer (a fire pan). This was the vessel in which the priest put burning coals of fire, taken from the brazen altar (Lev. 6:12). This denotes the sufferings of Christ when He endured the wrath of God, which was poured out like fire upon Him. The golden censer points to the excellency and perpetuity of Christ's sacrifice and intercession.

THE DESCRIPTION OF GOD'S PEOPLE

God's people are here called **"saints"** a common title in both the Old and New Testaments. Modern Christianity has corrupted the simplicity of the primitive meaning of the word **"saints."** Some make them a different order from ordinary believers, raised above the level of

human infirmity. From this mistaken notion has come saint worship. This wrong estimation of saintliness discourages many from seeking to attain sainthood, believing it is something entirely out of reach. This is not good.

The word "saint" (Greek *hagioi*) expresses not so much character as relation to God, one set apart from the secular and sinful to the sacred and spiritual. God chose us in Christ **"before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy"** or saints (Eph. 1:4). Saints are God's consecrated ones. Holy character is the immediate result of God's consecrating one to His service. **"That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints. . ."** (Rom. 16:2). **"But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints"** (Eph. 5:3).

In Christian experience every believer in Jesus Christ is a saint the moment he believes. Christ spoke to Paul of **"them which are sanctified by faith that is in me"** (Acts 26:18; cf. 3:16; 15:9; 20:32). On the human side, faith is the instrument by which we are sanctified. It is the hand which appropriates the holiness of Christ (I Cor. 1:30; Heb. 10:10, 14). Hence in the New Testament the term **"saints"** is applied to all the believing and baptized members of a church. **"Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints. . ."** (I Cor. 1:2). **"Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi. . ."** (Phil. 1:1). **"For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints"** (I Cor. 14:33).

We are not saints by nature, but we are made so by grace, being in Christ Jesus, the Holy One. God sets us apart for holy purposes: **"But know that the LORD has set apart him that is godly for himself. . ."** (Ps. 4:3). I Peter 2:9 declares: **"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."** They are not only an elect and holy race made so by God the Father, but they also have their sins expiated by the blood of God the Son: **". . . the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin"** (I John 1:7). We are made saints by the Holy Spirit, for the Bible speaks of **"the sanctification of the Spirit"** (II Thess. 2:13; I Pet. 1:2).

SAINTS ARE A PRAYING PEOPLE

Where there is no prayer, there is

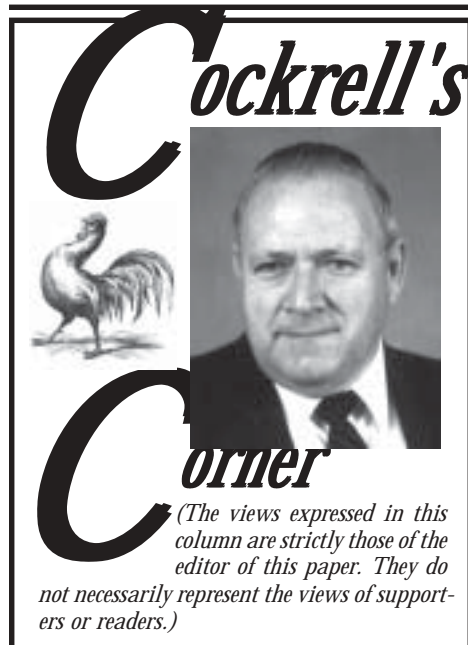
no piety. God's elect **"cry day and night unto him"** (Luke 18:7). The Bible teaches that men **"ought always to pray"** (Luke 18:1) and to **"Pray without ceasing"** (I Thess. 5:17). It also says **"continuing instant in prayer"** (Rom. 12:12) and **"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit"** (Eph. 6:18).

Revelation 8:3 does not speak of "some prayers" of the saints, but of **"the prayers of all saints."** This must be understood in a limited sense, for Christ has already presented many of our prayers to the Father, and they have been answered.

What kind of prayers from the saints have gone unanswered for centuries? First, there is the prayer for the kingdom to come. Christ taught in the example prayer for His disciples: **"Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven"** (Matt. 6:10). The saints are to pray for the coming of the kingdom of Heaven, the Messianic kingdom, which will result in the will of God being done on earth as it is in Heaven. The kingdom of Heaven has not yet come, for God's will is not yet being **"done on earth, as it is in heaven."** Christ will set up the kingdom of Heaven at His second coming (Matt. 25:31-46) when the seventh angel sounds (Rev. 11:15). Then the saints who have prayed for the kingdom of Heaven to come will reign with Christ **"on the earth"** (Rev. 5:10; 20:4-6).

Second, there is the prayers of the saints for judgment on a wicked world who has persecuted God's people: **"O LORD God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O God to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thyself. Lift up thyself, thou judge of the earth: render a reward to the proud. LORD, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph? How long shall they utter and speak hard things? and all the workers of iniquity boast themselves? They break in pieces thy people, O LORD, and afflict thine heritage. They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless. Yet they say, The LORD shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it"** (Ps. 94:1-7; cf. Micah 7:2, 7). The tribulation martyrs under the altar in Heaven in a disembodied state say: **"How long, O Lord, holy and true, doest thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?"** (Rev. 6:10; 11:15). There is a day coming when the principles of God's righteous judgment shall be enforced and evil shall be overthrown. When Christ comes with the armies of Heaven **"in**

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JUST THINKIN'

Today (12-14-01) I was just thinkin'. I praise God that neither Bill Clinton nor Al Gore are president of my country. If either had been in office, there would have been no response to the terrorist's attack on September 11, 2001. We would have heard much talk, but there would have been no response (unless it was to bomb an aspirin factory to escape a sex scandal). Instead of Osama bin Laden hiding out in some remote cave from the United Front and American forces, he would have been plotting another terrorist attack on the American paper tiger. Thank God this did not happen to my country.

Then there is the third edition of *The Berea Baptist Hymnal*. It is the largest ever published by us with 405 songs on 93 brightness 60 pound paper. It contains many hymns written by our own people. In these days of so many isms and schisms it is good to know that independent churches can still work together on such a project.

I shall never forget the year of 2001. We will all long remember the terrorist attack on Sept. 11th. I will remember it from the standpoint of personal experience. For 60 years I had spent only one day and one night (a tonsillectomy at age 7) in the hospital. This year I have been in and out of more than one hospital. In April I was told I had cancer in my left eye and my vision was fading. Then on June 11th I suffered a severe heart attack. I am glad to say the cancer is dead and some vision is returning to my eye. My heart is much better, but I still wear out quickly. But thank God I am still alive and doing the Lord's work which I love so well.

One might suppose that a person's enemies might show some mercy when a man is so near death's door,

but such was not the case. Like a wolf pack who smells blood, they seemed to move in for the kill. I have suffered the worse year of personal attacks in my history. I have been denounced by name in email, papers, and Bible conferences. One of the biggest lies told was that I was dead. Like Mark Twain, I can only say the reports of my death have been greatly exaggerated. I shall leave such people who have nothing better to do to the Lord (Rom. 12:19-20; I Thess. 4:6).

I am deeply grieved to see how far some brethren have gone on the doctrine of church organization. At first they said if one church organized another church, it was a good practice, although there was no Scripture for such a thing. Now we are being told that churches must be self-constituted to be scriptural. If one church organizes another church, it is an unscriptural act based upon a mere human tradition. They now say if you believe one church should organize another church, you are in fact "a fool." What will be next? Will Protestant churches become true churches? The idea that a man may start a new church at pleasure is a Protestant idea. What about self-constituted community churches? I fear some brethren are rapidly becoming immersed Presbyterians.

Today I grieve for the passing of great defenders of the faith. I mean men like Rosco Brong, Roy Mason, Bill Derossitt, Harold Harvey, etc. I wonder if this present generation will ever see such men again on this earth. Soon others (many of us are not spring chickens) shall depart to be with Christ, which is far better. In the next 10 to 20 years many soldiers will go home from the battlefield, if the Lord has not already returned. When God calls His ambassadors home it is a sign of war. While I grieve for the many who have gone home, I praise God for a small group of young men who have come to the kingdom for such a time as this. I constantly pray for these young brethren, for I know the times they will face. They will need a double portion of power.

None of us know when we shall cross over to the other side. With failing health, I know not how much longer I may have. But I came forth from my sick bed with a new determination to work faster and harder before I finish my course. As I write this, my book on *Death and the Hereafter* is being made ready for press. Also there are plans to republish *Three Witnesses for the Baptists* by Elder Curtis Pugh. Since in the "making of many books there is no end" (Eccl. 12:12), type is already being set on another book of mine on salvation, and still another on

prophecy is being considered. A number of outlines of books of the Bible will be printed in limited quantity by us. There is no discharge in this warfare.

The older I get, the harder it is to find a lost sinner. Most people tell me they are "good old boys" and members of some kind of a church (they probably have not been in 20 years). I cannot find an awakened sinner who has a broken heart and a contrite spirit. He is a rare breed indeed, if and when you find him. Equally rare is a church member who wants to learn the Bible. Many will tell you they do, but by their listless condition while you preach and failure to attend the services, you know otherwise. Some attend every service, and still they never seem to learn the Bible. Many professed Christians are willing to be church members, but not many seek an overall knowledge of the old black Book. Biblical illiteracy is one of the curses of this generation.

Purpose of the Death of Christ

VIII. TO DELIVER FROM THIS PRESENT EVIL WORLD.

"Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father" (Gal. 1:4).

First, look at the historical fact: **"Who gave himself..."** This truth is seen in other places in the Scriptures (Matt. 20:28; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 5:2,25; I Tim. 2:6; Tit. 2:14). How great the depth of the word **"Himself."** I doubt if the greatest theologians in the world fully understand this expression. It means that Christ gave Himself in the greatness of His person, in all of His worth as the God-man, and in all the glory of His power. Christ gave Himself both in body and soul (Luke 22:19; John 6:51; 12:27). Christ gave Himself to privations and sorrows of human life, to pain and anguish, to an ignominious and painful death on the tree to be an expiation for our sins.

Second, consider His real substitution for His people: **"...for our sins."** The Textus Receptus has *huper*, which is translated "for." Some Greek texts have *peri*. *Huper* is the proper word, for it is generally used of persons while the other is use of things. Hence "for" in Galatians 1:4 means "instead of" or "in the place of." This is a real substitutionary atonement with Christ taking our sins while we partake of His righteousness (II Cor. 5:21). The context would

limit *our sins* to Paul and other true believers. These facts are elementary in the verse, although some are willingly ignorant of these truths.

Judaizing teachers had come among the Galatian churches, teaching that circumcision and conformity to the whole law was necessary to salvation. Paul feared the Galatians were losing sight of a fundamental truth. So at the very beginning of his letter he sets forth a truth never to be forgotten: Christ died for our sins that we might be saved from the guilt and consequence of them.

The very fact that Christ died for sinners lays the axe to the doctrine of salvation by human works or human merit. If man could satisfy God for his sins, then there was no need for Christ to do so. The vital truth in Galatians 1:4 is that our sins were so great, so numerous, so infinite, and so invincible, that we could never satisfy the justice of God for them, nor could we have ever gained the mastery over sin. Our hearts were incurably wicked, our consciences defiled, our minds corrupt, our judgments warped, and our souls lost. We deserved judgment without mercy, but Jesus Christ died and put away our sins. He did what we could not do for ourselves. Christ did this work so well that the Father is satisfied with what Christ has done on our behalf.

Third, mediate upon the purpose of His death: **"to deliver us from this present evil world."** The word "deliver" means "to pluck out" (Matt. 5:29), "to rescue from danger" (Acts 12:11; 23:27) or "to deliver from bondage" (Acts 7:10,34; 26:17). It would seem that all ideas are combined in Galatians 1:4.

The Greek word for world is *aion* which mean "an age, a period of time." It is almost a synonym for *kosmos*. This world is said to be an "evil world." The word "world" in this verse means the unsaved world, the world of Jews who reject their Messiah and the world of Gentiles who were devoted to idols and crimes. It is the present course of the world under the domination of Satan, the god of this world (II Cor. 4:4). It is a world of evil passions and corrupt desires. It is a world where God is neither loved nor obeyed, a world in distinction from the spiritual kingdom of God.

The death of Jesus Christ delivers from this present evil world in a number of ways.

First, it delivers out of the doom of this world because of the misery and condemnation of sin. Our Lord rescued His people from the penalty

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and power of sin by giving Himself a ransom. No man or angel could have wrought this deliverance. Christ alone can deliver from the kingdom of the Devil (Acts 26:16-18). All of man's attempts to deliver himself by his own works are nothing but dung and the Devil's poison.

You will observe Christ's death separated us from this present evil world. He redeemed those the Father had chosen out of the world. Also observe that Christ's redeemed people are here contrasted with this present evil world.

Second, the death of Christ delivers us from the evil tendencies and influences, which characterize the world. As long as we are in the body, we shall be exposed to many influences of this present evil world. The Lord does not immediately take us out of the world the moment we are saved, but He leaves us in it to live for Him. But one of the fruits of the Redeemer's death is to preserve our souls in good spiritual health, even in the midst of the poisonous atmosphere of this perverted and wicked age (John 17:15). The ever-present cross of Christ is an ever-present protection from this evil world. By constantly keeping our eyes on a crucified Christ, we can continually overcome the world.

Those believers who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord are to be caught away from this present evil world (I Thess. 1:9-10; 4:17). They will have a special deliverance not enjoyed by all.

Fourth, in Galatians 1:4 we see a revelation: **"...according to the will of God and our Father."** Christ's death at Calvary to rescue us from sin and death was in harmony with the will of God the Father. Salvation is traced back to the divine will (John 1:11-13; Jas. 1:18), not to our wills. Both the Father and the Son are involved in our redemption. To reject the work of the Son is to reject the will of the Father (Heb. 10:5-10).

Jesus Christ died for His people so they could be delivered out of the wretched state of things in this world dominated by Satan. This was a part of the Father's will, which Christ came to do. Then how can you say Jesus Christ died for all men without exception, seeing millions died still a part of this world and in love with it? Verily if Jesus died to deliver from this present evil world and some He died for end up dying under the influence and condemnation of the world, then the death of Christ is a failure. If so much as just one Christ died for is not

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separated from the present evil world, then His death was in vain for this person. It can never be said that Jesus Christ is a failure, for the old prophet said: **"He shall not fail nor be discouraged"** (Isa. 42:4).

Prayers of the Saints

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righteousness he doth judge and make war" (Rev. 19:11).

These two kinds of prayers are not lost. The prayers of the righteous avail with God (Jas. 5:16). These prayers have been regarded by Christ, and He will present them to the Father. These prayers are carefully treasured up in the golden bowls in Heaven (Rev. 5:8). Let us continue to pray for the kingdom of Heaven to be set up on earth. He who does not pray for the kingdom of Heaven to come on the earth is not a saint!

Our prayers at present are imperfect. They need **"much incense"** mixed with them to be acceptable to God. The word **"much"** is an allusion to the many spices used in the composition of the incense (Ex. 30:34). The Jews say from 11 to 14 spices were used. These were brought by the high priest within the veil on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:12). **"Much"** denotes the fullness of Christ's intercession for all His people. This incense was put upon the burning coals in the firepan, or upon the fire before the Lord (Lev. 16:13). This points to Christ's intercession which is based upon His sufferings and death. Our prayers must be perfumed with the incense of Christ's mediation to be acceptable to God.

THE PRAYERS OF THE SAINTS ARE GIVEN TO CHRIST

The Angel has **"given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints."** Some make much to do about the word **"was given unto him,"** saying this proves the person is an ordinary angel, not Jesus Christ. But on this they are mistaken. The incense

offered up is explained in Revelation 5:8 as the prayers themselves. Of course the prayers of the saints are given to Christ, for He offers no prayers which have not been put in His hands. These prayers are given Christ by the saints and by God the Father who made Christ our great High Priest. Our prayers are given to Christ in the same sense the Revelation was given Him (Rev. 1:1), in the same sense the throne of David was given Him (Luke 1:32), and in the same sense all judgment was given to Him (John 5:27).

We give our prayers to Christ, seeing He is our Mediator: **"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus"** (I Tim. 2:5). The Father assigned the Son this work in the covenant. **"Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God. . . let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need"** (Heb. 4:14, 16). At present Christ as our Angel-Priest **"appears in the presence of God for us"** (Heb. 9:24). The prayers of the saints are put in the hands of One who is in God's immediate presence. We must give our prayers to Christ because we can trust Him with them.

When we pray we must ask our prayers in the name of Christ. Jesus said: **"And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son"** (John 14:13; 16:24, 26). This truth was seen even in the Old Testament in the expression **"for the Lord's sake"** (Dan. 9:17) and **"look upon the face of thine anointed"** (Ps. 84:9).

The name of Christ is not some musical close to a collection, nor a signal to the congregation that prayer is over so the people can go home and eat a good Sunday dinner. That is not the meaning of praying in the name of, or for the sake of Christ. His name is the very ground upon which we address the throne of grace. It is the very name by which God sends down blessings on us.

What does it mean to offer our prayer in the name of Christ? First, it means we offer our prayers to plead His merit and intercession and to depend on His plea. If we come in our name, we cannot receive anything. Being sinners we have no name in Heaven. The name of Christ is well known in Heaven. Those who make their request in His name will have the petitions they desire of God.

Second, we must ask in full recognition of Christ's person and His relation to us and the Father. We must

ask because of our union with Christ. When we truly ask in the name of Christ, He is the real Petitioner. Our prayers become His prayers, and He presents them to the Father, and the Father always hears the Son (John 11:41).

Third, to ask in the name of Jesus is to ask as a servant of Christ, honoring His authority, seeking His will, and desiring His glory. To pray in His name implies an absolute self-sacrifice, and it involves a request that our prayers not be answered, except so far as in accordance to His will (I John 5:14-15). We are encouraged to ask for anything in His name, and what we ask in His name, He Himself (as God) will grant us.

CHRIST OFFERS OUR PRAYERS TO THE FATHER

The Angel-Priest is first seen standing at the brazen altar (v. 3). The much incense given Him is the prayers of the saints: **"And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints"** (Rev. 5:8). Like the high priest in Israel (Lev. 16:12-14), the Angel-Mediator proceeds to the altar of incense, or to the very presence of God, to offer our prayers. These prayers are offered by the Angel-Priest with **"much incense"**, or with the satisfying blood of Jesus. Our prayers are like much incense: **"Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense. . ."** (Ps. 141:2). But to our incense Christ must add much more incense, or He must add His prayers to our prayers. The imperfections of our prayers are perfumed and made acceptable to God by the atoning blood of Jesus.

Mark carefully the words **"with the prayers of the saints"** (Rev. 8:4). This means for furthering them, benefiting them, and prospering them. The incense of Christ enriches and forwards these prayers of the saints. Thank God Christ makes **"intercession for the transgressors"** (Isa. 53:12; Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25; I John 2:1).

There is a connection between the brazen altar and the altar of incense. The priest could not approach the altar of incense with acceptance unless the incense was kindled by the sacred flame of the brazen altar. This showed the connection between the sacrifice of Christ and His intercession. Christ's intercession is founded upon His sacrifice, and it is upon this ground the Father hears Christ always (John 11:41). The prayers of the saints find acceptance and an answer only through Christ's intercession. The

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much incense which Christ offers along with the prayers of His people, and which are represented as covering the mercy-seat, is nothing by His own intercession. This gives a continual sweet savor unto God from His oblation and renders acceptable all our approaches unto God in prayer and worship.

How thrilling to know Christ mingles His own prayers and intercession with our requests. This was typified by the legal service in the Old Testament. While the people were offering their prayers in the court of the temple, the priest offered sacrifices within. **“And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest’s office before God in the order of his course, According to the custom of the priest’s office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense”** (Luke 1:8-10). Even so, while we are praying, Christ offers incense to sweeten our prayers and to make them ascend as a delightful odour before God.

Christ presents our petitions to the Father as if they were His own prayers, so that if the Father denies us He must deny Christ also. Christ’s blood pleads justice. It is just that the Father should hear our prayers since this was one end for which the blood of Christ was shed. The Father would be unjust if He did not give us what Christ shed His blood to purchase. Christ’s blood is the blood of the covenant (Heb. 10:29) by which the blessing of the covenant were purchased and confirmed. One of the articles of the covenant was that whatsoever Christ would ask the Father He would receive (Ps. 2:8; John 11:41). When Christ makes our prayers His prayers, His blood cries out for an answer to our petitions. A just and righteous Father must hear the prayers of Christ offered for us.

CONCLUSION

1. Pure judgment will be meted out to the apostate earth during the seven-year tribulation period in answer to the prayers of the saints. Revelation 8:3-4 is followed by verse 5: **“And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.”** What we see in this is God is about to punish the earth. In Old Testament times the altar was the expression of God’s holiness in dealing with the sins of His people. The same holiness will

search the earth and judge and punish accordingly. The voices, thunders, lightnings, and the earthquakes are the harbingers of the coming successive outburst of divine wrath on the earth.

2. Saints are to pray for the righteous kingdom of God to come. These prayers are not in vain. Ultimately these prayers will result in the judgment of the enemies of Christ and the establishment of the kingdom of Heaven on earth.

3. Our prayers prevail because of Christ’s intercession for us. Our prayers become His prayers, and the Father cannot refuse to hear the prayers of His Son. Prayer is not a waste of time, but a great privilege.

4. Do you know this prayer-offering Christ? If not, your prayer should be: **“God be merciful to me a sinner”** (Luke 18:13).

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believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!” (Romans 10:9-15).

There seems to be much confusion today regarding when an individual is saved, that is, when a person is declared to be righteous in God’s eyes. Some think that only after a man is dead and resurrected in Christ’s likeness can he be righteous. In a sense this is correct, for **“...when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is”** (1 John 3:2). Then we shall be sinless in our experience. Then we shall experience righteousness, but our question in this message deals with when God views us as immaculate. Some would have us to believe that we are righteous in God’s eyes only upon our baptism. That is they teach that the waters of baptism wash away our sins and make us righteous before God. Others would have us think that only after coming to the front in a religious meeting and praying a certain prayer we are then righteous in God’s eyes. And so I raise the question and will seek to answer it from the Scriptures, **“When is a man righteous in God’s eyes?”** I do not refer to the eternal purpose of God where God views all His works as already accomplished, but rather refer to the experience of men in their lives.

We did not read the first part of chapter ten of Romans, but there Paul tells us about the Jews. He writes,

“...they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth” (Rom. 10:3,4). This is a characteristic of every man-made religion in the world today. Men think that they can, by their works, or by their religious ceremonies, by their good lives or good deeds – by something that they do – that in this way they can be righteous in God’s eyes. The Jews thought to be righteous by trying to keep God’s law. But they did not submit themselves to the righteousness of God – that is, they rejected Christ who is the end of righteousness by law-keeping to everyone that believes. But around the world at this very moment there are sincere men and women in various religions, including some which claim to be Christian, who think to be righteous in God’s eyes because of something that they do or have done. They are **“ignorant of God’s righteousness”** and are busy **“going about to establish their own righteousness.”** But they have missed God’s righteousness which is in Jesus Christ and are in fact without imputed righteousness.

The famous British Baptist preacher, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, in preaching on the subject of election had as his first point, **“There is such a thing as election.”** My first point in this message is, **“There is such a thing as justification – that is, there is such a thing as being declared to be righteous in God’s eyes. In Romans chapter 4 and verses 1-8 we read of a man who experienced this justification, that is, he experienced being viewed by God as righteous. There we read these words: “What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for**

righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin” (Romans 4:1-8).

Notice these things regarding this imputed kind of righteousness. This righteousness is something Abraham “found” or discovered. He did not earn it nor did he qualify for it. He did not know about it, but discovered it in his experience as God dealt with him. This, then is a truth that God must reveal. It is unknown to the natural man and can only be understood from the Scriptures. Notice that this righteousness came to Abraham when he believed God. It is not, cannot be, of works because it is of grace. This righteousness comes not because of a combination of works and grace as some think, for such a combination automatically by its very nature negates grace. Speaking of election which is by grace unto salvation, Paul wrote, **“And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work”** (Romans 11:6). The principle is clear and is this: you cannot mix works and grace and still have grace! To add man’s works for righteousness to God’s free grace is to change the nature of grace so that it is no more grace, but rather works. If I do something which earns God’s favor, He does not give it, but pays me with His favor because I have worked for it. To preach such synergism is not to preach the Gospel of Christ!

Notice this, and this is very important! This justification or righteousness before God is not just

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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
WVSA, Vernon, AL	Sunday 7:00 - 7:30 a.m.	1380	1,000 AM
WLZA, Starkville, MS	Sunday 1:00 - 1:30 p.m.	710	2,500 AM
WCNA, Myrtle, MS	Sunday 12:30 - 1:00 p.m.	95.9	3,000 FM
WCTT, Corbin, KY	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.	680	5,000 AM
KARI, Blaine, WA	Saturday 10:30 - 11:00 a.m. .	550	5,000 AM
KORE, Springfield, OR	Sunday 8:00 - 8:30 a.m.	1050	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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the forgiveness of past sins. Revelation 1:5 says that Jesus, "...loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." Now I ask you, what sins did Jesus wash us from? The answer is "our sins." All our sins! For when Jesus died to pay for sins, I had committed none. All my sins were yet future when Christ paid for them and the truth of justification is that we are declared to be righteous. We are declared to be sinless. When we are justified we are viewed by God as immaculate. Proof positive is in that Paul goes on in Romans chapter four to quote David in the Psalms as saying, "**Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin**" (Romans 4:8). According to Paul and David, there is a blessed state of justification where God does not write down sin on our account sheet! He does not impute sin to His children.

Remember the story of Balaam? Most of the time we think only of Balaam's donkey and how she spoke to the prophet. Sometimes we miss the point. Balaam was a prophet of God. The enemies of Israel wanted Balaam to curse Israel so that they could defeat them before they entered the Promised Land. Think about what Israel had been doing for forty years. The people had complained and murmured against God and Moses. They had plotted to choose a new captain and rebel against Moses and Aaron. They wanted to return to Egypt. During the very time that Moses had been on the mountain receiving the Holy Law of God, the children of Israel, along with Aaron, had made a golden calf and were worshipping it in the most licentious manner. And yet, Balaam reported that "**He (God) hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel...**" (Numbers 23:21). God does not behold iniquity in His children. This can only take place because of God's free grace! Only imputed righteousness can be in view here.

So there is such a thing as being righteous in God's eyes. Abraham found it. The next question we want to consider is this: when does it occur? Does it occur at the moment a person comes forward in a religious meeting? Does God declare a person righteous when he prays a certain prayer? Is this what is meant by "calling on the name of the Lord?" Or, as some say, does God declare a person righteous when he is baptized in water? When? In Romans 10:14 and 15 we read: "**How then shall they call on him**

in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" Notice that (1) calling follows belief; (2) believing follows hearing; (3) hearing follows preaching; and (4) preaching follows being sent. Let us reverse the order and put it in the way we usually think. (1) First the Holy Spirit speaks to a Church and the Church is responsive and sends out a preacher. This is the New Testament pattern. No other entity in the world has authority from God to send out a preacher other than a New Testament Baptist Church. No association, community, fellowship, mission board, convention or union has this authority. Only a New Testament Church can rightly do this sending out. (2) The preacher preaches the Gospel. (3) The Gospel is believed – not just in the head, but in the heart. That means that faith has come to the individual and is exercised toward Jesus Christ. (4) Then these believers call on the name of the Lord. They do! The Bible says in verse 14, "**How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?**"

Calling on the Lord is something that believers do! Unbelievers cannot do it! Unbelievers can mouth empty words that may be called by some people a prayer, but only believers can truly call on the Lord. Praying a prayer does not make an unbeliever into a believer. According to verse 14, only believers can and do genuinely call upon the Lord! Let me illustrate this in this way. I do not know what the modern medical practice is, but I am told that many years ago when a baby was born, it was sometimes, at least, picked up by the feet and given a swat on its bottom. Of course the baby immediately screamed! Such a procedure probably helped clear out all the mucus that might have been in the throat and nasal passages of the infant. It also provoked the baby to take in a great gulp of God's air, thus filling its lungs to capacity. I suppose the scream tested the baby's vocal chords. But the scream of that baby did not make it alive. The scream of that baby was evidence of it's being alive, but did not in any sense make it alive! Now, without the swat, babies cry and scream at times. This is the natural course of events in the life of a baby.

So it is with believers. They call on the Lord. Calling on the Lord does

not make them a believer. Be clear on that point! Calling on the Lord does not make an unbeliever into a believer! But genuinely calling on the Lord is evidence that those who call are believers! Only believers begin and continue a lifetime of calling on the Lord in the Scriptural sense. Paul wrote in 2 Timothy 2:22, "**Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.**" Notice Paul does not say "with all them that have once upon a time called on the Lord." The idea that you can call one time on the Lord and be saved and go on in life and never call on the Lord again is foolish. Believers call on the Lord – not once, but again and again. They do! It is a characteristic of a believer in Jesus Christ to be often calling on the Lord. The Psalmist cited this evidence in testifying to the righteousness of Samuel. He wrote, "**Moses and Aaron among his priests, and SAMUEL AMONG THEM THAT CALL UPON HIS NAME...**" Psalm 99:6 – Capital letters added for emphasis). What a recommendation! To be reckoned "**among them that call upon his name**" is to be reckoned up among the host of true believers. Believers call on the Lord! It is an evidence of spiritual life. True believers will be found calling on the Lord and confessing with their mouth regarding Christ and their faith in Him (Romans 10:9).

Now we come to the question. Does justification, that is, does a man become judicially righteous in God's eyes at the time he calls on the Lord? Does a man become judicially righteous in God's eyes at the time he is baptized? Or does a man become judicially righteous in God's eyes at the point of faith? What does the Scripture say? The Scripture says, "**Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness**" (Romans 4:3). Abraham was not righteous in God's eyes when he prayed or was circumcised, but when he believed! This is the testimony of the New Testament. In 1 Corinthians 1:21 we read, "**For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.**" God saves who? He saves them that believe!

Let us take a little "tour" through the New Testament and just read what the Word of God says. In John 1:12 we read: "**But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.**" Who has authority to become the sons

of God – those who are baptized? Those who pray a certain kind of prayer? Or is it those who believe? In John 20:31 are these words: "**But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.**" Who has this eternal life? Those who believe! In Acts 13:39 we read these clear words: "**And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.**" Here it is clearly stated that justification, that is being declared to be righteous in God's eyes, comes to "**all that believe.**" Again in Acts 16:31 "**And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.**" The requirement for salvation is not calling on the Lord – not praying some so-called "sinner's prayer," but the requirement is faith!

Notice Romans 3:22 which says, "**Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference.**" The righteousness of God is by faith and is unto all and upon all them that believe! Plain words. Nothing here about being baptized for righteousness or praying or calling on the Lord or doing anything else for righteousness! In Hebrews 10:39 we find these words, "**But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.**" At what point is the soul saved? This verse is clear. It is upon believing that the soul is saved. One more Scripture should suffice. In 1 John 5:13 we read these words, "**These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life....**" Who is it that has eternal life? The answer is plain and simple. It is those who believe on the name of the Son of God! And these may "**know**" that they have this never-ending life! From these and other Scriptures it is clear that justification, that is being judicially declared to be righteous in God's eyes, comes at the point of faith, not at some subsequent point in time when a person acts on that faith and confesses his faith, or prays to the Lord, or is baptized. What could be clearer to the unbiased mind?

To persuade someone to be immersed in water when he is yet in unbelief and then to tell that person that because they were baptized they are righteous in God's eyes is to deceive them. The Bible does not teach that it is at the point of going under the water or coming up out of

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the water that a man is viewed by God as righteous. Imputed righteousness does not come that way! But to persuade someone to make a false calling upon the Lord, that is, to solicit and to elicit a prayer from the mouth of a man who is yet in unbelief, and then to tell him he is saved because he prayed - that is the worst kind of deception! Let me say that another way. To get someone to "come forward" in a religious meeting - a thing unknown in the New Testament - and then instruct them to pray, telling them they will be saved as a result of their prayer, gives a person a false confidence. Human nature will trust in the prayer and not in Christ! The person will have come forward as an unbeliever and will return to his seat as an unbeliever who is deceived into thinking he is saved because he prayed. He will think he is saved because of something he did - and thus the glorious gospel of the free grace of God is turned into a false gospel of works for salvation.

We have these people walking our streets. They have been deceived. They came forward in some kind of evangelistic campaign or meeting. They were sincere in wanting

something, but had not repented of their sins nor received faith in Jesus Christ. But they were told to pray a certain prayer and they did it. And they returned to their place just as lost and dead in their sins as they were before they stood up from their seats. Now they are cynics. Whereas once they would at least listen to the Gospel, now they speak against it. I hear them saying, "I tried Christianity. I went forward and prayed, but nothing happened. There is no reality in Christianity. It is false. I know. I tried it and it doesn't work." What harm we do when we do not follow the Bible exactly! Why are we not content to follow the example of the apostles and other New Testament preachers? They simply preached the Gospel and left the results in God's hands. There is no record that they ever told anyone to come forward or to pray a certain prayer in order to be declared righteous in God's eyes. But the power of God was on them and men asked them, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And what was their answer? "And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved..." (Acts 16:30, 31). They did not tell them to call on the Lord and by doing that they would be saved. They told them that men are righteous in God's eyes by faith in Christ!

Now we have considered

Abraham. Abraham had positive righteousness imputed to him - that is set down on his account sheet - when he believed God. That is clear. But does that have anything to do with us today? Yes it does. Consider how Paul closes chapter four of Romans. Romans 4:23-25 says, "Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." Romans chapter four was not written that we might read it and wonder at the man Abraham and marvel at how God blessed him. No! It was written for our sakes. For we shall have the same judicial, positive righteousness charged to our account upon believing! Do not marvel at Abraham and the grace given to him. Rather rejoice, believer, at the grace given you! The Bible says in Ephesians 2:8, 9, these words, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." The Cornilescu (Romanian language) translation may be of interest to you here. It says clearly in translation, "For through grace you were saved through faith, AND THIS (i.e. this faith - CAP) DOES NOT COME FROM YOU, but is the gift of God." God gives "...the faith of God's elect" (that is what the Bible calls saving faith in Titus 1:1) and at the point of faith, the time of believing, righteousness is imputed to the believer.

In closing let me ask you a question. Have you believed to the saving of your soul? I do not refer to mere intellectual or mental understanding. I do not refer to mere mental assent where in you agree in principle to the facts of the Bible or to the facts of the Gospel. I ask if in your heart, your innermost being, you have believed the Gospel in such a way that all your hope, confidence, trust, and expectation is in Jesus Christ? Do not think you shall be saved because of something you have done. The only way anyone is righteous in God's sight is through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Yes, a man can be righteous in God's eyes, by grace, through faith which is the gift of God. And this righteousness is charged to your account at the point of faith in Jesus Christ. Imputed righteousness comes at the point of faith! Do not be deceived, but rejoice in the simplicity that is in Jesus Christ and salvation through faith in Him. Amen.

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uttered in public or private. It also prohibits all causes and tendencies toward this sin. Furthermore, it implies the positive duty: We are to speak the truth in love.

THE SIN OF LYING

In our amoral society people at the highest and lowest levels are perfectly happy to tell any lie they want to tell, and most people (including professed Christians) let them do so. Lying has turned into a way of life. In the business world and the political world lying is encouraged, giving the impression you can't survive and get ahead without some deception. Americans have developed a strange characteristic. We love people who lie to us, and we hate people who tell us the truth. This is why we have a habit of electing the biggest liar to public office.

In our modern world lying is an acceptable sin. The world is filled with a prolific family of liars. "I said in my haste, All men are liars" (Ps. 116:11). The children of untruth are as many as the frogs of Egypt, and, like that plague, they intrude into every chamber. Falsehood can be found among the great and small. An ambassador is often a man of honor sent abroad to tell lies for the good of his country. Advertisers make claims about products that are not completely true, so we buy them under false pretense. In our courts lies are the most abundant commodities, and often lawyers are little more than high paid liars. In today's world we witness industrial leaders, respectable lawyers, governmental officials, and college professors perjuring themselves on the witness stand and before the U. S. Senate. Well did the psalmist say: "Help, LORD; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men. They speak vanity every one with his neighbor: with flattering lips and with a double heart do they speak" (Ps. 12:1-2).

CIVIL GOVERNMENT NECESSARY

God ordained civil government for the good of mankind. The power of making laws and appointing judges is of God (Deut. 16:18-20; Ruth 4:1-2; II Chron. 19:5; Ezra 7:25). Justice cannot be rendered in our courts unless the witnesses tell the truth. In Bible times there were no fingerprints or Federal Bureau of Investigation. Everything depended on what the witness said. A witness could hold sway over life and death. At the

Funnybone

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

Bill Tightwad told Deacon Jones, "I have noticed there is a conspiracy going on against the over-the-hill gang such as we are. They now make stairs steeper and everything is farther away. Even groceries are heavier."

The deacon asked, "What else have you observed?"

Bill continued, "Young people speak in a whisper and think we old folks are lip readers. People my age are much older than I am. I ran into an old classmate the other day, and she has aged so much she didn't even recognize me. I glanced at my face in the mirror the next day, and I discovered they don't make mirrors like they used to!"



"Deacon, when you pull out on the road in front of these younger people, they hit their brakes awfully fast and swerve. Even clothing manufactures have started labeling a size 40 pant as 46. My pants are so tight I can't reach my shoelaces!"

"Then to make bad matters worse, the people who make bathroom scales are pulling the same prank, but in reverse. You can't believe the pounds it shows on the dial. I would never let myself weigh that much."

The deacon said, "Is that all you can tell me about the conspiracy?"

Then Bill added, "All of this made me so mad I started to call up someone in authority to report what's going on, but the telephone company is in on the conspiracy, too. They've printed the phone books in such small type that no one could ever find a number in there!"



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testimony of two or three witnesses a defendant could be sentenced to death (Deut. 17:6; 19:15). Perjury was considered a terrible sin, so horrible that a false witness received the punishment that the accused would have received (Deut. 19:16-19).

Today we still have a system of justice for the good of human welfare. Proper justice can not be enjoyed by the citizens of our country, if we have lying witnesses and corrupt judges. Such a society is on the edge of collapse. Too often justice is not administered impartially, and trials are a little more than a sham. Judges pass judgment in terms of political wishes, or rule a certain way for a price. When this happens citizens are no longer neighbors to each other, but they become wolves who prey upon one another. Isaiah 59:14-15 says: **“And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. Yea, truth faileth: and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey: and the LORD saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgment.”**

Our present society depends too much on the media—radio, TV, the internet, and newspapers—for quick judgment in all matters. The media has a habit of reporting things from a very liberal perspective. Events are reported with biases that shape how we understand the truth. We too many times formulate an opinion based on a very shaky foundation. Government officials and religious leaders are torn apart without mercy. People are tried in the press and condemned without a hearing. While we boast of having a “free press,” many of us think it is free only in the sense that it can tell any liberal, leftist lie it wants to.

THE WONDERFULNESS OF LANGUAGE

One of the most wonderful faculties ever given to man was language. This was something denied to the inferior creatures and given to man alone. A word is a symbolized thought, an embodied idea. Words are the most wonderful things, but language is more than this. It is also sacred. It is the bridge between God and man; it is the means of human intercommunication and reciprocal co-operation. By language man exchanges thoughts, sentiments, and plans. Hence language, in order to be true to its great mission, must itself be true and trustworthy. For confidence in one another is the foundation stone of society. Falsehood is a crime against

humanity as well as a violation of the Ninth Commandment.

The Apostle Paul wrote: **“Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another”** (Eph. 4:25). A man’s word should be his bond, but often times it is not. Men lie because they reject the counsel of God in the Ninth Commandment. They lie because they are more concerned with their own self-esteem and sense of importance than they are with the ultimate good of their fellowman. They speak falsely because they fear the opinions of sinful men much more than they do Almighty God Himself!

INJURIOUS PERJURY

The Ninth Commandment forbids perjury: **“And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbor; and love no false oath: for all these are things that I hate, saith the LORD”** (Zech. 8:17). We must not give a false testimony in a court room. There is a twofold bearing of false witness possible. One can give a testimony for a person who is guilty and thus justify him as if he were innocent. Sometimes this is done for money. Isaiah wrote about some **“which justify the wicked for reward”** (Isa. 5:23). This is a sin against both God and man. **“He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the LORD”** (Prov. 17:15). Again it is written: **“He that saith unto the wicked, Thou are righteous; him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him”** (Prov. 24:24).

Second, it is possible in a court of law to accuse a person falsely. This is to imitate Satan who is the accuser of the brethren. Such false witnesses are responsible for the execution of Naboth (I Kings 21:13), our Lord (Matt. 26:60-61), and Stephen (Acts 6:11-14). Perjury in the court rooms greatly hinders the administration of justice in our land. It is a sad thing that such sins are committed in the courts of highest justice. Such things are condemned by God. Exodus 23:1 says: **“Thou shalt not raise a false report: put not thine hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness.”** It is written again: **“A man that beareth false witness against his neighbor is a maul, and a sword, and a sharp arrow”** (Prov. 25:18).

FORBIDS ALL SLANDER

Our commandment forbids all false reports of whatever kind concerning our neighbor whether spoken, written, or hinted. It prohibits all misrepresentations of our neighbor such as perverting his meaning, or misquoting him. It condemns all

undervaluing of our neighbor’s goods, or good name. A slander robs one of his good reputation in the eyes of his fellowmen, and the chances are slim that the person slandered will ever fully regain his reputation. It is a terrible thing to rob a man of his good name.

Slander is an awful breach of the Ninth Commandment. The Bible warns us often about this sin. **“He that hideth hatred with lying lips, and he that uttereth a slander, is a fool. In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin. . .”** (Prov. 10:18-19). **“Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off. . .”** (Ps. 101:5). Oh, my friend, be cautious in believing ill of others, and more cautious in reporting it. Believe nothing against another but on good authority, nor report what may hurt another, unless it be a greater hurt to others to conceal it. Let us beware of smiting others with the tongue (Jer. 18:18).

FORBIDS GOSSIPING

Our commandment denounces all tale bearing, backbiting, tattling, and gossiping. Paul wrote of some who wander from house to house as **“tattlers”** and **“busybodies, speaking things they ought not”** (I Tim. 5:13). We are not to spread rumors on mere hearsay. The Lord has said: **“Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people”** (Lev. 19:16). In Proverbs 20:19 it is written: **“He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips”** (Prov. 20:19). A talebearer cannot be trusted, and it is wisdom to have nothing to do with such people.

The temptation to tattle is great. The business of gossiping brings an immediate reward, for the corrupt heart of man delights in scandal as a duck does water. The scandal-monger is a foe to love and unfailing author of enmity (Prov. 17:9). He can separate bosom friends and wreck homes by sowing suspicion and distrust. Where there is a little misunderstanding, the whisperer supplies wood to the fire to keep it burning. Apart from this it would soon die out. **“Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth”** (Prov. 26:20).

While we often say, “Silence is golden,” it is possible to lie by silence. When someone utters a lie about another and a third person is present who knows the statement to be false but, for reason of fear of being disliked, remains silent, that third person is as guilty of breaking the law as the liar. **“A wicked doer giveth heed to false lips; and a liar giveth ear to a naughty tongue”** (Prov.

17:4).

FORBIDS ALL FALSEHOOD

This commandment forbids all falsehood of whatever kind it may be. It forbids the deliberate lie, the failure to keep engagements, to fulfill conditions of agreement, to pay promissory notes, to discharge trusts, to observe treaties, and the like. In Proverbs 12:22 it is written: **“Lying lips are abomination to the LORD: but they that deal truly are his delight.”** The apostle Paul wrote: **“Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds”** (Col. 3:9).

Not only is the direct lie forbidden, but the indirect lie is also forbidden. It is wrong to exaggerate, to put false coloring on things, to use flattery, to make distortions, to do things under false pretence, to tell half-truths, to quibble, and to suppress the truth. God condemns what we call little “white” lies. In reality there are no such things as little “white” lies. A lie is one of the blackest of sins.

THE ORIGIN OF A FALSEHOOD

A lie can in no way be ascribed to God. In all the universe there is only one Being exempt from lying, and that Being is God. Titus 1:2 speaks of **“God, that cannot lie.”** Hebrews 6:18 declares: **“It is impossible for God to lie.”** To the Romans Paul said: **“Let God be true, but every man a liar”** (Rom. 3:4). It can be said to the honor of our God that He is not capable of lying or deceiving. He is the **“Lord God of truth”** (Ps. 31:5) and lying lips are an abomination unto Him. Lying is a sin most contrary to the nature, character, and law of God.

Lying comes from the Devil. The first lie ever told was told by the Prince of Darkness (Gen. 3:4). He is still engaged in subjugating the world to his influence by the lie. Jesus said: **“Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it”** (John 8:44).

The Devil is a liar; there is no truth in him. When he **“speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own.”** God never put it in him. Satan lies because it is his nature to lie. More than this, he is the author and founder of all lies in the world. When men speak lies they borrow them from the Devil (Acts 5:3). Lying is a sin that makes a person most like the Devil. Where there is a lie on the tongue, there is a devil in the heart.

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Ninth Commandment

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But it would not be fair to blame all lying entirely upon the Devil, for lying also springs from man's corrupt nature. Psalm 58:3 reads: **"The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies."** As soon as babies are born they begin to utter lies because of their fallen nature. Men are so depraved that the psalmist said of them: **"Thy tongue deviseth mischiefs; like a sharp razor, working deceitfully. Thou lovest evil more than good; and lying rather than to speak righteousness. Thou lovest all devouring words, O thou deceitful tongue"** (Ps. 52:2-4).

THE EVIL OF THIS SIN

First, the violation of the Ninth Commandment is evil because it creates in the liar a hatred toward those he lies about. **"A lying tongue hateth those that are afflicted by it; and a flattering mouth worketh ruin"** (Prov. 26:28). The lying tongue against our Lord was the fruit of

hateful malice (John 8:44, 40). A liar reproaches a person because he hates that person. He even hates that person all the more after he lies on him, for when he sees that person it reminds him of his sin of lying.

Second, lying produces more lies. Jeremiah 9:3 reveals: **"And they bend their tongues like their bow for lies: but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith the LORD."** The prophet again said in verse 5 of this same chapter: **"And they will deceive every one his neighbor, and will not speak the truth: they have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity."**

Third, when a person learns to live with lying, he will learn to live with other sins as well. Hosea said: **"Hear the word of the LORD, ye children of Israel: for the LORD hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they**

break out, and blood toucheth blood" (Hos. 4:1-2). Those who have no regard for the Ninth Commandment will soon have no regard for the Seventh, the Eighth, or the Third.

Fourth, lying makes one the object of God's hatred. Among the seven things which the Lord hates in Proverbs 6, Solomon mentions **"a lying tongue"** and **"a false witness that speaketh lies."** God in His eternal purpose has set out to rid the world of all liars. The Bible says: **"A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall not escape"** (Prov. 19:5). **"The mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped"** (Ps. 63:11).

Fifth, to bear false witness is wrong because it brings men into disfavor with their fellowmen. All God-fearing people despise a liar. The psalmist wrote: **"He that worketh deceit shall not dwell in my house: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight"** (Ps. 101:7). A righteous man can tolerate ignorance and poverty but not liars: **"A poor man is better than a liar"** (Prov. 19:22).

Sixth, lying has serious consequences. A lie caused Gehazi to have leprosy (II Kings 5:20-27). A lie caused Saul to lose the United Kingdom of Israel (I Sam. 15:1-26). The lie of Potipher's wife put Joseph in prison (Gen. 39:14-23). David's lie to Ahimelech brought about the death of 85 priests and their families (I Sam. 21-22). The lie of the old prophet of Bethel caused the prophet of Judah to die (I Kings 13:11-22). The world itself could not contain the books of the evil caused by lying, if such should be written.

Seventh, lying is worse than stealing. If a man steals a thing he can take it back, unless he has destroyed it. But even if he has destroyed it, he can pay the rightful owner its worth in money. Not so with lying. A lie is forever. To rob a man of his good name by lying is far worse than to take his pocketbook. Such lying does not enrich the liar and leaves the person lied upon poor indeed.

Eighth, the sin of lying banishes a person from Heaven. There will be no liars upon the golden streets of the New Jerusalem. Revelation 21:8 discloses: **"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."** Verse 27 of this same chapter says: **"And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination,**

or make a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

ALWAYS TELL THE TRUTH

Job said: **"My lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit"** (Job 27:4). This should be the rule that we live by. We ought to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. We should never suffer our mouth to cause our flesh to sin (Eccl. 5:6). Psalms 31:18 says: **"Let the lying lips be put to silence."** In our personal speech let us guard our words carefully.

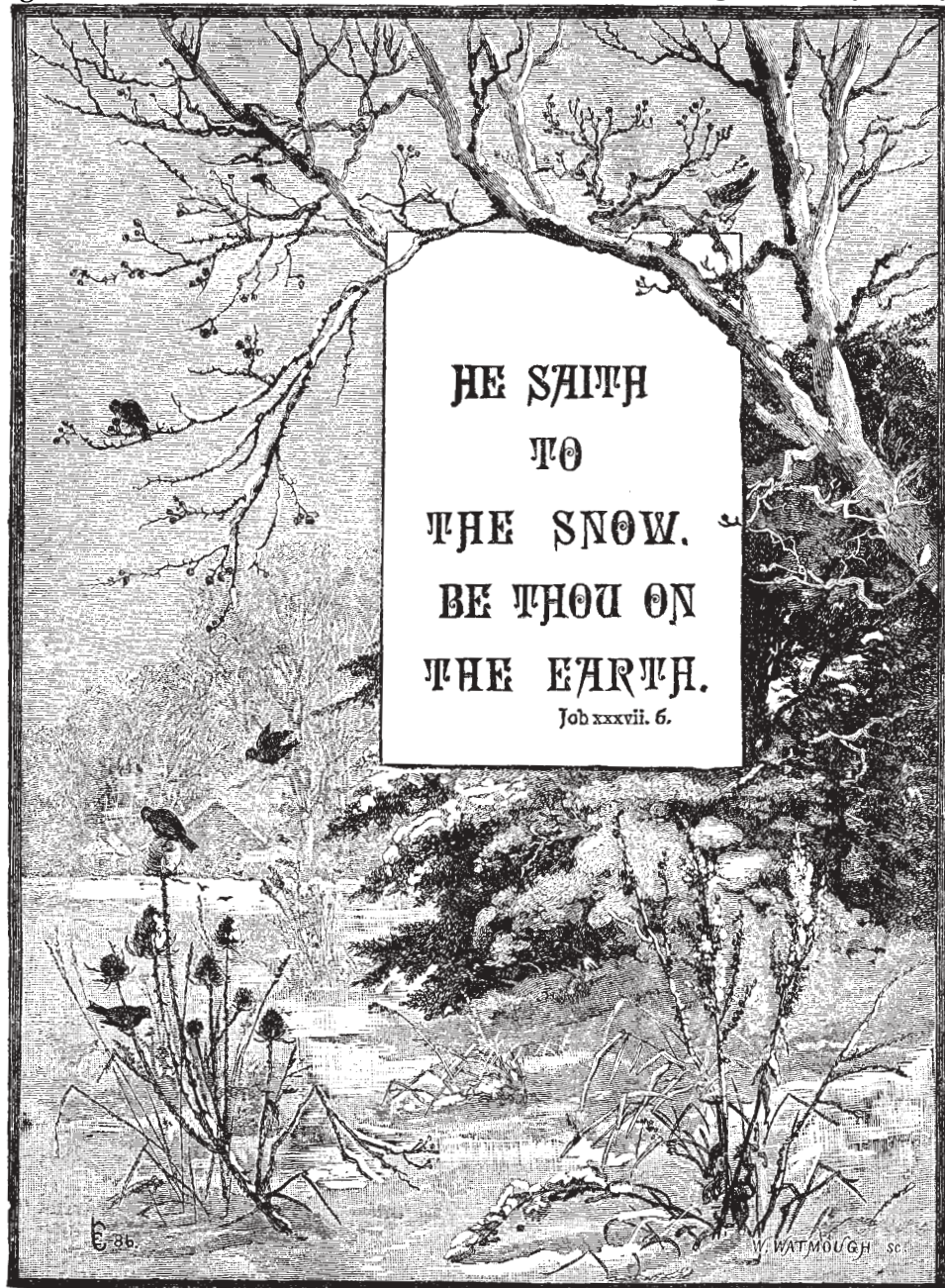
A Christian must never lie. The Lord says of His children in Isaiah 63:8: **"Children that will not lie."** It is the Devil's children who go around telling lies. It is written of the remnant of Israel that they **"shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth. . ."** (Zeph. 3:13). The true Christian can honestly say: **"I hate and abhor lying"** (Ps. 119:163). He who is to live forever with God is described in Psalm 15 as a man who **"speaketh the truth in his heart"** and **"backbiteth not with his tongue"** (vv. 2-3).

LIES OF NECESSITY?

Is there such a thing as a necessary lie? Let's suppose the Taliban took over America and set out to exterminate all Christians. If a non-Christian relative was hiding a Christian in his home, should he tell the truth to the Taliban soldiers who might come searching for the Christian? Speaking the truth would result in the death of a Christian, but a falsehood would save his life? Would this be a lie of necessity?

The midwives, Shiphrah and Puah, allowed the baby boys in Israel to live, contrary to Pharaoh's command (Ex. 1:15-21). The midwives told lies because they feared God, and they were blessed of God (Ex. 1:17, 20). Rahab lied about the Israelite spies (Josh. 2:4-6), and she was praised for her faith, because she received the spies (Heb. 11:31; Jas. 2:25). There are other cases in the Old Testament like these (Gen. 12:11-20; 20:2-18; 26:7-11; II Sam. 17:19-20). If all lying is wrong, then the strategies of military deception would be wrong (Josh. 8:1-26; II Sam. 5:22-25).

There may be on rare occasions times when it is better to lie than tell the truth, but let us be careful here. The midwives were not blessed for their lying, but for sparing the Hebrew boy babies. Rahab was not praised for her lies, but for her faith. Even what we call "lies of necessity" can be dangerous. Seldom if ever should such things be practiced, for no lie proceeds from the truth (I John 2:21).



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Most women believe that Deut. 22:5 refers to cross dressing perverts. How can we know it doesn't? --- Ohio



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Deuteronomy 22:5 is one of the many commands given by God to recognize the actions of Israel, the nation He had chosen and set apart from all other nations. This command concerns the fact that men and women in Israel were to be distinguished, as to their sex, by their apparel. Israel was to be different and separated from the idolatrous practices of the nations around them.

The command of Deuteronomy 22:5 would include any who would engage in the abominable practice of cross dressing, but would not be limited to such people. It was a command to all the people in Israel. God's commands to Israel, including Deuteronomy 22:5, was to separate them from the harmful and sinful practices of heathen nations. They were to be a holy people unto God.

As members of New Testament churches, we should be aware of the fact that we are no longer under the regulations given to Israel. If we were any preacher who uses Deuteronomy 22:5 to demean any woman who wears anything resembling something which men wear would be required to destroy all their suits containing any amount of wool mixed with other material (Deut. 22:11).

God, through His Son Jesus Christ, gives us sufficient instruction in New Testament epistles to His churches to guide us in our dress. Both men and women are to dress in a way where their relationship to God will not be questioned by the world. None of us should use garments that leave excessive flesh uncovered or that would cause others to lust after our bodies or to covet our apparel. All Christians should be careful to always clothe themselves in a way which becometh holiness. We can teach proper dress without being legalistic. In fact, I doubt that most preachers would know the difference between the garments worn by men and women at the time Deuteronomy 22:5 was written. I know that I cannot claim to be an expert on the style of that ancient time.

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Deuteronomy 22:5 does forbid cross dressing. It is an abomination when a man or a woman attempts to look, act, or in any way imitate each other. The Bible teaches that there is a very clear distinction between the sexes. In I Corinthians 11:3-16, we see this distinction brought out. We are told that even nature itself teaches that

there is a clear distinction between the man and the woman in their hair. The same rule must be observed in their clothing. For the woman to act, look, or in any other way give the appearance of a man is an abomination in the sight of God. Men must not dress or act in such a way as to appear effeminate.

There is an order in which God has placed men and women. The man is to be the head of the woman and provide for his house (I Tim. 5:8). The woman is to be a help meet to her husband (Gen. 2:18) and to be in obedience (I Cor. 14:34).

DAVID O'NEAL



ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Logan Baptist Church, Nicholasville, Ky., and Pastor Robert Ginn will have a Bible Conference Jan. 18-19. Speakers are as follows: Elders Tom Ross, Don Titus, Jerry Asbury, Garner Smith, Roger Jones, and Lonnie Bennett. For more information contact Pastor Ginn, 633 So. 3rd Street, Nicholasville, Ky. 40356-1812 or email Gshie@92618.com.

Elder Randy Graber has resigned the pastorate of the Grace Baptist Church, Melbourne, Fla., to accept the pastorate of the Grace Baptist Church, Fairborn, Ohio. He expects to be in Fairborn by Dec. 28th.

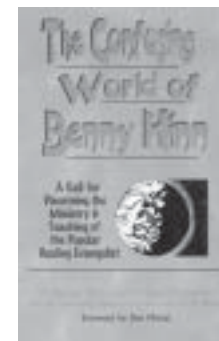
The Grace Baptist Church, Melbourne, Fla., is seeking a pastor. Any interested elder should contact Bro. Ronald McTaggart (321-723-6367) or Elder Artis France (321-722-1357).

Bro. Bart McDonald, 3891 Bonita Street, Fairbanks, Alaska, has started a work under the authority of South Jackson Baptist Church, Jackson, Ky. His phone is (907) 458-0343. He is holding services in his home, and hopes to have a church building by spring. He would appreciate any support the churches might see fit to send.



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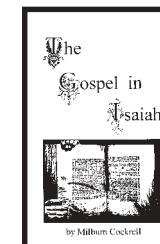
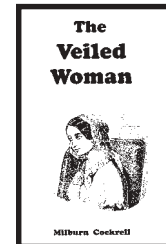
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In the light of John 4:2, when exactly did Jesus organize the first church? -- Kentucky



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In taking a position on the etymology of the Lord's Assembly (Church) I stand on the historical position of a great majority of Baptist brethren (both past and present) who believe its origin took place during His personal earthly ministry. I believe the parenthetical statement in John 4:2 indicates that the origin of the church happened shortly after Christ's baptism. Jesus authorized His disciples to baptize, but not before He had received baptism from John the Baptist. It is clearly taught in Scripture that a body came into existence after Christ had spent a night in prayer, and then chose and called out twelve disciples who were later called apostles. This was the first semblance of a called out body of baptized believers.

Some hold to the theory that the words of Christ in Matthew 16:18 meant that He would found His church at some later date. However, we find nothing in these words to Peter about founding a church. His words were, ". . . **I will build my church.**" The Greek expresses the thought of doming up or build up the superstructure. The same Greek word translated "build" used by our Lord in Matthew 16:18 is translated "edified" in Acts 9:31.

The popular theory held by those who believe in a so-called universal, invisible church will not stand under the searchlight of God's Word. The theory is that the church had its origin on the first Pentecost after Christ's resurrection. But one will search in vain who seeks to find the slightest mention of a church being organized at Pentecost. However, this does not seem to detract from the popularity of an unscriptural theory. If no church existed before Pentecost, what could those who received the word and were baptized be added to? Could they be added to a non-existent unorganized so-called entity? In I Corinthians 12:28 Paul writes: "**And**

God hath set some in the church, first apostles. . . ." To be set in something implies that whatever you are placed in had an existence before you became a part or member.

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"And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18).

This is the first of three times that the word "church" is found in the

book of Matthew. The Greek word is used 118 times in the New Testament. In the writing of God's Word, the Holy Spirit inspired the writers to use this word when referring to the Lord's congregation. This Greek word was well understood and has a precise meaning (an assembly; a congregation).

It is clear to me that when our Lord had a congregation He had a church. His church began when He called together His disciples (Matt. 4:17-22; Mark 1:16-20; John 1:35-49).

I cannot see that the baptizing of disciples in John 4:2 has anything to do with the organizing of the first church. His church was already in existence. He who possesses all authority; the One who had given authority to John the Baptist, had given this authority to His disciples.

DAVID O'NEAL

THE BEREA BIBLE SCHOOL

Our church feels led of the Lord to start "The Berea School of the Bible." It will be just what it claims to be "a Bible school." It will be mostly a correspondence school so as to serve our many scattered churches and preachers. It will begin with a very few subjects taught by our church in Mantachie. As time passes, more courses will be added and other teachers, if interest picks up.

Cost: Our goal is to keep costs very low on all courses. Many of those who need these are young preachers with young families and low funds. All teachers will serve without pay. I even pray that some day all courses can be offered free of charge, especially to young preachers in our churches. There will be no registration fee nor graduation fee.

Goals: To aid young preachers to be the best Bible scholars and preachers possible and to educate interested church members in the Bible. We have no plans to be anything but a Bible school, and we seek no state accreditation or affiliation. Over the years I have observed that when state accreditation comes in the truth generally goes out the door of the school. Those who finish a course will be given a certificate of accomplishment. Students in our school will have to



work hard. Unless you are willing to do this, I suggest you look elsewhere. To put it simple, our goal is education, not accreditation.

Courses: The first course to be offered is "A Survey of the Old Testament." This will consist of introductory material on each book prepared by the teacher. Each book of the Old Testament must be read and questions answered at the end of each book. These questions and answers will be sent to the teacher for correction, grade, and comments. This will be followed by a "Survey of the New Testament" on the same order. When a person finishes the two courses he/she will have read the entire Bible.

He/she will have learned about each book such things as title, authorship, date and place of writing, theme, division, contents, and special features of each book. This will be a real Bible course. These two courses are now ready. The Old Testament and New Testament are \$30. The Bible on tape is not required in the course, but the tapes might be helpful to the student. If you want the whole Bible on tapes to go with the course by Scourby (KJV), please add \$59.97 to this price, making \$89.97. If you want to take the Old Testament, it is \$20. If you want to take only the New Testament, it is \$20. If you want the New Testament on tapes by Scourby (KJV), please add \$15.97, making \$35.97. If you want the tapes, you may have the regular tapes or the dramatized edition at the prices quoted above for a limited time. The above prices include shipping. There are no hidden costs.

Another course to follow is "Methods in Sermonizing," using the book which bears this title by A. J. Kirkland. Students will have to read the book and answer questions. Students will also be required to make their own outlines on some of these methods and submit them to the teacher for examination, correction, and comment. This course is a must for young preachers and Sunday school teachers. It will be ready soon.

Some will say the editor has gone crazy (critics will say he did not have far to go). Our school will be founded upon three great doctrinal truths: the doctrines of grace, the Old Landmark view of the church, and pre-trib premillennialism. Those who do not believe these things should seek out other schools.

Over the years some of us have become weary of sending young preachers off to sovereign grace schools which turn out to be Arminian schools. Some of us are equally weary of having young preachers go off to school and come home confused on the church and prophecy.

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Ninth Commandment

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RELIGIOUS LIARS

Satan told the first lie (Gen. 3:4), and sin entered the world by falsehood. From the lie of the serpent until now, sin has been sustained and propagated by lies told by the Devil or his disciples. Satan and his children continue to work to destroy the good by bringing lies and untruth into areas of truth and reality. Some of the biggest liars are religious liars who are under the control of demon spirits (I Tim. 4:1). These speak **“lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron”** (I Tim. 4:2).

Satan is the father of liars. Those who are ministers of Satan are religious liars. They speak of lying oracles and lying wonders. The world often calls them “great scholars” and “deep thinkers.” But in God’s sight they are liars about God and Christ (Rev. 2:2). They claim to be “doctors of divinity” but in truth they are “doctors of damnation.” Multitudes upon multitudes are deceived by those religious liars, for many entertain devils unawares.

God have mercy upon those who **“have made lies”** their refuge (Isa. 28:15). If you are trusting in your good deeds to get you to Heaven, you **“trust in lying words”** (Jer. 7:8). You have been deceived by some religious liar. Good works cannot atone for sin; only the blood of Christ can do this. The Bible makes it plain that some shall believe a lie and be damned (II Thess. 2:11). Will you be among those deluded by the Father of Lies? How sad for a person to live in pretended service to Christ on earth, then on the great day discover he has made lies his refuge!

MAKING GOD A LIAR

Are you making God out to be a liar? I John 5:10-11 declares: **“He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.”** Do you believe Jesus Christ was virgin born? the eternal Son of God? the Savior of all of them who believe? Do you believe that it is within His power to save even liars? If you do not believe all of this and much more, you are accusing God of being the author and abettor of a lie. You are saying that God lied in the Bible about Christ—that the gospel is falsehood!

Perhaps this message upon the Ninth Commandment has caused you to see yourself as a sinner. You know that you have lied more than one time. You have given out false reports on others. You have engaged in

gossiping and tattling. You must say with Isaiah: **“Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips”** (Isa. 6:5). I shall cease my lying and trust the cleansing blood of Christ to wash away my sins. I believe in Jesus Christ with all my heart as the Truth (John 14:6). If this is so with you, I am pleased to inform you that you have now as a present possession eternal life. I John 5:13 declares: **“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God: that ye may know that ye have eternal life. . .”**

Demonstrating Our

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his beloved friends, his brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ. He had a genuine love for them and a great concern for their spiritual welfare. They were God’s beloved sons and daughters, so they were precious to the apostle. This attitude of love and respect should exist among all the saints of God.

2. The apostle also commends the Philippians for their record of consistent obedience and fidelity to the commands of God. The believers had exhibited a steadfast adherence to the claims of Christ, having a testimony of always abounding in the work of the Lord. Their consistent obedience was not performed just while Paul was present and watching them, but also when he was absent. He calls upon them to continue this practice through faithful perseverance and reverence for God, behaving themselves as citizens of Heaven. Oh, that all of our lives would exhibit such faithful obedience and single-eyed service to the commands of Christ!

3. The latter part of verse twelve combined with verse thirteen provides us with the inseparable link that exists between Christian perseverance in holiness and God’s preservation of the believer in a state of grace. The perseverance and preservation of God’s elect are twin doctrines that should never be separated if a balance of truth is to be preserved. There are many exhortations in Scripture that address the believer’s responsibility to preserve in holiness such as: **“Keep yourselves in the love of God”** (Jude 21); **“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord”** (Heb. 12:14); **“But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation”** (I Pet. 1:15); **“Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us**

cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (II Cor. 7:1); **“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect”** (Matt. 5:48). Many people who fail to **“rightly divide the word of truth”** isolate these passages from their context and other truths of Scripture in an attempt to teach that salvation is in some way dependent upon man’s works. They fail to realize that all of the passages addressing the believer’s responsibility to persevere were directed to those who were already complete in Christ (Col. 2:10), **“accepted in the beloved”** (Eph. 1:6), and considered by God to be **“saints in Christ Jesus”** (Phil. 1:1). Verse twelve of Philippians chapter two is no exception.

Furthermore, the basis of the believer’s perseverance in holiness is God’s preserving grace. If believer’s were not **“kept by the power of God”** (I Pet. 1:5); **“preserved in Christ Jesus”** (Jude 1); and dependent upon the faithfulness of the Good Shepherd **“that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy”** (Jude 24; cf. John 10:27-9) they would lose their salvation everyday. But such is not the case where a balance of truth is preserved and spiritual things are compared with spiritual. It is the height of prideful presumption for a sinner to think that he can somehow add to or complete the finished work of Christ with regards to his salvation. Yet that is precisely what Arminians believe when their heresy is taken to its logical end.

4. Philippians 2:13 in no way, shape or form teaches that salvation is dependent upon the believer’s works. Good works are the fruit of salvation, not the basis of our acceptance with God (Eph. 2:8-10). The demonstration and maintenance of good works is only possible by those who are already saved by the grace of God. I agree with John Gill’s comment on this verse:

“. . . Which is not to be understood in such a sense as though men could obtain and procure for themselves spiritual and eternal salvation by their own works and doings; for such a sense is contrary to the Scriptures, which deny any of salvation, as election, justification, and vocation, and the whole of it to be of works, but ascribe it to the free grace of God; and is also repugnant to the perfections of God, as His wisdom, grace, and righteousness; for where are the wisdom and love of God, in forming a scheme of salvation, and

sending His Son to effect it, and after all it is left to men to work it out for themselves? And where’s the justice of God in admitting of an imperfect righteousness in the room of a perfect one, which must be the case, if salvation is obtained by men’s works?”

THROUGH POSITIVE ATTITUDES AND ACTIONS

“Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain” (Phil. 2:14-16).

1. Not only were the saints to demonstrate their sonship through perseverance in holiness, but also through the positive attitudes and actions that are outlined in verses fourteen through sixteen. If we are truly persevering in holiness, and God is working in us to accomplish His will and pleasure, then that work of grace should be demonstrated in a very practical way.

2. We are exhorted to do everything without a spirit of complaining or grumbling about our circumstances. This spirit of contentment and joy should be practiced at home, on the job, in society at large, and in the church. God never gives His children a license to gripe and complain! There is nothing worse than a Christian who is constantly bellyaching and bemoaning their present state of affairs. What kind of testimony are we displaying before the world when all we have to offer them are complaints and gripes! Nor are we to be engaged in contentious disputes, fussing, fighting and arguing with others. Such temperaments and attitudes do not demonstrate the grace of God, neither do they display appreciation for what God has done for us in making us His sons and daughters. I like what Matthew Henry wrote:

“God’s commands were given to be obeyed, not to be disputed. This greatly adorns our profession, and shows we serve a good Master, whose service is freedom and whose work is its own reward.”

3. Our goal as sons and daughters of God should be to manifest a testimony of purity and peace. We should strive to be both blameless in our conduct before the world, and harmless in the way we treat our fellowman. Our lives should give off the fragrance of holiness as well as harmony. Our behavior should be

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Demonstrating Our

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such that others would find nothing in our lives worthy of rebuke. This worthy goal may only be reached through self-denial, honesty, and good works as I Peter 2:11-12 implies: **“Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.”**

4. The world in which we live is crooked and perverse, enveloped in spiritual darkness, and captivated by Satan. If we are to demonstrate our sonship we must shine as lights in the world. Rather than being crooked, our lives should manifest righteousness. Rather than being perverse, our lives should manifest a desire for holiness. Rather than dwelling in the darkness of sin, we ought to shine as lights that reflect the glory of the Son of God. Rather than dwelling in the darkness of sin, we ought to shine as lights that reflect the glory of the Son of God. Rather than blending in with the wickedness of this world, we are called upon to display the radiance of Christ in us. Matthew 5:16 declares: **“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”** I like what Davis Huckabee wrote:

“A heavenly people ought to be like the heavenly orbs in shining forth and reflecting the glory of God. Alas, how often our selfish, grumbling, disputatious attitudes cloud our testimony over so that the world sees only a discontented person instead of a radiant reflection of the Son of God. Shame on us when we do so.”

May God give us the grace to live up to the titles, privileges, and duties described in I Peter 2:9: **“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”**

5. To further demonstrate our relationship to God and our union to Christ we are called upon to hold **“forth the word of life,”** meaning that we are to boldly proclaim the Gospel of Christ to others. If we have been born of God and have a genuine love for Him, we should not be ashamed to proclaim the Word of salvation to others. When we consider the deplorable state that men are in

we should be more than willing to go to them with the Word of life pointing them to Christ who is **“the way, the truth, and the life”** (John 14:6). Christians are not responsible to save the lost or coerce them to make a profession through psychological trickery. All we are responsible for is simply pointing to the path of life in Christ and then depend upon God to regenerate and justify them. May God enable all His people to not only demonstrate His grace by a sanctified life, but also to display His grace by **“holding forth the word of life.”**

6. If the believers at Philippi would obey the admonition given by Paul under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, it would mean that he had not labored in vain with regards to his ministry among them. A preacher may sometimes feel as though his ministry is in vain when the people of God do not respond positively to the truth. But there is nothing that cheers the heart of a preacher more than when the truth that he proclaims is practiced by his hearers.

THROUGH PERSONAL REJOICING

“Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all. For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me” (Phil. 2:17-18).

1. Paul implies that his life may be poured out as a drink offering to God through martyrdom. Yet in spite of such a prospect, he is found rejoicing. Even though Paul was imprisoned and anticipating execution for his faith in Christ, he is found demonstrating his relationship to God in a practical way by rejoicing. He would later write: **“For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith”** (II Tim. 4:6-7). When the saints of God can maintain an attitude of joy in the face of distress and doom it is a sure evidence that they are the sons of God, confident of obtaining their glorious inheritance despite their circumstances.

2. Paul calls upon the believers at Philippi to rejoice with him regardless what the future might hold. He was trusting in the sovereignty of God and believed that God works **“all things after the counsel of his own will”** (Eph. 1:11). May God grant us the grace to trust in His sovereign control over all things and rejoice in His counsel regardless of the circumstances we might find ourselves in. Through such personal rejoicing in God we are demonstrating to all those around us that we belong to the Lord and are happy to be under His authority and care.

Why I Preach the Word

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and God takes care of the results. God has appointed the means by which He will save sinners and add to His work. **“For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe”** (I Cor. 1:21). You and I do not need to improve one single bit upon God’s plan; much rather, we need to submit to His will and fulfill our part in His plan that He has designed for us.

The preaching the Word is a divine appointment with divine purpose. Why preach God’s Word?

1. God commands it.
2. God’s Word is dependable.
3. God’s Word stabilizes children of God.
4. God’s Word convicts and converts sinners.
5. God’s Word is at the center of true revival.

God does not tell those whom He calls to preach to change, soften, or take away from His Word in order to suit the carnal likings of sinful men, women, boys, and girls. God says: **“Preach the Word!”**

1. God Commands It.

The first reason that a preacher has for preaching the Word is that God says to do so. Every true New Testament church has the responsibility to see that the Word of the Lord is proclaimed and held forth from the pulpit because God would have it so. The charge that Timothy received is the same that every true gospel minister receives: **“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.”** The preacher doesn’t need to come up with a message, so to speak, but he needs to preach the Word of God.

God commands that all of His Word be preached. Paul stated to the elders of the church at Ephesus: **“Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God,”** (Acts 20:26,27). Paul did not hold back, and no faithful preacher will hold back in preaching the Word of the Lord. If he does, he has betrayed his calling, the One who called him, and those to whom he has been sent. A God-called man has the burden of the Word of the Lord upon his heart, and he must proclaim the message God has given. **“For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea,**

woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!” (I Cor. 9:16).

2. God’s Word Is Dependable.

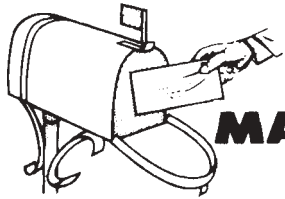
You can rely on God’s Word, it will never let you down. That is not true concerning your word and mine, for we often say things we do not mean or have no intention of carrying out. Sometimes we say things that we intend to do, but we lack the power to do it. Man’s word is next to useless, but God’s Word is sure and steadfast. **“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away”** (Matt. 24:35). You can make decisions based upon the Word of God, and His Word won’t let you down. His Word is a light for your path that won’t allow you to stumble if you walk according to its precepts and principles. You don’t have to worry that God’s Word will ever be out-of-date or inapplicable, for His Word is ever fresh and practical for your daily life. **“For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven”** (Ps. 119:89).

God’s Word being dependable means God’s Word won’t fail: everything else will. Everything that people are relying on today apart from the Word of the Lord is going to fail and disappoint them. Many churches are relying on man-made programs and schemes to accomplish something that only God’s Word can do. Their plans and programs and devices will all fail, their religious kingdoms will all crumble to the ground one day, and all that will stand the test of time is that which is built upon and according to the everlasting Word of the Lord. Yes, young Timothy had other things he could have relied on in his ministry and could have used amongst all the churches in which he ministered. Others were doing just that. **“But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of.”** What Timothy could rely on is the same thing you and I can rely on, the unchanging Word of God. God’s Word will get the job done and nothing else will. God says, **“So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it”** (Isa. 55:11).

3. God’s Word Stabilizes Children of God.

The scriptures are what God has given us so that we **“may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”** If something is **“thoroughly furnished,”** it is not lacking anything

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FROM THE MAILBOX

Dear Sirs,
I recently heard a radio broadcast sponsored by your church and was impressed by the truth in the sermon. I would like to know more about your church.

Mississippi

We love you all and pray for you and your health. May the Great God and Saviour bless you all.

Perilous times surely are here, but in spite of all this, we can lift up our heads and rejoice. Jesus surely is coming soon.

With love and our prayers.

-Tennessee

Bro. Cockrell,

We continue to pray for the health of both you and your son, Chris. May it please our Sovereign Lord to send healing and comfort.

May God's richest blessings be upon you, your family, all the saints and His work there in Mississippi.

-North Carolina

Bro. Cockrell,

Pray you problems are getting better by now. A good sound one-eyed preacher of the truth is better than the other kind. Do hope and pray the answer is good. Am sure this will not stop your zeal for the truth. Man did not put that in one.

We pray also for your son and family. In such illness the family is always affected.

God bless Bro. Pugh. His work is a blessing to read about.

-North Carolina

Dear Brother Cockrell and Church,

Greetings to you all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is good to write and tell you that the Lord sent a special offering to Grace Baptist Church and we are thankful that we can give a larger offering this month to the Pughs. Tell Brother Pugh to pray that the Lord will send some more special offerings to Grace Baptist Church and Berea Baptist Church.

Brother Cockrell, check is enclosed for me to get my subscription added to. Expiration date 07/02. I do not want the see the mark of the beast on my paper.

-Florida

Please start sending me your free Bible course. I want to learn more about the Bible.

-Tennessee

Bro. Cockrell,

Hello my Brother in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. I am looking forward

to hearing you preach next week when you come to the area to hold a meeting. I have been greatly blessed by the paper, and books. We have been praying for you and your family that the Almighty God that we serve will heal and bless.

-Kentucky

Dear Bro. Cockrell,

Christian greetings! We are greatly enjoying the hymnals recently received from you and rejoice in our God's provision of them for us. May He be magnified in the praise of his saints!

-Kentucky

Dear Bro. Cockrell:

Enclosed is our monthly gift to help in the Lord's work.

We pray God's blessing on you and your family as you serve Him.

-Texas

Dear Elder Cockrell:

Greetings in Him who "works all things after the counsel of His own will" (Eph. 1:11).

I thank the Lord knowing you and our fellowship in the gospel order. BBC is my grandmother church for I am baptized and ordained to the gospel ministry by LMBC, of Digos, Davao del Sur. Today I'm pasturing a 70-member congregation here in Leyte. Our ministry here is difficult since we are considered a rare breed of Baptist and our faith is "spoken against everywhere" (Acts 28:22) by modern Baptists who are man-centered in their theology. However, these things do not discourage us but galvanize us to begin a Bible school to train men for the gospel ministry. In fact one will be ordained this coming June and be sent out to Cebu City (the second biggest metropolis of the Phils. next to Manila but no sound church).

Brother Cockrell, the big problem with our school ministry is the lack of good and sound references of our Baptist forefathers. Good books are virtually nil in our place and beyond our capacity to buy. We fervently pray that you could extend a right hand of fellowship through books, especially John Gills EXPOSITION OF OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS (9 Vols.) and other peculiar landmark books. Any blessings in the form of literature is a cause of heartfelt thanksgiving here and a practical encouragement in our difficult ministry.

Please renew my subscription of BBB for it is a part of my edification and make it three copies if possible for the library and to be lent to the members. You may communicate to me in my e-mail address.

-Philippines

Dear Brother Cockrell,

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. I am writing to seek your counsel concerning my tithes. Bro. Cockrell, I have come to a clear and true

understanding of many Biblical doctrines (justification, sanctification, baptism, as well as the "local visible body," etc.) mostly due to your publication "Berea Baptist Banner," to which I subscribe, as well as your sermon tapes, and God has blessed me greatly. To Him I bow my knees giving thanks for your ministry. Your counsel is needed regarding my tithing to your ministry, seeing as how I don't have a home church which has contributed to my growth and knowledge in the Lord. I have prayed and asked God for His will after all, the money is His, not mine. So, I'd like to begin tithing to your ministry until such time as the Lord plants

me into a local visible assembly. I feel this is His will. I look forward to hearing from you at your convenience. Until then. . .

-A prisoner in Washington

Dear Bro.

Hope this letter still finds you doing better. I pray for you every day and thank the Lord for your improvement. Please renew my subscription for the BBB for five years. It is the best paper I have ever received.

May our great God bless you with many more long years.

-Kentucky



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

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MUSLIM JIHAD FIGHTERS ATTACK CHRISTIAN VILLAGES IN INDONESIA

PALU, Indonesia (EP)-Jihad terrorists attacked three villages in Central Sulawesi during the early morning hours on Nov. 1. Several hundred Muslim Jihad warriors who are affiliated with the terrorist group Laskar Jihad appeared from out of the jungles, attacking the Christian villages of Tomata, Pinedapa and Kasiuncu. The terrorists set fire to most of the homes and destroyed churches. Three Christians were confirmed dead in the village of Tomata and International Christian Concern reported that many people were injured.

Later that same day, terrorists blocked the main road from Poso to Palu, the capital of Central Sulawesi. The terrorists stopped cars and busses as they attempted to identify Christians. Sources say that at least four Christians in vehicles forced to stop were killed. The police and military were later dispatched to the area, but the Jihad terrorists had fled back to the jungles.

Another attack by the Laskar Jihad terrorist took place in the early morning hours of Nov. 2. The Christian village of Malitu, 20 miles from Poso, was attacked and once again Muslim terrorists destroyed nearly every home and a church. There were no deaths reported, as Christians fled to the jungles for safety.

Before this attack, Sulawesi and the neighboring Maluku Islands had experienced a month of relative peace. The region has been the setting of intense fighting between Christian natives and Muslim "jihad" or holy war invaders.

Since the fighting began in 1999, over 8,000 people have died and an estimated 500,000 Indonesians have been forced to flee their homes.

"Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned?" (Prov. 6:27).

GLEANINGS HERE AND THERE

WASHINGTON, D. C. (EP)-U. S. Attorney General John Ashcroft ordered federal drug agents to take action against doctors who use controlled substances to assist in the suicides of terminally ill patients. The order overturns a 1998 directive issued by Ashcroft's predecessor, Janet Reno, which effectively suspended the federal Controlled Substances Act as it applied to Oregon by allowing the state to permit physician-assisted suicide.

LUNENBURG, Nova Scotia, Canada (EP)-Police suspect that local vandals set fire to St. John's Anglican Church on Oct. 31, one of the oldest Anglican churches in North America. The 248-year-old white clapboard church burned to the ground on Halloween night. Over 120 firefighters from six departments were called in to fight the blaze. While no arrests were immediately made, police said that witnesses saw roaming groups of young adults, most in their 20s, milling around the neighborhood the night of the blaze. Fire Chief Terry Conrad said investigators had evidence that suggested these groups were involved in the arson. Of particular loss were the church's 10 historic bells that were rung by hand on Sunday mornings. "You can't replace the structure as it was-the architecture, the details, the artifacts

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and the memories that so many families have," said Peter Allen, a bell ringer and long-time member of St. John's. No one was injured in the fire.

LAHORE, Pakistan (EP)—A pro-Taliban group has claimed responsibility for the massacre of 16 Christians inside a church on Oct. 28. The Lashkar-e-Umar says that the shooting deaths of Christians during a worship service inside St. Dominic's Catholic Church outside Bhawalpur were in response to the "American crusade" against the Taliban party in Afghanistan. The attackers locked the Christians inside the church and began shooting at the congregation, which was made up of men, women and children. Compass Direct reports that over 100 people have been arrested as suspects in the massacre, in which a Protestant pastor, 14 Christians and one Muslim security guard died. Five Christians injured in the attack remain hospitalized. A memorial service was held Nov. 4 in memory of the dead.

WASHINGTON, D. C. (EP)—U. S. President George W. Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin spent time talking about religion, according to Peggy Noonan's new book. *When Character Was King*. [Putin] basically seemed he was saying there was a higher power," Bush told Noonan of his meeting with the Russian leader. Bush broached the topic by commenting on a cross Putin's mother had given the Russian leader. Putin explained to Bush that he has taken to wearing the cross, which he had blessed during a visit to Jerusalem, and told of a time when he feared he had lost the cross, but it was found. Putin told Bush, "It was as if something meant for me to have the cross." Bush responded, "Mr. Putin, President Putin, that's what it's all about—that's the story of the cross."

VENTURA, Calif. (EP)—One of the most-quoted Bible verses by Christian parents and educators is "**train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it**" (Prov. 22:6). A new nationwide survey provides some statistical support for that notion, showing that adults who regularly attended church as children are much more likely than their unchurched peers to be involved in church-based and personal spiritual activities.

WASHINGTON, D. C. (EP)—People who regularly attend religious services are more generous with their time and money than their unchurched peers, according to a new study by the nonprofit coalition Independent Sector. The study found that churchgoers contributed more than twice

as much to charity as others last year (\$2,151 compared to \$964). Churchgoers also volunteered at a higher rate (54 percent, compared to 32 percent of those who do not regularly attend services). The study also found that women (46 percent) volunteered more than men (42 percent).

FAYETTE, La. (EP)—Two Baptist ministers are under arrest for robbing a Louisiana bank. Police say Barney Rankin, pastor of St. Stephen Baptist Church in Vidalia, La., was the getaway driver in an October bank robbery at the United Mississippi Bank in Fayette. He was reportedly accompanied by Jimmy Hargrave, a former pastor in Natchez, Miss., Hargrave reportedly ran into the bank with a stocking over his face and a gun and told a teller, "This is a stickup," then escaped with more than \$40,000 in cash. Rankin reportedly drove the church's Yukon sport utility vehicle during the robbery.

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POSO, Indonesia (EP)—Over the weekend of Nov. 10 several towns and villages located on Indonesia's Sulawesi Island were attacked by thousands of Islamic Jihad militants. "As of Saturday night Indonesia time, the District of Poso in central Sulawesi was under attack by Islamic Jihad forces," said an anonymous contact for the relief agency Christian Aid. "The situation is very critical. Unless there is a miracle many lives will be lost." An estimated 50,000 Christians are still under the risk of attack. During the most recent attacks, 68 houses were burned and over a ton of rice was looted by Muslim warriors. Sources said Christians in the area are desperate for food, medicine and protection from the attackers. Christian Aid has been able to rescue almost 2,800 people from the area, which has been the scene of religious strife for over 18 months.

JERUSALEM, (EP)—Scholars claim to have found the original site of the city of Emmaus, a place mentioned in Luke 24 as the destination of two travelers who encountered the resurrected Christ on their way there. German historian Carsten Peter Thiede told United Press International that Emmaus was a "wealthy suburb" about seven miles west of Jerusalem. Thiede and Israeli scholar Egon Lass head up a joint project sponsored by the Ben Gurion University of Beer Sheba and the Independent Theological Seminary (STH) of Basel. The scholars conclude that the biblical Emmaus is also known as Ammaous, described by the Jewish historian Josephus. According to Thiede and Lass, this Emmaus was a second home to many wealthy people who lived and worked in Jerusalem. The scholars also believe their site to be the authentic Emmaus because it is within walking distance of

Jerusalem. It would have taken people about four hours to reach the city, Thiede estimated.

LYNCHBURG, Va. (EP)—The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) has offered to support Jerry Falwell in his challenge of state laws that restrict how much property a church can own without losing its tax-exempt status. According to the Lynchburg News & Advance, a letter sent to Falwell by the ACLU offered to file a friend-of-the-court brief on his behalf. "We agree with your position that such laws discriminate against religion in both purpose and effect, in flagrant violation of the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution," wrote Rebecca K. Glenberg, the ACLU's legal director. Falwell's son said they welcome the offer and hope for even more support, particularly from other church groups.

NEW YORK, N.Y. (EP)—A study reported in the September issue of the *Journal of Reproductive Medicine* found that women receiving fertility treatment are more likely to conceive if they are being prayed for than if they are not. The study involved 219 women being treated in a South Korean hospital. Without their knowledge they were randomly divided into two groups; one group received regular prayer by Christian intercessors and the other did not. The women receiving prayer were nearly twice as likely to become pregnant as those not receiving prayer, and at rates higher than the normal rate for the treatment at the same hospital. The results were reported by Rogerio Lobo, chairman of the department of obstetrics and gynecology at Columbia University in New York City.

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP)—Paul

Weyrich, leader of the conservative Free Congress Foundation, objected to a stamp issued by the U.S. Postal Service to commemorate an Islamic holiday. In a letter to Republican congressional leaders, Weyrich suggested that stamps commemorating the Muslim feast of Eid al-Fitr should be withdrawn, overprinted with an image of the destroyed World Trade Center towers, and then reissued. "I have no doubt that a majority of Americans would find the altered stamps a more appropriate commemoration of Islam than the current celebratory version," Weyrich wrote.

WASHINGTON D.C. (EP)—America's first woman fighter pilot is suing Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld over military policies which restrict her Christian faith. Lt. Col. Martha McSally, the first woman to ever fly a U.S. combat mission, is challenging orders that require military women stationed in Saudi Arabia to wear Islamic dress and follow Muslim customs when they travel off-base. "In Saudi Arabia she can pilot a plane but not drive a car," said lawyer Thomas Neuberger of the Rutherford Institute. The lawsuit argues that the regulations violate McSally's First Amendment right to practice her Christian faith and not have a religion imposed on her.

NEW YORK, N.Y. (EP)—It took 54 years, but Israeli scholars announced in November the release of a complete publication of the 1,500 ancient documents that comprise the Dead Sea Scrolls. The 2,000 year-old scrolls, discovered in Qumran in 1947, have been the subject of much debate among scholars because of their significance to understanding the Bible. Now, complete copies of the scrolls will be available in a

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"FELLOWHELPERS TO THE TRUTH" (III JOHN 8)

Here are some ways you can help us in getting out the BBB to the world:

1. Daily pray that God will bless our paper and its messages.
2. Send in gift subscriptions for your friends who might be interested in the BBB.
3. Send us the name of any young Baptist preacher. We will send him the BBB free for one year.
4. Each month we have some papers printed which are not mailed out. We will send you some of these if you want to give a copy to your friends who might enjoy the BBB. Some already do this.
5. You can have the BBB sent to all your church members for \$1 each per year on our church plan. This plan has to be renewed at the beginning of each new year.
6. Send an offering to the BBB. Any offering, whether large or small, is always deeply appreciated.

The Bible & Newspaper

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37-volume set. "After 54 years of excitement, expectation, tribulation, much criticism, and a little praise, the publication has been finalized," said Professor Emanuel Tov, head of the scrolls publication project organized by the Israeli Antiquities Authority. The scrolls, written in Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek and Latin were authored and gathered by the Essenes, a communal Jewish sect that predates Christianity.

DENVER, Colo. (EP)—A Colorado couple who refused medical treatment for their 13-year-old daughter while she died from diabetes-related complications has been placed on probation for 20 years. The judge ordered Randy and Colleen Bates to provide medical insurance for their other 12 children and to consult doctors when their children are ill. Noting that the Bates' acted from religious motivations, Mesa District Court Judge Amanda Bailey said the Bates were "not criminals in any ordinary sense of the word," explaining, "They were not evil in their intentions." The Bates' family belongs to the General Assembly Church of the First Born, which emphasizes Divine healing and discourages reliance on modern medicine. The Bates girl was the third child from the church to die in the last three years.

FRANKFORT, Ky. (EP)—A Kentucky judge condemned the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) for suing to force four Kentucky counties to remove the Ten Commandments from courthouses. Rowan County Judge-Executive Clyde Thomas blasted the ACLU's timing. "I believe it couldn't come at a worse time in view of Sept. 11 and the fact this country had the first casualty of this war on terror," Thomas said. Edward Thomas Earhart from Rowan County was a sailor killed when a hijacked jetliner crashed into the Pentagon.

WASHINGTON, D. C. (EP)—Attorneys for the Rutherford Institute have filed a "friend of the court" brief in the United States Supreme Court in support of the State of Ohio's educational voucher program. In hearing the case, the Justices will decide the constitutionality of Ohio's voucher program that provides individual scholarships of \$2,250 to children in Cleveland's failing city school system to enable them to attend area private schools.

Nearly 90 percent of American households donated money to charity in 2000, giving an average of \$1,620 or 3.2 percent of their income (*Washington Times*, Nov. 12-18, 2001).

Southern Baptist churches total 15.9 million members but only 5.5 million are in attendance on any given Sunday morning—only 33 percent (10-10: *Christian News*). A new study showed that the typical SBC church has 233 members but an average attendance of only 70 persons for Sunday morning worship. It may be as bad or worse in other denominations (*Calvary Contender*, 11-01).

When Jesse Jackson shows up in corporate offices demanding not just racial equity in hiring but millions of dollars paid to his organization, most businessmen give in (9-01 *World*). Like shop owners in a Mafia-controlled neighborhood, they pay protection money and count it as cost of doing business (*ibid.*).

Total projected cost of legal and illegal immigrants for 1995-2004: \$688 billion. Newcomers of both stripes displace two million workers from their jobs each year at a cost of \$12 billion to welfare agencies (*Straight Talk*, 11-8-01).

Federal watchdogs told Congress that "lax oversight" by Andrew Cuomo, Bill Clinton's secretary of Housing and urban Development (HUD), could eventually cost taxpayers \$130 billion to bail out. "Decisions made during (Cuomo's) tenure opened up this program to widespread fraud and abuse," said Rep. Sue Kelly (R.-N.Y.). Supposed to fix housing, one HUD program left 719 houses in foreclosure or unrepaid as scam artists pocketed the funds before giving the houses to non-profits, claiming they had been renovated (*ibid.*).

Federal debt continues to grow at about \$250 billion a year rate and is headed for \$6 trillion. (Congress has raised the debt ceiling to \$5.95 trillion.) The interest on the national debt is now larger than the U.S. defense budget. Last year's "official" deficit was \$210 billion, but the "real" deficit was at least \$50 billion higher. The Administration and Congress continue to steal \$50 to \$100 billion per year from the Social Security Trust Fund, so they can understate the real size of the deficit. The so-called balanced budget by 2002 is another lie. The Congressional Budget Office says the real deficit will be \$403 billion in 2006 (*ibid.*).

Pro-lifers warned that it would likely happen, but hoped the day would never come. Now, a Canadian woman participating in that country's trial of RU486 is dead, and questions are being raised about whether the abortion drugs she took may have factored in or contributed to her death (*National Right to Life*, 10-01, p. 21).

The U. S. Supreme Court let stand

Virginia's requirement that school children begin their day with a minute in which "to mediate, pray or engage in other silent activity." The high court refused to hear an American Civil Liberties Union challenge to a lower court upholding the law, which took effect last year (*Human Events* 11-5-01).

According to a team of economic researchers from Cornell University and the University of Massachusetts, as many as 35,000 U. S. jobs—and maybe even twice that number—moved to the People's Republic of China in a recent seven-month period. . . . The researchers discovered that between October 1, 2000, and April 30th of this year more than 80 U. S. -based corporations had announced their intent to shift production to China. . . . The study estimated that "as many as 760,000 U. S. jobs have been lost in the U.S. -China deficit since 1992 (*The New American*, 11-19-01).

On October 12th, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the United Nations and to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan for their efforts to build "a better organized and more peaceful world." Annan is about as worthy of this award as Bill Clinton would be of an award for telling the truth. Annan was in charge of the UN peacekeeping operations when Hutu extremists massacred around 800,000 Tutsis in Rwanda. He was also in charge during the genocide against the Bosnian Muslims. Annan makes sure people have peace; that is, in a graveyard (MRC).

The Salvation Army has repealed a new policy to provide health benefits for domestic partners of its homosexual employees in the fact of overwhelming opposition from inside and outside the 136-year-old church and charity (*The Washington Times*, Nov. 19-25, 2001).

According to the November 4th *London Telegraph* state-controlled Chinese media outlets are producing propaganda videos and DVDs "glorifying the (September 11th terrorist) strikes as a humbling blow against an arrogant nation" (*The New American* 12-3-01).

Because of the terrorist attack on September 11th, the USA Patriot Act recently was rushed through Congress and signed by President Bush, giving vast new police-state powers to federal agencies. Incredibly, in passing that legislation, Congress and the president accepted a provision demanded by Senator Ted Kennedy of Massachusetts and Representative John Conyers of Michigan to exempt members of the terrorists PFLP (Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine), an ultra-radical branch of the PLO (Adapted from *The New American*, 12-17-01, p. 8). Kennedy and Conyers support the rights of PLO

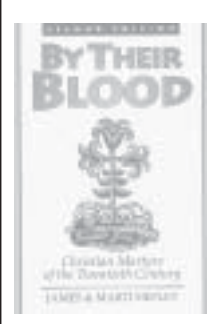
terrorists within the United States.

The award-winning Christian music group Raze has disbanded after one of its members recently pleaded guilty to sex charges involving a back-up dancer for the group. Ja'Marc Anotoine Davis pleaded guilty Nov. 1 to felon counts of rape by instrumentation, lewd molestation and sodomy, Associated Press reported. The four-member group earned a Dove Award from the Gospel Music Association in the dance/rap/hip-hop category in April (*Western Recorder*, 12-4-01).

The National Council of Churches, facing a \$2.1 million budget shortfall, cut more than a quarter of its work force during its annual meeting in Oakland, Calif. This liberal church organization, which claims to represent 36 mainline Protestant and Orthodox churches, continues to face financial troubles two years after mounting deficits first came to light (MRC).

Bill Clinton, in his effort to create for himself a legacy besides a trashed White House, a stained dress and 30 Chinese nukes aimed at the U.S., broke ground last Wednesday in Little Rock for his presidential library. The problem is that the \$104-million memorial to last century's only impeached President is being built with non-Union labor on the ground of a former black historical site. Before the library could be built, developers had to demolish a former "underground railroad" depot, much to the dismay of historical preservationists. Outside the dedication last week, union workers protested that non-union labor would build the library, which was financed in part by contributions from Denise Rich, the ex-wife of pardoned fugitive Marc Rich (*Human Events*, 12-10-01).

Speaking at an ecumenical prayer service concluding the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity on January 25, John Paul II said that "baptism has united all Christians" and "the separations among Christians are contrary to the will of Christ" (*Challenger*, Aug.-Sept., 2001).



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Why I Preach the Word

Continued from page 253

that is required to make it complete. The problem with the lives of many children of God is that they are spiritually incomplete, lacking some good thing that would stabilize their Christian walk and life. True churches are not weak today because God's Word is not what they need, but because God's Word is not being preached and believed like it should be, so church members are weak and spiritually unstable. Spiritually, you must have a continual intake of Bible doctrine or else you will grow weary and faint and wither away.

(Read James 1:5-8.) A lot of Christians are double minded today: they are hearers of the Word, but they are not doers, and God's Word does not find lodgment in their hearts and lives. When God's Word is received by believing hearts in them that hear it, it will take root and grow, bringing forth abundant fruit in that person's life. **"For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe"** (I Thess. 2:13). (Read Eph. 4:14,15.) A stable Christian is one who can be a blessing unto others, whose life is a good example unto others, and whose lips speak forth words of wisdom seasoned with grace to the encouraging and uplifting of the hearers.

4. God's Word Convicts and Converts Sinners.

God's Word is the only effectual weapon against the hardened heart of a sinner. **"The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God"** (Eph. 6:17), is that which convicts sinners of their sins before God and converts them through repentance and faith. Paul wrote to Timothy, **"And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."** Nothing else can do what God's Word does! Dramatic acting, eloquent and persuasive speaking and oration, and entertaining and enticing plays and movies will not save a single soul or turn a single backslider from his sinful ways. Only the Word of God can do this. **"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart"** (Heb. 4:12).

The psalmist David wrote, **"The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple"** (Ps. 19:7). The preaching of the scriptures made effectual by the operation of the Spirit of God will turn the most stiff-necked sinner from darkness to light, and change the stoniest heart into a heart of flesh. God's Word never almost saved anybody, but it does save effectually and completely all who hear and believe. **"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God"** (I Cor. 1:18). **"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek"** (Rom. 1:16).

5. God's Word Is at the Center of True Revival.

Paul said, **"All scripture . . . is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."** God's Word is that which will not only stabilize children of God, but will spiritually arouse them and awaken them and give them spiritual fervor and zeal for the Lord. The preaching of the Word of God is not useless. Many church members are spiritually asleep, and the only thing that will awaken them is the Word of the Lord. (Read Eph. 5:14-21.) A revived church is an energized church, which is stirred up, not in the flesh, but in spiritual things.

Revival is necessary when we

become spiritually lethargic, spiritually complacent, and spiritually unaware. Many times we become desensitized to sin and the wickedness that is around us, so much so that pretty soon it comes creeping into the Lord's church. Only God's Word will awaken us to the dangers around us, the duties about us, the need of those amongst us, and the love and grace of God sent down upon us from on high. (Read Neh. 8:1-17.) Some things had been neglected in the service of the Lord by the children of Israel; and that which brought it to their attention and aroused them to faithfulness unto the Lord with gladness in their hearts was the reading and expounding of the Word of God.

When God's Word is preached, there shall be a harvest. Paul wrote unto the church at Corinth, **"I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase"** (I Cor. 3:6,7). When God's Word falls on the good ground of ready hearts that have been prepared by the Spirit of God, it will bring forth fruit. (Read Luke 8:4-15.) We don't need to worry about the harvest taking place, but we need to pray for workers to preach the Word and work in the fields. **"Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest"** (Luke 10:2).

for concerts and recordings, did that make him a Gospel singer or a ministry singer/musician? When he included a couple of Gospel songs in a concert, did it become a Gospel concert? Including the "token" Gospel song(s) in his concert was the perfect "jewel in the swine's snout," to renew an old proverb. Let's continue being honest. The lifestyle of Elvis, his language, his drug abuse, and other things that could be mentioned, were not habits Christians would want their children to copy.

Some might say his contribution to Gospel music is found in the way he influenced some of today's singers. Maybe, but I think there is a difference between an influence and a contribution. I'm sure some will think I'm wrong and die-hard. Christian Elvis fans might attack me for "attacking" their idol, but Christianity should be careful who and what it endorses. The world is usually pretty careful in not accepting Christianity. Why is Christianity sometimes so eager to accept and reward the world?

GOODBYE JOE, YOU GOTTA GO

Thank goodness for the enlightened politically correct who are keeping this country from going down the drain. Fox News recently reported on a daycare center in North Carolina that was penalized by the state for stereotyping and violence. Nine little plastic army men were the culprits. Imagine the stereotype of males only, in combat (notice, they were army men, not army persons) and the violence taught with these few, inches-high plastic volatile weapons of mass destruction. The statement was made, and I quote loosely, that these toys stereotyped, and had the potential to be dangerous, because the children may try to act out violent themes. BAA-LONE-EE!!

G. I. Joe dolls and little green army men aren't known for inciting violence in kids. Moe, Larry, and Curley didn't teach me to poke out people's eyes and hit them over the head with hammers and John Wayne movies did not traumatize me and encourage me to shoot people. The Stooges presented wacky slapstick comedy that any kid with half a brain knew was fake violence, and John Wayne taught honor, manhood, and justice for the downtrodden by modeling masculinity, minus the blood, guts, and gore. Good clean violence was usually performed to right a wrong, enforce the law, or overcome evil.

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Mini Edition

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



BLUE SUEDE GOSPEL SHOES

Elvis Presley has been inducted into the hall of fame of the Gospel Music Association, not to be confused with the Southern Gospel Music Association. The GMA is broader than the SGMA in that it recognizes several styles of Christian music and Christian music performers, including Southern Gospel Music.

If anyone could lay claim to the phrase "talent on loan from God" (to quote Rush Limbaugh), it would have certainly been Elvis. He was extremely talented with his voice and in his charisma. He came from a home where he was exposed to Christianity and Christian music and he even recorded several Gospel songs and hymns.

But I'm confused. The Gospel Music Hall of Fame? ? When was his *emphasis* ever Gospel music? What contributions did he make in this field? I admit, I do not know what criteria was used for his selection, so I am speaking as objectively as I can evaluating with what I know about Christianity, music, and standards. I have to wonder how much glory God received through his music and lifestyle and how much spiritual ministry was accomplished through his concerts, recordings, and movies. I do not recall ever hearing of an Elvis Gospel concert in a church.

This is not an Elvis bashing session. It is a plea for reality in truth. I like some Elvis songs and have enjoyed listening to them, but just because Elvis used J. D. Sumner and other Gospel music singers as his back up

Mini Edition

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If the figures had been replicas of some violent, gangsta rap artist, would the daycare have been penalized? You figure it out. If the little men had been pink or lavender instead of green, and arm in arm, depicting a “non-traditional” family, the daycare may have even scored some points. That certainly would have broken the stereotype.

And speaking of stereotyping, let me reinforce the stereotype of a chauvinist. Women do not belong in a foxhole or on the front line of battle. I’m sure some may perform well in

these areas, but how would you have felt if dear old Mom told the war stories to your friends when they came over, instead of Dad. I know it’s not popular today, but the facts remain. Men and women are very different physically and emotionally. God designed males and females differently for various roles and functions in the church and the family. True peace, harmony, and contentment in life is found by those men and women who function within their God designed roles.

As for *my* little army men: you can have them when you pry them from my cold, dead fingers.

Saving Earth

By Philip Parks

Ashland, North Carolina



Philip Parks

Would you be surprised to discover that the world’s religions are sidelining some of their doctrinal differences to unite with each other on more contemporary issues? These enemies have discovered a common interest which will aid them toward ecumenicalism. They are not uniting to pool their talents, money, and time to preach the gospel to win unregenerated souls. No, they see a much grater, and more pressing need. The most prominent issue which brings bitter religious theological enemies together is saving the earth’s environment. They are now in the thick of the struggle to save our planet. This is another angle used to unite the world’s religions, and religion may succeed with this issue where politics, at least in our culture, has failed incredibly.

The issue of saving the earth from those, who in the opinion of these theologians, are recklessly abusing her and selfishly squandering her precious resources without conscience, is a social issue. The word “her” when referring to the earth is used because most of our populace, and possibly most of the world, refer to the earth in the female gender as “Mother Earth.”

The fodder for their doctrine is “rolling blackouts and spiking gas prices”¹ If that is not sin enough, they’ve added another, more personal sin to their long list: “some think it may also be a sin to drive an SUV” (Sport Utility Vehicle). This is one issue in which all religions are in absolute agreement regardless of their vast differences and violent disagreements with each other on other more fundamental doctrines. The time will come, if it has not already arrived, when saving the earth

will be a common, religious fundamental doctrine.

To make their point in supporting the earth’s preservation, the representative theologians quote their religion’s scriptures in a manner which they hope will influence their followers that “a higher power”, whoever or whatever their god happens to be, is the inspiration for their doctrine. Scriptures regarding conservation of the earth and its resources are quoted simultaneously from the Bible and the Qurn, another name for the Koran, “the sacred text of Islam.”²

The similarities of the scriptures these theologians take from the Bible and the Koran seem to compliment each other—that is until one studies the context of the scriptures used. Most of God’s children certainly would not even pretend to be even remotely familiar with the Koran, for any writing “believed to have been dictated to Muhammad by Gabriel and regarded by Muslims as the foundation of religion, law, culture, and politics”³ is at the very least, false, and in its extreme, damnable and abominable. The believer of the correct interpretation of the Bible may be ridiculed for his ignorance of the Koran, but in the true believer’s defense, they will value the Word of the Holy Spirit over any angel’s, Gabriel included, regardless of his rank or devotion to any recognized god, “**For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but**

holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (II Pet. 1:21). Regarding Biblical writings, God’s true followers can speak with authority and with purer motives.

But not all who quote Biblical scriptures can be trusted. What are the opinions of those who are sponsors of the Biblical teachings of earth’s environment conservation? It is best to be careful of their Biblical interpretations. The Jewish coalition, whoever they are, are said to quote Leviticus 19:9 as their premise: “When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap all the way to the edges of your field.” If this is the strongest verse this coalition can find to promote environmentalism, they’ve failed miserably. The particular Biblical version this verse was taken from is not given, but the King James (Authorized) Version renders it “**And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest.**” Identifying the context of this verse will reveal their gross negligence and very possibly their willful misinterpretation of this verse to justify their goal, for the context does not deal with extravagant waste and abuse of the earth but to instruct the Jewish nation that they were to leave a generous portion of their harvest to those who were poor and also for the strangers in the land. Verse 10 proves this fact: “. . .**thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger. . .**”

Not one to be overshadowed by elevated scholars, Pope John Paul II adds his paltry opinion on this subject as well. He refers to a concept called the “structures of sin” which must be overcome. Care to take a wild guess how he recommends doing this? The article is quoted: “Pope John Paul II has said protecting the environment can overcome ‘structures of sin’ and promote respect for creation,” this according to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. One must wonder if the catholic pope has ever heard of the redemptive work of God’s Son, Jesus Christ, on the cross of Calvary as the means for overcoming sin and its “structures.” There is no end to this mere mortal man’s deplorable wresting of the Holy Scriptures. To those with Biblical wisdom, this most certainly reeks of “**doctrines of devils**” (I Tim. 4:1).

Then, there is the Evangelical Environment Network. This organization is so far left in left field, they are fielding in foul territory. Even the organization’s name oozes with an air of overzealous and misdirected respect for the earth’s environment as

it mixes its erroneous doctrine with wrested Scripture. This group gives portions of Hosea 4:1-3 as their Biblical reference: “*There is no faithfulness, no love, no acknowledgement of God in the land. . . Because of this the land mourns and all who live in it waste away.*” Again the King James (Authorized) version renders these phrases as “**There is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. . . Therefore shall the land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish.**”

This organization’s interpretation cannot be further from the truth. They interpret these phrases to say that the nation which squanders the earth’s environment will one day be in want for the environment will no longer produce the nation’s needed resources. Now let us read what the verses actually say: “**Hear the word of the LORD, ye children of Israel: for the LORD hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood. Therefore shall the land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish, with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven; yea, the fishes of the sea also shall be taken away.**” Even an ignorant school boy, the likes of which there is a great abundance these days, can figure out what the scholars of the Evangelical Environment Network overlooked.

The correct contextual interpretation is this: God is not warning the nation that it will suffer because they wasted their environment, but, that He will punish them for their multitudinous iniquities which are headed up by lies, cruelty to each other, and ignorance of God. The phrase, “**blood toucheth blood,**” certainly describes our world’s situation today. The Evangelical Environment Network would make more progress if they shifted their energies to punishing the perpetrators of crime and promoting social morals than saving the earth’s environment.

Possibly the greatest and most influential argument for protecting the environment is to identify God and the environment as one and the same. Veli Matti Karkkainen, professor of systematic theology at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California, did not come right out and say this but he certainly implied it. He is quoted to say: “How we behave toward the environment and creation,

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Saving Earth

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is how we take our stand toward God's spirit. We either support this life-giving, nurturing presence of God's spirit or we make everything act against it." In the preceding quote, the gross and disrespectful failure to capitalize the word "spirit", referring to God's Spirit, can be attributed to either Rachael Zoll, the article's author, or to Karkkainen. But Karkkainen is certainly guilty of referring to God's Spirit as an inanimate "it" just as surely as he would refer to the environment as an "it." Does he believe that the Spirit of God can be used, abused, squandered, and destroyed in the same manner he believes the environment can?

To the world, the environment has already become an intrinsic factor in its salvation. Religion and its leaders are energizing and uniting around the green banner of this issue. Jesus Christ and His work of salvation have long been discarded, forgotten, or blatantly usurped. To the Bible student, this is a vivid reminder of the New Testament Pharisees, Sadducees, Herodians, scribes, and lawyers, who ordinarily were bitter mutual enemies to each other, uniting their cause against Christ. But, the end result of their efforts and their worldwide following is also woefully recorded in the same Bible from which they so recklessly abuse: **"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God"** (Ps. 9:17).

(Footnotes)

1. Zoll, Rachael; *Saving Earth* - Theologians cite Bible as conservation guide; *Winston-Salem Journal*; Saturday, July 7, 2001; Page B7, Column 2.

BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 10-31-2001 to 11-30-2001

Beginning Balance \$275.61

RECEIPTS
Parkway Landmark B. C., Springfield, OR 25.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY 100.00
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS 100.00
Berea B. C., Westpoint, TN 132.00
Dividing checks 75.00
TOTAL RECEIPTS 432.00
TOTAL 707.61

EXPENDITURES:
Radio Time 607.00
Dividing checks 75.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES 682.00
..... \$25.61
Bank Charges -10.00
BALANCE \$15.61

CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT

Beginning Balance \$413.32
RECEIPTS
Total 413.32

EXPENDITURES:
WCTT (Apr) 160.00
Total Expenditures 160.00
ENDING BALANCE \$253.32

GREED IS THE CREED—YES, INDEED!

By G. Russell Evans

Norfolk, Virginia

The answer to the Big Question is coming into focus. The Big Question is "How could it happen?" The answer is, "Because greed is the creed—yes, indeed!"

The 19 Mid-East murderers who commandeered four jet-liners to massacre some 6,000 innocents and assault the foundations of America had help from an American system that had grown complacent with peace, prosperity and fat pocketbooks. Hardly anything else mattered, it seemed.

GREED FOUR WAYS

It was greed, almighty and underlying greed, that facilitated the catastrophic Sept. 11th massacres—four ways:

1. Greed of politicians, both major parties, to *capture the votes* of the immigrants in order to hold onto power—almighty political power above country, family and their own souls.

2. Greed of corporations and businesses for *cheap labor and steady employees*, available from the flood of immigrants, legal and illegal, and assured by corporate pressure on politicians for laxity in enforcing immigration laws with the *quid pro quo* of campaign donations to the politicians—a cozy arrangement for everyone.

3. Greed of colleges and universities for *foreign students* and their grants and benefits to beef up their budgets and expand diversification into international fields for prestige and global outlooks rather than so much old-fashioned Americanism.

4. Greed of State Department bureaucrats to prove how *nice and generous* they are with foreign nationals. For example, their Manual for Consular Officers states that "mere membership" in a known terrorist group would not bar an immigrant from getting a visa to enter the United States, nor would "advocacy of terrorism" be a basis for exclusion. This kind of stupidity is hard to believe.

WHAT MORE TO SAY?

What more need be said to explain a national policy that evolved into a national disaster? Who can deny these greedy policies of our corporations, our politicians, our educators and our diplomats—or, that how these institutions go, so goes America?

Since Sept. 11th, the turn to God and religious faith has been phenomenal—with no whimpers heard about

separating church and state, nor about public prayers in public places, nor any other act that brought peace and comfort to survivors of this Satanic assault. Obviously, opponents dare not!

GAINING THE WORLD

In public places, the Scriptures have been used freely. So, in the matter of greed and profit—so important both to greedy Americans and to the opportunist hijackers as well—Jesus warned His disciples, **"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man gain in exchange for his soul?"** (Matt. 16:26).

In exchange for political votes, corporate profits, educational bounties and diplomatic stupidity, we gain death, misery and longtime threats to our God-given freedom and security.

AMERICA-HATERS

President Bush, in his magnificent speech in Atlanta, noted that America-haters call us "shallow materialistic consumers who care only about getting rich and getting ahead."

He added, "This isn't the America I know as a wonderful nation, full of kind and loving people, people of faith who want freedom for people everywhere."

The outbreak of flags, patriotism and security has been unprecedented—a wakeup call like Pearl Harbor Day.

Even so, Rep. Dana Rohrabacher (R-Cal.) had it about right in charging "our government either incompetent or unwilling to protect us." With greed as the creed, he's right!

VISA VIOLATIONS GALORE

The criminals convicted of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, of the 1993 murders at the CIA and involved in the 1998 plot to bomb New York's subways—all had visa violations that the government brushed aside.

The Congress tried to tighten up the rules and create a databank for use in enforcement of the immigration laws—but squawks from industry and colleges pressured delay—*until 2003*. What a sad commentary on national security—and what greed by all concerned!

Of course, the proposed electronic databank could have saved the day by screening applicants and expelling those whose visas had expired. Indeed, if such procedures had been used before Sept. 11th, 15 of the 19 hijackers would already have been expelled.

These are the main reasons we say that greed is indeed the creed that facilitated the national tragedy of Sept. 11th. Our politicians in Congress, our big business tycoons, our progressive educators and our please-all-the-people diplomats should think on these things.

Never has it seemed more important that "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty" (Wendell Phillips, 1852).

(Capt. Evans lives in Norfolk, Va. He is author of several books.)

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WORLD SCENE

By G. Russell Evans - Norfolk, Virginia

'Restraint' Is No Way to Win a War



A United Methodist delegation descended on Congress two weeks after the Sept. 11th massacres, urging restraint upon the congressional leaders in going after the terrorists who had just murdered 6,000 innocents, leveled the south end of Manhattan Island and devastated our defense headquarters at the Pentagon.

COULDN'T WAIT

It seemed that Bishop Bruce Ough and his East Ohio Conference could hardly wait to get into the act—unfortunately with bum advice on two counts:

First, “restraint” is no way to win a war and we proved that in spades in the Vietnam War. And *second*, his claim that war is “incompatible with the teachings and example of Christ” is shallow and misleading.

FULL-FLEDGED WAR

We are in a full-fledged war with international terrorists who are taunting us with threats of “more to come.” The “restraint” in the Vietnam War, engineered by Robert McNamara and his “whiz kids” and cheered on by United Methodists and other religious pacifists, gave America its first-ever defeat in war and over 55,000 body bags.

“Restraint” was a bum idea then and certainly is now. What more compelling words than General Douglas MacArthur’s warning, “In war there is no substitute for victory.”

OUT OF THE WOODWORK

Now that we’re locked into a real live shooting war, look for the pacifists and peaceniks to come out of the woodwork with all kinds of palaver: use measured and controlled restraint, search for a faithful response and maintain a creative tension—but nothing about getting the culprits and punishing them.

The Ohio United Methodists seem to be first in line to declare for a peaceful solution. They want everyone to know they deplore the devastation of Sept. 11th, but also condemn war as “incompatible with the teachings of Christ.”

WANT IT BOTH WAYS

As with the Vietnam War, another time of national crisis, some religious leaders want to have things both ways: piously deplore war, but sanctimoniously and inaccurately inject the teachings of the Bible.

For example, Herman Will of the United Methodist Board of Church and Society registered 100 youths as

conscientious objectors to the Vietnam War—and Barry Lynn of the United Church of Christ organized the Committee Against Registration and the Draft (CARD). The CARD people poured glue into locks of our post offices, bombed some post offices, laid out on the floors of others and had contests to see who could register the most times as Donald Duck.

CHRIST FULFILLS

The teachings of Christ do not outlaw war. His Sermon on the Mount was emphatic: “**Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill**” (Matt. 5:17). Thus, Jesus made clear His acceptance and fulfillment of the teachings of the Old Testament. No exceptions.

For example, on the plains of Moab in the 15th century B. C. stood Moses teaching the children of Israel the laws of warfare: “**When thou goest out to battle against thine enemies, and seest horses, and chariots, and a people more than thou, be not afraid of them: for the LORD thy God is with thee. . .**” (Deut. 20:1).

WAR PLAN FOR ISRAEL

The 20th Chapter of Deuteronomy is a sort of war plan for the nation of Israel—and Moses does not teach “restraint.” Moreover, the Old Testament is, among other things, a history of the Jews and their war against enemies of Israel.

There are many examples of the righteousness of national defense. The Book of Nehemiah is a biblical treatise on national defense with Nehemiah

exhorting his countrymen to take up swords and spears and repel their enemies.

King David ruled Israel for 40 years, loved by his people and remaining in the Lord’s favor. He began his military career by cutting off the head of Goliath with a sword—later, “the slayer of 10,000 enemies.”

JESUS SENDS A SWORD

We should remember that Jesus, the Prince of Peace, came from the line of David and that He never condemned the profession of arms for keeping the peace and for national defense.

Ar: He told His disciples: “**Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I come not to send peace, but a sword**” (Matt. 10:34).

The Apostle Paul understood the sword—the sword of righteousness—and explained its use by soldiers and policemen to the Roman Christians: “**For he is the minister of God to thee for good. . .for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is. . .a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil**” (Rom. 13:4).

RENDER UNTO CAESAR

Jesus told His disciples: “**Ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars**” (Matt. 24:6)—and admonished His critics, “**Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s**” (Matt. 22:21). Jesus was acknowledging the evil of war, but not appeasement or “restraint: in pursuing justice or national defense.

There is no Scriptural justification for “restraint” in fighting terrorism. Indeed, many passages demand the “sword of righteousness” which, in the hands of the just, can become the “sword of the Lord.”

Gideon in the 11th century B. C. led his three hundred in the cause of national defense against the Midianites with the “**sword of the LORD**” (Judges 7:20). Nothing is

heard about “restraint” as they “**set every man’s sword. . .against the host (and eventually) brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon**” (Verse 25). Gideon was not “restrained.”

Christ did not reprove Gideon or any part of the Old Testament.

“Restraint” in war is the formula for defeat—proved convincingly in the Vietnam War. Religious leaders cannot justify “restraint” in dealing with the terrorists who brutally murdered our fellow citizens on Sept. 11th—and they are sadly misguided to try.

(Captain Evans is author of *The Church and the Sword* (St. Thomas Press, 1982). He lives in Norfolk, Va.).

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