

# The Berea Baptist Banner

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Whole Number 286

## A.D.

By Jesse B. Thomas

(1832 - 1???)

**"To preach the acceptable year of the Lord"** (Luke 4:19).

"A.D."—the world writes the letters carelessly as it turns the page to record for the first time the new year, 1887; but in these letters is the "open secret" of the ages; for this, too, is a "year of Our Lord," an "acceptable year," a "year of grace."

With the close of the old year a day of accounting comes. Letters and accounts are filed and housed away, having left their substance sifted into figures on the books. The stock in shelf and store-room, measured, counted and weighed, yields its quota to the reckoning, and the measure bearing the year's harvesting is evenly stricken.

For some the heaped-up surplus falls into garner already well filled—



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it is a year of triumph—they say to their souls, "Take thine ease."

For others, it is a year of doom. Their shrunken resources fall far below the brim—they "owe a thousand talents and have nothing to pay." A

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## Sovereign Grace Defended

By A. H. Strong

(1836 - 1921)

We grant that man can work evil without God, but can he work any thing which is truly good? Surely not. In a fallen state man is solely responsible for evil, but not he alone is to be credited with good. That is due to God. Good King Alfred, with



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laboring quaintness of phrase, tried to express this truth more than a thousand years ago. "When the good things of this life are good, then they are good

through the goodness of the good man who worketh good with them, and he is good through God." But the fountain head of all this doctrine is in the utterance of the Apostle Paul. **"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."**

### PAUL COMBINES THE TWO ELEMENTS

And yet, if Paul were not an inspired apostle, such an utterance might seem a piece of sublime audacity. Here are two truths, so far

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## Divine Ownership

By Milburn Cockrell

(1941 - 2002)

**"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's"** (I Cor. 6:19-20).

The Bible reveals to us many things which unenlightened reason could never discover. Much of this respects the office of Christ and the Holy Spirit. Since such truths are revealed to us in the Word, every true Christian

should know these things. One of the most elementary principles of the Christian life is the words: **"Ye are not your own."** These words set forth the doctrine of Divine ownership, rather than self-ownership.

### THE BELIEVER IS NOT HIS OWN

All men naturally think they are their own masters. Men employ their time and talents as they please without any consideration to God. Men **"have turned every one to his own**

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## The Limits of Intercessory Prayer

By Milburn Cockrell

(1941 - 2002)

**"Then said the LORD unto me, Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people: cast them out of my sight, and let them go forth"** (Jer. 15:1).

This text seems to contradict many plain Scriptures, which tell us God answers our prayers. There are in Holy Scripture numerous promises that when we call upon the throne of



Milburn Cockrell

grace the Lord will hear us. But here we have an exception to this general rule.

This text does not teach that the saints in Heaven (men like Moses and Samuel) intercede for the saints on earth as the papists teach. The dead do not pray for the living. It is the prerogative of Christ to be the only Intercessor in the other world. I Timothy 2:5 says: **"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus"** (I Tim. 2:5).

### PRAYER IS MUSIC IN THE EARS OF GOD

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## 100 World-Known Witnesses to the Second Coming of Our Lord

Part 3

**Dr. James M. Gray**, Dean of the Moody Bible Institute, Author of several works.

"There is a Coming of Christ *for* His saints, and a Coming of Christ *with* His saints. It is the Coming of Christ *for* His saints that is the Hope of the Church, an event for which the faithful are always looking. I know of nothing to intervene before He comes. He may come today, or certainly within our generation, when the Church will be caught up to meet Him in the air. Then there will be an interval, how long I do not know. And during that interval, while the Church is with her Lord in the air, most of



James M. Gray

these events apparently, of which the prophets speak are to transpire on the earth. It is then that the nations are federating, the man of sin developing, the Jew returning, and the crisis approaching. And when that crisis comes, then Christ comes, not for His Church as we have seen, but *with* His Church, and *with* His holy angels, **"In flaming**

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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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## 100 World-Known

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**fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (II Thess. 1:6-10)."**

**F. W. Grant**, Author of the "Numerical Bible," the well-known book "Facts and Theories as to a Future State," and others.

"Think of it, *'in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump.'* The last trump was that which in its military sense stood for departure. It was the signal to march, and that is the thought here. God is taking us into another place, and at the last trump, which sounds for this, we shall be changed into a condition corresponding with that which is implied in it. 'The trumpet shall sound, the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and the living shall be changed.' The 'corruptible must put on incorruption,' there he is speaking of the dead; 'the 'mortal,' here he speaks of the living, 'must put on immortality.' Here will be in every way the complete triumph over death.

Everything here applied, as we see again, to the resurrection or transformation of the saints simply. There is no thought of anything besides."

**Henry Groves**, well-known Teacher in Britain.

"The Lord is Coming—'Maranatha.' I found this word the other day in an old Greek MS., and it show us how bright an object was the Coming of the Lord to the apostolic saints. It is not a Greek word, but a Syriac one; and while they had their 'hosanna' and their 'hallelujah,' they had also their 'Maranatha'—the Lord is Coming. Maranatha hopes and Maranatha joys made martyrdom only half martyrdom; so would our troubles be shorn of half their weight if Maranatha were better known to us. May it be the watchword of the whole Church of God, and may the Maranatha glory be preserved in freshness on our hearts—*'The Lord is Coming.'*"

**Francis Ridley Havergal**, the Sweet Singer in Israel, Authoress of numerous Hymns, sung world wide. "Thou art Coming! Thou art Coming! We shall meet Thee on the way! We shall see Thee, we shall know Thee! We shall bless Thee, we shall show Thee

All our hearts could never say!  
When an anthem that will be, ringing out our love to Thee!  
Pouring out our rapture sweet to Thine own all-glorious feet!  
O! the joy to see Thee reigning! Thee, my own beloved Lord!

Every tongue Thy Name confessing; worship, honour, power, blessing,  
Brought to Thee with one accord!  
Thee, my Master and my Friend, vindicated and enthroned!

Unto earth's remotest end, glorified, adored and owned!"

**Dr. I. M. Haldeman**, American Teacher, writer of many valuable works.

"The deceiving wonders in the world today performed in the Name of Christ, as they increase in emphasis, bear witness that the Coming of the Lord draweth nigh. He Himself has said so. He has said that when all these things begin to come to pass, we, as believers, may look up and know that our redemption draweth nigh; that the Lord is even at the door. It is a witness that this age, like the river that at last reaches the brink of the cataract, is



I. M. Haldeman

about to sweep over and plunge to its fall. These very signs say to us in the loudest possible speech, 'The Lord is Coming.'"

**R. Wright Hay**, Secretary of "The Bible League," London; Editor of the Bible League Quarterly, Author and Lecturer.

"Soon after my conversion I saw in Holy Scripture that my Lord had promised to come from Heaven to receive His own unto Himself that they might be with Him in all His subsequent sovereign movements (John 14:2-3). I saw that He intimated the possibility of His Coming while John was still alive on the earth (John 21:22). I saw also that He enjoined His disciples to watch, because in such an hour as they thought not, he would come (Matt. 24:42, 44). I had impressed on my heart the motto, *'Perhaps today,'* and this has been a daily benediction in all the years since. I see clearly that the Appearing of our Lord is a matter of time (I Tim. 6:15), and that the coming of the Day of God may be hastened by the holy living and service of saved sinners (2. Peter 3:11-12). I find it congenial to recall the Saviour's word of love, *'Surely I Come quickly,'* and to respond with John, 'Amen, even so, Come, Lord Jesus' (Rev. 22:20). . ."

**Dr. J. Stuart Holden**, of St. Paul's, Portman Square, London, well known in many branches of Christian work, Chairman of Keswick Convention.

"I am often asked: 'Do you think that all believers will be taken away when Christ Comes, or will some of them be left to go through the Tribulation? in any Divine recognition of a spiritual aristocracy. It is altogether contrary to the Word of God that *merit* should have place for one fraction of a second in regard to the translation of His people, any more than it has in regard to their earlier experiences of fellowship. It was the grace of God which brought salvation at the first. It is the grace of God which is sufficient for the lives of His own today. And it is the grace of God which will be revealed anew when Christ Comes for them (I Peter 1:13). I do not believe that any true believer will go through the great Tribulation. I cannot believe those who are exercising sincere faith in Christ will be shut out when He returns for His own.

"Then will only those be taken whose lives are flawless, whose love is unflinching, whose keenness has never fluctuated, whose consecration has never been denied, and who are actually subordinating every interest in life to the great interest of His Coming? There are some who affirm that it shall be a dramatic discrimination between, as it were,

different grades of His followers. Let me say that I do not believe this, for I find no warrant for it in the Scriptures. I believe that as we are saved and kept by grace, so we shall be translated by grace."

**Wm. Hoste**, B. A., Author of "Bishops, Priests, and Deacons," "Visions of John the Divine," "The Passion Song of Israel," etc.

"The next event in the Divine Programme is the Return of Christ. It will be a *personal* return—'The Lord Himself.' It will be a *sudden* return—'in a moment.' It will be a *secret* return. Only those actually involved in it will know of it, for it will be 'in the twinkling of an eye.' Then will come in the heavenly sphere the judgment seat of Christ (II Cor. 5:10), and the marriage of the Lamb (Rev. 19:7). On the earth the portentous events which we see already unfolding around us, will then reach maturity—the Roman Empire will be revived, Israel restored to her land, and partly to her place of testimony, the Man of Sin and Antichrist revealed, and Babylon the great whore judged."

**Dr. H. A. Ironside**, Pastor, the Moody Memorial Church, Chicago, Illinois.



H. A. Ironside

"The Blessed Hope of the Lord's imminent return to raise the dead and to change the living saints prior to His Coming in power and great glory to set up His Kingdom has been the joy and earnest expectation of my heart for over thirty-five years. While deeply interested in the significant movements occurring in connection with the Jews, the Gentile nations, and the professing Church, I have ever recognized the fact that Scripture gives *no direct prophecy that must be fulfilled ere the rapture takes place.* If called Home by death before this hope is realized, I shall have lost nothing, but gained immeasurably by looking for His Coming, and I shall still be waiting for the same blessed event. It has been to me a purifying and stimulating thing to realize that at any moment He might descend to call His own to meet Him in the air."

**Dr. J. H. Jowett**, Minister of Westminster Church, one of the greatest preachers of his day.

"Is it not the introduction of a jarring discord? Will it not be as when some stealthy terror appears upon the field of sight, and all the birds are

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# 100 World-Known

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hushed in fearful silence? *Oh! no; that is one of the perversions of the years; but it was not the experience of the Apostolic days. When the apostles thought of the Lord's Coming, and of 'the Day of the Lord,' their hearts rang out a merrier peal! It was not the gloomy eclipse, but the 'daybreak, when all shadows should flee away!' They thought of His Coming, and their joy was enriched. They thought of His Coming, and their gentleness became still more refined. It gave courage to their hearts and firmness to their steps, and out of that valorous strength there sprang all the softer graces of the consecrated life."*

**Howard, A. Kelly, M.D., LL. D.,** American Writer, Author of "A Christian's Belief in the Bible."

"One master word covers the attitude of Christians in relation to this expectation of the Coming of the Bridegroom to claim His Bride, and that word is *'imminent.'* Ever since our Lord passed beyond the confines of this earth into the Heavens, the hour of His return, all unknown, has been *imminent;* and our right attitude therefore, is one of constant expectancy, with hearts fully prepared to give our Lord His fitting, royal welcome, when He appears, no longer as sin-bearer, but with the holy angels and in His heavenly glory."

**Wm. Kelly,** an able Teacher, and Author of many helpful Bible Works.



**William Kelly**

"One important inference we ought to draw from this Scripture (I Thess. 1) is that the Christian hope is a fit and seasonable, and Divinely warranted expectation for a young convert's soul. Whatever may be said about the propriety of prophetic study for such a one, the Coming of the Lord Jesus is certainly suitable. It is as clear as He can make it that the Thessalonian saints from their *very conversion* waited for His Son from Heaven. The Holy Ghost. . . mentions it to their praise as a component part and happy feature of their conversion, a result of God's mighty power which wrought upon them from the very first. Thus we have it on the sure authority of God's Word that it is never out of season to bring before the simplest soul that 'Blessed Hope' of the Lord Jesus Christ's return."

**E. L. Langston, M. A.,** Rector of

Sevenoaks, Chairman of the Advent Testimony Movement, Keswick Speaker, Author of several books, etc.

"The heavens are going to be rent, it may be this year, it may be this week, *it may be this day,* but whenever that great event takes place, if you are a true Christian, you have the inward consciousness that you are both of the Spirit, and that the Divine oil is burning in you. These are serious days. The signs indicate the *near approach of the Lord Jesus.* If we would be ready, then we must see that the oil is in the vessel, and that the lamp is trimmed."

**Clarence Larkin,** Philadelphia, Author of "The Greatest Book on Dispensational Truth."



**Clarence Larkin**

"Whilst we do not know the day or the hour of Christ's Coming, we know that it will be Pre-Millennial, that is, before the period of the 1000 years spoken of in Revelation 20:1-6. The very structure of the New Testament demands that Christ shall return before the Millennium. . . If He is not Coming until *after* the Millennium, and the Millennium is not yet here, why command us to watch for an event that is 1000 years off?"

**Robert Lee,** of the "Mildmay Bible School," Author of the "Outlined Bible" and other "Outline" Books.

"For the first ten years of my Christian life, all that I was looking forward to was the Great White Throne and the general Judgment, though I was greatly puzzled over statements in Corinthians concerning the Judgment Seat, and references to the Lord's Coming in the Thessalonian Epistles. I could not square these Scriptures with the ideas held of a general Judgment. During my pastorate in Bolton, Lancashire, in 1893, I came in touch with a retired evangelist and his wife, who kept a Bible shop. The lady in question was a real 'Mother in Israel,' and discussing with me the Lord's personal and Pre-Millennial Coming, she discovered my bewilderment, and

then presented me with a copy of Walter Scott's 'Coming Glories.' The prayerful reading of that book revolutionized my ideas and my life. I then bought Fry's "God's Plan in the Bible," which confirmed the conviction received through Walter Scott's 'Coming Glories,' and after most careful study of the Scriptures, I came to see that *the great Hope of the Church was the Pre-Millennial and Personal Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.* Oh, what a change it made in my outlook upon things, and upon my life! It led to purification and consecration of heart and life, and the Bible became an entirely new book. It has been my joy to pass on to others the truths that have become precious to me, and I have noted time and again, the same revolutionary change in outlook and living."

**Canon Liddon,** of St. Paul's Cathedral, Author of the famous Bampton lectures on "The Divinity of our Lord."

"As the moments pass they bring us nearer one by one to the Second Advent. Christ's Coming will be *sudden* when it does take place; but it will be the product of a lengthened preparation. 'The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely Come, it will not tarry.'"

**Wm. Lincoln,** of Beresford Chapel, London, Author of "The Javelin of Phinehas," and several books.

"The suddenness with which the entire church, and all the Old Testament saints shall rise together into the presence of the Lord, is called in I Corinthians 15:51, a mystery, *i.e.,* a secret revealed. First, the Son of God descends and gives the triumphant signal so long expected. It will bear on the destinies of earth, being the voice of the Archangel. It will be the consummation of the Heavenly call, and hence is termed 'the trump of God.' In instant and joyful obedience, rise from their graves all the dead in Christ; all those to whom death was only a 'sleep through Jesus' (I Thess. 4:14). Then a change equivalent to death and resurrection passes on the bodies of the living believers. Then

the two companies rise simultaneously into the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and to return and come down with Him. But though these two, the resurrection of the dead saints, and the change of the living, as also their rising all together into the Lord's presence, will be done thus orderly and perfectly; yet the whole of this action is *to occupy only a single moment,* or even the twinkle of an eye, or even less time still. For a twinkle denotes the casting of the eyelid down and up too; but the Greek word denotes only the one or the other of these. *What a moment!* Here one second, at our daily work, and then, ere the clock has ticked once more, all this accomplished."

**Dr. W. P. Mackay,** Minister of the Gospel, Hull; Author of the world-renowned book "Grace and Truth"; For long Editor of "The British Evangelist."

"When the truth of His Second Coming and the glory to be revealed in connection with His Pre-Millennial Advent, dawned upon my soul, it was like a second conversion."

**Dr. F. E. Marsh,** well-known as a Bible Teacher on both sides of the Atlantic, Author of many books.

"One essential difference, and of primary importance, is to see that the Spirit plainly and unmistakably distinguishes between the presence of the Lord *for* His saints and His manifest glory *with* them to the world. We can easily discern the difference in the following words, where the former is spoken of as 'the Blessed Hope' and the latter as "The appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ' (R.V.). The Lord's *private reception* of His own called and chosen ones is like a king's levee, and is exclusively for the redeemed ones of His grace; but the *glorious appearing* is like the king's open and royal procession as he goes to open Parliament, and is manifest to all. Another thing to remember is that the Lord's return for His saints *is a matter of grace;* therefore every member in the Body of Christ, (not every one in Christendom) will be taken; whereas His Coming with His saints is to execute judgment upon the ungodly and those who have not obeyed the Gospel of our Lord (Jude 14-15; II Thess. 1:7-10)."

**Jas. E. Matheson,** of Mildmay Conference Work.

"What is the deeply solemn truth that all this urgency to obtain labourers for Christ pressed home? Surely this, *i.e.,* the dispensation of grace is *nearing its close;* eleven o'clock has struck on the clock of the age; we may be beyond half-past eleven, yea, in the very closing year!"

## Berea Baptist Broadcast

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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
WDBS, Sutton, WV	Sunday 6:30 - 7:00 a.m.	97.1	50,000 FM
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

## Divine Ownership

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way” (Isa. 53:6), and they do that which is right in their own eyes (Judges 21:25). They contend it is their liberty to do their own things and to go their own way (Jer. 33:17). Some are heard to say: **“With our tongue will we prevail; our lips are our own: who is lord over us?”** (Ps. 12:4). Their conduct, if not their speech, resembles the words of Pharaoh: **“Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go”** (Ex. 5:2). Every unsaved man stands in defiance of God: **“Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have, if we pray unto him?”** (Job 21:14-15).

The idea that every man is his own master is a satanic delusion. The man who lives only to sin and gratify his selfish desires has no conception of God or the teachings of the Bible. Man may be free in a civil sense; he may be free from any human yoke, but no man is independent of God. All men belong to God, and they are accountable to the Divine Being for all their conduct. No man is an island!

Every born-again person knows better than this. Paul asked: **“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?”** Paul’s question is a direct appeal to the conscience of each believer. He addresses himself to their elementary instincts. He takes for granted that no saved person can be ignorant of this truth. He expresses surprise that such a truth should be forgotten.

No real Christian lives to himself. He must live to the Lord in all things. God’s will is to be the sole rule of our conduct. We have an obligation to glory God in our life and by our death. **“For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s”** (Rom. 14:7-8). We are the property of the Lord, not of one another. We cannot use our bodies as if they were absolutely under our own control. Paul says that our body and spirit **“are God’s.”**

### THE CHRISTIAN IS GOD’S PROPERTY

There are five good reasons why we are not our own. First, we have no personal rights because of

presentation. In eternity past we were given by God the Father to God the Son: **“I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word”** (John 17:6). A number of truths are seen here. In the before-time covenant the Father gave the Son particular people for Him to redeem and glorify. These were given in a special manner to Jesus Christ to be His servants. The number of them is known to God and Christ (John 6:37-40; 10:27-28). This select company is of the world before the Father gave them to the Son. At first they were unsanctified and unsaved, for the world had possession of them. But in the fulness of time they came to be the Lord’s. After they are given up to be the Lord’s they are of the world no longer.

Jesus Christ is God’s love gift to the elect. **“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life”** (John 3:16). **“Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift”** (II Cor. 9:15). The elect are the Father’s love gift to Jesus Christ. **“As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him”** (John 17:2). **“I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine”** (John 17:9).

Second, we are not our own by production. God creates all men. **“Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves...”** (Ps. 100:3). **“Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth...”** (Eccl. 12:1). **“...he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things”** (Acts 17:25). **“For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring”** (Acts 17:28). As our Creator, He has unalienable rights over us. We possess not a faculty of mind or body but from God. **“For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why doest thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?”** (I Cor. 4:7). We cannot exercise one faculty which is not derived from our Creator: **“Not that we are sufficient of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God”** (II Cor. 3:5). We are all God’s property by creation.

Third, we belong to Christ because He purchased us. We were in bondage to the curse of the law:

**“Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them”** (Gal. 3:10). Christ redeemed us from this miserable state: **“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree”** (Gal. 3:13). This is why Paul says in my text: **“Ye are not your own.”** Believers are called in Holy Scripture **“the purchased possession”** (Eph. 1:14). The New Testament church was **“purchased with his own blood”** (Acts 20:28). **“Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us”** (Heb. 9:12). **“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without blemish and without spot”** (I Peter 1:18-19).

We are the purchased property of Jesus Christ, bought altogether for His ends. We are bought to be His eternal possession. In New Testament times when a man bought a slave that slave belonged to him. We are redeemed for the Redeemer. We belong to Christ, and we are obligated to devote ourselves unreservedly to Him. **“Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men”** (I Cor. 7:23). We must not be defiled or be alienated from Christ. Our hearts and thoughts are to be those of Christ’s: **“But we have the mind of Christ”** (I Cor. 2:16). All our abilities and influences are to be consecrated to our Lord, for by redemption He acquired special rights over us. Our Redeemer claims our all.

Fourth, we are God’s by possession. He re-stamped His image upon us when He sent the Spirit to regenerate us. He formed us anew in Christ. We became the temple of the Holy Spirit. **“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God...”** The Holy Spirit is enthroned in the sanctuary of our body. Not only is the assembly of baptized believers the temple of God (I Cor. 3:16), but also the believer’s body is the dwelling place of the Spirit of God. This makes the whole man the temple of God.

In the old dispensation God had a temple for His people, but under the new covenant He has His people for a temple. The temple in Israel was entirely dedicated to God’s use. It existed solely for His service. And so

it is now with the believer’s body which is called the temple of God. Our body and spirit exist solely for God’s service.

The presence of the Holy Spirit in our body confers sacredness upon our body. The Christian who defiles the body transgresses against the indwelling God and ignores His august presence. How horrible to profane the Eternal Majesty and to pollute His holy sanctuary! There are some things unlawful for a Christian to do. The temple of the Holy Spirit must be kept holy—fit for the Master’s use.

Fifth, we are God’s property by preservation. Sometimes we are sick unto death, and the Lord sees fit to raise us up and lengthen our days as he did Hezekiah (Isa. 38:1-8). This may be after the medical profession has decided our case is hopeless. Why does God preserve our weak and lowly lives? Such preservation makes our lives sacred, and we must use our days of good health to serve the Lord and be thankful unto Him (II Kings 20:8).

### THE CHRISTIAN IS TO GLORIFY GOD

Because our body and soul are entirely God’s, we are duty bound to glorify Him with both to the uttermost. **“...Therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”** In the strict sense of the word, we cannot make God any more glorious than He already is. Nothing we do really adds to the glory of God. Speaking to God, the psalmist well said: **“My goodness extendeth not to thee”** (Ps. 16:2). Nevertheless, God esteems Himself glorified by our services. **“Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God”** (Ps. 50:23). **“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God”** (I Cor. 10:31).

### BODY—OUTSIDE DEPARTMENT

**“...Therefore glorify God in your body...”** Christians have a poor understanding of this teaching. The general idea is that the soul is all-important, but the body is nothing. Here are some statements I have heard from professed Christians over the years. I heard a modern-day new lighter say, “It does not matter what you do in your body. The only sin a child of God can commit is to teach heresy.” An antinomian once told me, “The sins of the body are all the work of the old man. Don’t worry about these. The spirit cannot sin.”

This reminds me of a story I once

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# Outlines for Country Preachers

## by a Country Preacher

*Sermon Outlines by Milburn Cockrell*

### HINDRANCES TO PRAYER

#### I Peter 3:7

Prayer is one of the essential exercises of the Christian life. Anything, which hinders prayer, is to be avoided. Prayer is the breath and language of the new nature. There are some things which will hinder our prayers from reaching the throne of grace.

#### I. A BAD HOME LIFE (I Peter 3:7).

1. Failure to show honor to the weaker vessel will hinder our prayers.
2. Mutual agreement is a powerful condition of prevailing prayer (Matt. 18:19).

#### II. LIMITED LOVE FOR GOD.

1. God answers the prayers of those who love Him (Ps. 37:4).
2. No delight in His Word will hinder (John 15:7).
3. There must be no idol in the heart (Ezek. 14:3).

#### III. UNFAVORABLE SEASONS.

1. There are weary nights
2. There are busy mornings, days, and evenings.

#### IV. UNCONFESED SINS.

1. Sins hid God's face and closed His ears (Ps. 66:18; Isa. 59:1-2).
2. Our sins are a barrier to prayer before God.
3. There must be no secret controversy or traitor in the camp.

#### V. TEMPTATION OF THE DEVIL.

1. He ever seeks to hinder our prayers.
2. He tells us God is not willing to hear and answer our prayers.

#### VI. UNSANCTIFIED TEMPER.

1. Prayer is a calm, meek, and kind action of the spirit.
2. Confusion of mind, trouble in the spirit, agitation in the soul, makes us unfit for the Divine presence, for approach to the throne of grace, for speaking to Deity.
3. God abhors passion and wrath.

#### VII. MISTAKEN VIEWS ABOUT PRAYER.

1. That prayer is a duty instead of a privilege and a pleasure.
2. That prayer is dictating to God instead of bringing our wills into submission to God.

#### VIII. SELFISHNESS.

1. The desire after our own personal pleasure strangles multitudes of prayers.
2. Self denial is essential to answered prayer.

#### IX. A LACK OF FAITH (Jas. 1:6-7).

1. There is no stability about a wave driven of the wind.
2. The prayer of persevering faith storms the fort of blessing (Mark 11:24).

## Divine Ownership

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Once upon a time a church member committed a crime. When brought before the judge he said, "I did not do this. It was done by my outer man. I have an inner and outer man." The judge told him, "I plan to put this outer man in jail. You can do whatever you want to do with the

inner man." This judge was not only a good civil servant, but an able scholar of the Scriptures as well.

Of all the visible wonders of God's creation, the human body ranks first. It is the handiwork of God. The body of the redeemed man is the instrument of the renewed spirit which is in man as well as of the Holy Spirit who dwells with the human spirit. If I use my body for lust, anger, selfishness, and unkindness to others,

I am not only making myself an objectionable nuisance to others, but I am guilty of sacrilege, of something akin to the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit who dwells within. **"Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that commiteth fornication sinneth against his own body"** (I Cor. 6:15-18).

The body must not be neglected or despised, for it is a medium of giving glory to God. In the Dark Ages it was the belief of some that they honored God by punishing the body. Long fasts, beds of spikes, and serious privations were thought to be special marks of piety. Christendom is still not free of some of this. Many Christians care more for the soul than the body. Some are so busy "saving souls" that they care next to nothing for the body. This is all a clear violation of the teaching of Holy Scripture. A man who thinks Christianity is merely a thing of the spirit and not of the outward life has misunderstood the gospel.

To glorify God in our body we must abstain from all evil. **"Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God"** (Rom. 6:12-13). **"But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway"** (I Cor. 9:27). **"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry"** (Col. 3:5).

But to glorify God in our body is more than mere abstinence from evil. It is to consecrate the power of our nature to God's holy service. I take the word "body" in I Corinthians 6:20 to mean the whole form and fashioning of the outward life. Our bodies must be yielded to God as our reasonable service. **"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your**

**reasonable service"** (Rom. 12:1). Paul does not say, "Present your souls," but **"present your bodies."** Our bodies are to be presented to God as living sacrifices wholly devoted to God's use.

In II Corinthians 4:10 Paul wrote: **"Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body."** He does not speak here of self-salvation, but of progressive sanctification which takes place in the body. Paul was practicing what Christ had taught His disciples: **"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me"** (Matt. 16:24). He felt the crucifying effects of Christ's cross in his appetites and activities. He experienced Christ's death in his body so as to reveal Christ's life in his body. The life of the body (Heb. 13:3) of each believer is to be a manifestation of the life of Christ. **"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me"** (Gal. 2:20).

There are many ways we can glorify God with our bodies. We can do it by attending the services of the church and by godly living. We must confess Christ before men and speak well of Him at all times. We must use our strength and substance for Christ's honor and the extension of His kingdom. If called upon to do so, we must gladly suffer in our body for Him even to the point of death.

#### OUR SPIRIT—THE INSIDE OR HIDDEN LIFE

**"...glorify God...in your spirit..."** This has a positive and a negative aspect. The negative aspect involves a cleansing of our spirit: **"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in fear of God"** (II Cor. 7:1). The positive aspect concerns our worship. We are to worship God in our renewed human spirit. **"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth"** (John 4:24). **"For we are of the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh"** (Phil. 3:3). Prayer and singing must be performed by this renewed spirit. **"I will pray with the spirit...I will sing with the spirit..."** (I Cor. 14:15). All service to Christ must be in the spirit: **"For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son..."**

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## Divine Ownership

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(Rom. 1:9).

### CONCLUSION

1. We are not our own masters. We were bought with the precious blood of Christ. When we look at the bloodstained cross, we must realize that Christ bought and paid for us. We cannot live for our own pleasure or profit. We must live according to the will of God and for His glory, whose we are, and whom we serve (Acts 27:23).

2. Let us be desirous of glorifying God. This is what delights the departed saints and the angels of God in Heaven. To abound in this duty will make us happy here on earth and add to our rewards in the hereafter. Oh, the inestimable privilege we have of honoring God with our body and spirit in this low land of sin and sorrow!

3. We are duty bound to glorify God inwardly and outwardly. Let us beg God's forgiveness for our failures to honor Him as we should. **"Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations"** (Ezek. 36:31).

4. We cannot glorify God in our body by sexual impurities, intemperance, or lust in any form. Such things give the body the upper hand. God intended that the body be the instrument of the renewed spirit. That part of us which is most akin to God must rule. The body must always serve. When the order is reversed there is a loss of true manhood and inevitable sufferings. The drunkard, staggering down the street, is a man whose body has already become the grace of a lost spirit.

*Not my own; my time, my talents,  
Freely all to Christ I bring.  
To be used in joyful service,  
For the glory of my King.*

## A.D.

*Continued from page 1*

year of doom—for the secret will not lie silent on the page. Out of the figures, blurred in their anxious vision, seems to rise a hand which writes, not only on the record of the past, but on the white margin of the future, "Ruined"—a hand that, with "flaming sword," drives out wife and children from their inheritance, and keeps the door against them—a hand of iron, that lays manacles upon

themselves, and brands them in the forehead with the mark of bondage. The vision is true. In a few days counting-house and home are empty—the wife is hiding even from the gaze of pity that burns like fire—the children's life is dwarfed in the cold shadow of a grief they do not understand, and the father, too proud to serve, too old to begin life anew, lingers in the margin of his former haunts, waiting for crumbs of fortune, until "heart and flesh fail."

Such as these are the parables of life, whose facts men see, but whose lessons they will not learn. They count failure a misfortune, and therefore not a fault; as though it were no fault to trust to the favor of fortune rather than the justice of law. The full-grown scholar, setting aside the lessons of his childhood, on his bigger slate, through all the problem persists in reckoning two and two as five, and "sells short," "lives fast," "over-trades" accordingly, and yet wonders at last that his figures are rubbed out as worthless. Doubtless there are exceptions, but as a rule the insolvent need not look to earthquake or tornado as the cause of falling walls, but to the carelessness of his own hand, that by uncounted expenditure or reckless venture has removed the first foundation stone.

### THE WORLD AS WELL AS THE INDIVIDUAL FORGETS THE LESSONS OF ITS CHILDHOOD

Lessons whose analogies reach into politics, morals and religion, as well as the social relations of men. From Agrarianism to Fourierism, from Plato to the blue-eyed dreamers of Brook Farm and the Susquehanna, there have been sentimentalists who attributed the misery of the race to the circumstances, rather than the character of men, and insisted that unchanged man in a changed world would find Paradise and keep it—that upon a redistribution of estates, the establishment of a just democracy, and the leveling of social distinctions, pauperism, crime and cruelty would finally cease, and the newly adjusted ranks of men keep elbow-touch together in the fraternal march of progress. In this view of the case no "year of the Lord" is needed, since nothing is required which is not possible to man alone; no "year of grace" (since there is nothing to be forgiven), but only a year of reason.

Just this experiment was tried more than three thousand years ago, and to that trial and its issue those words of Christ refer.

Israel, rescued from Egyptian bondage, was established in Canaan, a free people without caste, and equal in inheritance in the land. Every man dwelling among his kindred, the

owner of an estate whose fertility was security against want, owing no man and second to none in rank; the highest conditions for the realization and permanence of a perfect human society existed. Yet the law which established this order made provision for its certain failure. It was foreseen that men unrestrained would mar the harmonious fabric, and within fifty years the land be filled on the one side with capitalists and aristocrats, and on the other with paupers, vagrants and slaves. *The history of this disruption of society is clearly indicated. Its first step in debt (not obligation simply, but in the narrower and more usual scriptural sense of the word, obligation beyond ability)—and debt is branded as sin.*

Thus, in Matthew's account of the Lord's Prayer, "debt is used as equivalent to "trespass," i.e., "transpas," going beyond. And in Luke we are taught to pray, "Forgive us our sins: for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us." The Apostle also exhorts his brethren, "See that ye go not beyond, and defraud one another." The debtor accordingly is represented as "poor," not simply as diminished in property, but as having passed the line from positive to negative, from possession to want.

So long as every Israelite was content with the fruits of his estate, and limited his liabilities by his income, there could be neither pauper nor millionaire, and lord nor serf, the equilibrium of society must be unbroken. Dis-organization came from no outward necessity, making men its victims, but from voluntary transgression by the covetous and extravagant.

Honest traffic is the interchange of actual values—it tends to frankness, maintains equality, and binds men in unity. It is within the law. Speculation abandons law to trust to fortune; dealing not in the actual but the possible, the gain of the one party is the other's loss. It leads to subtlety and strife, and widens the chasm between men. Debt is a kind of speculation, a presumptuous going beyond law, and therefore against law, safe only to a miracle worker greater than law. Doubtless it is because of the specious form of this temptation in suretyship that Solomon so condemns it. The generosity which yields to it is too often unjust. From the lending of great names to lottery frauds, down to the commendation of patent medicines untasted, and worthless books unread, men have thus made themselves hopeless debtors of the credulous people. There is no form of indebtedness more thoughtlessly incurred, and in the end more keenly resented as unjust than suretyship. If the debtor can pay, why is a surety

needed? If the surety can pay, why does he not lend to the debtor? If neither can pay, the creditor is defrauded at last.

Tempted in whatever form, it is the step "beyond," which changes just dealing into debt, and plants the seed of the upas tree.

*The step is irretrievable.* It is going beyond his depth—his struggles held to drown him. Debt is an elastic band that tightens as it stretches. The want of the borrower measures the extortion of the lender. As deserts are rainless because they are so dry, so the destruction of the poor is their poverty." Debt runs while men sleep, as well as when they wake, and they can not overtake it. The debtor Israelite soon parts with his inheritance. It was his co-worker, multiplying the seed he sowed, and returning it in harvests; it was his home, a perpetual fountain of youth to his weary body and burdened spirit. His resources thus dwindle as the debt grows. Without capital, he is like a bird without legs, and cannot start to fly. Without home, he is a vagabond, broken in spirit and irresolute.

The down-hill stride is swift. He is soon the bondsman of the creditor. It is the last plunge into despair—for not only the past but the future is now sold; the slave's earnings are not counted; the possibility of restoration is cut off.

This is the history of transgression. Debt turns to slavery. Seeking to add to his gains, the creditor loses himself—reaching beyond the safe verge, he topples into the gulf.

*There is no hope of relief from man.* The enslaved debtor at length ceases to struggle with his chains, and resigns himself to apathy and sullenness. The creditor grows fiercer with the taste of blood. The rugged mountains rise higher as the valleys deepen. The level "way" for "the people" seems less and less possible of realization. The tree will not land its strength and height to the vine to lift it into sunlight, but rather uses its thick foliage to stifle it. Men's hands grow colder as they climb higher, and the care of great riches brings a perpetual frown—so the poor are chilled, and creep away. The land of freedom, equality and plenty has become a chaos, its families scattered, its freemen wearing the yoke, giants sucking the blood of dwarfs, and the bitter waters of poverty submerging the multitude. On the side of the oppressor there was power; but they had no comforter.

*Therefore comes the year of the Lord.* The shrill voice of the trumpet rings throughout the land. It is a kingly signal. Starting as the shout of the

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## A.D.

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royal herald, or the flash of the scarlet robe, it tells that **"the Lord is come,"** who **"judgeth the poor with equity."** No man might interfere between creditor and debtor, but "the oppressed and the oppressor are His." **"The land is Mine,"** He declares; **"ye are but sojourners;"** **"it shall not be sold forever;"** **"the people are My servants;"** **"they shall not be sold as bondsmen;"** **"proclaim liberty throughout all the land, to all the inhabitants thereof."** At the word, the gathered estates of the extortioner dissolve, the hands of the oppressor loosen; in clay-pit, and forest, and harvest-field, the bondsman shakes off his shackles and looks up and from every quarter "the redeemed of the Lord come with songs" back to their long-lost homes.

It is a royal restoration. Whether the debt be large or small, the bondage long or short, there is no sordid calculation; every man is wholly free, and returns to his unbroken inheritance.

It is not without significance that this happy hour comes on the great day of atonement. The cancellation of debt is no arbitrary reasonless act. Debt is an offence against the law, and the law is just, therefore the people, "rich and poor, high and low together," are reminded in the tabernacle of Him, to whom they alike owe all things, and recognizing their forfeited life in the substituted victim and scattered blood, and the certainty of purchased forgiveness in the welcome return of the high priest from the Holy of Holies, they are ready to yield to the justice of the demand that they should forgive as they have been forgiven. Justice and mercy alike attend the coming of "the acceptable year of the Lord."

**ALL THIS IS A PROPHECY OF CHRIST'S COMING AND THE WORLD'S YEAR OF GRACE**

God taught the world "in divers parts," as we teach our children letters before words. Christ is "the Word," gathering these fragmentary truths of the Old Testament into Himself, "the Truth." That the vision might be narrow, and the outline distinct, the history of the world's bondage and deliverance was thus epitomized in a single land and nation.

When Christ read these words in the synagogue at Nazareth, and declared their fulfillment, the world had fallen into disorder, as Palestine before the Jubilee. Nations oppressed and oppressing one another, society broken into castes full of mutual

hatred, the rich surfeited, the poor famished, the rabble clinging to idols, philosophers despising them yet despairing of the truth the earth "filled with thorns and briars," and the "whole creation groaning and travailing together." To such proportions, sweeping away the inheritance of the race, and bringing them into bondage, grew the first debt of disobedience, the first transgression—"going beyond." The trickling rill has swollen to a roaring tide of blood—"sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." For a thousand years the "desire of all nations" had been awaited—some "Elias," who should "restore all things"—the Messiah of whom the Samaritan woman said, "He will tell us all things."

"In the fullness of time" Christ did come, the Redeemer and deliverer, and from His coming even the world which rejected Him began to write "A. D.," "the year of our Lord;" not the year of the beginning of His power or love, but of His coming to us and more perfect manifestation.

Democracy, in Moses' time, thrust supernaturally into the soil of an unprepared age, took no root, and soon died, but now, in milder atmosphere, this thought of God appears again, unfolding this time from the earth, and coming to fruition. God, in that day, must by a strong arm unlock the jaws of the sea, to let His people pass through, so delivering them from the "lion's mouth." But now the child taught of God "lays his hand upon the ocean's mane," and subdues the cruel forces of nature, making them his messengers. The lost crown of dominion over nature seems to be offered, ready to be restored, in fact, as it is in promise, to the ransomed, who "love His appearing."

But the year of jubilee was for Israel only. Others dwelt in the land, but the silver trumpet left them unredeemed, their debt uncanceled. The mere progress of time can save no man. Generations are not born into Christianity; the saints of the Old Testament were saved by the Gospel, and sinners of the New Testament are lost under the law. All the figures of astronomy, and the perfectness of its lenses, cannot reveal the stars to me, except as the heavens are ensphered in my eye, and repeated in its measures. So you, who have repeated in your experience the world's sad history, and by transgression been "sold under sin," must also have a Bethlehem and Calvary in your heart, ere you can rejoice in this year as a "year of grace." It is useless to inquire what and how heavy is the debt you

owe to God. What if it be beyond your power to computation? The force of the blow does not always measure its destructiveness. The child's careless stroke may shatter the slender statue, which genius has patiently wrought. The thoughtlessness of the world does not measure the limits of wrong done, or the price of reparation. It has blighted an innocent spirit, and robbed the world of a happy life. No lingering remorse, no studious tenderness henceforth can pay the debt. How then shall we measure the blow that mars that delicate and wonderful fabric, God's perfect law! how, for example, comprehended the ruin wrought by a scalding oath dropped into the sensitive heart of a child!

It matters little whether the debt is great or small, if payment is hopeless. It is enough to know that, "made to have dominion" over God's works, you are a stranger in your inheritance, and a "servant of servants," instead of a "prince of God." Yet your hopelessness is your only ground of hope, for the message of mercy is to the "poor," the "captive," the "bruised." "As many as received Him to them gave He power to become the sons of God."

At length another trumpet will sound, whose shrill voice wakes the dead, announcing that "the year of His redeemed is come," and "the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads." The substance of the truth, which has cast so many shadows into the earth, will then be fully known, and "sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

Are you in Israel? Is this year of grace a year of grace to you? To the Christian as he writes "A. D." beside the numbered years it is the king's token of remembrance that the "year of release" is soon to come.

And to every man it is the king's seal, the still extended offer of a covenant of grace. Receive it and "set to" your "seal that God is true."

(*The Pulpit Treasury*, Dec. 1886, pp. 481-485)

**MARK OF THE BEAST**

Look at your name on the front page of this month's paper. If you see the mark 01-03, so detestable to a Baptist, wash it out by renewal of green-backs. If not your paper will stop next month. We are not able to credit. It is not a good plan.



## Intercessory Prayer

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The God of the Bible is a prayer hearing God. When addressing God, the psalmist said: **"O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come"** (Ps. 65:2). In these words of the psalmist we see the omnipotence and omniscience of God. He can hear our prayers in all places and at all times. Since God is immutable, He must always hear prayers. The hearing of our prayers is His usual practice and pleasure, His native glory. Dark and dismal would this world be without the Hearer of prayers.

How wonderful to know that our prayers, uttered on earth, go up to God's throne in Heaven: **"Then the priests the Levites arose and blessed the people: and their voice was heard, and their prayer came up to his holy dwelling place, even unto heaven"** (II Chron. 30:27). Prayers, which come up into Heaven in a cloud of incense, will come down again on the earth in showers of blessings upon our heads.

The prayers of the saints are sweet perfume to the Lord: **"Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice"** (Ps. 141:2). There is a fourfold resemblance between prayer and the offering of incense. First, the incense had to be beaten before it could be used. Acceptable prayer must come from a broken heart. Second, it was of no use until fire was put under it. Prayer has no power which is not kindled from the Spirit, which we have from our altar, Christ. Third, the incense naturally ascended upwards toward Heaven. Our prayers are designed to ascend unto God's throne in Heaven. Fourth, the incense had a sweet odor. Even so, our prayers are sweet perfume to God. **"And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and 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 the saints"** (Rev. 5:8).

### INTERCESSORY PRAYER

There is such a thing as intercessory prayer. I mean that one person prays for another person. On the great Day of Atonement the high priest in Israel entered with the blood and incense within the veil before the mercy seat, and he made intercession for the people of Israel. It was done in behalf of the nation for the purpose of averting the displeasure and conciliating the favor of Jehovah.

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## Intercessory Prayer

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In Genesis 18:23-32 Abraham offered an intercessory prayer for the righteous who lived in Sodom and Gomorrah. He asked God to spare them if ten righteous souls could be found, but there were not ten righteous souls. God did not spare the cities of the plains, but He did deliver Lot, his wife, and his two daughters from the destruction.

Moses was a man given to intercessory prayer for Israel. It is written in Exodus 32:11: **"And Moses besought the LORD his God, and said, LORD, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou has brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand?"** Moses feared God would destroy the whole nation for worshipping the golden calf. Therefore he prayed for God to spare the people: **"And Moses returned unto the LORD, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin-; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written"** (Ex. 32:31-32). This intercessory prayer of Moses prevailed with God and preserved the nation. In Psalm 106:23 it is written: **"Therefore he said that he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them."** Here we see the power of the intercession of a righteous man with God.

The Apostle Paul made an intercessory prayer for unsaved Israel: **"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved"** (Rom. 10:1). The Peshtigo has it: "The desire of my heart and my intercession with God for them, is, that they might have life." It was the good pleasure of Paul's heart and his entreaty to God on their behalf to the end that they might be saved. We must use all proper means for the conversion of the unsaved. We must offer intercessory prayer in their behalf, for our Lord did: **"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do"** (Luke 23:34). He who cannot pray for the unsaved does not have within him the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

### IT IS NOT WRONG TO REQUEST INTERCESSORY PRAYER

Israel asked the prophet Samuel to intercede with God for them when they were going out to fight with the Philistines: **"And the children of**

**Israel said to Samuel, Cease not to cry unto the LORD our God for us, that he will save us out of the hands of the Philistines"** (I Sam. 7:8; cf. 8:6). When the Israelites committed a great sin by asking for a king God terrified them with thunder in harvest time (I Sam. 12:1-18). **"And all the people said unto Samuel, Pray for thy servants unto the LORD thy God, that we die not: for we have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask us a king"** (I Sam. 12:19; cf. Ps. 99:6).

When Israel sinned and was judged with the fiery serpents they went to Moses and asked him to pray for them: **"Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD, and against thee; pray unto the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people"** (Num. 21:7). Again the intercessory prayer of Moses prevailed with God.

A number of other examples of request for intercessory prayer are found in the Bible. Jeroboam made such a request (I Kings 13:6), and so did Hezekiah (II Kings 19:1-4). Even Zedekiah (Jer. 37:3) and Pharaoh asked for prayer (Ex. 8:8,23).

In many cases God heard these intercessory prayers of his servants. Abraham prayed for Ishmael: **"O that Ishmael might live before thee!"** (Gen. 17:18). God heard and answered this prayer, for in Genesis 17:20 God said to Abraham: **"And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee..."** Miriam spoke against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married (Num. 12:1) and God smote her with leprosy (Num. 12:10). **"And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee"** (Num. 12:13). Because of this prayer of Moses she was completely healed in seven days. The intercessory prayer of Moses also saved the life of his brother, Aaron (Deut. 9:20). The intercessory prayers of the church at Jerusalem got Peter released from jail by an angel (Acts 12:5-12). As a general rule, God hears and answers the intercessory prayers of His people.

It is according to the teaching of Holy Scripture to ask for intercessory prayer in sickness: **"Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual**

**fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much"** (Jas. 5:14-16). This is probably one of the most neglected passages in the New Testament.

It is worth noting that the sick person must call for the elders of the church. It does not say the elders must call on the sick person. Here we have both prayer and medical means used by the elders of the church. Oil was used in healing (Luke 10:34) and so was prayer. Both these things were to be used in the name of the Lord. The anointing and prayer by the elders of the church was designed to result in bodily healing. Here we see the great worth of intercessory prayer when a church member is sick. It is not wrong to use medical means, but this must be mixed with effectual fervent prayer. This is to follow the example of our Lord's disciples: **"And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them"** (Mark 6:13).

The Apostle Paul was a man of great intercessory prayer. To the church at Rome he wrote: **"For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers"** (Rom. 1:9). To the Thessalonians he wrote: **"Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith"** (I Thess. 3:10). He prayed for many people, but he also wanted people to intercede with God for him: **"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel"** (Eph. 6:18-19).

James Vaughan expressed so well how we need the prayers of those we love:

*I need the prayers of those I love,  
While traveling o'er life's rugged way,  
That I true and faithful be,  
And live for Jesus every day.  
I want my friends to pray for me,  
To bear my tempted soul above,  
And intercede with God for me  
I need the prayers of those I love.*

Mary, Queen of Scots, said she feared John Knox's prayers more than all her enemies. Her fears were well grounded. One night while he was praying word came to Knox that "bloody Mary" was dead.

### THE VALUE OF INTERCESSORY PRAYER

Intercessory prayer is an exercise of great worth. First, it is to carry out the command of God. In our prayers

we must not merely think of number one. We must give consideration to others. Jesus taught us in the example prayer: **"Our Father which art in heaven..."** (Matt. 6:9). Please note in this example prayer Christ taught His disciples to pray "our," "we," and "us," not "I," "my," and "me."

Second, it helps us to conquer a selfish spirit, which we have by nature. Intercessory prayer will help us develop love to our fellow man. Jesus taught us: **"Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you"** (Luke 6:28).

Third, when we engage in intercessory prayer we follow after some noble examples. We walk in the beaten path which was trod by Abraham, Moses, Samuel, Elijah, Jeremiah, Jesus Christ, Paul, and many good and godly believers who lived in former times. In other words, it put us in some of the best company who ever walked the face of the earth.

Fourth, people who pray for others may be the means of these other people obtaining blessings from the Lord. The prayer of Abraham saved Lot and his family from destruction. The prayer of Moses preserved the nation of Israel on more than one occasion. The prayers of the Jerusalem church resulted in Peter's deliverance from jail. The prayer of faith by the elders of the church can deliver a man from bodily sickness. Intercessory prayer may save a man from the chastening hand of God: **"If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death..."** (I John 5:16).

### THERE IS NO MERIT IN PRAYER

Prayer supposes the absence of all claims, for what a man can claim he needs not to pray for. It is not a demand, but it is an appeal for mercy. **"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. 4:16). In our sins and suffering we may merely seek God's pity and compassion. His mercy can only be obtained as we rely upon the advocacy of our Intercessor.

God is sovereign in His mercy, and He can heed or refuse our request, according to His good pleasure. **"And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy"** (Ex. 33:19). It is never written: "I will be angry at whom I will be angry," for

*Continued on page 9*



## Intercessory Prayer

*Continued from page 8*

God's wrath is always holy and just. But He does say He will show mercy on whom He will show mercy, for mercy is always free. God is a debtor to none. He will have mercy on whom He pleases.

Had God's mercy refused every prayer, justice would have received no violation. That God has a right to answer prayers is beyond challenge. If God were under obligation to hear prayer and bestow mercy, then mercy would no longer be mercy. Obligation is justice, not mercy. If we recognized the sovereignty of Divine Mercy, our prayers would be more humbly submitted and answers would kindle a loftier praise.

All prayers for mercy must be based on the atoning blood of Christ. Our prayers and services **"acceptable to God by Jesus Christ"** (I Peter 2:5). This is why we must pray in the name of Jesus Christ (John 16:24). To pray in the name of Jesus means to pray as a servant, bound to attend to Christ's interest, bound to consult His wishes, bound to carry out His purposes. This is how to pray an acceptable prayer for God's mercy and grace. Always ask God to answer your prayers for Jesus's sake. **INTERCESSORY PRAYER HAS LIMITS**

That there are limits on prayer even when offered by the best of men is clearly seen in my text. Even the intercessory prayers of Moses and Samuel would not avail in the case of backsliding Judah. The Lord told Jeremiah: **"Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me for I will not hear thee"** (Jer. 7:16; cf. 11:14). Here intercessory prayer is plainly forbidden.

People can become so steeped in sin until there is no remedy. Of Judah it was written: **"But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy"** (II Chron. 36:16). Prevailing prayer is dependent on the conditions of the people for whom we pray. In some cases the hour of hope has been lost. When this is the case neither the intercession of Moses, Samuel, or Jeremiah can avail for such a people.

It is an ill omen to people when God restrains His preachers and people from praying for those He is determined to punish. God forbids prayer for those believers who sin unto bodily death: **"There is a sin**

**unto death. I do not say that he shall pray for it"** (I John 5:16). We have no warrant to pray for a believer whose body is about to suffer Divine discipline.

### THE GREAT INTERCESSOR

It is the prerogative of the eternal Word to be the only Intercessor in the other world. To mediate and intercede are both conciliatory acts. An intercessor interposes for the removal of sins. A mediator pleads for the attainment of good. Even so, our Intercessor, Christ, asks the Father to remove our guilt (I John 2:1). As our Mediator, He pleads for the blessings of grace and salvation for us (Rom. 8:34). Christ is our Intercessor by virtue of His relationship to the Father. He is our Mediator by virtue of His atonement, by which act He takes upon Himself the sins of all who truly repents.

Christ does not ask for undeserved favors as we do in prayer. Therefore there is a great gulf between His prayers and ours. Christ desires nothing on our behalf but for which He laid down the price. The blood of sprinkling, mentioned in the Book of Hebrews (Heb. 12:24), is a reference to the blood of the sacrifices, which were to be sprinkled before the mercy seat by which the high priest did intercede for the people of Israel. The blood of Christ is equivalent to the voice of a supplicant. The intercession of our Lord is grounded upon merit, and Divine justice demands that His prayers prevail. There is no limit to the intercessory prayers of Jesus Christ.

As God, He pleads for nothing but what is the will of God (Heb. 10:7-9). It was the Father's will that Christ give Himself as a sacrifice. It is upon the perfect fulfilling of the Father's will that Christ makes His pleas. If Christ's requests were denied, the Father would cross His own will. This cannot be. Hence the intercessory prayers of Christ always prevail with the Father. In John 11:42 our Lord declared: **"And I knew that thou hearest me always..."**

Our Lord is not interceding with a stranger, but with His Father, the One loves Him (John 5:20) and withholds nothing from Him (Ps. 2:8). The Father and Christ have one essence and will. What Christ wills, the Father wills. What Christ desires is granted, for what He interceded for is the Father's will (John 10:30).

If we desire to make an intercessory prayer with God, we must pray for the same thing for which Christ intercedes. If while we are praying, and Christ is praying for the same thing, how can we doubt but what it will be granted? Though we deserved to be denied because of our sins,

Christ's prayer always prevails with God for us. The pleas of our Lord are irresistible. They satisfy the law, magnify grace, and glory the Father.

### CONCLUSION

1. Intercessory prayer is well pleasing to God when it is offered according to His will. **"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him"** (I John 5:14-15; cf. 3:22). If we pray under the influence and guidance of the Holy Spirit, we will pray according to His will (Rom. 8:26-27). To pray contrary to His will is not prayer, but rebellion.

2. There is a limit to our intercessory prayers. Our prayers cannot change God or His Divine purpose. Prayer does change us and makes us willing to submit to His will.

3. It is not wrong to ask favors from God for others. We are at liberty to fully unburden our soul to God. But we must intercede for others, knowing there is a limit to the long-suffering and forbearance of God. We must never attempt to dictate ultimate courses to the Supreme Being. We must pray and trust His righteousness and sovereignty. Our heavenly Father yields us many privileges as sons, yet as Lord of all He retains His majesty.

4. As Christians we are to pray for all kinds of men. **"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour"** (I Tim. 2:1-3). To fail to pray for people who have asked an interest in our prayers is a sin. Samuel told the Israelites: **"Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you..."** (I Sam. 12:23).

## Sovereign Grace

*Continued from page 1*

as human reason can see, irreconcilable with each other, yet both asserted in the same breath, and without the slightest intimation that the apostle is aware of any contradiction between them. Divine sovereignty and efficiency on the one hand, and human freedom and responsibility on the other. . . God the worker of all good, yet man called upon to work out his own salvation. We are usually content to hold each

of these truths at different times, and we are greatly perplexed when we are required to grasp both of them together. We are like the child who tries at the same moment to hold in its little hand two oranges. It can hold one, but so surely as it attempts to take up the other, it is compelled to drop the first. So God's working and man's working are both of them truths, but our intellects are too infantile as yet to be able at once to grasp them both.

Cecil once said, in substance, that the preacher who preached the whole truth of God would sometimes be accused of being a hyper-Calvinist; and that the preacher who preached the whole truth of God would at other times be accused of being an out and out Arminian. And F. W. Robertson is but the type of a multitude of candid thinkers, when he tells us that he was in great trouble so long as he sought man's free agency, and that he founded rest only when he finally determined that both were true, and that he would preach them both, but that he would forever give over any attempt to understand or to explain the relation between them.

But Paul stands on a loftier height than either Cecil or Robertson. What to us seems contradiction is to him as if it were not. He seems to discern the inner harmony between the divine and the human activities. He walks with firm and elastic step along the edge of these fathomless abysses of thought, and as for the depths of mystery, he does not even notice them. For my part I count it a proof of his inspiration. No merely human tongue could thus speak of the problem of the ages without effort to speculate or explain. I can not understand Paul's calm declaration of the twofold truth without supposing that God lifted Paul up to something like his own divine point of view, and then enabled Paul to speak as the oracles of God.

### ONE-SIDED ATTEMPTS AT SYSTEMATIZING

While the ordinary reader of Scripture has contented himself with holding each of these truths alternately, the makers of theological systems have very often tried to do better, and to embrace both in a rightly proportioned and organic whole. But we have to confess that, owing to the limitations of the human intellect which I have already alluded to, whether these be original and permanent, or super induced by sin and destined to gradual removal, the success of the systematizers has been far from complete. They have been constantly tempted to purchase a seeming unity by a partial ignoring of the one or the other element of the

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# The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit questions on any Bible topic

The Berea Baptist Banner

PO Box 39

Mantachie, Mississippi 38855

Does the word "study" in I Thessalonians 4:11 have the same meaning as the word "study" in II Timothy 2:15? ---  
Mississippi



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In I Thessalonians 4:11 the word study means to emulate others or be ambitious in trying to be equal to or even try to go beyond others in being a good example for others.

The context of this passage of Scripture teaches that the Lord's people are not to fret over trying to be like the majority but strive to attend to their own affairs and stay out of other people's business. Christians should strive to be good neighbors, friendly, not tale-bearers, but lead a peaceable and quiet life in godliness, being honest, not a loafer or seeking for others to help provide for them instead of working honestly and earning their own provisions.

In the context of this Scripture there were some that taught that the Lord had already come and they quit supporting themselves and looked for others to help them. The Lord says we are to take care of ourselves in order that we might help others disabled etc., but never encourage loafers by helping them who need only because they are busy bodies in others affairs because of their leisure time.

In II Timothy 2:15 the word study means to be diligent in the pursuit of learning and teaching God's Word. We are to strive to stick to the essentials of truth and not argue about philosophies or man's ideas. We should strive by the aid of the Holy Spirit to rightly divide or harmonize all Scripture. We must be sure we never take Scripture out of context, interpret Scripture (spiritualize) to make it coincide with our own doctrines.

Study here in this passage means to be absolutely certain we are very diligent to ascertain the true meaning of all Scripture in harmony with all other Scripture and especially as a teacher be sure we teach what the Scriptures say rather than what we might think or want them to say. We

must be objective in our searching the Scriptures realizing that the Word of God is God Himself speaking to us. We should be sure we have striven to the best of our ability by prayer, much study, and work to know the truth of God's Word.

GARNER SMITH



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There are two different Greek words used to express the English word study, with similar connotations. In I Thessalonians 4:11 the Greek word for "study" is *philotimeomai*, which carries with it the idea of striving to bring something to pass, or to make it their aim to be quiet and work with their own hands.

In II Timothy 2:15 the Greek word for "study" is *spoudazō*, which means to give all diligence to the task of rightly dividing and applying the Word of God. In both verses the idea of striving or endeavoring to accomplish a specific end is in view.



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The meaning of the Greek word translated "study" in I Thessalonians 4:11 is: "to be fond of honor, to be actuated by love of honor; to be ambitious, to strive earnestly, make it one's aim" (Strong). It is used of the aim of the believer to be quiet, do his own business and to work with his own hands. This word is translated "strive" in Romans 15:20 of Paul's aim in preaching the Gospel in places where it had not been preached before; and in II Corinthians 5:9 it is translated "labour," the aim of believers that they might be accepted at the judgment seat of Christ. It is

used of being ambitious and making it a point of honor to do so.

There is a different word used in II Timothy 2:15. This Greek word signifies "to hasten to do a thing, to exert oneself, endeavor, give diligence" (W. E. Vine). It is translated "give diligence" in II Peter 1:10 "to make your calling and election sure." In Ephesians 4:3, "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit. . ."; and in Hebrews 4:11, "Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest. . ." It is more than being ambitious. It is to be earnest in exerting one's self.

DAVID O'NEAL



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The word study found in I Thessalonians 4:11 and II Timothy 2:15 do not convey the same meaning. Different subjects are considered. Also, different Greek words are used in the verses we are dealing with.

Since Paul is about to present truth relating to the Second Coming of Christ, which he does in the verses following I Thessalonians 4:11, the apostle instructs these saints as to their duties as they await the coming of the Lord. They were to have an ambition to be quiet as opposed to being busybodies in the affairs of their brethren. They were to continue to do their own business, not forsaking their work, becoming dependent on others. Since they, as we, do not know the time our Lord will come we must study to be quiet and do our own business. We cannot let the doctrine of the Second Coming of Christ be used as an excuse to sit down and wait for His return. We must support ourselves and contribute to the support of others who have legitimate need.

The word "study" in II Timothy 2:5 has to do with the knowledge we are to have of the Scriptures. God's children, especially His ministers, must spend much time in study in order to rightly divide the Word of

God. One cannot plow a straight furrow or give a proper interpretation of Scripture while ignorant of the truths given in Scripture. Study of God's Word is to be done for the purpose of declaring truth always. False preachers and teachers study in order to use the Word deceitfully to present an agenda which benefits them and draws for them a great following. If one studies the Scripture for any purpose than proclaiming the Word in the way God intended they will give answer to Him in the day of their judgment.

JIMMIE B. DAVIS

## BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 10-31-2002 to 11-29-2002

Beginning Balance .....	\$2,139.33
RECEIPTS	
TOTAL .....	2,139.33
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio Time .....	852.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES .....	852.00
BALANCE .....	\$1,287.33

## CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT

Beginning Balance .....	\$2,253.32
RECEIPT	
Total .....	2,253.32
EXPENDITURES:	
WCTT .....	200.00
Total Expenditures .....	200.00
ENDING BALANCE .....	\$2,053.32

## BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 10-31-2002 to 11-30-2002

Beginning Balance .....	\$4,773.26
RECEIPTS:	
B.C. of Brimfield, Brimfield, IL .....	20.70
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS .....	200.00
Berea M. B.C., Mansfield, OH .....	50.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL .....	60.00
Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX .....	30.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne WV .....	300.00
Cedar Grove B. C., Millport, AL .....	50.00
Central Avenue B. C., Tampa, FL .....	25.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL .....	20.00
Faith B. C., Clarksville, TN .....	100.00
Faith M. B. C., Lynn, AR .....	25.00
Gail Knowles, Scarborough, ME .....	20.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY .....	100.00
Grace B. M., Marion, IL .....	25.00
Hillcrest B. C., Winton-Salem, NC .....	50.00
Letson Farrell, Long Beach, MS .....	120.00
Meadow Branch B. C., Millport, AL .....	50.00
Morris St. B. C., Hobbs, NM .....	300.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH .....	100.00
New Testament B. C., Bristol, TN .....	10.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN .....	50.00
Ocoonita M. B. C., Keokee, VA .....	40.00
Philadelphia B. C., Aztec, NM .....	25.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL .....	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Columbus, MS .....	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Galena, OH .....	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL .....	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Raleigh, NC .....	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Silsbee, TX .....	30.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA .....	200.00
Wendell Beall, Cedarville, WV .....	80.00
Subscriptions .....	41.00
Anon. ....	14.81
Sub Total .....	\$2,486.51
TOTAL .....	\$7,259.77
EXPENDITURES:	
Wages .....	3,200.00
Printing .....	468.50
Postage .....	974.52
FICA taxes .....	244.81
Supplies .....	81.00
Total Expenditures .....	4,968.83
.....	2,290.94
Bank charge July & August .....	-17.89
ENDING BALANCE .....	\$2,273.05



# The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit questions on any Bible topic

The Berea Baptist Banner

PO Box 39

Mantachie, Mississippi 38855

Who are "taken captive" by Satan-- unbelievers or believers (II Timothy 2:26)? -- Mississippi



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I believe to understand this verse we must take it in context with verses 14-26. The context here is dealing with those who have gotten caught up in heresy of false teachers and in so doing have erred from the truth and allowed the devil to control their thinking concerning their doctrine and practice.

It seems to me the application here is to the minister to be patient, to make sure they rightly understand the truth and with a meek spirit seek to rescue those caught up in error by instructing the fallen with the truth.

It is only with the truth that one can be rescued from the devices of the devil. There are no fleshly means or methods regardless of how great the efforts of rescue may be. The only effectual weapon against Satan and the only means of reaching a wayward believer or lost sinner is by the power of the truth.

Certainly all lost sinners are in the clutches of Satan, but also believers are from time to time led astray by Satan through false teachers of the Scriptures.

The Lord's ministers can never help those captive to Satan by arguing or striving over foolish and unlearned philosophies of man, but he must be patient, loving, and instructed in the Word of God to influence one effectually for Christ.

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I believe that it is speaking of unbelievers. The believer has been delivered from the power of darkness and has been translated into the

kingdom of God's Son (Col. 1:13). As a child of light, he is not of the night, nor of darkness (I Thess. 5:5). His faith can be tried by Satan as was Peter in Luke 22:31-32; but Satan can do no more than he is allowed by God, as in the case of Job (Job 2:6).

The unbeliever is said to walk ". . . according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph. 2:2). Paul speaking before Agrippa of the vision he had received, that God had sent him to minister to the Gentiles, "To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me" (Acts 26:18). The believer is said to be delivered from the power of Satan unto God.

When the lost are saved, they recover themselves out of the snare of Satan. They had been led captive by Satan at his will, but now they are led into the glorious liberty of the children of God (Rom. 8:21). The gospel is the good news that the Spirit uses to deliver from the power of Satan.

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In II Timothy chapter two, Paul emphasizes the importance of truth properly presented (2:15), and the dangers of error taught by the uninstructed. Profane and vain babblings bring an increase in ungodliness (v. 16). Error, when taught by men like Hymenaeus and Philetus whether in the day of Paul or in our day, proves to be a very dangerous thing. Even though these dangers are real, Paul informs us that the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are his" (v. 19).

Those who name the name of

Christ are told to depart from iniquity (iniquitous views and religious observances). The fact that Timothy was to instruct those that oppose themselves (people holding different opinions), seems to picture these people as unlearned and undisciplined ones who have been led astray by erroneous teaching. Timothy is told that if God grant them repentance they can recover themselves. In my opinion unsaved men cannot recover themselves, or as the Greek affirms--awake to soberness. Nothing disturbs me more as a pastor than seeing regenerated people who have fallen into the snare of the devil's false doctrines, people who appear to be taken captive by Satan so easily when unsound teaching rears its ugly head.

I have some dear preacher friends, whom I love in the Lord, who, in my opinion have been ensnared by false doctrine. My prayer is that God may grant them repentance that they may recover themselves.

The fact that some are taken captive does not mean that they lose salvation, but become vessels of dishonor in the service of the Lord.

JIMMIE B. DAVIS



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II Timothy 2:26 declares: "And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will."

Unbelievers who are dead in trespasses and in sins are in the captivity of Satan. They oppose themselves in the sense that they will not hear or heed the message of the Gospel. The man of God has the responsibility to patiently preach and teach the truth of the Gospel to them in spite of their deplorable condition. It is sad to think that there are multitudes of people trapped and controlled by Satan. Only the power of the glorious Gospel of Christ applied by the Holy Spirit is able to

deliver unbelievers from the bondage of Satan (Eph. 2:1-6). May God give us grace to faithfully preach the Gospel of grace and fervently pray that God will make it effectual in the hearts of sinners. Then, and only then will they experience the freedom and liberty that is in Christ Jesus.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Salem Missionary Baptist Church of Willow Hill, IL is having special services January 16th -19th. Scheduled speakers are Bro. Larry Lafferty, Bro. Jeff Short and Bro. Scott Johnson. For more information contact Pastor Billy Holbrook at 618-592-3806 or email holfam5@shawneelink.net.

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## Sovereign Grace

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problem.

Many a scheme of doctrine has been built upon the single datum of human freedom. Freedom itself has been defined as the liberty of indifference, the soul's power to act without motive or contrary to the strongest motive, and such freedom has been declared to be the measure of obligation. The result has been the denial of all responsibility for our native depravity, all certainty of man's universal sinfulness and dependence upon Christ, all permanence of holy character in the redeemed or of unholy character in the lost, all predetermination or even foreknowledge by God of human free acts or final destinies. . . a self-dependent, self-righteous religion, in which the glory is given to man, not to God.

And then, on the other hand, many a system has been built upon the single datum of God's sovereignty, and man's freedom has been recognized only in name. Because God works all and in all, man's working has been ignored, and the human will has been made only the passive instrument of the divine efficiency and purpose. The result has been that human individuality has been lost sight of; the personality of man has been merged in the totality of the race; the race itself is but the automatic executor of an eternal decree; conscience is lulled to sleep; responsibility becomes a dream; sin is no longer guilt, but misfortune; men are saved or lost, no longer because of what they are or what they do, but only because it was so determined from eternity.

A faith like this may have in it some grain of truth, and may be far better than no religion at all, but it is dangerously defective. It plays into the hands of modern materialism with its professedly scientific refutation of the theistic, it is only because the necessitarian element in it is not carried to its logical consequences. Let it have its way unchecked and unchallenged, and Christianity becomes a dead orthodoxy, whose deadness is evidenced by indolence and immorality of life.

### SCRIPTURE TEACHES ESSENTIAL CALVINISM

Now it is this last error which, in certain quarters, is most prevalent, and which it is my present purpose to test by an appeal to Scripture and to consciousness. But before I do this it is important to notice that in the passage which I just now quoted the Apostle Paul does not urge human duty

by denying or undervaluing the divine activity. He does not inculcate man's work by disparaging God's. Nay, he not only recognizes both, but he bases the duty of the former upon the fact of the latter. "**Work out your own salvation,**" he tells us, "**for it is God that worketh in you.**"

As between the Calvinistic and the Arminian scheme then, the Calvinistic is much the better, for it presents the more fundamental truth, the truth which human nature tends most to deny, the truth which we need most to recognize. An awe-inspiring view of God's working will nerve the soul, so that inaction will be impossible. If is not true, conversely that a strong conviction of human power will lead to dependence upon God. The Scotch Covenanters knew what practical religion was. The English Church of the eighteenth century hardly did.

And the difference was determined largely by their creeds. To know that God is at work in us gives hope and courage. All things are possible to him who believes in this. But to be thrown back upon self and the strength of my unstable will for my security of salvation, this is weakening and depressing. Therefore, Paul tells us that in our very working we are to recognize already the working of God and the pledge of victory.

No synergism here; no recognition of an equal partnership between man and God much less of a co-operation to be symbolized by a tandem team, in which man leads and God follows; nor a "working out," on man's part, of what God, on His part, "works in." All this misses the point entirely. Paul's idea is that God is in all, and man in all, so that man is to go forward joyfully, in the faith that every movement is the revelation of a divine energy within him, and that his success is not by might or power of his own, but by the Spirit of the Lord. Whatever stage of progress it is God who has wrought all his works in him, that unto these very works he has been created in Christ Jesus, according to the eternal ordination of God, and therefore he shall ever cry: "**Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory!**"

### LIMITATIONS OF THE DOCTRINE OF DIVINE AGENCY

Having thus vindicated my position as a genuine Calvinist, I wish to point out certain limitations of this doctrine of divine agency. And the first is that, while God is said to be the worker of all good, he is not said to be the worker of all evil. There has been a hyper-Calvinism that has practically taught this. It has made God the only actor in the universe.

Because all things are included in his plan, it has been supposed that he must work all by his actual efficiency. And when it has been objected that this must make God the direct author of sin in human hearts, and that the responsibility of sin is thus transferred from man to God, such men as Hopkins and Emmons have responded that the moral quality of action does not depend upon its cause, but only upon its nature.

It is difficult to find words strong enough to express the instinctive indignation of the unsophisticated mind at his slanderous imputation upon God and at the perverse reasoning with which it is supported. Is it possible to suppose that a human being, created with a will set against holiness and efficiently caused to exercise his evil propensities, would still be responsible for the possession of this will and for the exercise of these propensities? Yet this must be true, if the moral quality of activity does not at all depend upon its cause. God might make a man evil, and yet for his evil, not God, but man might be responsible. This can not be. We can hold man responsible for his evil nature only upon the assumption that

man is himself, in some proper sense, the originator of it.

I do not now inquire whether there may not be a race-unity and a race responsibility, in virtue of which humanity is an organic whole, and constitutes one moral person before God. I only claim that no man's evil dispositions can be accounted guilty unless their origin can be traced back to some self-determined transgression committed either in his individual capacity or in his connection with the race. We are guilty only of that sin which we have originated or have had a part in originating. Indeed, there is no other sin than this. Sin is never God's work but always man's. Within the bounds of the human race. . . and of this only we are speaking. . . sin is not caused by beings or by things outside of us. It is due neither directly to God's efficiency nor indirectly, to the circumstances in which God has placed us. Man's sin comes from himself, and each man is tempted when he is drawn away by his own lust and enticed.

*(The Baptist Quarterly Review, Vol. V, pp. 220-226, 1883 Edition)*



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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### WOMAN MURDERED AFTER REPORTEDLY WITNESSING TO HOMOSEXUAL

By Bob Kellogg

*A killing in Chicago last week could turn "hate crimes" laws on their head.*

A brutal murder in Chicago last week highlights the double standard surrounding hate crimes. A homosexual killed a woman that was trying to witness to him. Will authorities call the killing a hate crime and will the media report it in the same way they did the Matthew Shepard murder?

Nineteen-year-old Nicholas Gutierrez is charged with first degree murder in the slaying of 51-year-old Mary Stachowicz. He allegedly beat, stabbed and hid her body in his apartment after she told him God would not approve of his lifestyle. The two were co-workers. Gutierrez allegedly has said he was enraged because it reminded him of heated debates with his mother. Relatives say Stachowicz was probably trying to help.

Peter LaBarbera, of Concerned

Women for America, was pointed in his response to this crime.

"This woman, Mary Stachowicz, was killed evidently because she was sharing the truth about homosexuality to a gay activist." LaBarbera said, "We will be waiting to see, now, if the media treats this case like it treated the Matthew Shepard case."

So far it has not. Laura Montgomery, of Soulforce—a gay-activist organization—seemed to avoid the hate crime aspect of the incident.

"Our understanding of the Bible in no way condemns sexual orientation or the love that two people of the same sex feel towards one another," Montgomery said.

But, when pressed, Montgomery grudgingly said she might consider this murder a hate crime.

"If it was directed at this person and intended to intimidate Christians, that would be a hate crime in my mind," Montgomery said.

For LaBarbera, this murder was

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## The Bible & Newspaper

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blatantly a hate crime.

"It's going to be hard for people to say this is not an anti-Christian hate crime committed by a homosexual activist. But I fully expect the media to not pay a lot of attention to this case."

Prosecutors say they are considering the death penalty for Gutierrez.

The Cook County State's Attorney's office says since Gutierrez is being charged with murder, a hate crime would be irrelevant.

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### COHABITATION LEVELS ARE ON THE RISE

One out of four women who live with their boyfriends say they don't expect to marry him, which may mean cohabitation is gaining ground as a lifestyle unto itself, a new study says.

"For so long, we've been looking at cohabitation as potentially leading to marriage or even a step in the marriage process—like an engagement," said University of Michigan sociologist Pamela J. Smock, who co-authored a paper on cohabiting in this month's *Journal of Family Issues*.

Now there's a solid minority of cohabiting couples who "explicitly say they do not plan to marry," she said. A survey of 715 cohabiting women in 1995 found 26 percent said they did not plan to marry their lover.

If a woman says she doesn't intend to marry the man she's living with, it's almost certain she won't, Ms. Smock and co-author Wendy D. Manning of Bowling Green State University in Ohio said in their article, "First Comes Marriage?"

There may even be a message here for the Bush administration, Ms. Smock said, since the government is pushing for more marriage among low-income and welfare families.

Among co-habiting women, the ones with low education levels, low incomes and boyfriends with the same characteristics were the most likely to say they weren't going to marry, she said.

"Putting two and two together, in terms of Bush's marriage initiative, if we're serious about promoting marriage, we have to take care of the educational and economic profiles of young people—especially young men," she said.

Cohabitation has captured the interest of U. S. family-policy experts because it is a steadily growing phenomenon: In 1960, the Census Bureau counted fewer than 500,000 unmarried couples living together. In 2000, it reported 4.7 million cohabiting households (*The Washington Times*, Nov. 18-24, 2002).

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### SENATE VOTES ITSELF ANOTHER PAY RAISE

The Senate last week approved a pay

raise for the fourth consecutive year, bumping senators' and representatives salaries by about \$4,700 to \$154,700.

The Senate, without debate, used its second vote on Nov. 13 to reject 58-36 a measure by Sen. Russell D. Feingold, Wisconsin Democrat, that would have denied the 3.1 percent congressional pay raise.

With the slumping economy and financial markets, layoffs and federal budget deficits, "this is the wrong time for Congress to give itself a pay hike," Mr. Feingold said in a statement.

The House cleared the way for the raise in July. Lawmakers' salaries have risen \$18,000 since the end of 1999.

Under a 1989 law, congressional cost-of-living pay raises pegged to inflation go into effect automatically unless lawmakers vote to block them.

The pay raise, which goes into effect in January, also applies to more than 1,000 top executive branch officials, including the vice president and members of the congressional leadership.

The president's salary of \$400,000 a year is unaffected by the congressional increase.

The first members of Congress received \$6 a day.

In 1855, compensation was set at \$3,000 a year. It hit \$10,000 in 1935, \$60,000 in 1979, and climbed above \$100,000 in 1991. The pay level stalled at \$133,600 during the mid-1990s with lawmakers wary of giving themselves a raise when the federal budget was in deficit, but the raises have continued steadily since then (*The Washington Times*, Nov. 18-24, 2002).

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### SPOKESMAN ADMITS THAT YWCA HAS LOST FOCUS OF ITS CHRISTIAN ROOTS

MILWAUKEE (EP) – The Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), begun in the U.S. in 1858 as an association of "concerned women" of faith, has lost its Christian focus and now concentrates on "empowering women and their families," according to a spokesman for the YWCA of Greater Milwaukee. Crystal McNeal of the YWCA's Milwaukee chapter told the Cybercast News Service (CNS) that it's been a "very, very long time" since the YWCA promoted Christian values.

Reported CNS, "Recently, the YWCA of Greater Milwaukee announced it had partnered with Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin to open two community-based health clinics. The unique partnership arose out of a shared desire to provide low-income and homeless women with free health services, including cancer screening and 'family planning.'"

McNeal told CNS that family planning services offered at the two inner-city Milwaukee cites would be limited to dispensing birth control pills and condoms to the walk-in patients, and

would not include abortions, which are offered at the vast majority of Planned Parenthood clinics across the nation.

While the YWCA has refused to identify itself as a pro-abortion group, since the feminist movement gathered momentum in the late 1960s and '70s the organization has included contraception and abortion in its "progressive" approach to women's health issues, McNeal told CNS.

The YWCA acknowledges that it supports a woman's "right to choose in the matter of abortion based on her own religious and ethical beliefs and her physician's guidance," reported CNS.

Additionally, the group has lobbied for "the repeal of all laws restricting or prohibiting abortions performed by a duly licensed physician and supports public funding for abortions and pre-and post-abortion counseling."

Wendy Wright, senior policy director for Concerned Women for America, argued that if the YWCA is no longer a Christian organization, it may be time for a name change. "If they want to reject Christianity, they need to change their name," Wright told CNS. "Because the YWCA continues to use that name, they are misleading people."

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ST. LOUIS (EP)—The Episcopal News Service (ENS) reported that nearly 200 proponents of a "rite of same-sex blessing" met at Christ Church Cathedral in St. Louis during the Veterans' Day weekend for a strategy session to prepare "for what will surely be the most controversial issue of the next General Convention of the Episcopal Church." The group, which calls itself Claiming the Blessing (CTB), is composed of lesbians, homosexual men, bisexuals, and "transgendered" individuals in the Episcopal Church. CTB's executive director, Susan Russell, told the crowd, "Our persistent God does indeed seek to change us. . .but the change God desires for us is not our sexual orientation but our theological orientation. It's not our gender identity but our spiritual identity." Another CTB officer, Elizabeth Kaeton, explained exactly what the homosexual Episcopal faction wants from the denomination, "At this moment, we are focused and coalesced around a single task: to obtain authorization for the development of a liturgical rite of blessing of the faithful monogamous relationship between two adults of any gender at General Convention 2003."

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### PRESIDENT SIGNS LEGISLATION REAFFIRMING REFERENCES TO GOD IN PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, NATIONAL MOTTO

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP)—On Nov. 13 President Bush signed legislation that reaffirms the phrase "under God" in the

Pledge of Allegiance and "In God We Trust" as the national motto. Bush affixed his signature to the law without offering a comment.

Congress rushed to enact the bill following a June federal appeals court ruling in California that the phrase "under God." added to the pledge by Congress in 1954, was a government endorsement of religion in violation of the constitutional separation of church and state. The measure had massive support in the legislature, drawing just five no votes in the House and passing unanimously in the Senate.

In addition to the affirmation of the references to God, the new law modifies how the pledge is to be delivered, mandating that when not in uniform, men should remove any nonreligious headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Prior to the new law, "any headdress" was to be removed during recitation of the pledge.

Rep. Todd Akin (R-Mo.) told Focus on the Family that the law expressed the overwhelming will of the American people. "The politicians are united in their sense that the public doesn't want to change the Pledge of Allegiance to take 'Under God' out of it," he said.

The new law also references historical background that documents the Christian foundations of the nation. Said Akin, "There's a number of members who are very strongly interested in getting this history back out to Americans in general."

In related news, the actions of a patriotic Texan apparently influenced the U. S. government to display the national motto "In God We Trust" in every post office in America. Frank Williams, a resident of Montgomery County, Texas, purchased posters bearing the national motto for the post offices in his area.

But when postal officials ordered the posters removed from post offices in Montgomery, Willis, and Dobbin counties (with the exception of the office in the community of Cut and Shoot, where postmistress Ida Miera declared the posters would only be removed over her dead body), Williamson wrote to the Postmaster General to complain.

Williamson's protest was heard, and the U. S. Postal Service announced that it has designed a poster with the national motto that will hang in all post offices nationwide—some 38,000. The new poster is designed to resemble a giant postage stamp, bearing the likeness of the Statue of Liberty, with "In God We Trust" over its crown.

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### ALABAMA CHIEF JUSTICE MUST REMOVE TEN COMMANDMENTS MONUMENT FROM STATE COURTHOUSE, FEDERAL JUDGE RULES MONTGOMERY, Ala. (EP)—

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## The Bible & Newspaper

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Alabama Chief justice Roy Moore has been ordered to remove a 5,300-pound granite monument of the Ten Commandments from the rotunda of the state judicial building. U. S. District Judge Myron Thompson ruled Nov. 18 that the monument violates the constitution's ban on government promotion of religion, and gave Moore 30 days to remove it at his own expense.

"This court holds that the evidence is overwhelming and the law is clear that the chief justice violated the Establishment Clause," wrote Thompson in his ruling, referring to a clause in the Constitution's First Amendment. He said that the monument is "nothing less than a obtrusive year-round religious display intended to proselytize on behalf of a particular religion, the chief justice's religion."

A day after the ruling Moore stood in front of the illegal monument and vowed to fight the order. "I have no plans to remove the monument, and when I do I will let you know personally," Moore told reporter. While he questioned whether a federal court has the authority to make such an order on a state judge, Morris Dees of the Southern Poverty Law Center, one of the groups to sue for the monument's removal, called Moore a "religious demagogue" and predicted that "he'll step aside when the federal marshals come."

In explaining the lawsuit, Dees said that Moore "was trying to force his religious beliefs on the people of Alabama. He turned the hall of justice into a religious sanctuary where people drop to their knees and pray."

Moore installed the monument after hours one summer evening in 2001 without informing other justices. However, he did tell Dr. D. James Kennedy of Florida's Coral Ridge Ministries, who sent a television crew to film the installation (Kennedy sells videotapes of the event for a donation of \$19 to his ministry). Moore has appeared on Kennedy's nationally syndicated religious television show.

The monument features a King James Bible, opened to the Ten Commandments, sitting on top of a granite block. Around the monument are quotes from historical figures and documents, such as the Declaration of Independence. Thompson said in his ruling that not all displays of the Ten Commandments in government buildings are unconstitutional, but that Moore crossed the boundary "between the permissible and the impermissible." Said Thompson of the monument, "Its sloping top and the religious air of the tablets unequivocally call to mind an open Bible resting on a podium."

Moore insists that the monument must remain because it acknowledges America's moral foundation. "I feel very strongly that the monument represents the moral foundation of law, which is greatly needed in our country today," he said.

He said that the federal ruling was no surprise to him. "There is great confusion in the federal courts on this issue," he said, adding that Thompson's ruling illustrated that confusion by saying it was dangerous to try to define the word "religion."

"If the court can't define religion, it has no business telling the people of Alabama what they can do, or can't do, in regards to God," Moore said.

This is not the first time Moore has been in conflict with the courts over the Ten Commandments. In the 1990s he was thrust into the national spotlight when he fought to display a wooden plaque of the Ten Commandments on his courtroom wall in Etowah County, Alabama.

Tom Parker, a spokesman for the Alabama Judicial System, said that the ruling demonstrates that Thompson "does not understand the position of the chief justice of the Alabama Supreme Court in regard to religion. He mistakenly thought that Chief Justice Moore was using his own definition of religion when [Moore] was actually suing the definition of religion used by the U.S. Supreme Court which, in turn, got the definition from Madison and Jefferson—writers of the founding documents of the United States." Parker added, "The issue presented in this case is the right to acknowledge the source of the fundamental principles of American law. This is different than trying to proselytize or push a particular denominational view or a religious view. This is simply acknowledging the source that our founding fathers acknowledge—the Creator, who is the source of our rights."

Moore's attorney Stephen Melchior said they will appeal the ruling, and will also ask that the monument remain in place as the case continues in court. Melchior called the logic Thompson used in his ruling "interesting," noting that the federal judge "uses the term 'religion' 97 times. . . and the term 'religious' 50 times, but goes on to talk about how it's dangerous to define the term 'religion.' I can't imagine the appellate court buying such interesting logic."

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### MINISTRIES FARE POORLY IN ANALYSIS BY FINANCIAL WATCHDOG ORGANIZATION

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (EP)—A watchdog group that analyzes the financial statements of Christian nonprofits has released a list of 45 ministries it says demonstrated poor "transparency" concerning their finances. Wall Watchers said it provides the unique service to "help donors become more responsible givers by providing them with information about the largest Christian ministries," giving

"detailed descriptions, financial information, financial efficiency ratings, transparency grads, and commentary about the ministries it researches."

In its latest publication, *Transparency Watch*, Wall Watchers lists the names of ministries to which it issued a grade of "D" or "F" based on how difficult it was to obtain financial information from the ministry, and whether the information provided by the ministry was useful in understanding how funds were being used.

Explained Wall Watchers' founder and chairman Rusty Leonard, "Christian ministries who accept hard earned money from donors seeking to help the weak, feed the poor, and bring the gospel to those who have not yet heard it, have a moral obligation to set a high standard of openness about their finances. They should be setting the example for other nonprofit organizations to follow. Providing a useful set of financial statements to anyone that asks should be something that every Christian ministry does automatically. Fortunately, many do just that, but donors need to be made aware of those who fail to meet these basic standards of accountability."

Chris Hemepe, president of Wall Watchers, said that a poor grade for a ministry was not necessarily an indication that it was misappropriating funds or doing something wrong. Rather, it merely indicated that the ministry was less than timely in getting quality financial information to Wall Watchers—which Wall Watchers sees as a possible red flag for donors.

"Our standards make it easy for any ministry to receive a high grade," said Hemepe. "They simply need to send quality financial statements in a timely fashion so that we can make this information, and our analysis of it, available to donors. By letting donors know which ministries are not demonstrating openness about their finances, we believe our work is creating a force for positive change, and ultimately will help those ministries whose already strong commitment to financial transparency has gone unnoticed."

In preparing its list, Wall Watchers wrote to a total of 475 ministries, asking them for their financial statements. Three weeks later, it called or e-mailed those ministries that had not yet responded, doing the same after four weeks for those ministries that still had not provided the statements. Finally, after another four weeks, Wall Watchers assigned grades to the ministries relative to the number of requests it took to receive the information, as well as the quality of the financial materials ministries provided.

Of the 475 ministries contacted, 337 received a grade of A, 32 received B grades, nine got Cs, one received a D, and 44 received Fs. Wall Watchers said it still had 52 organizations to assess.

The 45 ministries receiving D and F grades provided no financial materials at all, despite being asked several times, Hemepe explained. He emphasized to *Christianity Today* that "a low transparency grade is simply a reflection of how the ministry respond to our requests for financial information. It is not necessarily an indication that the ministry is doing anything wrong, illegal, or even inefficient. However, this cuts to the heart of their willingness to be open and to recognize their accountability to donors and to the public at large as tax-exempt organizations."

Hemepe noted that while the *Transparency Watch* list includes a number of well-known ministries, the 45 organizations receiving the worst grades represent only nine percent of the 475 Christian ministries Wall Watchers reviewed, "indicating that most ministries reviewed exhibit a good or very good degree of financial transparency."

The 45 ministries Wall Watchers initially said demonstrated poor "transparency" about their finances were: Alberto Mottesi Evangelistic Association Inc.; Amazing Facts; AnGel Ministries; Awana Clubs International; Benny Hinn Ministries/World Outreach Church; Bible Broadcasting Network; Breakthrough Ministries; Catholic Medical Mission Board; Chinese Christian Mission Ind.; Christian Hope Indian Eskimo Fellowship; Christian Men's Network Inc.; Christian Research Institute Inc.; Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort Inc.; Crystal Cathedral Ministries; EAPE/Kingdomworks; East Gates Ministries International; Ever Increasing Faith Ministries; Family Stations Inc.; Gideons International; Goad International; Good Shepherd Services; Heaven & Home Hour Inc.; Impact Productions; International Students Inc.; Joy of Jesus Inc.; Jubilee Network/KFUE AM 850; Kenneth Copeland Ministries; Kenneth Hagin Ministries; Lesea Ind.; Life in the Word, Inc./Joyce Meyer; Lifechangers Inc.; Ligonier Ministries Inc.; Lutheran hour Ministries; Maranatha Volunteers International; March for Jesus USA; Ministries in Action Inc.; Mustard Seed Inc.; Quiet Hour; Romanian Missionary Society; Shelter For Life/Shelter Now International; Sports World Ministries Inc.; TD Jakes Ministries/Potters House of Dallas Inc.; The Rutherford Institute; Trinity Forum Inc.; Your Story Hour.

There are potential consequences to the organizations that chose not to respond to Wall Watchers' requests. Reported *Christianity Today*, "Nonprofits that do not send copies of their informational tax return (called Form 990) within 30 days of a written or e-mailed request may be fined up to \$10,000 by the Internal Revenue Service, with an additional \$5,000 penalty for 'willful failure.'"

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Hempe said Wall Watchers has no interest in getting ministries in trouble with the IRS, "but it demonstrates a real problem that even when required by law to provide information, some ministries choose not to do so."

Some large ministries which received poor grades are registered as churches, and insist that they are not required by law to make public disclosure of their finances. They include such high-profile organizations a Benny Hinn Ministries, Crystal Cathedral Ministries, Joyce Meyer ministries, and T.D. Jakes Ministries.

A written statement from the headquarters of T. D. Jakes Ministries/Potters House of Dallas Inc. said, "The Potter's House is a church and is recognized as such by the IRS. Consequently, its finances, like those of many other churches in America, are not reported publicly, though we are certainly accountable to our members and our God." A similar response was given by a spokesman for Joyce Meyer, who insisted that the ministry's donors are kept "very informed."

Other organizations protested their inclusion on the list. *Christianity Today* quoted a spokesman for Awana Clubs International as saying, "We can prove that we have responded to every request we have gotten. They are going to have to prove to us that they actually requested this. We work with churches and thousands of volunteers, so this kind of information [Transparency Watch], if it is erroneous, would be a very serious thing for us." Wall Watchers later agreed to remove Awana from its list, pending the reception of the ministry's financial statements.

The Rutherford Institute, a civil liberties organization, insisted that it was on the list erroneously. "Our financial staff has repeatedly sent financial documentation to Ministry Watch, and actually that information is posted on Ministry Watch's [the flagship ministry of Wall Watchers] Website for the most recent fiscal years available," Steven H. Aden, chief litigation counsel for Rutherford, told *Christianity Today*. "Their assertion that Rutherford has failed to provide financial statements or to respond to their request for information is utterly false. We'll be calling on Ministry Watch to withdraw its irresponsible statements and to stop attacking this ministry."

Similarly, Anne Graham Lotz's AnGeL Ministries said it had no record of a request from Wall Watchers for its financial records. And Mohan Zachariah, administrative director for Tony Compolo's Evangelical Association for the Promotion of Education, told *Christianity Today* that he had never heard of Wall Watchers or Ministry Watch,

adding, "We are totally transparent. We offer all of our information out there from everybody. We've got nothing to hide."

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ROME (EP)—Church officials in Italy are fuming about a new calendar that features photographs of scantily clad and naked women posing as Mary, mother of Jesus, and other scenes inspired by the Bible. Reuters News Service reports that the photographer, Alberto Magliozzi, claims his calendar is being misinterpreted. But church officials and the Italian public have voiced disgust at Magliozzi's images of naked women in religious poses and acting out parodies of religious scenes. "Rather than blasphemous, it's just ugly," Alessandra D'Abramo, 22, told Reuters after seeing the calendar. Church officials complain that the calendar is insulting to both Christians and women. "It's the height of sacrilege," Catholic theologian Gino Concetti told Reuters. "It's playing with religion to exalt hedonism and eroticism, and it turns into blatant consumer objects."

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NEW DELHI, India (EP)—Voice of the Martyrs (VOM) reports that Hindu persecution against Christians in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu is increasing. In early October, the state government issued a new ordinance that forbid religious conversion by enticement or force, but Christians there said the institution of the ordinance was a politically motivated decision meant to stop their work. Increasing persecution has endangered the lives of several Christians. A source close to VOM reports that protests by Hindus in Tamil Nadu in late October resulted in church burnings and the closings of Christian buildings and schools. Radical Hindus are expelling Christian families from their homes when they refuse to participate in Hindu festivals. Local police have done nothing to stop the violence, the source said. VOM requests that Christians pray for peace in the region.

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### **PRESIDENT BUSH DISTANCES HIMSELF FROM COMMENTS BY CHRISTIAN LEADERS ABOUT DANGERS FROM ISLAM**

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP)—In an effort to distance himself from conservative Christian leaders who categorize Islam as a violent religion, President Bush emphasized in mid-November that his administration views Islam as a peaceful religion.

In response to comments by both Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell, Bush stated at a press conference as he met with UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, "Some of the comments that have been uttered about Islam do not reflect the sentiments of my government or the sentiment of most Americans. Ours is a country based

upon tolerance. . . . And we respect the faith and we welcome people of all faiths in America, and we're not going to let the war on terror or terrorists cause us to change our values."

Bush declared that "the vast majority of American citizens respect the Islamic people and the Muslim faith. After all, there are millions of peace-loving Muslim Americans."

A day after Bush's remarks, Secretary of State Colin Powell labeled the comments by the conservative Christian leaders "hatred" that "must be rejected." Said Powell, "We will reject the kinds of comments you have seen recently where people in this country say that Muslims are responsible for the killing of all Jews. . . . We cannot allow this image to go forth of America, because it is an inaccurate image of America."

On another occasion, during a speech to a gathering of Muslim Americans, Powell said, "We must not listen to the siren song of the bigots, extremists who cloak themselves in false spirituality in an attempt to divide and weaken us."

The comments from Bush and Powell were prompted by Robertson's warnings on his Christian Broadcasting Network that Jews in the U. S. need to "wake up, open their eyes, and read what is being said about them." He cautioned that "Adolf Hitler was bad, but what the Muslims want to do to the Jews is worse."

Similarly, in an interview on the CBS news program *60 Minutes*, Falwell said that after reading both Muslim and non-Muslim writers addressing the Islamic religion, he concluded that the Prophet Muhammad "was a violent man, a man of war," and a "terrorist."

Bush has walked a political tightrope because both Robertson and Falwell are viewed with respect by a sizeable block of conservative Christian voters. Political analysts noted that the remarks came at the same time that Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein has been attempting to generate anti-American sentiment among Muslims worldwide by arguing that Bush is antagonistic to Muslims and their faith.

Since the Sept. 11 attacks, the president has attempted to reach out to Muslim-Americans and to emphasize the sympathy he has for peaceful Muslims. His latest statements, pointedly directed at the comments by the conservative Christian leaders, was a further step to distance his administration from any connection with anti-Islamic rhetoric among his erstwhile supporters.

But the Nov. 26 *Washington Times* reported that Robertson insists that both the news media and political leaders have not clued in the American people about Islam's violent history and tendency. Robertson said it would have been better had Bush never labeled Islam a peaceful religion.

He pointed out that the president "is not elected as chief theologian," and it

would have made more sense had he only spoken politically about the Islamic world, and not brought it into the religious realm. He argued that Bush's comments are "leading to needless confusion."

Reported the *Times*, "The public would be better served, Mr. Robertson said, if the media would investigate the content of the Koran and what he says are many passages that incite Muslims to kill nonbelievers. But reporting on that, he said, 'is not politically correct.'"

The *Times* stated that, according to Robertson, "the violence visited on Christians in many nations, such as Sudan and Nigeria, arises from Shariah, or Muslim law, showing that the violent behavior is tied to Islamic beliefs."

Robertson defended himself against charges that his comments indicate a racist attitude, telling the *Times*, "I have never advocated ferreting out Muslims in America. they are citizens like I am. But if they are funneling money to Hamas, organizing terrorist cells, or holding anti-American rallies, they ought to be deported."

Robertson, who stepped down late last year as head of the politically conservative Christian Coalition, told the *Times* that his main focus now is Christian evangelism. "I don't want to change my ministry and become some kind of Muslim fighter," he said. Nevertheless, Robertson warned that Islam is a deeply revered faith that Muslim leaders all over the world use to push for violence against Christians and Jews.

Concluded Robertson in his interview with the *Times*, "Maybe we can counter it by American propaganda. Maybe we can counter it by love."

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### **EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANS RELUCTANT TO HELP CHILDREN ORPHANED BY AIDS, BARNAS STUDY FINDS**

SEATTLE (EP)—A new survey by the Barna Research Group reveals the disturbing news that evangelical Christians are one of the least likely groups of Americans to reach out to children orphaned by AIDS. The survey of more than 1,000 adults, commissioned by the global Christian relief organization World Vision, found that only three percent of evangelicals said they "definitely" would help children orphaned because of AIDS, compared with five percent of all respondents.

Statistically, evangelicals were one of the least likely groups supportive of outreach efforts aimed at children of AIDS/HIV victims. Nevertheless, when asked wither they would help underprivileged children overseas, 14 percent of evangelicals said they would, compared with seven percent overall. The most likely group to support children affected by AIDS were young parents of young children who go to church every

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week, while the least likely was an older white evangelical male who lives in the Midwest.

Among the other finding in the study:

\* Americans aged 18 to 37 ("Baby Busters") appear to be more responsive to HIV/AIDS outreach efforts than Americans aged 38 to 56 ("Baby Boomers") and those aged 57 and older ("Elders"). Nearly 50 percent of "Busters" were supportive or mildly supportive of such efforts, compared with 30 percent of "Boomers" and 21 percent of "Elders."

\* The sagging economy and financial hardships among Americans are having a significant negative impact on plans to help children suffering from the effects of HIV/AIDS.

\* White Americans were most resistant to addressing HIV/AIDS: 27 percent of whites were supportive or mildly supportive, compared with 52 percent of Hispanics and 51 percent of African-Americans.

Public support for efforts to help those affected by the AIDS crisis is low across the board," noted David Kinnaman, vice president of the Barna Research Group and director of the study. "One of the big surprises from this study is the fact that evangelicals—who are typically some of the most generous donors in our country—were particularly unmoved by the plight of AIDS orphans. However, the other story is that few Americans were particularly sensitive to the issue of such children. Americans' awareness of the HIV/AIDS crisis is a mile wide, but their personal commitment to fixing it is an inch deep."

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### IN NATIONAL SURVEY OF PASTORS, EVANGELICALS PREDICT GROWTH OVER NEXT DECADE, MAINLINE CLERGY LESS SURE

PHOENIX, Ariz. (EP)—A nationwide survey reveals that a majority of Protestant pastors predict that the influence of Christianity in America will decrease over the next ten years. The study, by Ellison Research of Phoenix, showed that many pastors think that there will be a corresponding increase in the influence of non-Christian religions and "New Age" spirituality. Baptist and Lutheran clergy tended to be the most pessimistic about Christianity's influence, while Pentecostal and charismatic pastors tended to be more optimistic about the next decade.

The survey polled 567 Protestant pastors about their expectations concerning the Christian faith in America a decade from now. While pastors were widely split over how different things will be in the church in the year 2012, 82 percent agreed that "the influence of non-Christian religions in the U.S. "would

increase in the coming decade. Only five percent thought there would be a decrease in non-Christian influences, and 13 percent said they did not expect things to be much different ten years hence.

Similarly, 55 percent of all ministers said they believe there will be an increase in "influence of 'New Age' spirituality in the U.S." Twenty-six percent predicted no changes in New Age influence, while 19 percent believed New Age influence would actually decrease over the next decade. Evangelical pastors in general were far more likely to predict an increase in New Age spiritually—59 percent, compared to just 34 percent of pastors from mainline denominations. Younger ministers were also more likely to foresee an increase in New Age influence (71 percent of pastors under the age of 45, compared to 51 percent of those age 45 to 59, and 42 percent of older ministers).

Pastors were most pessimistic when asked about the future of the "overall freedom of religion in the U.S." Ten percent predicted that freedom would increase and 46 percent said it would stay the same as today. However, 44 percent predicted declining freedom of religion in America over the next decade. Evangelical pastors were particularly pessimistic, while most mainline clergy expressed no great expectation of substantive change.

Most Protestant clergy were not optimistic about "the influence of Christianity in Americans' daily lives." Forty-one percent said they believe such influence will decrease, while 33 percent thought it would stay the same. Only 26 percent predicted that the Christian faith would influence Americans more in 2012 than it does today.

Pastors were even less likely to project a ten-year increase in "the influence of Christianity in national politics." Nineteen percent predicted increased Christian influence in politics, 50 percent thought it would not change much, and 31 percent believed there would be a decline of Christian influence over the decade to come.

As to the future of churches in America, 33 percent of all ministers predicted an increase in "the proportion of Americans who attend a Christian church." Another 23 percent felt there would be no change in church attendance among Americans, while 44 percent predicted that there would be a decline in church attendance. Baptists and Lutherans were the groups most likely to anticipate a decrease in church attendance, while Pentecostals were more likely than other groups to predict that attendance would rise over the next decade.

While the predictions on church attendance by a high percentage of pastors were not encouraging, 35 percent still thought the number of Christian churches in the U.S. would increase over the next ten years. Another 30 percent

said they would stay somewhat constant, and 35 percent predicted that there would be a decrease. Pentecostal pastors were the most likely to be optimistic, with nearly half predicting an increase in the number of Christian churches.

Along denominational lines, 43 percent of all ministers said they thought the numbers attending their own denomination's churches would increase by 2012, while 25 percent predicted no change, and 32 percent projected a decline.

However, there was a vast difference in optimism between mainline and evangelical clergy. Among mainline pastors, only 26 percent said they thought their denominations would grow, while 44 percent predicted a decline. Among evangelical ministers there existed an overall sense of optimism, with 48 percent predicting denominational growth, and only 27 percent projecting a decline in their respective denominations.

The Ellison researchers noted that churches which are part of the National Association of Evangelicals—which represents the majority of evangelical denominations—were particularly optimistic, with 70 percent predicting growth and just 14 percent projecting a decline. Pentecostal and charismatic pastors were particularly excited about the future, with 80 percent predicting that their denominations and fellowships would grow.

By contrast ministers from denominations in the mainline National Council of Churches were far more pessimistic, with just 20 percent predicting growth and 54 percent expecting decreases. Methodist (22 predicting growth, 49 percent a decline) and Lutheran (25 percent for growth, 39 percent for decline) were the most pessimistic about the future of attendance in their denominations.

Finally, Ellison polled pastors on what they believe will happen with "the proportion of Americans who are believing Christians" over the next ten years. Once again, predictions were mixed, with 34 percent saying that Christianity would experience growth, 29 percent predicting stability in numbers, and 37 percent anticipating a decline. Lutheran and Baptist pastors were the most pessimistic about the growth of the faith in the next decade.

Ron Sellers, president of Ellison Research and director of the study, noted that those pastors who were the most optimistic may want to take a closer look at national trends. "Study after study reveals no real increase in church attendance, Bible readership, or Christian belief in the U.S. for many decades," Sellers said. "It's understandable that evangelicals tend to expect growth in their denomination, while mainline ministers often anticipate decline, because that is a continuation of well-established trends.

But the pastors who predict overall increased church attendance or more Christian influence in people's lives are apparently expecting the start of something new – something that, by all available measurements, isn't currently happening in the U.S. and hasn't happened for many years."

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### PLANNED PARENTHOOD'S 'CHOICE' HOLIDAY GREETINGS A DISTASTEFUL PLAY ON WORDS

NEW YORK (EP)—Planned Parenthood, which calls itself the nation's "most trusted voluntary reproductive health care organization," has issued its holiday greeting for this year with the troubling message "Choice on Earth." The phrase, meant to tweak the noses of Christians who oppose abortion, plays off the Scripture verse in which an angelic host announces the birth of Jesus Christ with the words, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

The greeting elicited the desired response from Planned Parenthood's pro-life opponents. Said Jim Sedlak of the American Life League, "In its never-ending effort to promote the gospel of 'choice,' Planned Parenthood has chosen to mock the Christian faith by issuing a holiday card with the message, 'Choice on Earth.'"

Added Sedlak, "Planned Parenthood likes to portray itself as a tolerant organization constantly searching for diversity. But this blatant attack on Christian values – and Christ Himself – is just another demonstration of the truly bigoted nature of Planned Parenthood. By replacing 'peace' with 'choice,' Planned Parenthood is essentially saying 'abortion on earth.' This is an extremely repugnant message to be spreading during the Christmas season. Planned Parenthood has insulted Christians and Christianity by deforming a slogan that refers to the Peace of Christ."

Gloria Feldt, president of Planned Parenthood, called such responses to the group's holiday message absurd. "A very popular greeting card among America's pro-choice majority for almost a decade," said Feldt, the card "send an inclusive seasonal message for people of all faiths." She claimed that Planned Parenthood's supporters were "so energized" by the criticism the greeting got from pro-life activists and Christians in general, the abortion champion decided to print "additional cards and limited-edition 'Choice on Earth' T-shirts"—which pro-abortion activists will no doubt snap up as handy stocking stuffers.

Feldt zeroed in specifically on American Life League's STOPP initiative—which stands for "Stop Planned Parenthood." Said Feldt, "The sole mission of [STOPP]. . . is to shut down

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Planned Parenthood, America's most trusted voluntary reproductive health organization." Added the pro-abortion leader, "Planned Parenthood believes in every individual's right to make choices and live in peace with our planet and wishes people of all beliefs a peaceful and safe holiday season."

But Sedlak, who heads up the STOPP initiative, noted that in a world where "choice" means abortion, "there will be no children to celebrate the birth of the Christ child on December 25. There will, instead, be graves and empty playgrounds. The time has come for Americans to reject this hateful organization. What more proof do we need of its unacceptable moral principles? That Planned Parenthood could be supported by even one person in America after this blatant attack on Christianity is beyond belief."

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JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (EP)—A Florida school bus driver was issued a letter of discipline after she distributed Bibles to students on her bus. After picking up students at a local elementary school, the driver stopped her bus at a corner, where she was approached by a man from the Gideons International, a group that distributes over 50 million Bibles worldwide each year. The man, whom the driver apparently thought was with the school, handed the driver Bibles he wanted to be distributed to the children. Some students sitting near the driver asked for Bible and she gave them out, Donna Alosa, a regional manager for the bus company, told the Associated Press. An official with the Gideons said that it does not condone handing out Bibles on a public school bus. The *Florida Times-Union* newspaper condemned the disciplinary action against the driver, declaring that "political correctness not only is alive and well, it's thriving on Florida's First Coast."

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STORRS, Conn. (EP)—A survey of 400 high school teachers, conducted by the University of Connecticut, found that more than 80 percent would never assign a 5,000 word history research paper. "the research skills in particular are being lost," Christopher Barnes, with the university's Center for Survey Research and Analysis, told Focus on the Family. "The high school students we saw were not really getting in depth with history topics the way in which perhaps those of us who are older remember doing it." Barnes said that lack of support outside the classroom, as well as he burden such papers put on teachers, has led to the change. Barnes told Focus on the Family that a lot of the work done by student in class today involves no research, but merely student

opinion—"being asked for their reactions for reading a book, or their thought on current events." Barnes added such reduced academic rigor leaves students unprepared for college-level work—which ultimately places a burden on colleges of teaching students the research and writing skills they should have mastered in high school.

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### AMERICANS BECOMING MORE PRO-LIFE AS ABORTION NUMBERS DECLINE

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP)—Americans appear to be shifting to a more negative attitude on abortion, according to a new national survey. The survey by Zogby International, a New York-based research firm, found that more than 20 percent of Americans have views that are less favorable toward abortion than they held 10 years ago—nearly twice the number who say they've become more pro-choice over the same time period. The pro-life shift seems to be most pronounced among younger Americans, with one third of those aged 18 to 29 saying that abortion should never be legal. That contrasts with about 23 percent for those ages 30 to 64, and about 20 percent for those over age 65. . . .

The survey's results contradicted the notion that abortion is a pressing political issue to Americans. Only 38.7 percent of those surveyed in the New York counties said their feelings against abortion impact the way they vote. But over 60 percent said that if a close friend or family member were contemplating having an abortion, they would advise against it. Those results seemed to mirror national trends.

Laura Echevarria of the National Right to Life Committee said that one explanation for the pro-life shift may be the ability to see a baby forming in the womb that technology has provided since abortion was legalized. "Everyone has seen a sonogram now," Echevarria told the *Buffalo News*. "In 1973, they were almost unheard of." . . .

In related news, the latest statistics from the federal Centers for Disease Control (CDC) show that the number of reported abortions fell to less than 862,000 in 1999, a downward trend that has continued since 1991. According to the CDC, the number of abortions per 1,000 live births in 1999 fell to 256 – a 3.2 percent decline from 1998 and the lowest recorded level since 1975.

But the slight decline in the number of reported abortions in 1999—down 2.5 percent from 884,273 abortions in 1998—was not enough to budge the national abortion rate, which remained at 17 abortions per 1,000 women. The figure was the same as in 1997 and 1998, the CDC said in its "Abortion Surveillance" report for the year 1999, which it released Nov. 29.

The CDC said the decline in abortions is due to a number of factors, including a

decrease in the number of unintended pregnancies, a female population that is getting older, reduced availability of abortions, and the passage of laws that require waiting periods or parental notification before a woman can get an abortion.

Among the CDC's findings in its latest report:

\* A total of 137,396 abortions were performed on teens. More than 60 percent were performed on 18- and 19-year-olds.

\* Over 50 percent of abortions were performed at eight weeks or less gestation, and another 20 percent were performed between nine and 10 weeks.

Fewer than two percent of all abortions were performed later than 21 weeks gestation.

\* New York State recorded the most legal abortions in 1999—137,234—and

Wyoming—110—the fewest.

\* In 1998, the most recent year for which statistics were available, nine women died nation-wide from complications during legal abortions.

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ORLANDO, Fla. (EP)—An amendment passed Dec. 2 by the Orlando City Council added the words "sexual orientation" to an existing human rights ordinance, making it illegal for Orlando residents to discriminate against homosexuals in hiring, renting, and accessing public accommodations. The ordinance essentially makes homosexuals in the Orlando area a protected class similar to ethnic and racial minorities. The ordinance change is scheduled to take effect Jan. 1.

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## Mini Edition

By Joseph Harris  
Chairman of Biblical Studies  
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### Bill Clinton, True to Form

Ex-President Bill Clinton was a precedent President. He set precedents and blazed trails as no other President before him. Unfortunately, I can't name one positive thing he did for this country, except maybe turn some liberals into conservatives by his shenanigans. He was the biggest disaster to ever enter the White House, the paragon of deceit, immorality and lack of character. The only thing I can give him credit for is his consistency. He never changes. He is consistent in his philosophy and treachery. He remains true to form as revealed in his recent speech to the Democratic Leadership Council on December 3. It was pure Clintonese, 200 proof.

He pleaded with the Democratic party to take on the "destruction machine" of the right wing Republican party. This was in response to the so called "vicious" attacks on little Tommy Daschle the OUTGOING SENATE MAJORITY LEADER (I can't say it loud enough). Tom Daschle tried to get media coverage by claiming his safety was threatened by radical conservatives, spurred on by talk radio. Mr. Clinton said the Republicans have a destruction machine, but "we don't" and those were his exact words. Now if the liberal Democratic Party does not have one, who does? They invented the destruction machine. He has always been consistent as a liar. This is also an example of his turnspeak, which is the art of accusing someone else of doing that for which

the accuser is guilty.

Notice also as he, a former President, criticizes the current sitting President, on security issues. He said, indirectly that President Bush was weak, because scared people seek comfort from powerful leaders. He even went so far as to say that people would rather have a leader who is "strong and wrong" rather than "weak and right". All this coming from a man whose presidency was built on the foundation of being wrong and weak. Mr. Clinton was wrong ethically, he was wrong morally, and he was wrong politically which was an indication he was wrong spiritually, and thereby weak overall. Mr. Bush has more strength in his little finger than Mr. Clinton has in his entire body.

So ex-President Clinton remains true to form. He lies, criticizes, blames and whines, while offering the failed plan of liberalism as the salvation for the country and the economy. The leopard cannot change his spots and apparently neither can Mr. Clinton.

### The Lynching of Lott

Senator Trent Lott is the object of a vicious, but precedented attack from the liberal Democratic Party and the Black Caucus. Just as Judge Charles Pickering was vilified as a racist and blocked from his potential position, because of the extreme prejudice of the enemies of truth and conservatism, so Trent Lott has become the victim of a mad, hateful,

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disgruntled, spiteful bunch of liberals who will stop at absolutely nothing to reach their goals. This destruction of Senator Lott is being carried out by the "non-existent destruction machine of the Democratic Party. Remember last week, Bill Clinton said that "they (the Republicans) have a destruction machine and we (Democrats) don't". Riiiiight!! Apparently, the destruction machine that doesn't exist, has been brought out, oiled, tuned up, revved up to full speed, and aimed at Trent Lott. In all probability, Senator Lott will lose his national political clout. The plan of the liberals is to beat him senseless and render him useless and weak as Senate Majority Leader, susceptible to compromise. Senator Lott is a dead man politically.

Racism has become the unpardonable sin and REAL racism is despicable, but according to biased, racist, prejudiced, bigoted liberals, everyone who is from Mississippi (or the south) and is white and a conservative, is racist. Or if anyone happens to agree on any **one** point in **any** area, with someone who is a segregationist, then that person also becomes a segregationist and racist. To begin with, when Trent Lott said the country would be better off if Strom Thurmond had been elected years ago, why does everyone automatically assume he was talking about segregation? Why couldn't he have meant conservatism in general? But oh, I forgot. Conservatism is racism. I keep forgetting that fine point. There is a lot of assuming going on, but that's always okay for the liberal left. They can assume and convict based upon their prejudiced opinion, regardless of the facts. Remember, if you are a conservative from the south, you are racist. Period. And there is no court of appeal for you. There wasn't for Judge Pickering. Conservatives may be in the majority politically right now, but don't be deceived. Liberals still wield the most power because of an all too willing media that is always ready to trounce the nearest conservative.

I find it hard to believe that Senator Lott was referring to segregation in his remarks, since he knows how caustic and politically dangerous such a remark could be. It is inconceivable he would be this naive. But let's say he willfully, purposefully, knowingly made the remark in reference to segregation. His apology will never be accepted, regardless of the length or depth of the apology. He could crawl on his knees on cut glass for two miles

doing penance, but all to no avail.

I for one am tired of what has been called "hi-tech lynching" whether the victim is Clarence Thomas, Newt Gingrich, Dan Quail, Charles Pickering, or Trent Lott. Some of the major players on the liberal team have made inexcusable, bigoted, hateful remarks over the years and have been given a pass. Senator Byrd with his famous "N" word statement was given a pass, because of his age. Tom Dashchle, Jesse Jackson, Alec Baldwin, Harry Belafonte, to name a few have made some of the most prejudiced, hateful remarks ever. The double standard of hypocrisy from liberals is nauseating. The hypocrisy of helping the downtrodden and minorities is also glaring, since the power of liberals is contingent on enslaving rather than liberating and empowering minorities and the little guy.

I wish Trent Lott would stop apologizing and defend himself. And he better defend himself, because, apparently, his Senate buddies are reluctant to defend him because they are afraid of political suicide. Notice, I didn't say defend racism, because that charge has not been proven. He made a statement of his belief that was not a statement of hate and he should stand by it and challenge the executioners. A watchdog group called FAIR, which stands for Fairness, and Accuracy In Reporting is anything but fair, and constantly lean to the left. They claim that the media has not been fair on this issue because the abundance of evidence of Mr. Lott's racism has not been presented. In other words, his opponents have been too soft on him. They make references to Senator Lott's ties with Confederate groups and Jefferson Davis and how he once referred to the Civil War as the War of Northern Aggression. I think the title "War of Northern Aggression" is more accurate when you consider who invaded whom. FAIR makes glib references to "The Party of Lincoln" and how the Senator is out of step with the great white emancipator Lincoln, therefore suggesting the GOP has seriously strayed. The reason President Lincoln is known as a saint today is because of the masterpiece of revisionist history that has ever taken place. President Lincoln, by his own statement would not have lifted a finger to free one slave, if it had not been necessary to his goal of conquering and subjecting the south to his government of tyranny, by infringing on the rights of individual states, which was the real issue. Yet, if one chooses to believe this view of history, which is supported by evidence, "racist" is the label applied.

Senator Lott needs to buckle his seat belt, because this rough ride will not soon be over. Some are calling for his resignation and others for the Senate to censure him. Where were all these champions of right when Bill Clinton blatantly displayed his brand of ungodliness, deceit and immorality? As I said, the liberals are mad and will use whatever means available to discredit, or demonize or vilify anyone who is connected with conservatism and it's principles. It's not about Trent Lott and it's not about segregation and racism. It's about grasping for power and woe be to anyone who gets in the way.

Let's use some common sense shall we, something which no one, even Rush Limbaugh seems to be doing at the present. Senator Lott's record

speaks for itself. He is not known to be a segregationist or racist. Up until now, he has not been in the controversial spotlight concerning this issue, and he has a clean track record of many years. Therefore, it is unreasonable to think that when he spoke favorably of Senator Thurmond, he was spotlighting and commending an issue that has not been an issue for him in his political career. He was simply making a broad statement that has been interpreted and twisted to mean he was fully and pointedly promoting segregation and racism, which yet remains to be proved. Clear thinking people can readily see this, whereas the majority is letting others tell them what Mr. Lott "really" said.

## Weekly Devotionals

By Jeff Short  
Indore, West Virginia



### Matt 25:18

**But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.**

Our text is a part of the parable of the talents. The Lord gave this parable to teach that not all servants have the same abilities. He taught that all servants are expected to work and equal diligence is equally rewarded despite differing gifts and gain. The wise man in the parable distributed his goods to his servants. **"And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey."** He administered the goods according to his servants' ability to manage and use them. Though their amounts were different, they were each responsible for what they possessed. We see a difference in the greatness of the responsibilities, but no difference in the reality of the responsibility to each servant.

The parable tells us that a particular servant received one talent, one-half as much as another received and only one-fifth as much as even another servant received. Upon receiving the goods, the servants each set to work and began to gain. However, the servant in our text **"went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money."** From the judgment of his Lord, his error did not lie in not having as much as the others, but in the fact that he did not use what was entrusted to him, rather he buried it. Now, let us consider the actions of the unfaithful servant in our text and receive instruction from our Lord.

In the first place, we notice that burying the talent was not an impulsive or rash decision. According to verse 19, it was **"a long time"** before the Lord returned and reckoned with his servants. The servants were given plenty of time to make use of their capital. Even if he went out and buried it at first, he had plenty of opportunity to make good. He could have dug it up and redeemed the time. From his own testimony in verses 24 and 25, we see that he deliberated about his course of action. He thought to himself, "I could never gain five talents as the first servant. Surely, I could not gain two talents like the other servant when I have only one talent to work with. Furthermore, what if my enterprise fails and I lose it all?" He decides that having so little; he had better not risk the loss and displeasure of his Lord. He assumes his Lord will be angrier if he loses all than if he makes no gain. He confesses, **"And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth."** He was afraid and ventured nothing.

In the second place, we take notice of where the servant hid the talent. He **"digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money."** He was not totally inactive. He went to great trouble to bury the talent. He **"digged,"** showing that he had some capacity to labor and **"in the earth"** was where he chose to bury his money. He chose the earth as a fit hiding place. I imagine that after the talent was **"in the earth"** for **"a long time,"** that it could not have been returned in the

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## Weekly Devotionals

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same condition in which it was given. It must have been stained with dirt and smelled earthy.

This language is very suggestive and symbolic of many Christians. The servant had been given a gift, which he was expected to use in his master's service. He figured that his gift was small and there were plenty of others with more ability than he that would labor in the master's cause. He gave himself a pass on greater responsibilities and hid his talent in the earth. How many Christians hide their talents in the earth? How many give their abilities to business, sales, recreation, acquiring possessions, houses and lands, instead of seeking to advance the cause of Christ? Just like the servant's talent, they are sullied by the dirt of the world and smell earthy. Their works will not stand the test of fire, but will be burnt up. They themselves **"shall be saved; yet so as by fire."** (I Cor. 3:15). Peter warned, **"Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."** (II Peter 1:10-11). I pray to God that we may be ready when our Master comes.

Lastly, we see that it is not enough to simply maintain what we have. We must seek to utilize what we have been given and gain and improve it for the glory of the Lord. The Lord explained that we must never be satisfied with the present portion. At the very least, **"Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury."** (Matt. 25:27). If we try to just maintain and not to enlarge the Lord's work, then we will waste the Lord's substance. **"He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster."** (Pro. 18:9).

We must not be satisfied to only hold the truth. Many make their boast of being sound, **"but in works they deny him."** Jesus denounced the Pharisees because **"they say, and do not."** We must be careful lest we **"hold the truth in unrighteousness."** If we have received the truth, let us be thankful and careful to **"adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things."** (Titus 2:10). Our conversation should **"be as it becometh the gospel of Christ."** (Phi. 1:27). We adorn the

truth with godly, holy lives, and we shall be judged for our faithfulness and diligence.

### Luke 18:1

**And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.**

In His ministry, Christ taught the disciples how to pray and that they ought to pray. It is positively taught and understood that the children of God are to pray. Jesus instructed the disciples saying, **"When ye pray."** It is written that **"praying always"** is a mark of those that overcome. Jesus said, **"Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."** (Luke 21:36). Christians who do not pray and Christians who will not pray are hardly worthy to bear the title. Rolfe Barnard once said that if God sentenced most Christians to pray for five minutes, they would be miserable and go crazy. They would not be able to do it. After about a minute, they would lose their mind to think about the corn crop, their bank notes, or some other thing. It is not only our obligation to pray, it is also our privilege and opportunity to pray. Let us meditate upon prayer.

Jesus preached, **"That men ought always to pray, and not to faint."** We see from His own prayers, that Christ took praying seriously. He poured out His heart unto the Father. **"And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."** (Luke 22:44). In telling his disciples **"to pray, and not to faint;"** He intends intense persistent prayer. It is not the mumbling of a few ritualistic words in the general direction of Heaven that avails much. It is **"the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man"** that **"availeth much."** (James 5:16). Effectual fervent prayer is an intense exchange with God. This sort of prayer engages the whole man. You cannot pour out your heart and be pondering the condition of the stock exchange. You cannot pour out your heart to God while wondering what the ballgame score is. You must be involved in prayer. Once before prayer, Jesus said, **"My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death"** (Mark 14:34). He went to the Father with a burden. He had nothing short of communion with God in mind when He prayed. Once on the mount, His prayer grew so intense that He began to shine with radiant light. He came so close to God in communion that the glory of the Father swept over Him and the

disciples were amazed. I long for those hours of prayer when my heart grows hot within me. I long for the times when I become so engaged in fellowship with my Lord that I begin to feel the wind of the heavenly world blow upon me. I desire to pray and for my soul to be ravished and caught up in rapturous glory. I then cry aloud like the Psalmist that said, **"Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice."** (Psa. 55:17). Oh, how easy prayer comes at these times. Almost without effort, we pour out our hearts to Him in the morning, at noon, and at night. Praise God! I sing with John Newton:

*His name yields the richest perfume,  
And sweeter than music His voice;  
His presence disperses my gloom,  
And makes all within me rejoice:  
I should, were He always thus nigh,  
Have nothing to wish or to fear;  
No mortal so happy as I;  
My summer would last all the year.'*

He also purposed to teach that in prayer, men are **"not to faint."** You may say, "I have never had the kind of experience, that you described, when I pray." You need to heed the words of Christ **"not to faint."** There is a persistence required in prayer if we are to secure the blessings of it. We must be like Jacob who wrestled with God and said, **"I will not let thee go, except thou bless me."** (Gen. 32:26). We must be like Daniel who says, **"And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes:"** (Dan. 9:3). We must **"come boldly unto the throne of grace"** (Heb. 4:16). We must be like a spiritual Samson that will uproot the very gates of Heaven rather than be denied an entrance. If you are a child of God, **"ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father."** (Rom. 8:15). You have a right to call on God. You have a right to cast **"all your care upon Him."** This right is not because of anything that we are or that we have done it is because of Jesus Christ who came **"To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."** (Gal. 4:5). He is our righteousness! He is our advocate! He is our reason! Have faith in the finished work of Christ and pray to God. Do not rest until you have laid hold of Heaven through prayer. Not all Christians have this sort of fellowship with God, but do not be satisfied without it.

Though prayer is not natural to us, it is a discipline in which we should be much practiced. Let us never fail through want of prayer. There may be many reasons that we do not

accomplish what we set out to do, but may our enterprise never languish for want of prayer. Additionally, we may run out of time for many things in a day. I hope that never shall the sun rise or set but what I have been much engaged with my Lord in prayer. Christian, seek His face continually and lay hold of the riches we have in Christ Jesus.

### Ps 105:1

**O give thanks unto the LORD; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people.**

Our text is the beginning of the Psalm that David delivered when they had brought up the ark out of the house of Obadedom. This was a time of jubilation and celebration. However, their rejoicing was mingled with a reverential fear of God. God had demonstrated His holy justice by striking down Uzza for lightly touching the ark. Israel was taught to respect the things of God and not treat them common, even though others might. However, in our text, the ark has been brought safely back and David exhorts the people to extol Jehovah with praise. Let us consider the directive in three parts as it is given.

Firstly, we are instructed to give thanks. **"O give thanks unto the LORD."** The text directs our gratitude toward the Lord. He above all else is worthy of our thanksgiving. We could multiply the reasons for giving thanks unto God. By His grace and mercy, we have received every good thing. **"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."** (Jam. 1:17). Our hearts should be thankful for the abundant temporal blessings that He has showered on us, **"seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things"** (Acts 17:25). Are you warmed and filled? Give thanks to God. Have you food and raiment? Give thanks to God. Have you lived to an old age? Give thanks to God. Have you joy in your family? Give thanks to God. Have you the breath of life at this hour? Give thanks to God and **"Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD."** (Psa. 150:6).

He is worthy of thanksgiving in temporal things and is much more worthy of thanksgiving for spiritual blessings. Our hearts should overflow with praise and thanksgiving if we are one of His. The Psalmist wrote that God **"redeemeth thy life from destruction"** (Psa. 103:4). When I consider what I was as a dirty vile

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## Weekly Devotionals

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sinner hastening down the broad road that leads to destruction, my heart is filled with gratitude and praise to God, for **“He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.”** (Psa. 40:2). He set His love upon me when I was so unlovable and Christ died for me when I was His enemy. **“For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.”** (Rom. 5:10). Praise God! Amen!

Secondly, we are instructed to worship. **“Call upon his name.”** The thought is of calling God by His name. The phrase **“his name”** conveys the thought of God in all His attributes. We worship Him in His holiness, love, mercy, and so on. This worship lends credence to our thanksgiving. I can hardly see how the former can exist without the latter. In fact, the latter seems born from the former. If God has blessed with great blessings and our hearts are truly thankful, then we will worship Him. If we give thanks with our lips and yet refuse to worship Him, we are hypocrites. Some Christians go on about thanking God for their homes, cars, clothes, cabins, campers, boats, and recreational vehicles saying that God has blessed them. Yet, on Sunday, they are not found in the church worshipping Him. They have no problem in missing the services to go and “enjoy” the Lord’s goodness. It seems that they are worshipping their possessions instead of God. If our hearts are true with gratitude, we will worship Him, calling **“upon His name.”**

Lastly, we are exhorted to witness. **“Make known his deeds among the people.”** All of these things should result in us telling others about the goodness of God. Are we to only receive and never give? We would be like the leprous men outside the gates of Samaria. They were about to die when God led them to abundance. They were enjoying the newfound blessings when they were smitten by their selfishness. **“Then they said one to another, We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning light, some mischief will come upon us: now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king’s household.”** (II Kin. 7:9). Let us never hold our peace. We have glorious news to sound out to the world. Let them hear

our thanksgiving. Let them hear our praise. Let them hear of our God. **“One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts.”** (Psa. 145:4).

David exhorts Israel to praise God, even though some trials have attended their proceedings. If we tend to focus on ourselves, we will not offer praise and thanksgiving to God as we should. In fact, it is a characteristic of hardened sinners in the last days that they are **“lovers of their own selves”** and **“unthankful.”** Neither should we focus only on our trials forgetting our blessings. And oh how these blessings should constrain us to worship Him and witness for Him. Amen.

### Prov 28:26

**He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered.**

Certainly, a uniquely wise man like Solomon is qualified to identify a fool. In the verse before us, he calls such a one as trusts in his own heart, a fool. The Hebrew word *batach*, here rendered **“trusteth,”** means “to be reliant, trust, be unsuspecting.” The word implies a great confidence even to the point of blind trust. It seems to have the sense of being careless or thoughtless. The idea is of one who without question follows the tendency of his own heart. Maybe you could say, “He flies by the seat of his pants.” You might also say of one, “He follows his gut instinct.” Either way, he follows his own instincts without deliberation or contemplation of the Word of God. He lives a carefree, spontaneous life. However, this man is a fool. **“The prudent man looketh well to his going.”** (Pro. 14:15). Let us now consider this great folly.

In the first place, the heart is not a good guide. **“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”** (Jer. 17:9). The heart of a saved man, while he continues on this earth, has not been glorified. He still has the flesh with which to contend. We should never look within ourselves for guidance. **“For from within, out of**

**the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.”** (Mark 7:21-23). Only God knows the depth of depravity to which the human heart can descend. The flesh is still sinful and therefore cannot be trusted. Paul said, **“For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing”** (Rom. 7:18). The flesh is to be mortified not trusted. The blessed man of God **“walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly,”** even if that counsel issues from his own heart.

Secondly, our emotions are bound up in our hearts. I fear that far too many Christians live according to their feelings. I had a conversation once with a certain saved woman. We were in disagreement about a subject. I quoted plain scriptures. She responded with, “I understand that, but I feel... Yes, but I feel... Well, I feel... etc.” If we base the interpretation of scripture upon our feelings, we have a very fluid theology that more resembles the shifting sands than the solid rock that Christ claimed wise servants to be building upon. I do not believe Christianity precludes all emotions, but it is not founded upon our feelings. A saved man that is sick does not feel very good. Does this mean his religion is vain? In the mind of some charismatic heretic, maybe it is, but not according to God’s Word. True religion is based solely upon **“Thus saith the Lord,”** and not our feelings. Our emotions swell and rescind like the tides, but God’s Word is forever settled in Heaven. How I feel does not change God or His Word in the least. I believe that Lazarus did not feel very good laying at the gate, competing with stray dogs for dinner, yet **“now he is comforted,”** and that rich man that felt so good faring sumptuously every day is **“tormented.”**

In the last place, we see the man that walks wisely. Our verse says, **“But whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered.”** The fool trusted

his own heart and the wise man places his trust elsewhere. He heeds the admonition found in Proverbs 3:5-6, **“Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”** He forsakes the dubious counsel of his heart for the **“sure word of prophecy.”** **“But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.”** (Psa. 1:2). He looks well to his own goings. He considers his path in the light of God’s Word. He declares confidently, **“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”** (Psa. 119:105). It is not his intelligence, experience, reason, or feelings that he depends on, but rather the infallible **“counsel of God.”**

The wise man walks **“not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”** (Rom. 8:1). In regeneration, we receive the Spirit, the divine principle of life within us. To walk after the Spirit, we must deny the lusts of the flesh. If we are walking satisfying the flesh, we are not walking after the Spirit. **“There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.”** (Pro. 16:25). The wise man will not trust his flesh to be his guide. Neither will he glory in the flesh if he walks a path that is right. He well ascribes all the glory to God knowing, **“For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”** (Phi. 2:13). Let us put our full trust in Christ and sing the old song.

*“Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus,  
Just to take Him at His word;  
Just to rest upon His promise,  
Just to know “Thus saith the Lord.”  
Jesus, Jesus, how I trust Him,  
How I’ve proved Him o’er and o’er!  
Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus!  
O for grace to trust Him more!”*

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