

The Berea Baptist Banner

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

Abraham Believed God

By Raymond Bennett
of Ithaca, New York

"And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness" (Gen. 15:6).

"For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness" (Rom. 4:3).

"He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Even as Abraham believed God, and it was

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The Essentials of Bible Repentance

By Milburn Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)

"Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God" (Heb. 6:1).

This text reveals "repentance from dead works" is the first principle of the oracles of God. There can be no conversion unless there is first repentance from a spiritually dead state and course. No one would ever cease from dead works and commence to perform good works, if he had not already repented of a sinful life. Thus repentance is seen to be the foundation stone of the Christian life.

Any minister who fails to preach repentance to sinners has ignored the



fundamental principle upon which a life of faith in Christ must be built. Without true evangelical repentance, there can never be any "faith toward God." Heaven help ministers of the Word to go out and preach that men should repent of their sins.

All the books of religious literature in the world cannot inform the heart what sin really is, or what sorrow it may bring to a soul. Likewise, none know what repentance is but a repentant sinner. A sick man knows what his disease is better

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A Church Member's Responsibilities

By Timothy Hille
of Pleasant Plains, Illinois

"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Heb. 10:23-25).

We live in a day in which people want religion without responsibility, church membership without commitment, and blessings without sacrifice. This is the reason so many churches are spiritually weak. You cannot cater to the flesh and fulfill your spiritual obligations at the same time - it will not work. When a person is saved by the grace of God through faith in His Son and submits unto scriptural baptism, which is the door into the New Testament church, that person comes up out of the water with a whole new set of responsibilities that he or she has never had before. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Cor. 5:17). I have a hard time believing that any one is in Christ if he or she is unwilling to put on Christ through scriptural baptism and church membership (Gal. 3:26,27).

God's Word instructs us, "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering." This is one of the responsibilities of every member of one of the Lord's kind of churches. The Bible



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The Two Words "Sent" in Acts 13:1-4 Where Is the Authority?

By William J. Stang
of Lexington, Kentucky

Read Acts 13:1-4

"...the scripture cannot be broken;" neither can it be set at odds against itself, nor caused to contradict itself. Wherever the authority is found in The Great Commission and other passages of Scripture, there it will be found in Acts 13:1-4.

Appeals are being made to "several great Landmark Baptist's of the past" few hundred years in an attempt to "disprove" church succession. It is this writer's conviction that "great Landmark Baptists of the past" must be interpreted and understood in the light of the Scriptures; we are not to interpret and understand the Scriptures by "great Landmark Baptists of the past." The Scriptures are a great commentary upon the unfolding of the history of man. The Scriptures alone, all the Scriptures, must be taken in consort.

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How To Lose Your Salvation

By Paul Stepp
of Indore, West Virginia

There is a division amongst so-called Christianity today that centers on the eternality of salvation. (Maybe I should rather say, that this particular division centers on the effectiveness of salvation.) Some denominations, churches, teachers, etc. . . teach that a man can be lost, then saved, and then lost again. Others teach that once a person has been saved, that salvation is effective for eternity. This doctrine of effective and eternal salvation is commonly referred to as the doctrine of Eternal Security.

I know that everyone reading this probably knows that I believe in Eternal Security. And, I know that most will likely admit that they, too, believe in Eternal Security. However, I will let you in on a little secret---I believe that you and I are in a very small minority on this topic, even amongst so-called



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Prayer is the ship which brings home the richest freight from the celestial shores. Prayer is the soil which yields the most abundant harvest. C. H. Spurgeon

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The purpose of the *Berea Baptist Banner* is as follows:

1. To honor God and to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. To preach the gospel to lost sinners.
3. To spread the whole counsel of God's Word.
4. To encourage God's preachers and to strengthen His churches in the most holy faith.
5. To motivate God's children to a closer fellowship around His Word.
6. To inform people of world events in light of Bible prophecy.
7. To condemn and expose error wherever it may rear its ugly head.
8. To stimulate Christian growth in grace.
9. To make the Devil and his demons as mad as possible.

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A Church Member's

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tells us, **"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses"** (I Tim. 6:12). Children of God are not merely to profess salvation, they are to lay hold upon it, experience the fullness of the life that God has given them, and possess the spiritual blessings of God which are ours in Christ. God expects you to not only say that you are His but to live like you are His. There are many who live like they are almost Christians. This is a sad state. God tells us to **"hold fast"**, but many are barely clinging to the profession of their faith. Full blessings are only found in full obedience.

Let us note some of the responsibilities of church members found in our text, and may we strive to bring honor unto the Lord in and through His kind of church. **"Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen"** (Eph. 3:21).

First, we have the duty of spiritually stimulating our brothers and sisters in Christ. **"And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works."** You know what it means to be provoked, and you have probably been successful in provoking someone else. We are to consider or be thoughtful of one another such that we are seeking to provoke one another, not to anger or jealousy or strife, but unto love and good works. One of the best ways to spiritually stimulate your fellow church members is to have some spiritual enthusiasm and zeal for the things of God yourself. If we want others to be on fire for the Lord, so to speak, then we will have to show some sparks ourselves.

One of the things to which we are to provoke one another is love. This is the chief characteristic of true disciples, that the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts. Jesus said, **"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another"** (John 13:34,35). You are identified as a disciple of Christ, not by might, not by working miracles, but by your love for the brethren (cf. I Cor. 13:1-3). A church whose members have not this kind of love is a dead church. We are to be stirring up this love in one another, and how better to stir up love than to manifest it yourself toward your brothers and sisters in Christ (I John 3:14-18).

One of the tragedies of the hour is that the love of many is growing cold. Jesus stated that this would be a sign of the latter days: **"And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold,"** (Matt. 24:12). **"For men shall be lovers of their own selves"** (II Tim. 3:2).

Sin has a dampening affect upon love. You cannot live in a sinful and ungodly fashion and expect to have true spiritual love or provoke others unto love and good works. Love **"Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth"** (I Cor. 13:6). If you are sinning, then you are not stimulating your brothers and sisters in Christ, you are having a deadening affect upon the work of the Lord. That is why the Lord's churches must be careful to maintain scriptural church discipline and remove those members who continue in sin, because they bring injury upon the body and prevent the church's spiritual growth.

We are also to provoke one another to good works (Tit. 3:8; cf. I Pet. 3:1-9). Good works are the manifestation of the new nature that is planted within us as children of God. Before we were saved, we worked the works of sin and death. Now, being justified by faith and regenerated by the Spirit, we are to bring forth fruit unto righteousness. And not only so, but we are to spiritually stimulate one another as members of Christ's body to bring forth the fruit of good works (Eph. 4:22-32). Our own good works are spiritually stimulating to others, so that they will be provoked by our Christ-likeness to also imitate the Saviour.

Thesecondresponsibilitywhichwenote is that of faithful attendance to the house of God. **"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is."** You can hardly provoke your brothers and sisters in Christ unto love and good works if you are not faithful to the services of the church of which the Lord has made you a member. How much of a spiritual help and encouragement you are to others and to the work of the Lord is directly related to your faithfulness to God's house. David said, **"Because of the house of the LORD our God I will seek thy good"** (Ps. 122:9). If you're forsaking His house, then you aren't seeking anyone's good, not even your own, no matter what you think. People who think that they are doing themselves some good by missing church for fleshly or worldly reasons are seriously deceived.

Faithful attendance to God's house is important because without it there will be no faithful witnessing, no faithful giving to the support of the work of the Lord, no faithful tithing, no faithful singing of praises unto God, no faithful giving of thanks, no faithful support of the ministry of God's Word, no faithful spreading of the gospel to all nations, and no faithful feeding of God's people from the Word of the Lord. The church is not the building, but the people whom God has placed in the body; and if they be absent, who will hold forth the Word of Life? Who will pray for the lost, for the sick, for the poor, and for the pastor? Who will pay their tithes unto the Lord? Who will tell the lost how to be saved and who will encourage the saved to give their bodies a

living sacrifice unto God? You know very well that in order to keep company with someone, you must be where they are. How can we fellowship with God without coming into His house?

The third responsibility mentioned in our text, which is closely tied in with the previous, is that we are to be **"exhorting one another"**. To exhort is to warn, urge, and encourage. We have the spiritual responsibility as members of one of the Lord's churches to warn one another of spiritual danger, urge one another to follow the Lord, and encourage one another in serving the Lord. Many people are a spiritual discouragement; but we are to be an encouragement to each other in the Lord. **"Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way"** (Rom. 14:13). **"Let us therefore follow after things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another"** (Rom. 14:19). In the work of the Lord, you are either building up or you are tearing down – there is no sideline, and there are no bystanders. (Read Phil. 2:2-8.)

Finally, there are some instructions regarding how we are to tend to these responsibilities. **"And so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."** We ought to be all the more faithful the more we see the day of Christ drawing nigh. Many are living as if Christ is not coming, as if we shall not soon stand before the judgment seat of Christ and give account, as if this were a time for putting off one's spiritual duties. (Read Rom. 13:11,12.) The Scriptures tell us that there shall be some who will be unfaithful in their spiritual responsibilities: **"as the manner of some is."** Let us not be such, but rather **"let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised)."**

I encourage you to read your church covenant.

If you are lost, this church, by which I mean the people who are members of this body which was purchased by the shed blood of Jesus, have the responsibility to tell you how to be saved and to warn you of the judgment to come. The message of this church is the same message which the Lord's kind of church has always had and will always have as long as they are in this world. **"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit"** (Acts 2:38). **"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him"** (John 3:36). If you are saved then you have the responsibility of being a member in one of the Lord's churches and participating in such a church to the honor and glory of God.



CELLBLOCK TO CELLBLOCK

By David G. Hoffman

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

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

An Everyday Walker, Not Just A Sunday Seat Warmer

Greetings, grace, and peace to you, dear reader. I pray this finds you in the highest of spirits and the best of health.

Speaking of health, I was finally sent to the hospital and they did an ultrasound on my abdominal cavity. However, prison health care as it is, I haven't received the results yet. So I still don't know what my illness is. However, the Lord is my strength day by day as I go through this ordeal: **"My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness"** saith the Lord! (II Cor. 12:9).

As for the GRAD Program, I'm in the third and final phase. This phase is 90 days in general population after which I'll graduate the program---sometime in January---and be transferred to another unit to complete my sentence.

Phase III is going smooth. I'm medically unassigned because of my health issue so I've been volunteering with the unit chaplain. I've also begun a Life Skills class and signed up for a Peer Education class to gain more skills and fill in my days. I'm taking each day as it comes, **"for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof"** (Matt. 6:34).

Your continued prayers for me, dear reader, are very welcomed and much appreciated.

For this month's subject, I would like to talk to you about personal Bible study. Dear fellow prisoners, I am where you are so I know the pitfalls and obstacles to Bible study you face on a daily basis. But if you're truly a child of God, then you have to be real with God, and real with yourself. You turn out to chapel service on Sunday mornings like clockwork, but what are you doing the other six days of the week to put God's Word in your heart? Now I'm not talking to everyone, I know there are plenty of Christian prisoners who read and study their Bibles on a daily basis, but for those of you who only pick up your Bibles on Sunday mornings, I would like to share a few Scriptures with you.

"Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom. 12:2).

"Be not conformed. . .but be ye transformed by the renewing of your

mind." How can we get God's character out if we're not putting God's Word in? How can our minds be renewed if we're not feeding it the Word of Life? The short and simple answer is, we can't. And so it is with the will of God, we can't begin to find out the will of God if we're not studying the Word of God.

But what about those chapel services, you ask? Isn't that enough? Well, if your chapel services are like mine, then 98% of them are 'salvation services', which are very much needed in our prisons, but they're not strong meat for the growing Christian. I didn't say stop going to them, but what I am saying is add to them by studying your Bibles on your own between Sundays.

Why should we study so much? I'm glad you asked:

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15).

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God," isn't that what we all want? He chose us, He drew us, He opened our spiritual eyes, shouldn't we have a burning desire to show ourselves approved unto Him by saturating our very beings with His Word?

"A workman. . ." It is work and we should be happy to do it. Recently a volunteer chaplain made the following point. He put his Bible on a desk at the front of the room and said, "The Word of God has entered the room, everyone in here has just received the Word of God." A few of us looked at each other like 'what's the point?' Then he said, "Do you feel more enlightened? I mean, there is the Word of God sitting right there, everyone in this room has received it, see, there it is. Aah, but it's not doing you any good while it just sits there on the desk, is it?" We all answered, "No!" "So we must pick it up and read it," he said. "Apply it to our hearts and minds in order for it to affect us, right?"

Of course, that Bible sitting on the desk did us no good until he picked it up and began to preach out of it. Just as your Bible, dear reader, does you no good as it sits on your shelf between Sundays. Pick it up! Read it! Study it!

Be not ashamed of the Word of God. Tell your domino buddy that you need some quality time with the Lord, tell your Scrabble buddy that the Word of God is calling, tell your workout buddy that you must exercise your renewed mind. All those things will still be there when you've finished studying for the day, but

if you put all those things before the Lord then you must ask yourself who is first in your life---the Lord or yourself? Only you can answer that question. Search your heart fearlessly.

My prayer for you, dear reader, is for you to spend time daily in the Word of God. How much time is up to the individual, but even five or ten minutes while you drink your morning coffee or before turning in for the night is better than no time at all.

Bro. Jeff, y'all are in my prayers daily and as always you remain an answer to mine. I love you and hope to see you soon.

Bro. McSwain and Bro. Hilton, thank you for your recent letters of encouragement, your feedback and prayers are much appreciated. You, also, are in my prayers.

Bro. Kevin, you, too, remain in my prayers. Keep fighting the good fight---you are not alone. I love you, Brother.

Krystal Ruthann, I still have not found words to express my love to you, I hope my feeble attempt is sufficient. May the Lord draw you to Himself and make you His own and richly bless you. You are in my thoughts and prayers daily.



Abraham Believed

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accounted to him for righteousness" (Gal. 3:5-6).

"Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness" (James 2:21-23).

One of the most common expressions in today's evangelical Christian world is, "All it takes is faith." There are many similar expressions passed on that deal with the same thought. We even have a hymn entitled, "Only Believe." Sincerity is the key word! "As long as you believe" we are told, or "If your heart is right."

Is salvation or the Christian life simply a matter of believing *something*, of just having some concept that Christ died to save sinners (as true and important as that is), or does it make a difference *what* you believe? Let's talk about that.

Genesis 15:6 is one of only two Old Testament texts that are quoted verbatim three times in the New Testament. When God sees to it that something is stated four times it behooves us to pay attention.

Our KJV, and a few other English translations, translate Genesis 15:6, **"..believed in The Lord.."** while a number of other translations omit the "in," simply saying, **"..believed God.."** You will notice that the New Testament writers

also omit the 'in,' reading **"believed God."** I have the Hebrew text and I agree with the New Testament writers. Surely Paul and James were more familiar with the Hebrew than we are, as well as writing under divine inspiration. *This is an important point!* There is a big difference between believing *in* the existence of God and *believing* God!

As a glaring illustration, I believed *in* Adolph Hitler, but I certainly didn't believe what he said. I believe *in* Satan, but I certainly don't believe what he says. To believe *in* God, that is, that He exists in some form, is far different than *believing* or *trusting* God. That is the point the New Testament writers are making.

The Biblical concept of faith, particularly the Old Testament concept, goes beyond simple academic belief. Faith and faithfulness are inseparable! When Abraham *believed* God, he relied on God's *faithfulness*. He trusted that God was faithful to keep the promises He had made to Abraham *and* that the keeping and working out of those difficult, impossible promises was totally dependent on God performing what needed to be done. **"And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform"** (Rom. 4:21). The Greek word (*pistuō*), translated 'believe' in John 3:16, carries that same connotation, so that **"..whosoever believeth in him.."** becomes *relies on him*, not just accepting the 'historical Jesus.' The New Testament writers bring this concept out in three different ways.

In Romans Paul deals with justification, i.e.: salvation. Abraham wasn't justified or saved because he had done some specific deed or offered a specific sacrifice. *Neither was he justified because he acknowledged the existence of God or simply obeyed God's command!* These two things cannot be separated!

These are essential (Hebrews 11:6: **"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him"**). But as James points out and repeated incidents in the gospels reveal, the devils, or demons, both believe and obey Him. In our Christian religious society today we have fallen from the scriptural concept that Paul is driving home here! As a society we have made our salvation more dependent on our academic doctrinal correctness and/or our obedience to known *Christian* ethics than on simply relying on what Christ has done. **"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast"** (Eph. 2:8-9, emphasis mine).

This is a faith that is the gift of God, not the result of a personal 'drummed up' faith, a more effective teaching, or the persuasive powers of the preacher or

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evangelist. **"For flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven...The same heard Paul speak: who stedfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed...Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life"** (Matt. 16:17; Acts 14:9; Acts 11:18).

But this has to go another step. The Judaizers of Paul's day have not disappeared! They have merely put on a different coat. The Galatian Christians were not denying that they had been, and needed to be saved by grace, but had been persuaded that they needed something more to bring them fully into the fold and keep them saved. They differed from the Corinthian problem only in specifics. They were teaching, or had been taught, that they could be saved but still needed that little *extra* to make them fully spiritual – the 'Full Gospel' preachers of *their* day.

Don't be misled by these 'wolves in sheep's clothing'! They seek only to increase their own sphere of power and enhance their own reputations. **"As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ."** (Gal. 6:12) Paul reminds the Galatians that if they had, by necessity, begun in the Spirit, they could certainly not improve themselves in, or by, the flesh. **"Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?"** (Gal. 3:3) He reminds them that Abraham relied on God, trusted God to finish the work He had started and fulfill His promises, even in the face of what seemed humanly impossible. **"Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."**

Dear reader, whether you stand, as I do, as a mature Christian, one who should, can, and does lead those younger than himself, or whether you are a brand new believer, or seeker, or somewhere in-between, you cannot add to, or supplement the work that Christ did on the cross! To try to do so is sin – worse and far more damaging a sin than the worst of sins recognized by the humanist, morally religious, or fundamental Christian societies! Any other sin may be repented of, or even if not repented of in this life may still be dealt with at the Judgment Seat of Christ, but to depend on *any* thing for salvation or assurance other than the work of Christ alone will cost you your salvation!

But there is still another essential thought. If we leave you here you may well fall into antinomianism, the belief that sin no longer is a problem and that the Law no longer applies to you. *God forbid!* Paul deals squarely with this in Romans

5:20-6:2: **"...But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound... What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid."**

He deals with it again in Galatians 5:18-24: **"But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law...Now the works of the flesh are manifest...But the fruit of the Spirit is...And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."**

James and Paul are not in disagreement when James writes, **"And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness..."** James brings out what Paul says in II Corinthians 5:17, **"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."** But James brings it out with an illustration that his Jewish readers could well understand. James uses the offering of Isaac as a *work* that proved Abraham's faith.

Ussher's chronological dating of the Scriptures places the offering of Isaac, the event which James connects with this great statement of Abraham's faith, somewhere between 21 and 41 years after the promise to which this great statement is made: **"And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness."** Abraham could obey only because he fully believed, trusted, and relied on God to work out the promise. His offering of Isaac was more than just obedience! Abraham *believed*, so he obeyed. Hebrews 11:19, **"Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead."** This applies to those not yet saved, young believers still learning and growing, and to the 'old folks' of faith. We obey fully only when we believe fully. We must believe God, not just believe *in* God or in our doctrinal or denominational teachings.

Essentials of Bible

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than all his doctors, for he feels it. So the best way to know what repentance is, is to experience it in your soul.

CONVICTION---SIN AWAKENED

The first step taken by the Holy Spirit in bringing a sinner to repentance is the work of conviction. It is the office of the Holy Spirit to convict a person of his sinful nature. It is written in John 16:8 of the Spirit: **"And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin."** The verb "reprove" here is translated "convince" in I Corinthians 14:24. The same verb in John 16:8 translated "reprove" is translated "convict" in James 2:9.

Convicting work is the Spirit's work. He alone can do it effectually and none but He. The expression **"to convict"** is a

legal term. It speaks of the office of a judge summing up the evidence and setting matters in their proper light. It might well be said that the Holy Spirit reproves of sin, convicts of sin, and convinces of sin, for He does all of this and much more.

It is the Spirit's work to convince men that sin carries the seed of death. If sin continues to work in them, it will bring eternal death. The unbeliever has rejected the only cure for sin--he has failed to believe in the Savior lifted up on the cross. No one but the Spirit can reveal to the sinner that rejecting Christ is a terrible sin against God. Speaking of the office work of the Holy Spirit, Christ said that He would convict **"Of sin, because they believe not on me"** (John 16:9).

The Holy Spirit uses the moral law of God, recorded in the Bible, to convict men of sin. He shows the sinner the holiness and justice of the law of God. The holiness of the law devolves upon man the obligation to be holy (I Peter 1:16). It has a special respect to obedience. The justice of the law prescribes the appropriate penalty for disobedience. When the Spirit brings the sinner to see the holiness of the law and his utter lack of obedience to it, the sinner has a sincere sorrow that he has sinned against a holy God. He then has a desire after holiness in himself.

There are many verses of Scriptures to prove that the Spirit uses the law of God to convict the sinner. **"By the law is the knowledge of sin"** (Rom. 3:20). The Apostle Paul wrote: **"I had not known sin, but by the law"** (Rom. 7:7). Again he said: **"Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful"** (Rom. 7:12-13).

Not only does the Spirit use the law of God as an instrument, but He uses the minister who preaches against sin. **"But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all"** (I Cor. 14:24). Here it is seen how the Spirit reproves through the preaching of the Word in the assembly of the saints. The unbeliever by the preaching of the Word of truth is convinced and converted to Christianity. This conviction of sin is the office and effect of the truth accompanied by the Spirit of God. The conviction of sin is the result of the Spirit using the truth, not the conscious act of the person speaking. Preachers who desire to be used of the Spirit in the conversion of sinners must preach against sin.

Jesus Christ said that **"the men of Nineveh. . .repented at the preaching of Jonas"** (Matt. 12:41). Jonah preached wrath and judgment. But his preaching

was the occasion the Spirit used to bring the men of Nineveh to repentance. On the day of Pentecost the preaching of Peter caused the men of Israel to be **"pricked in their heart"** and to cry out: **"Men and brethren, what shall we do?"** Peter's ready reply was: **"Repent. . .every one of you"** (Acts 2:37-38).

The Spirit employs the preaching of the Word to awaken the conscience and to touch the heart of an unbeliever. The Spirit uses the Word as an instrument to expose the secret sins of the heart and make the sinner to know he is guilty before God. The sinner feels he has sinned without cause and deserves to die without mercy. There is a deep sense of shame, arising from a consciousness of guilt and ill-desert. This brings fear of punishment for sins committed. The psalmist said: **"The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow"** (Ps. 116:3). At this point there is fear of punishment, but there is no hatred of sin.

CONTRITION---SIN ABHORRED

The second stage of true repentance is contrition for sin. The Holy Spirit causes the sinner to see sin will bring about his eternal ruin. The Spirit makes the sinner understand his sins crucified the Lord of glory (Zech. 12:9-13:1). Then there is produced in the sinner a hatred for sin. At this point sin is hated in all its forms--hated in its inward workings and in its outward manifestations. Sin is seen as the thing which God hates, and it has now become the object of the sinner's hatred. An example of this is seen in Psalms 38:17-18: **"For I am ready to halt, and my sorrow is continually before me. For I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin."** This sorrow is over the evil of sin committed against a holy God.

The antecedent of true repentance is godly sorrow. In some sense it causes and produces real repentance. **"Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death"** (II Cor. 7:9-10). At this point the sinner comes to

◊ (Continued on page 5)

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Essentials of Bible

(Continued from page 4) ♦

see that his sins have been committed against God, against His nature, His will, His authority, His law, His justice, His goodness, etc. The evils of sin arise chiefly from the fact that it is opposed to God and out of harmony with His character.

"It is as unreasonable as it is unscriptural to suppose that there is not sorrow in the change of mind denoted by repentance. How and why does the mind change at all in regard to sin, unless there is in it something to excite sorrow? Whatever calls for a change of mind concerning sin calls for sorrow on account of sin. The heart of the true penitent is a broken and a crushed heart--broken with sorrow and crushed with grief. How can it be otherwise when sin is looked at in contrast with the purity of the divine character, and its turpitude is seen in the light which shines from the cross of Calvary" (J. M. Pendleton, 1878).

In contrition the awakened sinner is sorry that his sins have offended God. **"Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest"** (Ps. 51:4). Such sorrow over sins is according to God's will, and it is wrought by the Spirit of God. This godly sorrow leads to repentance, salvation, and reformation.

The shedding of tears is not repentance, but it is often the case that the truly penitent person weeps over his sins. Joel 2:12-13 says: **"Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil."** Modern easy believism has no place in their evangelism for contrition over sin. Their false professors never shed the tears of repentance.

Contrition is attended with shame and confusion of face. Ezra said: **"O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens"** (Ezra 9:6). The penitent psalmist cried: **"For innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore my heart faileth me"** (Ps. 40:12). The penitent publican **"would not lift up so much as his eyes up to heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner"** (Luke 18:13).

The Divine Spirit causes the sinner not only to hate sin, but also to hate

himself because he is a sinner. **"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). Upon seeing the holiness of God, Job said: **"Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes"** (Job 42:6). When the Spirit revealed the condition of Isaiah's heart, he felt compelled to utter the plaintive cry: **"Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips"** (Isa. 6:5).

CONFESSION---SIN ACKNOWLEDGED

In repentance the Spirit brings the sinner to confess his sins to God. **"I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin"** (Ps. 32:5).

The returning prodigal told his father: **"I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight"** (Luke 15:21). The prodigal confessed his fault and folly. He acknowledged his sins against Heaven. The confession of sin is required as a necessary condition to the knowledge of peace and pardon. The sinner in repentance has a readiness to confess his sins to God and desires forgiveness. John the Baptist required of those that he baptize a confession of sins (Matt. 3:6). Baptist churches would do well today to require the same.

Ezra called upon the people of his day to confess their sins: **"Now therefore make confession unto the LORD God of your fathers, and do his pleasure: and separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from the strange wives"** (Ezra 10:11). In Old Testament times, as well as in our day, it is the duty of men to give **"glory to the LORD God of Israel, and make confession unto him"** (Josh. 7:19).

Without a penitent confession of sins before God, we can never have the knowledge that our sins are forgiven for Jesus' sake. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin, but no one understands this but the truly penitent person. The uncovering of our sins before the eyes of God is essential to real repentance. God has promised to forgive the penitent confessor and deliver him from guilt. I John 1:9 says: **"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."** He is just in doing this because of the atonement of Jesus Christ by which His righteousness is declared in the justification of sinners. God is faithful to His promise of forgiveness upon repentance inasmuch as Christ has died for our sins (Rom. 3:26).

CONVERSION---SIN ABANDONED

True repentance is followed by reformation. If there has been a change of

inward opinions, then there must also be a change in outward conduct. This is seen in the case of the inhabitants of Nineveh. When they repented at the preaching of Jonah, they fasted and put on sackcloth and turned from their evil way (Jonah 3:8). The Bible says that **"God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way"** (Jonah 3:10).

When a Sunday school teacher asked one of his students what repentance was, he received this reply from a little boy: "It is being sorry enough to quit." This little boy gave a better definition of repentance than some of the greatest theologians of the world. An old hymn well said: "Repentance is to leave the sins we loved before. . . And to show we in earnest grieve by doing so no more."

It is not enough to change your mind about sin and to reform your life. The repenting sinner must turn from sin to God. This we call saving faith. **"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon"** (Isa. 55:7). The Thessalonian Christians **"turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God"** (I Thess. 1:9). Paul taught that men **"should repent and turn to God"** (Acts 26:20). One of the Hebrew words for repentance means **"to turn."** The sinner must forsake what he would have God to pardon, and the sinner must turn to God for that pardon.

REPENTANCE IS GOD'S COMMAND

The command for the Gentile world is given in Acts 17:30. The Apostle Paul made it clear at Athens that God **"now commandeth all men everywhere to repent."** Repentance is a reasonable, important, universal, and immediate duty. All who would be saved must have the change of mind in regard to sin which repentance implies. This verse must not be twisted to say that God commanded only the elect to repent.

To the churches has been committed the task of preaching **"repentance and remission of sins. . . among all nations"** (Luke 24:47). The church which repudiates the preaching of repentance is a physician of no value. That religious society is preaching another gospel which was never preached by Christ, the apostles, and the primitive churches.

Men need to repent because they are

sinners. **"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"** (Rom. 3:23). **". . . both Jews and Gentiles. . . are all under sin"** (Rom. 3:9). All the world is guilty before God (Rom. 3:19). All men every where have committed sins of which they need to repent. They have too long continued in sin and now it is high time they repent. God commands you to change your mind and your ways. You are responsible to turn with sorrow and shame from every sin and with cheerfulness and resolution to every duty. Repentance is not only man's privilege; it is also his duty.

Without repentance the gospel of Christ cannot be savingly believed. Our Lord said: **"Repent ye, and believe the gospel"** (Mark 1:15). Here Christ makes it plain that repentance is preparatory to belief in the gospel. By repentance one laments and forsakes his sins, and by faith in Christ he receives the forgiveness of sins.

He who does not repent is yet in the snare of the Devil (II Tim. 2:25-26). He who has an **"impenitent heart"** is treasuring up unto himself **"wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God"** (Rom. 2:5). The sinner who walks in the way of an impenitent heart is on the broad way to destruction.

Impenitence insults the majesty of Heaven, and it defies God's wrath. The man who delays repentance does in effect pawn his soul to the Devil. He leaves it in Satan's hands and says, "Here, Satan, keep my soul. If I do not return for it in a few days, it is yours forever."



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How To Lose Your

(Continued from page 1) ◊

Christianity.

So, what I want us to do is to examine a hypothetical situation, where a person does, in fact, lose his salvation. And, to make this article applicable to you and to me, I want us to look at two main points: First, I want us to examine what it is that you must do in order to lose your salvation. Second, I want us to notice what it is that God must do in order for you to lose your salvation.

WHAT YOU MUST DO TO LOSE YOUR SALVATION

You must Cease to Obey God. The first aspect of losing your salvation that you must conform to is that of disobedience. In order to lose your salvation, I believe that you must first cease to obey God.

You know, in His teachings that the Lord Jesus Christ taught while He was here on this earth, He told His disciples, **“Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am”** (John 13:13). The Lord Jesus Christ was not just the **“Master and Lord”** of the disciples, but He is our **“Master and Lord”** as well; and whatsoever it is that He commands the disciples, we are obligated to obey as well. Therefore, we must be obedient unto Him in all that He commands. We read the familiar words of Jesus Christ in John 14:15, **“If ye love me, keep my commandments.”** Sometimes I think that we lightly gloss over what a big requirement this is for those who are saved. We think of the Lord Jesus Christ as simply our loving Savior (and He is), but we forget that He is also much more. He is, in fact, our everything. We have a **“Master”!** We have a **“Lord”!** We will answer to Him, and we must obey Him! Those of us who are saved will accept and acknowledge Jesus Christ as our Master, and as our Lord, and we will obey Him.

So we must conclude that in order for any man to *lose his salvation*, he must cease to obey God, and in particular cease to obey Jesus Christ. Now, I know immediately some of you will think, “Well, this is exactly what I have seen some do. I have seen some that once claimed to be a Christian, who later did cease to obey Christ. They must have lost their salvation.” However, let me submit to you that there are times when all of us will fail to obey Christ as we ought. But, in order for any of us to lose our salvation, we must *completely* and *forever* cease to obey Christ. For what lost man is there, that will ever consistently and from the heart obey Christ? On the other hand, what saved man is there that will never obey Christ?

The Apostle John tells us, **“And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth**

is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked” (I John 2:3-6). Here in this passage in John’s first epistle, we read some proof that we have of salvation. Actually the proof which we read of here can be used both to determine those that are truly saved, and those that were never saved. Some will say, “Well, those that do not perform the Word of God have lost their salvation.” But, I submit to you that we must be careful in giving out and taking back what only God can give. Perhaps (and I know that each of you who are reading this, and are truly saved, will agree with me) one that is saved will, from time to time, fail to obey and follow Christ as he ought. This occasional failure on the part of the children of God is regrettable but inevitable. However, there are other times when you will see that saved individual being obedient unto Christ. It is the goal of each and every one of the children of God to obey Christ and to **“walk, even as he walked.”** But we will (because of the sinful flesh in which we live) certainly fail from time to time.

And then someone might say, “Well, what about those who apparently have completely ceased to obey God?” I submit to you, that those who do not ever obey God were never saved in the first place. Any appearance of obedience that might have been noticeable before was only a façade; actually that person was only being obedient to some selfish desire and not being obedient to Christ. Some motive other than the Holy Spirit and a union with God was responsible for their apparent and temporary obedience to the commands of Christ. John says of such impersonators, **“He . . . is a liar, and the truth is not in him”** (I John 2:4). I believe that in the case of him who has made a pretence of obedience to Christ that the truth was *never* in him. Later in this chapter, John says of such individuals, **“They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us”** (I John 2:19).

But, even if someone who is reading this wants to believe that a truly born again child of God can forever and finally cease to obey God; still there is more to consider before we can allow that you can ever *lose your salvation*.

You must Cease to Fear God. As a part of losing your salvation, I believe that you must cease to fear God. Now, I know that some might argue that fear is not necessary to salvation, but I believe it is. And, I know some might argue that fear of God is not restricted only to those who are saved. Some will surely reference the demonic fear James refers to in James

2:19: **“Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.”** However, if you closely analyze this verse, the writer James is simply referring to a belief in God---even a belief in only one God. Certainly a case can be made for some, if not all, of the fallen angels believing in one God. But James is not referring to a reverential fear in, and belief and trust in, God alone. In fact, I believe that true, biblical, reverential fear is only present in those who are saved. Therefore, in order to become unsaved, you must set aside your awe and reverence of God.

How can those who have known God, ever truly cast aside the fear and the awe and the reverence that we have had for Him? The writer to the Hebrews said this: **“Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire”** (Heb. 12:28-29). How can one who has known God ever forget that He is a **“consuming fire”**? Well, again I suppose someone might say, “What about the Israelites who are mentioned in the context? Didn’t they cease to fear God?” Yes they did. And we must also certainly admit that they also did cease to obey God. But how many of them were ever truly saved? It is easy for one who has not been saved by the grace of God, and who has not been indwelt by the spirit of God, and that has not known God in an intimate and experiential way, to cast away someone whom he has not ever truly obeyed or feared. But those who were truly saved (such as Moses, Aaron, Miriam, Joshua, and Caleb, etc.), did continue to fear God, and they did continue to obey God---though at times they might also have fallen short of utter obedience and fear.

But even at this---even after we speak of obedience and fear---still, there is more you must do in order to *lose your salvation*.

You must Cease to Exalt God. Every person who has ever been saved has exalted God when he or she is saved by the grace of God. Every person who has ever been saved has continued to exalt God throughout the course of his salvation. So, in order to *lose your salvation*, you must *cease to exalt God*.

What do I mean when I say those that are saved exalt God? Well, I mean that we who are saved will lift God up and think highly of Him and praise Him, and set Him up above ourselves, all of mankind and every imagination or desire or knowledge of man. Now I am sure none of us ever exalt God with the consistency and to the level that we should. Certainly we fail, even in this, from time to time. But in order for you to *lose your salvation*, you must lose all desire to exalt God in your life.

Concerning those who are truly saved,

we have an irresistible desire to exalt and praise our God. David said in the 40th Psalm, **“And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God. . . Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as love thy salvation say continually, The LORD be magnified”** (Ps. 40:3, 16). I believe that those who are truly saved, by the grace of God, will go forth unto the praise and exaltation and magnification of the Lord God our Savior.

So in order for you to *lose your salvation*, you must lose all desire (which desire must have once been an irresistible desire) to praise and exalt your God. Some will say, “I certainly have seen those who said that they were saved and they did praise the Lord for some period of time. But eventually they did cease to obey God and cease to fear God and cease to exalt God.” Well, again, I will admit to you that there are times each of us who are saved will cease to exalt God as we ought. But which one of us that is saved today, could ever imagine ourselves getting down on our knees without a knowledge and fear of God; and without a knowledge and awareness of our own unworthiness; and without a knowledge of the exalted and high One that it is, and that we have come to serve? David said, **“I will call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies. . . The LORD liveth; and blessed be my rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted”** (Ps. 18:3, 46). And let’s read also some of the last words of King David: **“Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name”** (I Chron. 29:11-13). These words of David certainly serve to exalt the name and person and glory of our God. Notice, also, that this passage appears to be a passage that the Lord Jesus had in reference when He gave us the Model Prayer in Matthew 6:9-13. Those that truly know God will pray to Him as the Almighty, and as the One whose is the *kingdom* and the *honour* and *power* and all glory.

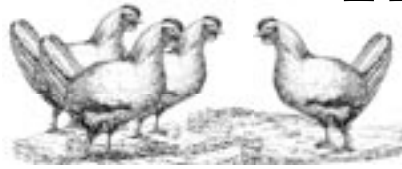
How could anyone who has ever been truly saved come to the point where they could not see God as the One Great God, who gives to men strength---even salvation? How can you, if you are truly saved, ever forget or deny the magnificence of our God? Well, even if someone wants to contend that a truly saved individual can get to this point, there is more which must take place.

◊ (Continued on page 7)

Hen Talk

Cyd James
Papua, New Guinea

For the hens.
Ok, you roosters can read it, too.



Hannah

“And when the time was that Elkanah offered, he gave to Peninnah his wife, and to all her sons and her daughters, portions: But unto Hannah he gave a worthy portion; for he loved Hannah: but the LORD had shut up her womb. And her adversary also provoked her sore, for to make her fret, because the LORD had shut up her womb. And as he did so year by year, when she went up to the house of the LORD, so she provoked her; therefore she wept, and did not eat. Then said Elkanah her husband to her, Hannah, why weepest thou? and why eatest thou not? and why is thy heart grieved? am not I better to thee than ten sons? So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk. Now Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the LORD. And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore....Then Eli answered and said, Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him. And she said, Let thine handmaid find grace in thy sight. So the woman went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad” (I Sam. 1:4-10; 17-18).

In this account of Hannah, we see what a great burden or deep desire she had to bear a child, yet the Lord had shut up her womb. Not only was she barren, but Peninnah, the other wife, taunted and made fun of her for something that she had no control over.

In Old Testament times it was an honor for a Jewish woman to bear children, especially sons. Therefore Hannah was sorely grieved by her barrenness and by the provoking of Peninnah. She wept and could not eat. Some would condemn her for her fretting, but God made women emotional beings and her wanting to bear a child was a perfectly natural desire. We should not be quick to judge. Hannah also did something about her heartache. She sought the Lord in prayer. She knew the Great God of Heaven and that He was the One who could answer her inner distress.

In this text it is interesting to note that Hannah did not revile back against Peninnah. Though she was provoked unjustly for something that she couldn't do anything about, we don't read where she was hateful and mean back to her. As for Peninnah, she may have been envious of the love that Elkanah had for Hannah

and this caused her to act as she did. Though we do not know for sure what her motive was, it always helps in dealing with problems to try to understand what others are going through and what may be causing them to act as they are. Doing this helps us to react with graciousness and not with anger.

We can also notice from the text that Hannah had perseverance. I don't know how long she was barren, but it appears to be for a period of years. Sometimes trials are short in duration and sometimes they last as long as we live. The Lord knows what is best. When trials last a long time, it is easy to feel disheartened. In the above verses we can see that Hannah was in bitterness of soul and wept sorely. Yet through it all, her actions showed that she knew from whence her help came and that God alone could change her situation.

Elkanah's words to Hannah were full of tenderness. He didn't tell her in a patronizing way that God's grace was sufficient, but instead told her that his love was as great as ten sons' love would be. He didn't care whether she ever had a child. Love does not have conditions. What he spoke was the very thing that most women desire to hear. That he was there for her no matter what. His words also remind us that we have to be careful not to get so caught up in our trial that we lose sight of the blessings around us. We may be going through a difficulty or hardship in one area, but God blesses us in many other areas. Though barren, Hannah had the blessing of her husband's love.

Last, Hannah's countenance changed after she went to the temple and poured her heart out unto the Lord. Prayer is not only a great privilege, but is also a great comfort. After we pray, we do not know how the Lord will answer our prayer, but we have the assurance in our heart that He will deal with it accordingly. Whether it is renewed strength to bear the trial or it is resolved in a physical way, we know that all is well.

“The jewels of a Christian are his afflictions. The regalia of the kings that God has made, are their troubles, their sorrows, and their griefs. Griefs exalt us, and troubles lift us.” ---Charles Spurgeon

“Blessed is the man who knows how to transform an offence into a beatitude, and a root of bitterness into a tree of life, so that many may be blessed thereby, instead of many being defiled.” --- A.J. Gordon



How To Lose Your

(Continued from page 6) ♦

You must Cease to have Faith in God. There is something that is a requisite (I dare to say) to your salvation. That something which I am talking about is faith. When you were first saved, you must have possessed a faith in God that was true, powerful, and genuine. Or else how could you have ever believed? We are talking about a supernatural experience, when we are talking about salvation. We are talking about having faith in the (from the human perspective) seemingly impossible! What faith must have been yours, when you were first saved! In fact, the Apostle Paul said, **“For by grace are ye saved through faith. . .”** (Eph. 2:8). Those of us who are saved, must admit, that at the very foundation of our salvation there is an unshakeable faith in God, and faith in the person and work of our Savior, Jesus Christ. So, in order for you to *lose your salvation*, you must *cease to have faith in God*.

Well, where does that faith go? How can you cease to have faith, when once it was so necessary and vital to you? Some will say, “I have seen many men and women who have seemed to have such great faith. And then, after a while, that faith which they wore on their sleeves was no longer visible. They simply lost their faith in God.” In response to this, I will ask you, “How is this possible?” Now, I admit, as with all of my previous points, that it is very common for us to see our own faith in God, and the faith of others, to ebb and flow, and to rise and to sink. But, as a truly saved individual, when have you ever felt that God was not who He said He was, and that Jesus had not done what He said that He had done? I do not believe that any child of God can ever lose that faith which is so central to our salvation. Those who have lost that faith are ones who only had a pretend faith. They must not have had the faith that comes through the grace of God. The writer to the Hebrews said, **“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him”** (Heb. 11:6). You could never have come to God, if you did not **“believe that he is.”** And you must have believed (had faith) that He could and would save you. Well, how can you lose that faith? How could that precious, saving faith be here today and gone tomorrow? I want you to examine yourself. Is it possible that you could ever imagine yourself, or anyone who is truly saved, that would cease to have faith in God as your own Savior and Redeemer? Well, if your answer is that you can see yourself losing that necessary faith; then I submit to you that, even now, you are not saved. And, therefore, it would be no wonder if you would lose that

salvation which you even now *pretend* to have. When the Lord Jesus was speaking to His disciples about false professors, He said this: **“Take heed therefore how ye hear; for whosoever hath, to him shall be given: and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have”** (Luke 8:18). Some **“seemeth to have”** salvation and faith in God; whereas others truly have salvation and faith in God. But, even if you want to overlook this requirement that you must cease to have faith in God if you are to lose your salvation; let me give you one more thing to think about---one more requirement that I would lay upon you--if you are to *lose your salvation*.

You must Cease to Love God. Do you love God? I am speaking to those of you who are saved---Do you love God? Well, if you are truly saved, then you must answer, “Yes!” (Perhaps even those that pretend to be saved will answer, “Yes!”) So then, if you are saved, and if you love God, I submit unto you that if you ever to lose your salvation, then you must cease to love God. I think that most of you who are truly saved, will admit that of all the possibilities in this world, one of those things which seems to be the most unlikely is the idea that you could cease to love your God.

Think for just a moment about the apostle, John the beloved. Consider that love which he had for his Savior. We read in I John 4:19, **“We love him, because he first loved us.”** Truly the Apostle John did love his Savior. And, truly, you and I who are saved today must love our Savior. Can you imagine your life (if you are truly saved) without a love for the Lord Jesus Christ? Can you imagine that love ever disappearing? What love could ever forever take the place of the love that you have for Christ? Is there a better or more fulfilling love somewhere out there? My brothers and sisters, though I am not much of a servant of Christ, still I cannot imagine my life without my love for God. In fact, I am quite sure that the love which I have for Him is an eternal love, for it comes from an Eternal God Who has eternally loved me. My life will end in this world, but I am quite certain that even beyond the bounds of this life I will love my Savior and my God.

To imagine a truly saved individual ever ceasing to love God is really a preposterous thing. But consider also some of the verses which precede the verse that we have just read. We read in I John 4:7-8, **“Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.”** Those who are **“born of God”** do have the eternal love that I have just mentioned. Again, I am not much of a servant to God, and yet I can certainly say the things that I have said about my love for God. And you,

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too, can say these same things. We do not have to think highly of ourselves to know that the love we have comes from above. And we do not have to think highly of ourselves to know that those of us who are **"born of God"** will forever love God. But these verses also teach us that he **"that loveth not knoweth not God."** These are the ones we have seen cease to love God. They did not ever love God. They only seemed to love God. In these cases it is admittedly possible (it is even inevitable) that the love of these persons for God will disappear.

In summary, if you can say that you can do all of these things which I have mentioned; that you can *cease to obey God*; that you can *cease to fear God*; that you can *cease to exalt God*; that you can *cease to have faith in God*; and that you can *cease to love God*; even if you say you can do all of these things (and I believe if you are truly saved, that you cannot do all of these things); still there is someone else you are not taking into account--- and that person is God. Even if you can do all of these things that are mentioned, still, in order for you to *lose your salvation*, there are certain things God Himself must do.

WHAT GOD MUST DO TO LOSE YOUR SALVATION

After noticing all of these things that you must do in order to *lose your salvation*, we must still be reminded that we are not the owners of this salvation--- God is the owner. If you read in the Book of Psalms, you will notice how often it is that the Psalmist will refer to salvation as something that is of, through, and by God. In fact, in just a cursory examination of the Book of the Psalms, I noticed at least 49 times in which the salvation that we have is tied personally to God. We can tell how closely and intimately God is associated to this salvation in the Book of the Psalms through the use of such statements as, **"his salvation," "God of our salvation," "God of my salvation," "Rock of our salvation," "Rock of my salvation," "the salvation of our God," "the strength of my salvation," "become my salvation."** To give you one example, let's read Psalm 79:9, **"Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name: and deliver us, and purge away our sins, for thy name's sake."** After that, let's read also, Psalm 68:19-20, **"Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation. Selah. He that is our God is the God of salvation; and unto GOD the Lord belong the issues from death."** You see, David understood that **"our God is the God of salvation."** Without Him there is no salvation. Through Him is salvation given unto the sons of men. And without Him, none would retain that salvation.

There are many other examples of God's salvation which are given to us in the Book of Psalms. In fact, if we had the space and the time, I would go on to show you that in the Book of the Psalms, there are 19 times in which the writer refers to the salvation which he has as **"thy salvation"** (speaking of the Lord God).

So, since God is a part of your salvation (which He has given you), then we must conclude that in order for you to *lose your salvation*, God must somehow be involved. Since God is so intimately involved in every aspect of your salvation, it is very logical to conclude, that you are not alone in losing your salvation (after all, you most definitely weren't alone in acquiring or keeping your salvation as long as you had it), God must be involved in the losing of your salvation. The result of these musings means that there must be certain things that God must do in order for you to *lose your salvation*.

God must Ignore His own Will to Save. The first thing that I would like for us to notice, is that, in order for you to *lose your salvation*, God must first ignore His Own will to save. We read in Acts 13:48, **"And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."** If you are to *lose your salvation*, then, it seems, that it would be necessary for God Almighty to ignore His Own will that ordained you to salvation. You see, God has ordained to save some, and it is His will that He will save some. He is a God of grace, and He has chosen to manifest His grace most clearly in the salvation of souls. So, if you are to *lose your salvation*, it must be that God has decided His original will to save you, or any of mankind, was a lie. Or, it must be that He has changed His will concerning you. Or, it must be that you have thwarted (or overcome) His will to save you.

Let's read some words of the Apostle Paul: **"And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord"** (Eph. 3:9-11). Could it be that God's purpose concerning you and the salvation of God on your behalf, was only a mistaken or misapplied purpose? Well, if you *lose your salvation*, then it must be that God has made a mistake in His will and purpose to save you. We read in Titus 1:1-2, **"Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness; In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began."** God cannot lie!

Do not ever accuse Him of doing so, for it is not even imaginable. If He said that He will save, then He will do so.

I want to also read what Paul had to say to Titus in Titus 2:11: **"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men."** I think this verse teaches us that the grace of God, as it is displayed amongst men, will bring salvation. And, in all truth, what is grace if there is no salvation? The grace of God is made most obvious, and is revealed most clearly in the salvation of lost and worthless mankind. If the grace of God has appeared to you and has saved your unworthy soul, then the only way that you can *lose your salvation* is if God will suddenly decide to ignore the grace which He has purposed to bestow upon you. In order for you to *lose your salvation*, you must pass from one that God has purposed to save, unto one that God has not purposed to save. Do you think this is possible in the mind of God?

We read also in I Timothy 2:4, **"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."** Here we are plainly told that God **"will have all men to be saved."** Now, the debate may rage over who the **"all men"** are; but there can be no debate over the fact that His **"will"** is involved, and has been determined upon the salvation of men. Therefore, whomever it is that He has **"willed"** to save, they will be saved. And, undoubtedly, those that He has not **"willed"** to save will not be saved.

Still, if someone wants to declare that God does change His purpose to save, and that He does alter His will in saving men, there yet remains some other things which God must do in order for you to *lose your salvation*.

God must Disregard His own Decree of Election unto Salvation. The next thing I want us to notice that God must do in order for you to *lose your salvation* is that God must disregard His own decree of election unto salvation. It might seem I am only repeating my last point, but, in this point I want us to notice that the Lord God did not just ordain to save a certain number of individuals (and that will and purpose cannot be thwarted or ignored), but I want us to also notice that the will and purpose of God in salvation are made manifest in the decree of election unto salvation in the lives of individual men and women. We read in Isaiah 49:15-16, **"Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me."** Salvation is not just an impersonal characteristic of God that is manifest in the purpose and will of God to save some. But, rather, the salvation that comes from God is much more readily seen as a very personal and intimate relationship which exists

between God, and those that He has sent His son to save. In order for you to *lose your salvation*, God must disregard the fact that you, as an individual child of God, were **"graven"** upon the **"palm"** of the **"hands"** of God. Again, I want us to remember that the salvation which we have is of God. Remember Jonah said, **".salvation is of the LORD"** (Jonah 2:9). As the Lord God said through Isaiah, A mother may forget her child, and she may cease to have compassion upon her children, but God will not forget!

Let's read also in I Samuel 12:22: **"For the LORD will not forsake his people for his great name's sake: because it hath pleased the LORD to make you his people."** Any child of God who has been saved, must admit that it has **"pleased the LORD to make"** him His child, and to redeem his unworthy soul. Therefore, in order for you to *lose your salvation*, it must be that He must disregard His own election of you unto salvation. And, He must disregard His own pleasure that He had in saving you. And He must disregard His own name that He has placed upon you. Does any of this sound possible or feasible to any of you? I hope not. The truth is, that once God has set His name upon us, He will not allow us to utterly fall. Once His name is set upon us, if for nothing else than for His own name's sake, He will keep us and ultimately save us. We read in Psalm 106:8, **"Nevertheless he saved them for his name's sake, that he might make his mighty power to be known."**

However, if you want to pretend that God can disregard His own will to save some from amongst mankind; and if you want to pretend that God can disregard His own will to save you personally; still there are some other things which God must do in order for you to *lose your salvation*.

God must Discount, and Consider Ineffective, the Blood of Jesus Christ. The next thing I would like for us to notice is this: In order for you to *lose your salvation*, God must discount and consider ineffective the blood of Jesus Christ. Why do I say this? Well, if you are saved, wasn't the blood of Christ crucial to your salvation? And if you are one that the Lord God intended to save, didn't the Lord Jesus Christ come to redeem and to save you? And wasn't it the blood of Christ that washed away your sins? We read in Hebrews 9:12-14, **"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. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead**

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works to serve the living God?" I like the way the writer refers to the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ has **"obtained eternal redemption for us."** You see, in the sight of God, and in answer to the justice of God, the blood of Christ is sufficient to eternally save those that are given unto Him. So, if you are to *lose your salvation*, it must be that God, in order to let you *lose your salvation*, must consider the blood of Jesus Christ is suddenly not effective---at least in your case.

Can the Lord God make exceptions in the cases of those who are saved, as far as the effectiveness of the blood and life and sacrifice of Jesus Christ? In other words, can God say, "The blood of Jesus Christ is sufficient in this case; but, it is either inadequate in this other case, or it has lost its effectiveness?" Or can the power and will of man, be supposed to be of such great effect, that a mere man can cancel the effect of the blood of Christ?

Well, again, I hope that you do not believe the blood of Christ is only partially effective, and that the rest of your salvation depends upon you. And I hope that you do not believe the blood of Christ is only sporadically effective, and that some of the children of God will lose their salvation because, in their individual cases, the blood of Christ was not meant to be forever effective.

But, if you want to argue that God can and does (at least occasionally or in special circumstances) count the blood of Christ to be ineffective, still, there is something else we must allow that God must do in order for you to *lose your salvation*.

God must Cease to Love His Own. This last thought which I want us to examine is this: In order for you to *lose your salvation*, I believe you must admit that God must cease to love you. Now, I know that many who believe a person can lose his salvation, also mistakenly believe that God loves, equally, and without exception or prejudice, every man, woman, boy and girl that has ever lived. Well, I believe this argument which I want to present is a fair argument to present, even in the case of those believe in a universal and indiscriminate love of God. You must admit at least this: when you were first saved, it was because the Lord God loved you. When you were first saved, surely the love of God was shined abroad in your heart. We read in II Corinthians 4:6, **"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."** And then we read also in I John 4:9-10, **"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live**

through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." How then could it be, that the Lord God could have loved you at one point so greatly, and to the extent that He saved you through the person and work and love of Jesus Christ; but now, in order for you to *lose your salvation*, He has ignored that love, or has cast it aside to your utter ruin? My friend, surely by now you can see that this idea that you could *lose your salvation* is truly a preposterous (and even heretical) idea!

Let me read to you another Scripture that will reinforce what I have just been talking about. We read in Jeremiah 31:3, **"The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee."** It seems to me, that the salvation of Jeremiah and of Israel and of each and every one of the children of God does depend upon the **"everlasting love"** of God. Notice that the Lord does, in this verse, mention this **"everlasting love,"** and then He goes on to say, **". . . therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee."** So, the drawing and calling and saving of the elect of God, is only accomplished because of the **"everlasting love"** of God. I, for one, would be terribly afraid of doubting the love of God, or the veracity or strength of it! Indeed, my very salvation that has been given unto me depends upon the veracity and strength and endurance of the love of God! His love will not falter, because He does not falter! His love will not wilt or diminish, because He cannot diminish! His love will not be defeated or subverted, because He cannot be defeated or subverted! His love will not be surprised or found unready, because my God is all-seeing, and all-knowing!

Let's finish this point concerning the love of God with these verses, **"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord"** (Rom. 8:38-39). In order for you to *lose your salvation*, the love of God must first be overcome. Do you believe that this can happen? Well then, I doubt your salvation even today. Perhaps you have already lost that which you only seemed to have.

CONCLUSION

In summary, when you compare the false idea that some have expounded that a person can lose his salvation, with the Biblical teaching which presumes that that person was never really saved at all; I suppose some might argue that the end result is essentially the same. In other words, some might say that our differences are only a matter of semantics; because, in the end, we both agree that that lost person is not saved, but is bound

for Hell. He has either lost that salvation which he had before, or he never really had salvation in the first place. However, I disagree that our differences are merely a matter of semantics. I think that it is much more God-glorifying, and much more Biblical, and even much more logical to contend that those who are saved are saved forever, and those that fall were never saved at all.

Those of you who believe that a truly saved individual can lose his salvation, let me present to you a test of logic. Which is easier to believe, that a man can lose his genuine and authentic and effective salvation, or that a man was never saved at all? What I mean to say is this: You suppose that some have lost their salvation. I present to you that they were never really saved in the first place. I think it is easier to believe that some unsaved man can *seem* to be saved for a short (or even an extended) period of time, than it is to believe that any *truly* saved man can forever cease to be saved. In other words, an unbeliever can *pretend* to be saved, and perhaps will disguise his true identity for some time. But, I believe it is much more difficult to believe that a true believer would ever cease to believe and do all of the things which God had prompted him to do while he was saved; and that God, also, would change His view of that individual from one who is saved to one that is lost. It is easier to believe that a man can *temporarily* pretend (or *seem*) to be saved, than it is to believe one who is truly saved can *permanently* forfeit his salvation which was, in fact, a genuine salvation.

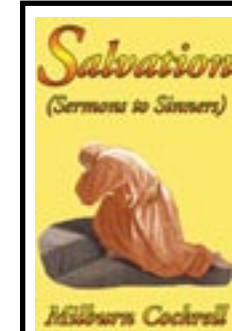
One of the things I hope this article can do for us is to cause us to consider just how foolish an idea it is that one could ever lose a salvation which is of the Lord. The Lord Jesus said to Peter, **". . . Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not. . ."** (Luke 22:31-32). What an amazing and comforting thought to have---that the Lord Jesus Christ has prayed for us! You might believe that this is only true in the case of Simon Peter, but I beg you to read the Lord's high priestly prayer in John 17. There you will find these words: **"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word"** (John 17:20). The Lord Jesus Christ is our intercessor and mediator. He has interceded on our behalf. He has presented Himself as our substitute. He is ours and we are His. How, then, could we ever fail to reach that eternal life which He has promised unto us? The Lord Jesus and the Father (from whom the Lord received His own) will never allow Satan to have us. We will be tempted and tried. And we will stumble and fall. But we will never fail of the grace and power of God. David said: **"The LORD preserveth the simple:**

I was brought low, and he helped me. Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the LORD hath dealt bountifully with thee. For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling. I will walk before the LORD in the land of the living" (Ps. 116:6-9).

Another something this article can do for us is to give us some thoughts and logical premises with which to approach those others who do not believe in eternal security. So, when they seek to decry our position, or they seek to preach or speak against eternal security, then we can present some of these thoughts and situations and use these to seek to convince them of the folly of their misplaced beliefs. Do not be afraid to present the truth to the lost and to those babes in Christ that might be misled and mistaught of men. Who knows when the Lord may use your words to reveal to some lost sinner the miserable plight of his condition? And, who knows when the Lord may use some words or testimony of your own to cause some babe in Christ to see the truth as it is found in the inerrant Word of God?

Also, I would hope that this article would serve to remind each of us, in a sort of "Reverse-Logic Fashion," about the truly marvelous and eternal salvation which the Lord God has provided for us. In the end, we can say simply, "You cannot ever *lose your salvation*; for it is not your own, but it has been given to you." If we go back to the Book of Genesis, we read the words of Jacob as he blessed his sons, **"I have waited for thy salvation, O LORD"** (Gen. 49:18). And then, as I have already mentioned, often in the Book of the Psalms, David would refer to the salvation of the Lord as **"thy salvation."** The salvation which we have is a salvation that is from and of God Himself. You cannot lose something that is not totally your own. God is the giver and He does not default on His promises. God is the giver and He is also the sharer of our salvation.

May we go forth with a knowledge and a zeal and a desire to praise God for His multitude of blessings which He has bestowed upon us, including the salvation that is of the Lord.



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Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. Many Sovereign Grace churches are now without pastors. Fewer ministers (young or older) are being called into the ministry to fill the widening gap. Do you feel this is a possible sign of the soon return of our Lord? If not, what is the outcome of the current trend?

- Mississippi

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church and support of schools that are turning out philosophers and teachers instead of Bible-grounded pastors and missionaries. Potential pastors know all the right words and can fool a poorly taught congregation and then lead that congregation into error.

"Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the LORD, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness..." (Jer. 23:32)

It is far easier to take a sound church into error than to bring an apostate church back to the truth. **"If one bear holy flesh in the skirt of his garment, and with his skirt do touch bread, or pottage, or wine, or oil, or any meat, shall it be holy? And the priests answered and said, No. Then said Haggai, If one that is unclean by a dead body touch any of these, shall it be unclean? And the priests answered and said, It shall be unclean. Then answered Haggai, and said, So is this people, and so is this nation before me, saith the LORD; and so is every work of their hands; and that which they offer there is unclean"** (Hag. 2:12-14).

Second, whenever a church that has taken this road is confronted with solid Bible doctrine, practically applied in life and attitude, they don't want that kind of pastor. They will create a multitude of excuses, such as the pastor is not loving or caring for his people. Many pastors, understandably, don't want that kind of church or they burn out trying to pastor such a church!

John 6:66: **"From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him."** John 8:45: **"And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not."** Galatians 4:16: **"Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?"**

The megachurch movement of today, which is nothing more than the 'fastest growing church' movement of the Rice, Hyles and Falwell days, has deluded our people into thinking that something is wrong with a small church and that a pastor is failing if he isn't seeing big numbers. Some smaller churches can't support a full time pastor, and the up and coming pastoral crop is seeking a church that can pay them more generously.

Fewer men being called may be the famine of Amos 8:11. Fewer men answering the call or answering the call for the wrong reasons may be explained by the lack of good teaching and the financial considerations we have just discussed.

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I have carefully considered this question. I do not think I fully agree with the things that are assumed *and* stated as fact here. First of all, there are hundreds of SGB churches in America and I only know of a very small percentage without pastors. Secondly, I know of quite a number of preachers who are 45 years of age or below. In fact, I'd say there are more young preachers today than I remember when I was a young boy. I, like many, have always heard that fewer and fewer were being called, but, I'm not sure there are realistic facts to support this theory. Thirdly, I don't see any "widening gap" between the lack of pastors and churches that need a pastor.

Most churches I know of have a pastor. Some haven't had a pastor for years, but, this is due to them not looking. Also, there are some lay preachers that are members of various churches, but, are not presently pastoring a church. So, again, I'm not sure this all adds up.

As for this being a prophetic sign of Christ's return, I don't see one Scripture that teaches fewer men will be called into the ministry in the latter days. On the contrary, I find that the Lord promises perpetuity to His churches. This surely includes that He will continue to raise up men to fill the role of the pastorate. He has done so today and I believe if He puts off His coming, He'll do it tomorrow.

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I don't know of a specific passage where a lack of God-called preachers is included as a sign of the soon return of the Lord. I have no doubt that we are living in the last of the last days. Apostacy and a falling away from the faith once delivered are definitely signs of the last days which could be related to this issue.

I believe that the call to the ministry

and to a specific pastorate are Divinely ordered by a sovereign God. Acts 20:28 makes this clear: **"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."** God is in control of calling men to preach and then placing them where He wants them in His churches. Because I am a firm believer in Baptist perpetuity and succession, I believe that God will remain faithful to equip His churches with pastors and teachers until Jesus comes.

Perhaps a another question to ask ourselves is: "Am I daily obeying the command that Jesus gave in Matthew 9:38?" It states: **"Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest."** All believers should pay attention to this command, but especially churches without pastors should make this a matter of daily prayer. Perhaps it would be good to set aside a day of fasting and prayer each week where every church member who is physically able engages in earnest, fervent, expectant supplication for God to call, equip, and appoint a pastor for the flock. James 5:16b declares: **"..The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."** Jesus said: **"And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it. If ye love me, keep my commandments"** (John 14:13-15). I John 5:14-15 declares: **"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing 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 don't think it is good for churches to go months and years without a pastor. If the trend continues you will probably see pastors who oversee more than one church like Brother Mark Minney has done in rural West Virginia for several years.

TOM ROSS

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The lack of young preachers and the number of Churches without a Pastor is certainly a concern of many Baptists. I for one wonder what it has to do with anything at all.

My answer will be brief. I believe that the reason for this situation is because of sin. Younger men and women are living

◊ (Continued on page 11)

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. Why are there few sermons (written or preached from the pulpit) about gluttony? Is it because of unbelief or guilt? – Mississippi

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This is an excellent question and I thank the questioner for asking it. It forces us to look beyond the cultural, regional, denominational and often pharisaical taboos we establish as measures of Christianity. I tease about the 'five Northeastern taboos': swearing, smoking, drinking, dancing, and going to movies. For years, these were seen as the 'identifiers' of Christians. We were taught that Christians don't do these things. But of the five, Scripture only prohibits one and that one has to be explained.

Gluttony means overindulgence. The terms "glutton" and "gluttonous" only appear in our KJV Bible twice each, (Deut. 21:20; Prov. 23:21; Matt. 11:19; Luke 7:34) but every time obviously in reference to sin, and always in context with abuse of wine. Perhaps because of this association, and the influence of such organizations as the W.C.T.U., gluttony gets ignored and the emphasis is placed on being a tee-totaler.

The denominational and cultural emphasis on not smoking or drinking has far exceeded the Biblical prohibitions. When we serve wine as the element of communion we violate *our own* prohibitions. What the Bible condemns as sin is excessive use of wine, i.e. unto drunkenness.

There are many good social and health reasons for abstaining from wine and other alcoholic drinks, but the same principles and reasons used to discourage or prohibit drinking have equal application to eating too much or other forms of gluttony, such as addiction to luxury and conveniences. I suspect that the questioner is thinking along those lines.

There are only two fat men specifically mentioned in the Bible: Eglon, King of Moab (Judges 3:17) and Eli, a sub-priest of Israel (1 Sam. 4:18). In both cases the fatness is seen as evidence of lackadaisical or lazy performance of their duties. I believe that overeating can be and should be seen as sin. Obesity runs rampant in our society, far too often being justified by the excuse of some inherited or glandular condition. (These things are not said to judge people who are overweight. Often those reasons are valid.)

There is such a thing as spiritual gluttony also. There are three references to God's people making themselves fat (Deut. 32:15; 1 Sam. 2:29; Jer. 5:28). Revelation 3:17 has the same spiritual implication for what *was* one of the Lord's Churches. The implication is that they overindulged in the available provisions and blessings of God without due exercise of spiritual or physical responsibility – gluttony if you please.

We, especially in the Lord's churches, need to re-examine our manmade restrictions and apply the same principles and reasoning to our eating habits and the degree of comfort and luxury in our homes and churches.

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This question could be answered in many ways. First of all, I actually do mention it from time to time from the pulpit. However, I freely admit I've never taken it as a subject. Secondly, our churches are so doctrinally minded that practical matters aren't preached much at all. Bitterness, anger, love for our fellow man, Biblical finances and many other practical things are rarely preached about these days.

I don't think our preachers preach nearly enough practicality for the most part. The reason is probably that we have spent so much time fighting against those who have erred from the faith that we have gotten accustomed to preaching theology and not practicality. However, we need to make sure that we preach the whole counsel of God including practical matters. This includes gluttony.

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There are exactly four (4) verses in the Scriptures that deal specifically with the subject of gluttony (Deut. 21:20; Prov. 23:21; Matt. 11:19; Luke 7:34). Proverbs 23:1-3 is a warning that relates

to gluttony when sitting down to a meal with a wealthy ruler. It is interesting that in each passage the sin of gluttony is associated with drunkenness. It seems that overeating and the consumption of alcohol are evil twins. The two references in the New Testament are both false accusations brought against the Lord Jesus Christ because of His ministry to the poor and outcast of society.

Though I have never preached a message specifically about gluttony it is a sin worthy of attention. I know that I have mentioned it when dealing with sins in the same category such as drunkenness, the lust of the flesh, intemperance in all forms, laziness, and lack of self discipline. American society is characterized by over indulgence in many areas, including that of over eating. Every year there are larger percentages of people in our country who are obese and drastically out of shape due to poor nutritional habits, laziness and inactivity.

Why don't preachers preach or write about it specifically? I have no idea. I am not sure that it is because of unbelief or guilt on their part. Most probably handle the subject like I do. I address it when preaching about other lusts of the flesh or intemperance.

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Deu. 21:20 - Heb. *zolel*, from a word meaning "to shake out," "to squander;" and hence one who is prodigal, who wastes his means by indulgence.

Pro. 23:21 the word means debauchees or wasters of their own body.

Pro. 28:7 the word (pl.) is rendered Authorized Version "riotous men;" Revised Version, "gluttonous."

Mt. 11:19 and Lu. 7:34 Greek *phagos*, given to eating, gluttonous.

Most Americans of recent days have never been in want. Few there are that know of hunger and have felt its pangs. I choose Americans because that is what I am and it is all I know. In this modern age we lack for nothing and food is at every corner in our towns. Our televisions flood our eyes with the images of wonderful foods that we may enjoy.

Instant gratification has somewhat of a contributing factor to gluttony for

we do not have to prepare our food as in ways of the past. All we have to do is drive to the market that large companies have prepared healthy and unhealthy foods for us to consume.

The appetites of the majority of Americans are as large as the local 7-11's big gulp and the amount of choices of food made available to the general populous.

God has decreed that we take care of what He has given us by first seeking His righteousness. To be sober in this life He has given us demands that we waste not away the resources that are supplied.

The gluttony of the flesh is of great concern and needs to be suppressed whether it is the appetite of our belly or our appetite for sin. Unbelief? No. I do not believe so, lack of knowledge and understanding and of self examination? Yes. I for one am guilty of this very subject.

MIKE DEWITT



Forum #1

(Continued from page 10) ♦

increasingly more sinful lives because some churches are allowing it and not preaching against it for the sake of fellowship with other churches. The more liberal stance on Bible doctrine a church takes the more liberal will be those who are taught.

The signs of the end times do not include the lack of churches without Pastors. I do not seek to read the situation of this world or examine newspapers to determine if the endtimes are near. We are in the endtimes and I am looking for my Saviour who says... "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. 22:12).

MIKE DEWITT



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THE BIBLE BANNER NEWSPAPER

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.

AMERICANS UNITED TURNS IN CHURCHES

(EP)--Americans United for Separation of Church and State (AU) has turned in four churches to the Internal Revenue Service for what it calls "electioneering violations." Rob Boston, spokesman for AU, said the message to pastors wanting to address issues during election season is: "Be extremely cautious." The IRS has not indicated whether it will investigate the churches. AU is asking the IRS to investigate churches in Maryland, Iowa and Arkansas. How is it getting the information? "This case in Arkansas came to our attention from residents in the area who sent the material to us," Boston said. "When we get those, we simply put the material together, make the best case we can to the IRS, send it off and say, 'This may be worth looking into.'"

SUPREME COURT HEARS ARGUMENTS ON PARTIAL-BIRTH ABORTION BAN

(EP)--The U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments in November concerning the partial-birth abortion ban that Congress passed in 2003. Pro-abortion attorneys said they hoped the court would follow the lead of its 2000 *Stenberg v. Carhart* ruling that struck down Nebraska's partial-birth abortion ban. A decision is months away -- perhaps in February.

CREATION SCIENCE ACTIVIST JAILED FOR TAX FRAUD

(EP)--Kent Hovind, founder of Creation Science Evangelism and Dinosaur Adventure Land in Pensacola, Fla., was recently found guilty of all 58 counts involving tax fraud and related issues. He was jailed, pending sentencing in January, and could face a sentence of 200 years in prison. His wife Jo also was convicted on numerous counts, including measures to shield transfers of cash from bank reporting. Prosecutors said the Hovinds took in about \$5 million between 1999 and 2004 from amusement-park profits and merchandise.

LIBERAL CHURCH GROUP CALLS FOR WITHDRAWAL FROM IRAQ

(EP)--The National Council of Churches called for an "immediate phased withdrawal" of U.S. forces from Iraq and condemned human reproductive cloning at its annual meeting in Florida that ended Nov. 9. The NCC comprises 35 Orthodox, mainline Protestant and historically black denominations, representing about 45 million

U.S. Christians. The Orlando assembly included 248 voting delegates. The Iraq war resolution, overwhelmingly approved by delegates, says "our view of this war in Iraq is informed by our belief that war is contrary to the will of God," according to the NCC. "We call upon the U.S. government to recognize that the continued presence of occupying forces has not provided meaningful security for Iraqi citizens and only exacerbates escalating violence," the NCC resolution said. The NCC also unanimously passed two resolutions on biotechnology. The first calls for a global ban on human reproductive cloning. The second calls for more oversight of governments and private laboratories developing biological weapons, and the creation of an advisory board for bio-defense in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

REPORT SAYS \$1.3-MILLION MISUSED BY TEXAS BAPTISTS

(EP)--An independent investigation of Texas Baptists has found that much of \$1.3 million contributed to start hundreds of churches in the Rio Grande Valley was misused by three pastors. The report further found that only a small number of churches exist today. The investigation found that many of the churches exist only on paper. Others are Bible study groups, not autonomous congregations -- which should have made them ineligible for financial help under Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT) guidelines. The independent probe, which was commissioned by the convention and presented to the body's executive board on Oct. 31, found that allegations of mismanagement made by other pastors in the Rio Grande Valley were overlooked for years.

TEEN ABORTION RATES AND BIRTHS DOWN

(EP)--Abortion rates among teen girls as well as birth rates have decreased dramatically over the last decade, according to a report from the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. Teen births are down a third since 1991, and teen abortions dropped 40 percent. Bill Albert, spokesman for the campaign, said abstinence education played a role. "A significant proportion of young people are delaying sexual activity," he said. "It is also true, at the same time, that among those teens that are sexually active, they are using contraception a bit more consistently and carefully." But it's estimated that teen births still cost the country more than \$9

billion in 2004 and more than \$161 billion dollars over last 15 years. "Health care costs, welfare costs, the cost of incarceration, and also this factors in lost tax revenues," Albert said, "because the children of teen mothers are less likely to get good paying jobs."

BIRTHS TO UNWED MOTHERS REACHES RECORD HIGH

(EP)--Nearly 1.5 million babies, a record, were born to unmarried women in the United States last year, the government reported Nov. 17.

The age group with the largest increase in the number of out-of-wedlock births was those 25-29. The number of births to unmarried teens dropped, and accounted for just 24 percent of unwed births, down from 50 percent in 1970.

Many of the women in that age group are living with partners. Contraceptive use among that age group has fallen indicating that many of the pregnancies might have been intentional.

UNBORN CHILD PAIN BILL DIES IN HOUSE

(EP)--The U.S. House of Representatives failed to muster the "super-majority" needed to pass the Unborn Child Pain Awareness Act, H.R. 6099.

Though the bill had the support of a 250-162 majority, because it was brought to the floor according to so-called "fast track" rules, it needed support of two-thirds of the legislators in order to pass the House.

The bill would have required abortionists to tell their patients about fetal development and the capacity of preborn children to feel pain. It also would have required doctors to offer pain-reducing drugs for preborn children -- all with the ultimate goal of convincing women not to proceed with their abortions.

The measure, sponsored by Rep. Chris Smith, R-N.J., called it "common-sense legislation."

"The Unborn Child Pain Awareness Act is a modest but necessary expansion of informed consent," he said. "These kinds of informed-consent booklets have been vigorously opposed by the abortion lobby, and we know for a fact from former, as well as current-day abortionists, that they do not discuss pain.

"They rarely will talk about anything that is even remotely connected with the humanity of the unborn child."

However, even some pro-lifers had trouble with the legislation.

WAL-MART TO TAKE MORE "MODERATE" POSITION ON CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

(EP)--Wal-Mart has begun to distance itself from organizations that support "highly controversial issues" such as same-sex marriage, a company official said Nov. 21.

The giant retailer had been criticized for making a \$60,000 donation to Out and Equal, an organization for homosexual employees which deals with workplace issues, but which

also supports changing the definition of marriage. The company also had joined the Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce and sent it \$25,000 in dues.

The Wal-Mart executive who served as the company's representative to the chamber has since left for unrelated reasons and will not be replaced.

The donations in question are miniscule compared to the total of \$245 million Wal-Mart gives out annually, a large portion going to more conservative and Christian-related causes and organizations.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CONSIDERING ABORTION AS A HUMAN RIGHT

(EP)--Seventy-four members of Congress, along with several pro-life groups, are calling on Amnesty International (AI) to continue to hold a neutral position on abortion. Under pressure from pro-abortion groups, AI is asking its nearly 2 million members in 74 countries whether to declare abortion an international human right. A vote is expected in 2007. Rep. Chris Smith, R-N.J., sent a letter signed by his colleagues urging AI to remain neutral on abortion -- or take a pro-life stance. Officials at Amnesty International said in a statement they had received the letter from Congress and look forward to more dialogue on "pressing human rights issues."

HIGH COURT REFUSES TO HEAR VOUCHER CASE

(EP)--The U.S. Supreme Court on Nov. 27 refused to hear a school-voucher case out of Maine that could have been a watershed for the school choice movement. Eight families from rural communities without high schools sought to use vouchers to send their kids to religious schools, but a state court said that they could not. The Supreme Court refused to hear the appeal. The case could have brought clarity to a currently muddied situation regarding school vouchers. Currently, five states offer school vouchers, but the rules are different in each state. Wisconsin, Arizona and Ohio allow them to be used for religious schools. Maine and Vermont do not. The provision in Arizona is being challenged.

LESBIAN CUSTODY RIGHTS UPHELD

(EP)--A Virginia appellate court ruled Nov. 28 that the biological mother in a lesbian custody dispute must abide by the laws of Vermont, where she and her former partner entered into a civil union. The ruling avoided the more important question: whether Virginia can be forced to recognize a same-sex union sanctioned in another state. The Los Angeles Times reported the decision was still celebrated by gay and lesbian groups. Kate Kendell, executive director of the National Center for Lesbian Rights, called it a "big deal." Mathew Staver, founder and chairman of Liberty Counsel, which represented the biological mother,

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called the case “the tip of the iceberg of what’s to come if one state cannot define its own marriage policy and must be subservient to the same-sex marriage policy of a sister state.”--CitizenLink

TRANSFER OF MT. SOLEDAD LAND TO FEDS CONSTITUTIONAL

(EP)--A California appeals court on Dec. 4 reversed a lower court decision that had determined that the transfer of the Mt. Soledad National War Memorial to the federal government was unconstitutional.

“The people spoke on this issue, and now the court has upheld their right to preserve the Mt. Soledad National War Memorial, which honors those who sacrificed themselves for our freedom,” said Tim Chandler of the Alliance Defense Fund, which filed briefs in the case. “Removal of the cross at Mt. Soledad would have no purpose other than to create heartache for the veterans’ families and comrades who cherish their memory. We, like them, are pleased with the court’s ruling.”

In 2005, 76 percent of San Diegans voted to preserve the Mount Soledad Memorial by transferring it from city property to the ownership of the National Park Service. The transfer was held up in litigation, but Congress passed and President Bush signed legislation to enact the transfer.

AUTOPSY CONFIRMS FLORIDA BABY WAS BORN ALIVE

(EP)--An autopsy report concerning a baby who was born at an abortion clinic confirmed that the baby was born alive, according to Operation Rescue (OR). It’s unclear whether that determination will affect any criminal proceedings. An 18-year-old woman who was 22 weeks pregnant went to A Gyn Diagnostics, near Miami, for an abortion. She came back the next day complaining of severe pain and was placed in a recovery room to await the doctor’s arrival. Instead she gave birth to a baby girl. The baby was allegedly placed in a plastic bag and thrown on the roof of the clinic, where she was discovered a week later. Troy Newman, president of OR, said the girl deserved to receive medical attention. “Once she was born, she was deserving of the same protections under the law as the rest of us,” he said. “At the minimum, she should have been given comfort care.”

HUMANISTS FILE SUIT TO STOP VOTING IN CHURCHES

(EP)--The American Humanist Association (AHA) has filed a lawsuit saying the civil rights of a Florida humanist were violated when he was forced to pass an anti-abortion banner on his way to vote at a Florida church in the midterm elections. The suit was filed Nov. 29. The group hopes to use the suit as a model to halt voting at all churches nationwide. The lawsuit is the first by the AHA’s new legal center, established

in Washington, D.C. The legal center will be staffed with 27 humanist lawyers from around the country who are committed to filing similar lawsuits. Among the lawyers is Michael Newdow, who tried unsuccessfully to remove the words “under God” from the Pledge of Allegiance. In a statement announcing the lawsuit in the Florida case, the AHA said churches are the most common polling locations in America, and cited a Stanford University study that found “environmental cues” inside polling locations can influence how voters vote.

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA REJECTS RELIGIOUS FRATERNITY

(EP)--Attorneys with the Christian Legal Society (CLS) and the Alliance Defense Fund filed suit in federal court against the University of Georgia because officials refuse to recognize a Christian fraternity, Beta Upsilon Chi (BYX), as a registered student group. The school objected to the fraternity’s requirement that its members and officers hold Christian beliefs. BYX, which stands for Brothers Under Christ, is a fraternity of Christian male college students who wish to foster fellowship through their common belief in Jesus Christ. The university denied the fraternity recognition in November, claiming the group’s requirements that officials and members profess faith in Christ is “religious discrimination.” The complaint is filed as Beta Upsilon Chi v. Adams in the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Georgia, Athens Division. Timothy Tracey, litigation counsel for CLS’s Center for Law & Religious Freedom, said Christian student groups cannot be singled out for discrimination. “The right of association applies to all student groups on a public university campus,” he said. “The University of Georgia deprives Christian student groups of this right when they force them to open their membership and leadership to students who disagree with their Christian beliefs.”

WORLD BRIEFS

SOUTH AFRICA LEGALIZES “GAY MARRIAGE”

(EP)--South Africa became the fifth country to legalize “gay marriage” when the acting president signed a landmark bill into law on Nov. 30. South Africa is the first African country to redefine marriage. Worldwide, Canada, Spain, Belgium and the Netherlands also recognize “marriage” between homosexual couples. South African Christians spoke out in opposition. “The Civil Union Bill justifies immorality and by inference calls sexual perversion a legitimate alternative lifestyle that should be openly accepted,” the South African Christian Action Network said. “It calls immorality and perversion true virtue and commendable freedom.” The new law redefines marriage to include “the voluntary union of two persons.” It became law one year after the nation’s highest court interpreted the constitution to require “gay marriage” to be legalized. The justices gave the African National Congress government one year to implement its

decision.

CHURCH OF NORWAY ENDS STATUS AS STATE CHURCH

(EP)--The Church of Norway (Lutheran) has voted to abolish the nation’s current system under which it was the nation’s official church. The mid-November vote at the church’s General Synod meeting in Oyer, Norway, would end the state-church system that has been in place since 1537. The proposal still must be affirmed and implemented by the government, and likely will not take effect until 2013. At the Oyer meeting, delegates voted 63-19 that the Church of Norway should no longer be referred to as a state church. According to Religion News Service, the vote by the synod follows a report issued in January by a government-appointed commission that recommended the changes to reflect Norway’s evolution to a modern, multi-faith society. The Church of Norway has about 3.9 million members, representing some 85 percent of the Norwegian population. If the changes are implemented, Norway will follow neighboring Sweden, which separated church and state in 2000.



The Two Words “Sent”

(Continued from page 1) ◊

Yet, many are they who claim to get their authority from the Bible alone; who upon closer inspection, give little regard to what that Great Book teaches. For example, when the “Jesus only” people baptize in the name of “Jesus only,” taking their cue from such passages as Acts 8:16 and 19:5, they fail to take into account that the pattern was established in Matthew 28:19 to baptize “**in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost...**” In other passages where it is merely and “only” mentioned that some were “**baptized**” (such as Acts 2:41, 8:38, 9:18, 16:15, 16:33, 18:8, etc.), are we to understand that they were baptized in no name whatsoever? Certainly not! In Acts 19:5, for example, we are told that “**they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus**” in contradistinction to their having been baptized in the name of John the Baptist (v. 3). And we are thus let in on an additional piece of information in the process: the authority which John had could not have been passed on at his death, it having been given to man which dies; but authority given to a perpetuating institution, the Lord’s kind of church, does pass on from church to church. They “**knowing only the baptism of John**” at the hands of Apollos, needed scripturally authorized baptism from one sent by the New Testament Institution of the Lord’s church (Acts 18:24 – 19:5). If I were to hire you and form a contract with you to take care of the maintenance of my property and then you were to die, that contract would be dissolved. But if you had formed a corporation, and I had made

that contract with the corporation, then the contract would remain in force with the successors in the corporation in spite of your death. Here are some principles that we all know naturally speaking. Ah, but how men willingly ‘selectively’ apply that which they know when it comes to the spiritual realm! But these principles do apply. And if we do not apply them, they are a testimony against us, in that we know them by nature. (I shall continue further with this illustration in a moment). Nevertheless, the Scriptures do not have to repeat the whole formula for baptism here in order to teach us this added bit of information. For once the precedent is set we are to presume and understand, unless we are told otherwise, that in the Divinely recorded account the precedent is followed. And so, all Scripture on any particular subject must be taken together in order to define that subject. We all know this. So also is Acts 13:1-4.

Acts 13:1-4 is not an isolated passage of Scripture that teaches all that there is to know about church truth, church authority, nor even the scriptural pattern for doing mission work under such authority. No one would even take such a position except they had a preconceived ax to grind, a predetermined position to defend, or an unscriptural past practice “to justify,” as opposed to: “to depart from.”

The questions which ought to arise in our minds as we read Acts 13:1-4 are, “Why didn’t the Holy Spirit just speak to Barnabas and Saul?” “Was the ordination service of verse 3 just practiced by individuals without church capacity?” “Is ordination so practiced by anyone?” One cannot help but wonder if a lack of scriptural ordination lies at the root of the refusal to recognize where the authority is in this passage. Instead of “**Lay hands suddenly on no man,**” some would lay hands on none! Responsibility and authority are the twin teachings of an ordination service, both of which are teachings repugnant to the old nature. In Acts 13:1-4 the Holy Spirit first began dealing with those who were the pillars of the church that was at Antioch, else, why is the church mentioned at all in verse 1? Why does it not just say that “there were certain prophets and teachers at Antioch?” And can the authority in Acts 13:1-4 to “**Go**” and “**teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things...**” be any different than it is found in Matthew 28? I think not.

In I Corinthians 12:28 it says: “**God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.**” Every one of those italicized words is adverbs of time.

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The Two Words "Sent"

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This is chronological order. During the 1st century, even in the Book of Acts, but beginning *during* Christ's earthly ministry, He **"set some in the church, first apostles,"** Luke chapter 6 is where they were first called **"apostles"** and first chosen out to be assembled unto Himself. You cannot have officers of a corporation without a corporation for them to be officers of. Luke chapter 6 marks the incorporation of the Lord's Church. The first act of incorporation: is the *naming* of the officers thereof. There is nothing odd about that. They were first **"named apostles"** (not "called" apostles, but **"named"** apostles; as in the naming of officers) in Luke chapter 6. Now these are they to whom The Great Commission is given. It is given in church capacity (they comprised the first church), and it is the "authority" to **"Go"** and to do that which is the emphasis of that passage, as even the word *ἐξουσία*, in Matthew 28:18 translated "power" but entailing the meaning of "authority," indicates. It is the same authority exercised in Acts 13:1-4 under the direct intervention, supervision, and endorsement of the Holy Spirit of God twice mentioned in that passage, and that not without significance, even as the mention of the **"church"** in verse 1 is not without significance.

It is presumed that I am writing to those who believe in "church perpetuity." That is the teaching that there would be churches after the kind that the Lord started, existing in every day till our Lord Jesus Christ come again to receive them unto Himself – which is all, it appears, that some "Landmark" Baptists are willing to contend for. Therefore, I shall not attempt to prove that here, other than to list a number of passages that do teach it – some directly, some indirectly: Matt. 16:18 & 19, Matt. 18:15-19, Matt. 28:18-20 ("even unto the end of the age." *αἰῶνος*), Mark 16:15, Eph. 3:21, Heb. 10:25 (how could we so assemble *till* that day come, otherwise?), I Cor. 11:26 (The Lord's Supper is a church ordinance. How could it be observed **"till He come"** without church perpetuity?), I & II Thessalonians, which was written and addressed to a local church, tells them in I Thessalonians 1:10 **"to wait for His son from heaven"**. In chapters 4 & 5 it tells them of the rapture and subsequent judgment to fall on those left behind, in II Thessalonians 2:1 Paul beseeches that local church **"by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto Him,"** that's the rapture. And in chapter 2 in the context of "that Wicked One being revealed" we are told that that won't happen till we be taken out of the way. The Wicked One has not yet been revealed. The Lord's kind of

church is going to be here till he is. And when he is, we'll already be gone. And then, Revelation chapters 2 & 3 wherein are the letters to the seven churches (seven being the number of completion) the completion of the church age leads right up to Revelation 4:1, the **"..things which must be hereafter"** (after the church age). How else is it we speak of it as "The Church Age" but that the Lord's churches will be here throughout? All of these, when properly understood, teach church perpetuity.

And yet, "church perpetuity" is not that about which there is current contention. Error always tests the bounds of any doctrine from a different angle from generation to generation. Look and see if that is not so! Today, the doctrine of "church succession" has been called into question. Nonetheless, it is necessary to establish the one (perpetuity) in order to build upon it the other (succession). In like manner, in the last century "Verbal Inspiration" was being attacked, and our brethren vigorously defended it. Today, "The Preservation of The Scriptures" is under attack, and most of us are asleep as to the implications involved: 'So what, God inspired His Word; if He did not preserve it, you do not have it!' Everyone who uses a modern version based upon corrupted texts has already surrendered. Howbeit, those two doctrines go together; Preservation and Inspiration cannot be separated. They are twin doctrines which stand or fall together. And yet, the art of preaching is the art of discerning between things which differ. How else can we defend them? So also is "church perpetuity" and "church succession," you cannot have the one without the other. And so it is for our generation to vigorously defend the doctrine of the preservation of the Scriptures; and, so it may seem, the doctrine of church succession as well; as today, these are the legs under attack.

The current controversy has been brought about by men quoting "great Landmark Baptists of the past" who were defending the doctrine of church perpetuity; quoted, I say, as though that were all that they believed. Now there is an argument from silence if ever there was one! And yet, if one will study history and not just quote it, it may be readily seen that there were certain high minded "Baptists" who sent their sons to Europe to "polish" their education; but they came back teaching things that shall forever be a tarnish upon their good names. For they went to such Protestant schools as the famous Tübingen University in Germany where Protestant scholars, with over 1,800 years of Baptist history on their very doorsteps, had to come up with a way in which to deal with that history. Can you imagine trying to explain away known massacre sites throughout your very own countryside?

Now, Darwinism had swept over all

the academia of Europe influencing even the schools of theology, planting ideas and rationale with which to dismiss truth. And so, what did these Protestant schools teach? Only, 'that there were Baptist "principles" and there was a Baptist "faith" as it were, but Baptist churches didn't really "evolve" into being until about the time of the Reformation.' This was the doctrine of evolution applied in the theological realm. Thus they could deal with the evidence on the one hand, and dismiss the facts on the other. We might well say, "How could you have Baptist principles and Baptist faith without having a people who held to those principles and practiced that faith? What? Were they empty baskets wondering around Europe without body and soul, without blood to give for the cause of Christ their Savior?"

The Northern Baptists were the first to so lean, and the Southern Baptists within but a decade or two were marching their aspiring young collegians off to Europe as well. If you want an example of it in the north, look at Thomas Armitage's revised and enlarged edition of his *History of The Baptists* published by Bryan, Taylor, & Co., New York, 1890, Vol. I, Introductory Chapter, pg. 3, where he quotes from Tertullian (who wrote within two centuries after Christ) in the last paragraph of that page:

"Tertullian says, 'If any of the heretics dare to connect themselves with the Apostolic Age, that they may seem to be *derived* (italic is my emphasis) from the Apostles, as existing under them, we may say: Let them, therefore, declare the *origin* of their Churches, let them exhibit the *series* of their bishops, as coming down by a continued *succession* from the beginning, as to show their first bishop to have been some apostle or apostolic man as his predecessor or *ordainer*, and who *continued* in the same *faith* (Armitage emphasizes and italicizes the word *faith*) with the Apostles. For this is the way in which the Apostolical Churches calculate the series of their bishops.'"

Armitage passes over what Tertullian says about "derived" authority, he's blind to what he says about "the origin of their churches," "the series of their bishops," and even "a continued *succession* from the beginning,.." Armitage actually misses that word, though he copies it! And then he jumps upon the word *"faith,"* when Tertullian says that they had "continued in the same *faith* with the Apostles." Armitage italicizes and emphasizes that word, giving all the emphasis to it in all his relative comments both before and after that quote, actually denying church succession outright, and teaching that only the *"faith"* is that to which is promised perpetuity. But again I ask: "How can you have a *"faith"* without a people who held that faith?"

Or again, you can look at H. C. Vedder's *Short History of The Baptists* published by the American Baptist Publication Society (a Northern Baptist Convention publishing house), copyright 1907, preface pg. vi, where it is said that his book "provides a *unique* (now there's an admission!) approach" which "is a sharp *corrective* to Landmarkism," because it is a "presentation in some detail of the historical *development* of Baptist principles...set in the *general* context of Christian history." He goes on to say that he "blends an appreciation for the contributions of these early *protestants* (his emphasis) with historical objectivity, with no attempt to *maintain a thesis* or *minister to denominational vanity*." Oh, how condescending to his protestant admirers.

If you want an example of it in the south, look and study about "The Whittsitt Controversy" when W. H. Whittsitt came back to America teaching the same rubbish at Old Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky., and Baptists throughout the south were up in arms about it! This was shortly after that great Baptist historian J. H. Spencer, a contemporary of J. R. Graves, said that all Baptists throughout the south believed in the principles of Old Landmarkism – of 16 major Baptist publications, 15 agreed; and the editor of the 16th had a personality conflict with J. R. Graves. J. H. Spencer said that all Southern Baptists agreed with J. R. Graves on the principles of Old Landmarkism.

But if you want to see what has happened today, just take out your phone book and call the Southern Baptist churches in your area and ask the pastors where and when the first Baptist church came into existence, and you'll see that though they were once up in arms about it, what W. H. Whittsitt taught is now standard teaching in all their schools. For some will give this one and some will give that (whichever church they give will usually always be one somewhere around the time of the Reformation, if they will give you one at all). True Baptists wouldn't have any problem answering that.

Brethren, the beginning of these things is what our "great Landmark Baptists of the past" century were dealing with, and they combated it by showing that there were full grown Baptist churches in every century, even predating the Reformation, all the way back. Their faith, as well as ours, is not dependent upon *proving* an "unbroken chain succession" all the way back to Christ. Our faith is dependent upon the teachings of the Word of God alone. Because they saw the teaching in the Word of God, they looked in history to see the fulfillment thereof. Because the Word of God is true, history is loaded with examples. Because any example given which

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predates one which some liberal may give as being the "first" disproves such foolishness, they gave such examples. But that is not to say that they did not believe that *succession* was necessary nor did they doubt that it existed, only that it was not to be proved by history, nor was it the point of contention with which they were engaged at the time. Nevertheless, I have myself seen many examples of our churches of the last few centuries predating J. R. Graves which sent "helps" to see that new churches were "properly constituted." One should ask himself, "What did they mean by that?" If one church "helps" in another's organization, and if the first church, as a church, votes to send such "helps" (as can be seen in the very minutes of the church which this writer is a member of, Bryan Station Baptist Church, Lexington, Ky., in the early 1800's) then does that not constitute a recognition of the necessity of church succession?

When Tertullian, whom I believe we would all consider being one of us, while contending with erring churches two hundred years after Christ, spoke of a "succession," did that not give some indication of what our forefathers believed? If you will read Tertullian's statement in Armitage's Vol. I, pg. 3, you will see there the seeds of the Catholic doctrine of "Apostolic Succession," but such can be overlooked on the basis of the fact that that error had not yet even developed and was not identifiable as yet to be contended with. Tertullian was contending for a pure and regenerate church membership. A state church did not even exist at that time. Nevertheless, such a doctrine did arise and has become the hallmark of Roman Catholicism. Now, reasoning backwards, I might here point out that the devil is ever and always the imitator and counterfeiter of truth, he is *not* an originator of anything new. Therefore, that there is a doctrine of "Apostolic Succession" is telling in itself. What is it a counterfeit of? But the Bible does not teach "Apostolic Succession" for it does not say "...upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against *him*." It does say, "...upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against *it*." The Bible teaches "Church Succession" not "Apostolic Succession." But what is the false doctrine of "Apostolic Succession" a counterfeit of? And *who* was teaching *what*, that led them to counterfeit it?

Now, one of those "great Landmark Baptists of the past," D. B. Ray, wrote a book entitled *Baptist (Succession), A Handbook of Baptist History*. Now what did he believe? What did I put in parentheses? Is it no wonder that he has not been referred to by our antagonists? This, too,

was put out by the Southern Baptists in 1870, a book of almost 400 pages, the last three pages of which, as well as the preface, are filled with testimonials from major Baptist newspapers, professors of theology, and Baptist leaders of the south. What did they then believe at that time? Is it not a wonder that our antagonists have not referred to this book, this is the era they love to quote? The very title of this book refutes them. It was first published in 1870, again in 1912; my edition is a 1984 reprint published by Church History Research & Archives, Gallatin, TN. It was evidently thought important enough that successive generations sought to keep it in print! S. H. Ford, J. R. Graves, W. A. Jarrell, A. C. Dayton, Pendleton---all of these men who are appealed to in an attempt to disprove succession, were Southern Baptists too! And J. R. Graves, whom they have quoted to disprove what J. R. Graves believed, gives his endorsement to succession in D. B. Ray's book on page 395! So much for proving that J. R. Graves did not believe in succession! His testimonial is included. These men were overlapping contemporaries of D. B. Ray's day. One may quote Graves or Ford or Jarrell on what they believed on perpetuity, but to go from that to say that they did not believe in succession is like accusing them of not believing in salvation in that context, for in the context of perpetuity they mentioned not salvation! Our antagonists ought to be ashamed of such chicanery! D. B. Ray is but one example. Another can be found in J. B. Moody's book *My Church* (referring to our Lord's words "**I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.**") published 1907, my edition is a 1974 reprint by The Attic Press Inc., Greenwood, S. C. J. B. Moody was the president of the Southern Baptist Convention at the first of the 1900's (this is *not* the D. L. Moody of Moody Bible institute fame). On page 322 of his book he uses the word "succession" three times on that one page alone, insisting on that doctrine. He was fooled by Professor Whitsitt at that time because Mr. Whitsitt was not honest with him, but J. B. Moody left this recorded testimony in his book that their leadership held to the doctrine of church succession at the turn of the century. Read what he says of succession on pages 159 - 162. He uses "succession" over and over again, and uses the exact same argument that we use today: 'about the law of primogenitors, that like begats like, everything living reproduces after its own kind, and something dead cannot give birth to something living...; the exact same argument our antagonists see the over when we use it today. Will they be boiling if they read those four pages of Moody's book? This, again, from the era they love to quote to prove that nobody believed these things then. J. B. Moody,

the president of the Southern Baptist Convention a century ago, contended for *both* church perpetuity and church succession at a time when our antagonists say that nobody believed that then!

I am sure that others who better know the writings of our "great Landmark Baptist brethren of the past" can produce other examples that will repeatedly be settings such 'arguments from silence' upon their ears to the eternal embarrassment of our dear brethren who take such presumptuous and untenable positions against the truth. How much better to turn and agree with the truth even if it might perchance "unchurch" you, than to have the truth constantly going against the grain so that it is all that you can write, and hiss, and spit against. Those who try to prove doctrine from history will always find themselves in such a position. Let us derive our doctrine from the Word of Truth. History is important because we're still here; but if we do not get our doctrine from the Bible, our own history will only record how that we ourselves went astray.

Anybody can challenge somebody to prove that nobody believed in the QRZT theory throughout the last two thousand years! But what would that mean? I can make up anything I like for the letters QRZT and say that if you can't show me in history what I just invented, then nobody should believe what the Bible teaches! But should we not believe what the Bible teaches in spite of how many 'straw men' arguments are arrayed against it? I think so; anyone's "EMDA" theory not excluding. This is the foolishness we would get into by trying to use history to prove doctrine.

And so I would challenge those who are opposed to succession, to pray tell, give answer: why are there two different words translated "sent" in Acts 13 verses 3 & 4? In verse 4 "**they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost...**" it is the Greek word "εκπεμπω," meaning "to thrust forth." It speaks of that inner compulsion of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, it says that they were there "**sent forth by the Holy Spirit.**" If that were all that were involved, why even mention the "**church**" in verse 1? Why did the Holy Spirit even speak to the church? He speaks to the leadership, to the "messengers" of the churches, as He did in Revelation 2:1, 8, 12, 18 & 3:1, 7, 14. They who were "amongst" the church, Acts 13:1 ("κατα" - with reference to, pertaining to, with respect to the church; Dana and Mantey, *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, pg. 107).

Then, too, He uses a very strong emphatic particle "δη" (Dana and Mantey, pg 261) to say "Separate *indeed* unto me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them" verse 2. May our dear brethren tell us why He did not just speak to Barnabas and Saul? Then the church *ordained* them to this work in verse 3. May our dear

brethren tell us: does *any* body practice the laying on of hands to the ministry apart from a church that they would like to be identified with? May they pray tell us what they do with I Timothy 1:5? Or even what is spoken of here in verse 3? Or even what Acts 6:6 is speaking about? Under what authority is ordination done?

And may one please, please tell us why there is a totally different word "**sent**" in verse 3 which involves a "sending" differentiated from the "sending" of the Holy Spirit in verse 4? This word: "απολωω" involves a sending with authority and with substance. You see it, in another form, with 'substance' in Acts 11:30. Whether some would care to balk at the 'substance' aspect of it (and certainly if they are against missions they will) there can be no denying that they were *loosed* and sent forth by the church in verse 3. They who are denying church succession, are in effect, denying church authority.

The church at Antioch "**sent**" Paul and Barnabas with authority. The Holy Spirit oversaw both ends; both the leadership of the church, and the "unction" from on high to do the work. There are *two* words "**sent**" in verses 3 & 4, two different words.

Men may claim to be led of the Spirit; yea, men have been led of the Spirit to do God service, and have erred in the way they do it. Stick with the Scriptures! Stick with the Scriptural way. Hand picked examples from history do not overthrow the Word of God.

Study Paul's journeys. Many churches were started doing things God's way. Paul was sent out by the church of Antioch. He reported back to his sending church in Acts 14:26. You do not need to call the church of Antioch the "mother church" if you don't like. You *do* need to recognize that they sent Paul out with authority to make disciples, baptize them, and start churches, wherein is to be taught the "**all things**" of Matthew 28:20. By the time you're into the "baptizing," you're into forming a church where once there was not one, as long as there is authority. The church of Antioch sent him with that authority. Without a recognition of that authority, you're denying Scriptural principles.

If the argument were just about at what point a church becomes a church: what might well bear with them. Let them be as loose as they like. Let us be as careful as the Apostle Paul. He was yet setting things "**in order**" (I Cor. 11:34) fifteen years later, yet instructing the young preachers to "**set in order**" and to "**ordain elders**" some twenty years later (Tit. 1:5). Heresy has caused us to do nothing hastily.

You do not have to use the term "mother church." Some use that term to facilitate teaching; perhaps it would

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be better if they did not. But there is no Baptist Pope forcing anyone to use that term. But in reality, it's not the terminology that people are balking at; it's the teaching that "church" authority is necessary in the propagation of church succession. Yet they themselves would like to leave successors! Would they not? Such foolishness! Why listen to them quibble with a phrase which they themselves are striving to accomplish! Let's make clear the issue: these men are attacking church authority, clear and simple: that is what is behind church succession; they are simply using another word to attack authority.

The Catholics who believe in Apostolic Succession believe that they have the authority. Yet Christ said, "...the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" not "him." The devil does not originate anything; he just corrupts it, or twists it; or, as in this case today: he just denies it; denying that there is even any such thing as Succession, all the while pretending it doesn't have anything to do with "authority."

I would simply ask the question: Is there no such thing as church authority as taught in the Scriptures? For that is what is being challenged in the name of "succession." If there is not, then is not every man an authority unto himself? And is not this where this would lead? And is not that the history of every Alexander Campbell and every Daniel Parker that has come along before?

We extend an arm of authority. We take pains to see that a new church is properly constituted. We send "helps" (men "sent" by existing churches under the authority of those churches) to help "set things in order." If what our antagonists are saying is true, what harm could there be in this? What possible harm? That church, once organized, is a church in its own right, and it's been taught by example to take these things seriously from the very first. If we're wrong, and I most seriously believe we are not, what harm has it done? But if, on the other hand, those who deny the necessity of church authority in the starting of other churches; if they're wrong, just think of the implications! If all the sound Baptists which remain were to begin to haul water with that bucket, in one generation all would be parched. There would no authority remain. I pray to God that some in that camp might see the need of authority in their baptism and their ordinations.

Let me give one more suggestion for study along this line. From Acts chapter 13, study Barnabas backwards. Barnabas was first "sent" by the church of Jerusalem "that he should go as far as Antioch" (Acts 11:22). He was "sent" with specific authority, the word "sent"

there literally means "to send forth as on a mission." That mission had to do with believers who were at Antioch, news of whom had come to the ears of the church in Jerusalem. The believers at Antioch were never yet, to this point, referred to as a "church." Barnabas from thence went to Tarsus "for to seek Saul" 11:25. Which Saul, had been "sent" from the same church, the church of Jerusalem in Acts 9:30. It is the same word "sent" in Acts 9:30, "sent forth as on a mission" (*Strong's Concordance*). Paul was "sent" to Tarsus in Acts 9:30. Barnabas brought Saul back to Antioch, in chapter 11, where they continued there "a whole year" setting things in order; and that "setting things in order" became a hallmark of New Testament missions. And it wasn't until that point, that they were first recognized as a "church" in Antioch (Acts 11:26).

They obviously united with the church in Antioch, and in Acts 11:30 began to be "sent" on missions by that church. It is from the same root word, meaning "to send out" (as on a mission) (*Strong's* number 630 & 649). And when "they had fulfilled their ministry" they returned to Antioch (12:25). And were sent out again in chapter 13, and reported to that church again in 14:26 & 27. And thus did the Lord propagate the Gospel; and where it was received and the saved submitted to scriptural baptism at the hands of one authorized, were true churches started: one church successfully started from another, and on, and on.

Here, I am going to repeat the argument that those who really hate this doctrine get so upset about, for it is indeed a valid point and I will not be deterred from it. It is a natural argument for those of us who believe that all the seed doctrine of the Bible is laid down for us in seed form in the fertile soil of the first few chapters of Genesis: that being "that from the beginning God so created...that in the law of primogenitor of all species...like begets like, everything reproduces after it's own kind, and something dead cannot give birth to something living; while every living thing has, by the express will of God, been restrained to only reproducing its own kind. And that, not by accident. And that, not without purpose. Else there would be confusion, and God is not the author of confusion. No! Not even in the churches. Especially, in the churches! Is not His bride the focal point of all creation from His point of view? How then is it wrong to point out the focus of God's creativity?"

Baptists make Baptists, that's where they come from! Baptist churches start Baptist churches, that's church succession! You can't have church perpetuity without church succession (even as you would not have the horse if that species had ever failed to reproduce). Perpetuity and Succession go together. The doctrine of church perpetuity necessitates church

succession, and church succession is the mechanism by which church perpetuity is fulfilled.

Here, it becomes a simple matter to demonstrate that we know, and understand, and observe these principles naturally speaking. And if so, then what shall we answer to our Lord if we do not practice them in the spiritual realm of which this world is but a poor reflection. If we see it in the mirror what shall be our excuse if we miss it in reality? For we all understand these things naturally speaking: No man goes out to erect golden arches to sell hamburgers without first obtaining a franchise from the parent corporation. If a man were to do so he would be found to be operating without *authority*, would he not? Who would risk such a thing when naught but material wealth is all that's involved? Perhaps an illustration from multilevel marketing is even more exact, for one obtains the right to market a thing from one who has obtained the right to market that thing from another who has obtained that same right...all the way back to the founder. And no court in all the land would uphold an usurper's right who was not found to be legitimately in that succession.

Are you in a church after the kind that the Lord started? Mark it down, the

Lord knows who they are. True churches come from true churches; but that's not all: they remain true to their Lord. For in every franchise there is, if the franchisee will not abide by the guidelines of the franchiser, the franchiser is within full right to revoke the franchise.

We are in a truly blessed position in that our Lord is a merciful God. And not for money and not for price, but because He loved us with an everlasting love, He bought us with His own precious blood, and appointed us a place to fill. If it be in one of His kind of churches, let us fill it with all that is in us, for He is worthy Who hath called us. Let us rightly discern and contend for all truth – both aspects of every twin doctrine (for there be many: preservation and perseverance, outward and inward calling, general and effectual, the first Adam and the Second, the old man and the new, etc., etc., inspiration and preservation of the Scriptures, perpetuity and succession of the Lord's churches...) remembering that the only proper balance is a right dividing of the Word of Truth. May God help us to so do. For as members of His churches we are the elect of the elect, and have been made to "sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come..." Oh, what a thought! Is it not worth our all?



The Threefold Cord

By Adoniram Judson
(1788 - 1850)

"And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken" (Eccl. 4:12).

You hope, my dear brother, that you have repented of sin, and put your trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. You now desire, above all things, to grow in grace, and attain the perfect love and enjoyment of God. But you find yourself perplexed about the way, amidst the various directions of various classes of the Christian world; and you ask for a short manual of advice, plain to the understanding and convincing to the heart. I present you, therefore, with the threefold cord. Lay hold of it with the hand of faith, and be assured that it will draw thy soul to God and to Heaven.

The first is the cord of Secret Prayer. Without this the others have no strength. Secret prayer is commonly considered a duty which must be performed every morning and evening, in order to keep a conscience void of offence. But do not, my dear brother, entertain an opinion so defective. Consider secret prayer as one of the three great works of thy life. Arrange thy affairs, if possible, so that thou canst leisurely devote two or three hours every day, not merely to devotional exercises, but to the very act of secret prayer and



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communion with God. Endeavor, seven times a day, to withdraw from business and company, and lift up thy soul to God in private retirement. Begin the day by rising after midnight, and devoting

some time, amid the silence and darkness of the night, to this sacred work. Let the hour of opening dawn find thee at the same work; let the hours of nine, twelve, three, six, and nine at night witness the same. Be resolute in this course. Make all practicable sacrifices to maintain it. Consider that thy time is short, and that business and company must not be allowed to rob thee of thy God. At least, remember the morning, noon, and night sessions, and the season after midnight, if not detrimental to thy health.

Dost thou ask how to pray? There is One who is able and willing to teach thee. Whenever thou intendest to pray, draw towards Calvary; kneel at the foot of the mount; lift up thine eyes, tremblingly and in tears, to thine incarnate God and Saviour dying on the cross; confess that

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thou art the guilty cause; implore His forgiveness; and, believe me, my dear brother, that the Holy Spirit will quickly come and teach thee how to pray.

The second is the cord of Self-denial--rough, indeed, to the hand of sense, and so abused in the Roman Catholic church that Protestants have become afraid of it, and thrown it away. But lay hold, my brother, with the hand of faith. It is one of the three; and without it the other two, although they may do some service, will not have firmness and consistency.

It is an acknowledged principle, that every faculty of the body and mind is strengthened and improved by use, weakened and impaired by disuse. It is needless to produce proofs or illustrations; they are to be met with in every day's experience. Self-love, or the desire of self-gratification in the enjoyment of the riches, the honors, and the pleasures of this world, is the ruling principle of fallen man. In the new-born soul this principle, though wounded to death, still lives. And the more it is indulged, the stronger it becomes. But

*"The love of God flows just as much
As that of ebbing self subsides;
Our hearts, their scantiness is such
Can not sustain two rival tides.
Both can not govern in one soul;
Then let self-love be dispossessed
The love of God deserves the whole,
Nor will she dwell with such a guest."*

And the way to dispossess self-love is to cease indulging it; to regard and treat self as an enemy, a vicious animal, for instance, whose propensities are to be thwarted, whose indulgences are to be curtailed, as far as can be done consistently with his utmost serviceableness; or, in the language of Scripture, to deny self and take up the cross daily; to keep under the body, and bring it into subjection; to mortify the members which are upon the earth; to cease from loving the world and the things of the world.

Alas for those whose days are spent in pampering their bodies, under the idea of preserving their life and health; who toil to lay up treasures upon earth, under the idea of providing for their children; who conform to the fashions of the world, under the idea of avoiding pernicious singularity; who use every means to maintain their character, and extend their reputation, under the idea of gaining more influence, and thereby capacity for serving the cause! How can such enter the kingdom of Heaven? **"Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."** Wouldst thou, my brother, belong to the happy few? Wouldst thou subdue the inordinate self-love which has hitherto shut out the love of God from thy heart, and impeded

thy progress in the heavenly way? Adopt a course of daily, habitual self-denial. Cease gratifying thy appetite; be content with the plainest diet; reject what most pampers the palate; fast often; keep thy body under subjection. Cease adorning thy person; dress in coarse and poor apparel; discard all finery; cut off the supplies of vanity and pride. Occupy a poor habitation; suffer inconveniences, yea, prefer them ever to slothful ease and carnal indulgence. Allow no amusements; turn away thine eyes from the pleasant sights, and thine ears from the pleasant sounds, of this vain world. Engage in no conversation, read no book, that interrupts thy communion with God; nor indeed any that has not a devotional tendency, unless it be necessary in thy calling. Get rid of the encumbrance of worldly property; sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, especially those who are in spiritual poverty. As to character, that last idol and most deadly tyrant of poor fallen man, follow the advice of that eminent saint, Archbishop Leighton: "Choose always, to the best of thy skill, what is most to God's honor, and most like unto Christ and His example, and most profitable to thy neighbor, and most against thy own proper will, and least serviceable to thy own praise and exaltation." And again: "Not only be content, but desirous, to be unknown, or, being known, to be contemned and despised of all men, yet without thy faults or deservings, as much as thou canst." Finally, renounce all terms with this world, which lieth in the arms of the wicked one; renounce all thy worldly projects and pursuits, except what is absolutely necessary for thine own sustenance and that of those dependent on thee; avoid, as much as possible, the contaminating touch of worldly things and by shutting the avenues of thy soul against the solicitations of the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, endeavor to weaken that deadly and tremendous influence which the world has gained over thee, and of which thou art scarcely suspicious. And when thou hast done all thou canst, remember that on account of the hesitation with which thou didst admit the light; the reluctance with which thou didst enter on thy duty; the carnal reasonings which at every step thou hast indulged; the readiness which thou hast sometimes felt to give up the effort; and the unfaithfulness which has marred, the sin which has polluted thy best performances---thou deservest nothing but Hell.

Art thou ready, on reading these pages, to say in despair, Alas for me! bound by a thousand chains, and loaded with a thousand burdens, how can I ever live a holy life of self-denial? Remember that there is One who is able and willing to help thee. It is commonly, if not always, the case with young converts, that the Holy Spirit draws them towards the

path of self-denial. We can all, perhaps, remember the time when we had such a sense of our unworthiness that we were desirous of denying ourselves of every indulgence; when we had such a sense of the danger of temptation, and the dreadful power of sin, that we were willing to renounce all things in order to live a holy life. But in the Protestant church we were frightened by the phantoms of Romish austerities, self-inflicted mortifications, overmuch righteousness, religious enthusiasm, etc.; we shut our eyes to the dawning light, turned away our ears from the heavenly call, the Spirit ceased to strive, and we have been swept away with the tide.

Return, O mistaken soul, to thy first love. God is still waiting to be gracious. Dost thou not feel a latent impulse, as thou readest these lines? a secret conviction that this is the truth? an incipient desire to comply? Yield thyself to the heavenly influence. Make an immediate beginning. Wait not till thou seest the whole path clearly illumined; expect not meridian brightness, while the sun is yet struggling with the dark, malignant vapors which rest on thy earthly horizon, the confines of a still darker world. The path of self-denial is, to carnal eyes, a veiled path, a mystery of the divine kingdom. While thou hesitatest at the first sacrifice required, expect no further admonition, no further light. But if thou wilt do what thy hands find to do this hour, if thou wilt, in childlike simplicity and humble obedience, take the first step, thou shalt see the second, which now thou seest not; and as thou advancest, thou shalt find the path of self-denial open most wonderfully and delightfully before thee; thou shalt find it sweet to follow thy dear Lord and Saviour, bearing the cross, and shalt soon be enabled to say,---

*"Sweet is the cross, above all sweets,
To souls enamored with thy smiles."*

The third is the cord of Doing good. This imparts beauty and utility to the rest. It is written of the Lord Jesus that He went about doing good. Art thou His disciple? Imitate His example, and go about doing good. DO GOOD. Let this be thy motto. Do good---all the good in thy power---of every sort---and to every person. Regard every human being as thine own brother; look with eyes of love on every one thou meetest, and hope that he will be thy loving and beloved companion in the bright world above. Rejoice in every opportunity of doing him any good, either of a temporal or spiritual kind. Comfort him in trouble; relieve his wants; instruct his ignorance; enlighten his darkness; warn him of his danger; show him the way of salvation; persuade and constrain him to become thy fellow-traveller in that blessed way. Follow him with all offices of kindness and love, even as thou wouldst be pleased to have another do to thee. Bear with

◊ (Continued on page 18)

BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 11-1-2006 to 11-30-2006

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Beginning Balance | \$6,124.46 |
| RECEIPTS: | |
| B. C. of Brimfield, Brimfield, IL | 28.68 |
| Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS | 200.00 |
| Berea B. C., Stonington, IL | 60.00 |
| Berea M. B.C., Mansfield, OH | 50.00 |
| Berea M. B. C., Westpoint, TN | 150.00 |
| Bethel M. B. C., Pasadena, TX | 100.00 |
| Bible Believers B. C., Naples, ID | 50.00 |
| Big Creek B. C., Wayne WV | 300.00 |
| Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY | 125.00 |
| Buffalo Valley B. C., Clay, WV | 50.00 |
| Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL | 25.00 |
| Cedar Grove B. C., Millport, AL | 50.00 |
| Faith B. C., Seffner, FL | 25.00 |
| Faith M. B. C., Lynn, AR | 25.00 |
| Gail Knowles, Scarborough, ME | 20.00 |
| Harold Flynn, Craigsville, WV | 25.00 |
| Grace B. C., Corbin, KY | 100.00 |
| Grace B. C., Winston-Salem, NC | 50.00 |
| Grace M. B. C., Marion, IL | 25.00 |
| Grace M. B. C., Tulsa, OK | 35.00 |
| Hillcrest B. C., Winston-Salem, NC | 50.00 |
| Indore B. C., Indore, WV | 100.00 |
| Joseph Jurzec, Redmond, IL | 25.00 |
| L. H. Farrell, Des Allemands, LA | 125.00 |
| Leroy Bullard, Albuquerque, NM | 100.00 |
| Morris St. B. C., Hobbs, NM | 500.00 |
| Mt. Plesant B. C., Chesapeake, OH | 300.00 |
| New Testament B. C., Bristol, TN | 10.00 |
| New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN | 50.00 |
| Ocoonita M. B. C., Keokee, VA | 40.00 |
| Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL | 100.00 |
| South Park B. C., Seattle, WA | 25.00 |
| Southside B. C., Fulton, MS | 25.00 |
| Sovereign Grace B. C., Columbus, MS | 50.00 |
| Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL | 100.00 |
| Sovereign Grace B. C., Wake Forest, NC | 100.00 |
| Victory B. C., Courtland, VA | 25.00 |
| Subscriptions | 61.00 |
| Anon | 325.00 |
| Dividing Checks | 150.00 |
| Sub Total | \$3,754.68 |
| TOTAL | \$9,879.14 |
| EXPENDITURES: | |
| Printing | 634.69 |
| Postage | 934.99 |
| Wages | 2,240.00 |
| FICA | 171.37 |
| Dividing Checks | 150.00 |
| Supplies | 389.41 |
| Total Expenditures | 4,520.46 |
| ENDING BALANCE | \$5,358.68 |

BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 11-1-2006 to 11-30-2006

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Beginning Balance | \$8,179.94 |
| RECEIPTS: | |
| Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY | 75.00 |
| Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS | 225.00 |
| Berea M. B. C., West Point, TN | 50.00 |
| Grace B. C., Corbin, KY | 100.00 |
| Calvary B. C., Everson, WA | 500.00 |
| | 950.00 |
| TOTAL | 9,129.94 |
| EXPENDITURES: | |
| Radio Time | 400.00 |
| Postage | 20.10 |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURES | 420.10 |
| | \$8,709.84 |
| Interest | +2.23 |
| | \$8,712.07 |
| Less Corbin, KY des. | -851.52 |
| ENDING BALANCE | \$7,860.55 |

CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| Beginning Balance | \$1,051.52 |
| RECEIPTS: | |
| TOTAL | 1,051.52 |
| EXPENDITURES: | |
| WCTT | 200.00 |
| ENDING BALANCE | \$851.52 |

The Threefold Cord

(Continued from page 17) ◊

all his infirmities. Be not weary in well doing. Remember that thy Saviour bore long with thee, and is still bearing with thee, beyond all conception, and covering thy pollution with the robe stained with His own blood, that the wrath of God may not strike thee. And when He thus forgives thine immense debt, canst thou not bear with thy fellow-debtor?

Do good to the Lord thy Savior. Is He far beyond thy reach? True, He reigns on high; but still He lives in all His members. **“Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”** As thou hast, therefore, opportunity, do good unto all men especially unto them who are of the household of faith. As a true follower of Christ, seek not thine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved. Since Christ has suffered, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life, extend thy good wishes to earth’s remotest bounds; and wherever a human being exists, let thy prayers and thine efforts combine to bring down eternal blessings on his beloved soul. But let the members of the household of faith, whatever be their language, country, or religious denomination, share in thy warmest love. Regard each one as a part of thine own dear Saviour; and be as happy to wash his feet as if they were the feet of thy Lord Himself. Remember that, notwithstanding present imperfections, ye are hastening to be united to one another, and to God, in a manner most ineffable, even as God is in Christ, and Christ in God; that the bosom of infinite love as even now opening to receive you all, and that ye will all bathe together, for endless ages, in “that sea of life and love unknown, without a bottom or a shore.”

By practicing self-denial, thou weakenest the debasing principle of inordinate self-love; and by doing good, thou cherishest and strengthenest the heavenly principle of holy benevolence. Let these exercises, then, quickened and sanctified by secret prayer, be the regular work of each day of thy life.

Thus I present thee, my brother, with the threefold cord---the three grand means of growing in grace---of gaining the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil---of drawing the soul from the earth to Heaven. Means, I say; for I speak not now of faith, the living operative principle within---the hand, with which thou must lay hold of the threefold cord. Wilt thou accept my present? Art thou inclined to lay hold? Cherish the Heaven-born inclination. It is worth more to thee than all the treasures of the earth. Go into thy place of prayer, stretch out the hand of faith, and implore the Holy Spirit, who is even now hovering over thee, to strengthen thee to lay hold for

life. Dost thou hesitate? O my brother, do not, I beseech thee. O, do not grieve the Holy Spirit. Disappoint not the fond hopes of thy longing Saviour. Renounce the world, renounce thyself, and flee into His loving arms, which are open to receive and embrace thee. Angels will rejoice over thy second conversion, as they did over thy first. Thou wilt soon find such sweetness as thou hast never yet conceived. Thou wilt begin to live in a new world, to breathe a new atmosphere, and to behold the light of Heaven shining around thee; and thou wilt begin to love the Lord thy God in a new manner when He is **“pacified toward thee, for all that thou hast done.”**

In taking leave of thee, my brother, the thought occurs, that, notwithstanding thy prevailing hope, thou mayst yet have fearful doubts about thy spiritual state, and mayst think that thou hast not yet the hand of faith, with which to lay hold of what I send thee. And I fancy I hear thee cry, What shall I do? Art thou sensible of thy maimed state? Then there is some hope. Do what thou canst; stretch out what thou hast, however maimed or withered, and try to lay hold. Try to pray in faith, to practice self-denial, and to do good. And be assured, my brother, that thou wilt quickly find the hand of faith where thou thoughtest it was not. There is one near thee whom yet thou knowest not---He who gave sight to blind Bartimeus, and said to the deaf man, Ephphatha, Be opened; He who heareth the young ravens when they cry, and much more, the cry of man, the dearest of all His creatures; He, who is ever moved with the yearning feelings of a tender parent, when He sees, at a distance, His poor prodigal son returning, famished and forlorn, from the far country.

(Mizar, February, 1829).



Thomas Jefferson and the Separation of Church and State

By Dr. Gary Scott Smith

The current mid-term elections accentuate the massive confusion that exists in the United States today about the meaning of the phrase “the separation of church and state.” Many liberals contend the concept requires that religion be completely divorced from government, while countless conservatives counter that the founders simply wanted to prevent the establishment of a national church. Dee Wampler’s *The Myth of Separation Between Church and State*, D. James Kennedy’s *What If America Were a Christian Nation Again?*, and David Barton’s *The Myth of Separation* all argue that the founders intended almost no separation between church and state. Florida Senatorial candidate Katherine Harris calls the separation doctrine “a

lie.”

In a recent study of 14,000 randomly selected college freshmen and seniors at 50 colleges and universities across the country conducted by the University of Connecticut’s Department of Public Policy, 73 percent of respondents could not correctly identify the source of the expression “a wall of separation” between church and state. Many Americans undoubtedly think this phrase is in the Constitution, but it is not. The First Amendment simply states that “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.”

The phrase comes instead from a letter Thomas Jefferson wrote in 1802, to the Danbury Baptist Association. Justice Hugo Black cited Jefferson’s words in a landmark Supreme Court case in 1947. “In the words of Jefferson,” wrote Black, the First Amendment clause prohibiting “the establishment of religion by law was intended to erect ‘a wall of separation between church and State.’ . . . That wall must be kept high and impregnable.” This decision, along with a number of subsequent ones, has helped push religion out of the public square.

Jefferson should not be considered the final authority on the relationship between church and state, although many magically grant him that authority. His views are very important, however, and those who invoke Jefferson’s phrase need to take a closer look at what he meant by his oft-quoted phrase as well as his actions as president. In his letter to the Danbury Baptists, Jefferson explained why he, unlike the first two presidents and almost all state governors, did not proclaim days for public prayer, fasting, and thanksgiving. Jefferson argued that the First Amendment prohibited the federal chief magistrate from issuing religious proclamations of any kind. He later explained that both the First Amendment and the Tenth Amendment, which reserved to the states the powers not delegated to the United States, prevented the federal government from “intermeddling with” “the doctrines, discipline, or exercises” of religious institutions.

Historian James H. Hutson maintains that Jefferson consistently supported “the principle of government hospitality to religious activity” as long as it was voluntary and offered equally to all citizens. While the government could not legally establish one church or creed as a national faith and support it financially, Jefferson believed that the state, as long as it remained “within its well appointed limits,” “could provide ‘friendly aids’ to religious denominations. Moreover, he used the term “church” rather than “religion” in restating the First Amendment, stressing that “the constitutional separation was between ecclesiastical institutions and the civil

state.”

Throughout his presidency Jefferson attended religious services held on government property. He aided infant congregations in the newly created capital by allowing them to hold services in the Treasury and War Office buildings, and he signed a federal law that provided tax exemption for churches in the District of Columbia. Moreover, in 1779 as governor of Virginia, he appointed “a day of publick and solemn thanksgiving and prayer to Almighty God.” As president, Jefferson approved the use of federal funds to support a Catholic missionary who worked with the Kashaskia Indians in Illinois. He also extended three times a law that granted federal land to a United Brethren society to assist them in evangelizing Indians in the West. Thus, to use the words, “high” and “impregnable” to describe Jefferson’s wall is at odds with what he said and contradicts what he did.

The United States was not founded as a Christian nation. Judeo-Christian, Enlightenment, and English Whig principles all provided an ideological foundation for our new nation. Nevertheless, biblical ideals and norms have played a pivotal role in shaping the structure, standards, and practices of our country. Today, some argue that the separation of church and state necessitates that we divorce all religious voices and values from our government. Daniel Dreisbach, author of *Thomas Jefferson and the Wall of Separation Between Church and State*, contends that Jefferson’s metaphor, as interpreted by the courts, has been improperly “used to inhibit religion’s ability to inform the public ethic,” to thwart citizens from participating in politics guided by their faith, and to prevent religious communities and institutions from speaking prophetically in the public arena. The founding fathers spoke eloquently, passionately, and often about the importance of religiously-grounded morality to the success of their new republic and provided governmental aid for religion in a variety of ways. The current effort to exclude religious perspectives and ideals completely from government and ensure a naked, ideologically “neutral” public square is at odds with the views of the founders, the history of our country, and the well-being of our society.



Back-row Baptists & Backslidden Churches

By Tennis Henderson

Did the headline grab your attention? If so, what difference does it make which pew you sit in on Sunday mornings? And while we've all heard of backslidden Christians, what exactly is a backslidden church? I'm glad you asked.

Baptists are well known for the phenomenon of back-row pew-sitters--folks who just barely set foot inside the church doors and typically are the first ones to head for the parking lot as the final words of the benediction are voiced.

But the back-row Baptists I'm talking about are not so much the ones who physically sit in the back of the church, but the ones who have a back-row philosophy about church involvement--doing the absolute minimum in ministry efforts while patting themselves on the back for bothering to show up each week.

What's the problem with such an outlook? According to II Corinthians 5:17, **"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new."** That includes gaining a fresh, new, dynamic perspective about church involvement, ministry, missions, discipleship, prayer and other disciplines that can make a positive spiritual impact in your life, family, church and community.

Colossians 3:23 instructs Christians, "Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men." It's a matter of moving beyond a back-row mentality and committing anew to do your very best through the power of God's Spirit for the sake of His Kingdom.

What about the backslidden church issue? Just as individual Christians can lose their spiritual zeal, the same is true of local congregations. A harsher term is "dead churches"--congregations that are going through the motions by maintaining a physical presence, but are failing to practice effective evangelism, outreach or other vital ministry priorities.

Revelation 2:4 warned the church at Ephesus that "you have forsaken your first love." That likely would be the same indictment of backslidden churches today that have turned inward and forgotten the call to **"let your light so shine before men"** (Matt. 5:16).

According to Scott Pittman, "The church is the vehicle of the gospel." He lamented, however, that "some churches have run out of gas, some have flat tires."

Dan Garland, a pastor, warned church leaders, "We are losing a generation with the gospel of Christ. Our Achilles' heel

is we have not made disciples. The only way to grow deeper is to spend time with God."

What's the solution? One starting point is to petition God to help us return to our first love of Jesus Christ and His gospel so that we triumphantly can move beyond the tragedy of being back-row Baptists and backslidden churches.

(Adapted from *The Western Recorder*, Nov. 14, 2006).



"Avoid foolish questions."

"But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain" (Titus 3:9).

Our days are few, and are far better spent in doing good, than in disputing over matters which are, at best, of minor importance. The old schoolmen did a world of mischief by their incessant discussion of subjects of no practical importance; and our Churches suffer much from petty wars over abstruse points and unimportant questions. After everything has been said that can be said, neither party is any the wiser, and therefore the discussion no more promotes knowledge than love, and it is foolish to sow in so barren a field. Questions upon points wherein Scripture is silent; upon mysteries which belong to God alone; upon prophecies of doubtful interpretation; and upon mere modes of observing human ceremonials, are all foolish, and wise men avoid them. Our business is neither to ask nor answer foolish questions, but to avoid them altogether; and if we observe the apostle's precept (Titus 3:8) to be careful to maintain good works, we shall find ourselves far too much occupied with profitable business to take much interest in unworthy, contentious, and needless stirrings.

- C. H. Spurgeon



National Missile Defense

By Capt. G. Russell Evans, USCG
(Rtd)
of Norfolk, Virginia

Pundits who mislead us about national missile defense and who insult leaders dedicated to our protection and best interests are easy to spot: They make wild charges without backup. They use ridicule and cheap humor. They love insipid caricatures of those they hate most. And they demean the issue.

Strong words, yes, but they are needed to challenge the irresponsibility of those who belittle any U.S. anti-ballistic missile (ABM) system because:

* It costs too much.

* It won't work.

* Our best defense is the mutually assured destruction (MAD) policy--nuke anyone who attacks us.

One Glitch: One glitch was the 1972 ABM treaty with the Soviet Union. We withdrew from the treaty in June 2002. Here are good reasons why that was the right course of action:

* The Soviet Union no longer exists.

* U.S. defense priority warranted termination of the thirty year old treaty.

* Rogue nations like North Korea and Iran, will soon pose a nuclear threat.

As a presidential candidate, George W. Bush said he would "field an NMD system at the earliest possible date"--indicating U.S. independence and sovereignty. Candidate Al Gore said he would gain international approval before moving forward--indicating dependence on the New World Order.

Anti-missile test successful: "Brilliant" has not been good enough for critics of the anti-ballistic missile tests--the equivalent of a bullet hitting a bullet while closing at 4.5 miles per second 144 miles above the Pacific Ocean.

Senator Joe Biden (D-DE), as chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, congratulated the military, but he quickly threw on the cold water: "It's not a real world test." Of course not, but further tests can make it "real world."

Successful tests could be turning points for even stronger public support for our ballistic missile defense organization under Air Force Lt. Gen. Ronald T. Kadish.

Some failures must be expected, but progress will be made each time. Imperfect tests from prototype systems are inevitable but, nonetheless, help fine tune for future wins.

Needs increasing: China is expanding its ICBM capability with some fifty 3-megaton warheads annually, thanks to espionage and Clinton-Gore waivers to sell U.S. missile technology in exchange for campaign donations.

A tenfold increase is in the works for China, including ballistic missile submarines with multi-warheads and the new DF31 and DF41 solid fuel mobile rockets.

This Chinese expansion precedes any possible U.S. missile defense program.

Now is also the time for serious diplomatic consultations to reduce the Chinese missile threat.

Communist China's Lt. Gen. Xiong Guang Kai made a bold nuclear threat warning the United States not to interfere in China's dispute with Taiwan because Americans "care more about Los Angeles than they do Taipei."

Three Tiered Program: The National Missile Defense Act (PL106-38) authorizes a missile defense "as soon as technologically feasible." A three tiered

missile defense is being planned.

* Sea-based interceptors and space-based satellites to attack missiles at launch;

* Land-based interceptors to down warheads in space;

* Short-range missiles to down warheads in the re-entry phase.

Tests are proceeding--so far, successful in one in three tries out of twenty-one planned.

The NMD system is complicated and very expensive--but much cheaper than war and nuclear annihilation.

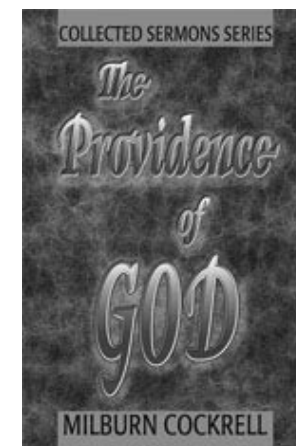
Throughout history, Americans have done the "impossible"--put a man on the moon, invented the electric light bulb and, perhaps greatest of all, won a world war after most of our fleet was at the bottom of Pearl Harbor.

Missile defense gets support. Support for NMD is increasing, with President Bush leading the way. People are waking up to our vulnerability to rogue nations with missile capability and a grudge against Uncle Sam--plus a rapidly arming Communist China and some thirty-one other nations--all with missiles and all with potential for an accidental or grudge launching.

Let me close with an observation by Amy Ridenour, president of the National Center for Public Policy Research, about World War I artist Max Slevogt's graphic painting "The Mothers," of "an endless column of wailing mothers alongside an endless ditch of dead men."

She wrote, "Without a missile defense system, the column of the dead will be even longer after a future war. But the column of mothers will be shorter, because the mothers will be dead too."

(Excerpts are from previous writings of Capt. Evans).



The Providence of God

by Milburn Cockrell

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Please add \$2.50 P&H.



WORLD SCENE

By G. Russell Evans USCG (Ret.) - Norfolk, Virginia

Mainline Churches Deplore War Against Terrorists



The mainline churches and their world-famous councils--The National Council and The World Council of Churches--are out in full force deploring war and any other violence against the terrorists.

There's no sign that our national leaders take seriously such churchly advice as: "Say no to war on terrorists" or "denying the intentions of God" or "using limited force to restrain evil" in pursuing justice and honor for America.

These are the same church bodies whose leaders were in the forefront of the pacifist and disarmament movement of the cold war when the Communist Soviet Union posed a real threat and when the American military was the real hope for "peace through strength." It worked then and will work now in bringing evil forces to justice.

OBSESSED WITH PACIFISM

For over a hundred years, many mainline churches have been busy with the ecumenical movement, i.e., uniting the Christian churches, and, in the process, have developed a rather dogmatic obsession for pacifism, often emphasized in their seminaries.

Two of their principal vehicles have been the world and national councils of churches with numerous denominations, including United Methodist, Presbyterian Church (USA), United Church of Christ, Episcopal Church and Lutheran Church--all faithful followers!

BORDERS ON TREASON

In fact, their plea is so far beyond the pale that it hardly seems worthy of response, except to set the record straight, and to challenge what borders on treason in giving aid and comfort to our enemies in a time of war (Art. 3, U.S. Constitution)--and the bin Ladens are our sworn enemies.

The words of former U.S. Senate chaplain Brown Harris ring true:

"Without swords, coerced men are compelled to cry peace when there is no peace and to surrender the most heavenly things to the most hellish forces. There is a sword approved by Heaven. If swords are in the hands of those who cannot be trusted with them, then the only peace possible between the Lamb and the Lion is for the Lamb to lie down inside the Lion. There are present-day appeasers of evil who would label that arrangement peace. But a peace dictated by unethical force is the peace of slaves."

WHAT THEY SAY

The acting Secretary of the World Council of Churches (WCC) "prays" that the United States will end the war against terrorists at once and that "no other state will join," adding, "We do not believe that

war. . .can be regarded as an effective response to the equally abhorrent sin of terrorism."

United Church of Christ (UCC) officials call the U.S. response to bin Laden "a painful new chapter of violence being met with more violence," turning from "the way of the cross" and "denying God's intentions."

Incredibly, the UCC pacifists blame America for precipitating the terrorist attacks and for "contributing" to the poverty and militarism that provide safe haven for terrorists to operate.

United Methodists (UM) are always in the fray for pacifism. Representatives of the East Ohio Conference rushed to Congress soon after the terrorist strike, pleading "restraint." Their Board of Church and Society says "no to war" and wants the United Nations for "multilateral action"---whatever that is---totally ignoring the unsafe haven for member nations harboring and supporting terrorists. Maybe that's the "multilateral" bit.

THE BIBLE ON RESPONSE

In blaming America, these church leaders do not quote the Bible, which features extensive passages on national defense, as well as love and forbearance for enemies---but nothing about surrendering to evil.

Pacifism is not the solution to the terrorist evils that ruthlessly and cruelly assaulted America and boast of "more to come"---and Christians cannot and will not accept this false doctrine as "the way of the cross."

Pacifism, under these conditions, is the way of the devil. Clarence E. McCartney said:

"Before Christians commit themselves to pacifist movements, they do well to ascertain whether these movements arise out of a genuine aversion to war or whether they are

What the Bible Teaches Bible Commentaries



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part of the scheme to disarm the country and render it incapable of resisting the machinations of those who would overthrow its historic institutions."

Today the United Nations is growing in power and assumed authority for global controls over a world church, world army, world taxes, and world court--facilitated by overthrowing America's "Historic Institutions."

Consequently, look for support from mainline denominational leaders and specifically for them to continue deploring the war on terrorism with allies from academia and, later from the entertainment world and even the media---all thriving on the boredom and discontent that a long war can bring.

(Excerpts are from previous writings of Capt. Evans).



ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Landmark Baptist Church of Collinsville, IL is in need of a pastor. For more information please contact Donald Coppedge at (618) 288-4236. Or write to Landmark Baptist Church, 107 Meyer Dr., Collinsville, IL 62234.

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Northport, AL will be having special services January 19th-21st. Elder Doyle Thomas will speak each day.

Saturday, Elders Jeff Short and Bobby Amos will be speaking for the fellowship meeting.

Service times for Friday night are at 7:00 p.m. Saturday services begin at 10:00 a.m. with a lunch provided by the church. Saturday services should conclude around 2:30 p.m. in the afternoon. Sunday services will be at regular times.

All are invited to attend. For more information contact Pastor Todd Bryant at (205) 242-8466 or email toddbryant@charter.net.

The Lord's Baptist Church of Tacoma, WA and Pastor Larry Killion wish to announce they will be having special services January 22nd - 29th. Elder Garner Smith of Clarksville, TN will be speaking. The 26th of January will be the church's 27th anniversary as a church.

Services will be at 7:00 p.m. each evening Monday thru Saturday. Sunday services start at 10:00 a.m. with a noon meal, afterward the afternoon service will begin at 1:30 p.m. which will conclude the meeting.

Please pray for the services. All are invited to attend.

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