

The Berea Baptist Banner

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

What A Friend We Have In Jesus

By Milburn Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)

"So foolish was I, and ignorant: I was a beast before thee. Nevertheless I am continually with thee: thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heat, and portion for ever" (Ps. 73:22-26).

Judging by the title Asaph was the penman of this Psalm. Some believe the title should read "a psalm for Asaph." If this be true, then David may have been

its author, and he may have sent it to Asaph to be used in public worship (I Chron. 16:7). Nevertheless, Asaph may be its author for he too was a composer of spiritual songs (II Chron. 39:30).

The Seventy-Third Psalm is in the main a record of the mental struggle a pious Jew underwent respecting the prosperity of the wicked. But in the portion of the text Asaph relates the whole experience of the believer from conversion to glory. It is to this selected portion I direct your attention.

A SINFUL CONDITION

In looking back over his past life, Asaph wrote: **"So foolish was I, and ignorant: I was a beast before thee"** (v. 22). Here is a threefold description of the unsaved

man. In substance the unrenewed man is a fool, an idiot, and a brute beast.

A SPIRITUAL FOOL

First, the psalmist says man is "foolish." The Apostle Paul said the natural man has his **"foolish heart darkened"** by sin (Rom. 1:21). The sons of Adam are such from childhood: **"Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child"** (Prov. 22:15).

Foolishness is our birthright. It is the root and essence of sin in our fallen nature. This is what causes a person to act from wrong principles, form bad habits, and enter into an ungodly life. This self-will and proud independence is held firmly in the heart by chains invincible to human power.

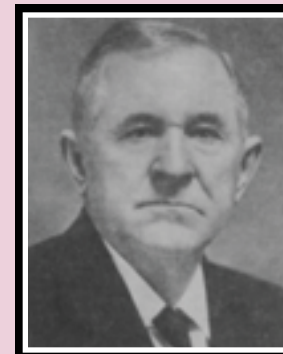
◊ (Continued on page 247)

A Pilgrimage

By J. W. Porter
(1863 - 1937)

"We are journeying unto the place of which Jehovah said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good; for Jehovah hath spoken good concerning Israel" (Num. 10:29).

Life in this world is a pilgrimage from the cradle to the grave. Here we have no continuing city, but we hope for, if we do not seek one, in the world to come. Across the barren wastes of time there are many pathways, but they all lead to one goal--the grave. Over hill and plain together we go and then "down the valley one by one." Though brief our earthly pilgrimage, it determines our eternal destiny. At this moment we are, one and all, traveling the road that leads to eternal life or



everlasting destruction. While crossing the Atlantic a ship passed us within hailing distance. The captain of the ship cried across the stormy waters, "Whither bound?" Back went the reply, "Liverpool." I would ask of every soul in this presence, "Whither bound?"

Our text is an invitation given by Moses to his father-in-law to accompany the Children of Israel to the Holy Land. Moses was, as we should be, deeply

◊ (Continued on page 246)

Temperance

By John Harvey

(Continued from the last issue.)

4. **Indispensable.** Indispensable to our safety and continuance in well doing. This may be argued from the fact that there is a greater probability of a temperate man becoming religious, and of a religious man being more steadfast in grace. Some professors say that the grace of God will keep them from becoming drunkards. This may be correct, so long as it keeps them from surrendering religion at the shrine of the decanter or of intoxicating drinks, but no longer. Religion will keep them if they will keep it. A person might keep on his feet while walking on a narrow and slippery path; but would he not be less liable to fall on a wide and firm road? An individual might stand at the top of a mast, or on the yard of a ship; but would he not be safer on deck? A man may be a moderate drinker of ardent spirits; but would he not pursue the safest course to take none at all? "Moderation is the mark at which six hundred thousand drunkards of the United Kingdom first

made their start."

Intemperance is a rock on which many ministers and professors of religion have made "shipwreck of faith and a good conscience." It is said "that more souls are yearly hurried to hell through these drinks than all the ministers of religion put together are the means of saving." **"But they have also erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, . . . they err in vision, they stumble in judgment"** (Isa. 28:7). How frequently have ministers to expel members from society, mourn over declensions in piety and numerical decreases, occasioned by intemperance! How important that we should pursue a safe course, and practice self-denial, not only for our own sakes, but to set an example to others. In a small volume published by the Tract Society is the following anecdote. "A religious lady at Edinburgh was sent to visit a woman who was dying in consequence of disease brought on by intemperance. The woman

◊ (Continued on page 242)

What God Hates

By Milburn Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)

"These six things doth the LORD hate; yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren" (Prov. 6:16-

19).

A holy God never looks upon sin with indifference or pleasure. He hates every action in man which is contrary to His divine nature. Out of the seven things Solomon says God hates, pride is the very first. This is because pride is at the bottom of nearly all other sins and the spring of them. The God of the Bible wants no flesh to glory in His presence. He hates

◊ (Continued on page 254)

If you put your trust in banks you could lose all your money.
If you put your trust in Christ you will gain everything.
"And again, I will put my trust in him" (Heb. 2:13).

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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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Temperance

(Continued from page 241) ♦

had formerly been in the habit of washing in the lady's family; and when she came to the dying woman she remonstrated with her on the folly and wickedness of her conduct in giving way to so dreadful a sin as that of intemperance. The dying woman said, "You are the author of my intemperance." "What did you say?" with pious horror exclaimed the lady. "I the author of your intemperance?" "Yes, ma'am; I never drank whiskey till I came to wash in your family: you gave me some whiskey, and told me it would do me good. I felt invigorated, and you gave it me again. When I was at other houses, not so hospitable as yours, I purchased a little, and, by and by, I found my way to the spirit shop, and thought it was necessary to carry me through my hard work: and by little and little I became what you now see me." Conceive what this lady felt.

With respect to the ultimate doom of the drunkard, the Scriptures are clear and conclusive. "He shall not inherit the kingdom of God." This is not a probable case, but an absolute certainty. In fits of intoxication, thousands have passed into eternity, and awoke to a consciousness of their everlasting ruin. Notice---

III. HOW TEMPERANCE MAY BE CULTIVATED IN GENERAL, AND PROMOTED IN PARTICULAR.

The possession of this virtue will subordinate the appetite to the superiority of reason, allay the ebullitions of the temper, bridle the tongue, check extravagance, restrain the desires, and moderate the imaginations; and there it must be cultivated and exhibited by all who profess the Christian name. It may be cultivated in general, by self-denial and resolute abhorrence of all evil, by the improvement of our privileges, by a due respect to the ordinances of religion, by cherishing exalted thoughts of Christ, by a faithful imitation of His example, by the constant exercise of faith and fervent prayer, by living under the influence of the Holy Spirit, and by conformity to God in holiness. But "Christians must reprove sin in others, as well as abstain from it themselves;" they have relative duties, as well as personal ones. Temperance in particular may be promoted---

1. *By precept.* By following Divine direction. Warnings, denunciations, and cautions against intemperance are found in the Bible. "Look not upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder" (Prov. 23:31-32). Forgetfulness and perversion are the effects of indulging in this sin. "It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong

drink: Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted" (Prov. 31:4-5). Again we read, "Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink." Belshazzar and his one thousand satraps were thrown into utter consternation whilst drinking wine and eulogizing their gods. The mystic handwriting upon the wall had a thrilling effect upon the monarch, his countenance changed, his thought troubled him, the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another. Daniel read him his doom: his kingdom was numbered and divided, and he was weighed in the balances and found wanting. He lost his throne and his life together: "In that night was Belshazzar the King of the Chaldeans slain" (Dan. 5:30). In the New Testament the warnings and cautions against intemperance are equally as solemn and forcible. "Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying" (Rom. 13:13).

Thus, from the inspired volume, the highest authority to which we can appeal, the sin of intemperance meets with Jehovah's most decisive disapprobation; it also places man in perilous circumstances, and surrounds him with fearful dangers. We are directed to "abhor that which is evil."

2. *By example.* We must add "to knowledge temperance." "In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works" (Tit. 2:7). Every sensible man will admit that intemperance has brought a withering influence upon society---that the number of drunkards is immense---that to reclaim and save them is highly important. Then the question arises, Who are to reform these characters, and promote the principles of sobriety? The duty certainly devolves upon professors of religion; and they cannot more effectually accomplish this object than by abstaining from such pernicious beverages themselves. Some fancy a little is necessary to health; "but who," says Dr. Burns, "can cling to such a complete delusion with a document before him signed by fourteen hundred medical gentlemen, including many of the most distinguished in the profession, in which the uselessness of these drinks is distinctly attested?" Others say that what they take is so trifling it neither benefits nor injures them, that they see no need of abstaining entirely; but to do so would involve no great sacrifice on their part. Some religious people say, to sign the pledge indicates a lack of self-government; and were they to sign, others might conclude they had indulged in drinking to excess. But who would say, that because you had subscribed one hundred pounds to some charitable institution to which you had never before subscribed, that you had previously been indulging a spirit

of covetousness, by withholding what you ought to have contributed before? Would they not rather applaud you for the generous deed? But it is not so much our business to listen to what people say as to attend to our duty in relation to our fellow-men. Provided it was a sacrifice to abstain from intoxicating drinks, would it be too much to make such a sacrifice for the temporal and spiritual benefit of others? Surely not. Did not Christ make many sacrifices, and endure innumerable privations, for us? Did not the same spirit actuate the apostle Paul, when he said, "Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth" (I Cor. 8:13).

3. *By exertion.* By judicious efforts. Some, in advocating the temperance cause, deal largely in opprobrious epithets, censures, and even personal abuses against those who are not total abstainers. There must be affectionate appeals to their reason and judgment. We must first convince men of their duty, then urge them to the performance of it. Remonstrance, private counsel, and public lectures may contribute to the spread of those principles, and the progress of that cause whose object is the social, moral, and intellectual improvement of society; by training the rising generation to temperate habits, by teaching them to shun those vices so destructive to every noble aspiration and moral virtue. Let the minister and people, the magistrate and the mechanic, the rich and the poor, throw the weight of their influence into the temperance cause, and they will confer a lasting boon upon society.

4. *By discretion.* By mingling with suitable associates. "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat" (I Cor. 5:11). "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." "Evil communications corrupt good manners." Such solemn and reiterated cautions show us the necessity of watchfulness and circumspection in the choice of our companions. Our weal or our woe depends, to a certain extent, upon the character of our associates, or the company we keep. "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise" (Prov. 13:20). We may walk with them by imbibing their spirit, by avoiding the evils they avoid, and by imitating their excellencies. "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world" (Phil. 2:15).

That we may fully exemplify the fruit of the Spirit in our conduct there must be a complete surrender of the heart to

♦ (Continued on page 244)



From the Pen of a Country Preacher

Milburn R. Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)



The Restoration of Israel Part Two

In my last article I had completed the study of Romans 11:1-15. Now I want to begin where I left off in the last article. The primary theme in Romans 11 is the restoration of Israel. Verses 16-24 deal with the parable of the olive tree. The good olive tree is Israel in covenant relation with God. The wild olive tree represents the believing Gentiles. The unbelieving branches were broken off, and the branches of the wild olive grafted in upon the root of the good olive tree. The grafting in of the wild olive branches shows how the Gentiles were privileged to come under the influence of that which belonged to Israel. When some of the natural branches were broken off, God put the Gentiles upon the ground of responsibility where Israel stood. Today the Gentiles partake of the root and fatness of the olive tree.

THE CONSECRATED LUMP

“For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches” (v. 16).

The firstfruits here refer to the heave offering of the Lord, a cake made from the first of the dough (Num. 15:19-21), whereby the whole lump was regarded as consecrated to God. Both the **“lump”** and **“the branches”** represent Israel (Deut. 4:7; 7:6; 10:15; 14:2; 26:19; 32:8-9). The **“root”** is Abraham, the depository of the promises. In Abraham **“the branches,”** or his natural posterity, were regarded as consecrated to God.

The apostle's argument is essentially this: As the lump is holy through the offering of the firstfruits, even so the lump, or the body of the nation of Israel, will yet be made holy. The future conversion of Israel is guaranteed by the peculiar covenant relation in which Israel stands to Abraham. Again Paul proves that God has not cast away His people.

SOME BROKEN AND SOME GRAFTED

“And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree” (v. 17).

The writer continues in this verse and those following to employ the figure of a tree and its branches. The useless branches are cut off and better ones inserted. The natural branches broken off are those unbelieving Jews who rejected Christ. By the word **“some”** is meant not

all (Heb. 3:16). It implies that others, as the apostle had already shown (vv. 2-5), remained.

The wild olive tree branches point to the believing Gentiles. The branches of the wild olive tree were grafted in among them (believing Israel, the elect remnant), not instead of them. This is a further elaboration of Romans 11:5-7. The faithful remnant was still in the good olive tree bearing fruit. If it had not been for this elect Jewish remnant, which constituted the church which Jesus Christ organized during His personal ministry, the Gentiles would never have heard the gospel. It was Jewish Christians in the gospel church who preached the gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 10:1-48; 13:46).

These believing Gentiles were **“grafted in among them,”** and they became a **“partaker with them.”** Some brethren miss the boat in this verse. They teach all Jews were reprobated forever; that is, that all the branches were cast off and the Gentiles put in their place. But this is not what Paul said at all. At conversion a Gentile is spiritually grafted into the good olive tree, and he becomes a partaker (not an all-taker) with Jewish believers. These believing Gentiles partake of the root, Abraham (Rom. 4) and of the fatness (the righteousness of faith) of the good olive tree.

A WARNING TO GENTILE CHRISTIANS

“Boast not against the branches, But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear” (vv. 18-20).

What a warning is given here to Gentile Christians! All too many times a Gentile believer exhibits an overbearing disposition toward the Jews. We must not forget that the Jewish nation is what Paul called the natural branches of the olive tree. The Israelites were first the people of God, and the first members of the gospel church. Our Savior Himself was a Jew. The Jews received no advantage from the Gentiles, but the Gentiles have received much advantage from the Jews. We are indebted to them for first preaching the gospel to us. We Gentiles become the spiritual children of Abraham and enjoy Israel's blessings through that relation.

Some of the natural branches were broken off, not because God loved the Gentiles more than the Jews, nor because there must have been room made for the Gentiles. The majority of the Jewish nation was broken off because of continued unfaithfulness. The Gentiles have no superior merits or special claims upon Jehovah. They were grafted into the good olive tree by faith (v. 20). Since faith is the gift of God (Eph. 2:8-9; Phil. 1:29) and bestowed upon whom He wills, there is no room left for Gentile boasting.

On verse 20 Elder Alvah Hovey so well wrote: **“The words for ‘unbelief’ and ‘faith’ are in the so-called instrumental dative, which is generally translated ‘by’ or ‘through.’ The word ‘standest’ in our text is used antithetically to falling (14:14), though some refer it to the standing as of a branch upon the olive tree. Paul, it will be noticed, forgets here to say that these Jews were broken off from the stock of the spiritual Israel and cast away by reason of the absolute decree of Jehovah; but, on the contrary, he charges their rejection solely to their own fault---their want of faith. Nor did these Jews ever think of charging their want of faith to God's decree of reprobation. And yet this unbelief of theirs was connected with a divine purpose.”**

GENTILES TO BE CUT OFF

“For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou shalt also be cut off” (vv. 21-22).

How long-suffering God was with the nation of Israel! They sorely tried His patience for generations upon generations, and He endured their infidelity. With infinite patience God permitted Israel to commit their last greatest sin, the rejection of their Messiah! For this act the righteousness of God moved Him to break off the unbelieving branches. If He did not spare the natural branches are we so foolish to think He will spare us? God forbid.

In verse 22 Paul shows the two extreme opposites of God's attributes, i.e., His goodness as contrasted with His severity. These two are inseparably related in God's nature, yet one is the antithesis of the other. One without the other is inconceivable. Both goodness and severity are seen in His dealings with the Jews and Gentiles. The natural branches which were broken off because of unbelief experienced the severity of God. They fell from their high privilege as a branch falls to the ground when severed from the tree. The word for **“severity”** means literally **“a cutting off.”** It occurs nowhere else in the New Testament.

While unbelieving Jews were exposed to the severity of God, the believing Gentiles enjoyed **“the goodness of God.”**

In this age the believing Gentile partakes of the covenant blessings of Israel. The Gentiles must continue in this state of faith (Acts 13:43) into which His goodness has brought them; otherwise, they, too, will be cut off. This verse does not teach that an individual can fall from grace. Instead, it is a warning to Gentiles against falling from a state of favor with God, as the Jews had fallen, after the same manner of unbelief.

The final days of the Gentile dispensation will end in judgment just as the Jewish dispensation ended. Ultimately, the Gentiles **“shall be cut off.”** Instead of continuing in God's goodness, Gentile Christendom is seeking to set up the kingdom without the King. Modern day Christianity has forgotten God's purpose concerning Israel, and it has become a boasting, worldly organization, calling itself Israel and laying claim to the promises which are Israel's in the kingdom age. Rather than preaching salvation by free grace and the goodness of God, Christendom preaches salvation by good character. They have made the Lord's Supper a holy mystery and baptism a means of grace. They put crosses on their church buildings and then do not preach the cross of Christ. The finger of God has already written **Ichabod** across the Christianity of the present day!

The Gentiles have corrupted the very faith which was the channel through which they are to continue in the goodness of God. **“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times SOME (note not all) shall depart from the faith. . .”** (I Tim. 4:1 emphasis MRC). When Christ comes to rapture the saints He will find very little true faith on earth (Luke 18:8). He will find a Gentile church which has dishonored Him and His Word, a church which failed in its mission to the world as did the Jews in theirs.

Mark carefully the words: **“Thou shalt be cut off.”** This judgment is not far away. Gentile Christians are not provoking Israel to jealousy. Some of them are boasting of Gentile superiority and denouncing the Israelites as Communists and antichrists. Just such Gentile boasting is causing the apostasy to rapidly develop. God will not go on forever tolerating this sort of behavior. He will not permit much longer the ever increasing rejection of His Son by the Gentile nations and their open denial of His deity and lordship in their schools and religious colleges. **“Thou shalt be cut off.”** How soon this is to come to pass! The saints will be taken to glory at the Rapture, and then there will remain a professing Gentile Christendom on which at last judgment will fall.

GRAFTED IN AGAIN

“And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again.”

◊ (Continued on page 244)

Temperance

(Continued from page 242) ♦

God. The divine requirement is, "My son, give me thine heart." There must be no reservation, nothing must be kept back which God requires; the hopes, desires, and affections must be centered in Him. There must be a firm adherence to Him, manifested by a faithful prosecution of those duties we have to perform. We must pray for the operation of the Spirit's influence, for without it we can do nothing effectually. "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." In conclusion---

1. *What is our real state and character?* Do we exemplify in our daily deportment "the fruit of the Spirit?" Are these moral virtues visible in our temper and conduct? There must be more than a mere skeleton of religion; the bare outlines of Christianity are not sufficient; there must be "perfect stature" and fullness of religion. This is not an inaccessible superiority. We may attain to this excellency by using the requisite means. Our foibles and imperfections should humble us in the dust, and also stimulate us to greater earnestness in the attainment of those virtues so essential to our happiness. Let us not forget that "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." This chain is far more desirable, ornamental, and valuable than the "chain of gold" the king of Babylon promised to Daniel, provided he could read the mysterious writing upon the wall of the palace, and interpret the meaning thereof. The believer's chain is not merely for ornament, but for use. It must be worn; all may wear it; the more it is worn the brighter it shines.

2. *A word to you who make no profession of religion.* Perhaps you admire its excellency and acknowledge that you need it, but attempt to justify your conduct by pointing out the inconsistencies of those who professedly belong to the church. That the state of the church is far from being satisfactory, every sensible and enlightened man will at once admit, both with regard to the numerical strength and spiritual attainments of its members. But if religious professors are not what they ought to be, that is no reason you should remain unconverted; but should remember that religion is a personal matter, and that you are responsible for your own acts, and not for theirs.

3. *Some of you have lost religion.* "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee: know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the LORD thy God" (Jer. 2:19). You may stand associated with the church, and even pass for a genuine Christian, and yet be in a declining state;

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for it does not follow that before you can become a backslider you must plunge into open wickedness and immoral practices; indulging in secret sins and remissness in secret duties will constitute you a backslider. You may have a name to live, while you are dead.

Or you may have worn the badge of discipleship, the uniform of the soldiers of the cross, but are now disrobed, and have taken up arms against the Prince of Peace. You have relapsed into a state of sin, grieved the Holy Spirit, forsaken the good and right way. "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you." "Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?" I entreat you to reconsider your ways, and hear Him Who hath said, "Return unto Me; for I have redeemed thee."

"Lean not on earth, 'twill pierce thee to the heart;
A broken reed at best, but oft a spear;

On its sharp point peace bleeds, and hope expires."

How distinguished the character and privileges of real Christians! "I will be their God, and they shall be My people" (II Cor. 6:16). Those who are obedient to His commands and rely on His faithfulness enjoy His presence and are cheered by the light of His countenance. We must imitate the apostle Paul, "forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things that are before." We must "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Our experience in divine things must be more profound. Heavenly mindedness, a well-regulated conduct, sincere love to God and to each other, are requisite to consummate our bliss on earth, and elevate us to the joys above. To advance in the paths of peace and holiness, there must be unrelaxed diligence, firmness, and application. We must never relinquish our endeavours to improve and exalt our spiritual nature, nor rest satisfied with any attainment of purity we may have reached: for there is a summit of religious excellence beyond the degree the most devoted Christian has attained. Our purpose must be to "hold fast what we have obtained;" guard against excessive anger, and "every sin that doth, or would, so easily beset us;" cultivate those feelings and principles which Christianity inculcates; "put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering." We

must avoid everything that is calculated to produce indifference to the duties we have to perform; that would endanger our spiritual interests, or diminish our happiness. We must acknowledge the Divine claims to our unreserved obedience, respond to the voice of reason, conscience, and inspiration; follow the direction of the Holy Spirit, summon all the resolution and promptitude we can command in the observance of those social and religious duties we are bound to perform. We must cultivate all the graces of the Spirit, walk circumspectly, resist the encroachments of our vigilant enemy, "gird up the loins of our mind," live in daily communion with the Most High; have our lamps trimmed and our lights burning when the voice of the bridegroom is heard; and when death shall wipe our name from the list of the living, may our souls be found sheltered in the cleft of the everlasting Rock!

"Other refuge have I none,

Hangs my helpless soul on thee;

Leave, ah! Leave me not alone,

Still support and comfort me

All my trust on Thee is stay'd,

All my help from Thee I bring,

Cover my defenseless head

With the shadow of Thy wing!"



Restoration of

(Continued from page 243) ♦

For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?" (vv. 23-24).

Even though God has destroyed their temple and priesthood and scattered them to the four winds of the earth, He is able to restore them to the place of blessing. He is able to make dry bones live and to restore the severed branches of the Jewish nation. In the time of their restoration Israel will become the center and spring of Divine blessings and the Gentiles will again be subordinate to Israel and be required to go to Jerusalem to worship Jehovah (Isa. 2:3; Jer. 31:6; 50:5; Zech. 8:21-23).

Israel will not always abide in unbelief. Zechariah 12:10 declares that in a future day Israel shall "look on him whom

they pierced." When Christ returns to the Mount of Olives "every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him" (Rev. 1:7). "And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. . . . And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third part shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God" (Zech. 13:6, 8-9).

If the Gentiles, who were strangers to the covenants of promise, have been grafted in contrary to nature into the good olive tree, how much more the descendants of the patriarchs to whom the promises were made? The hand which broke them off can put them back. This grafting in again does not depend upon human frailty. A sovereign God has promised to restore Israel to the place of blessing. Paul emphatically states: "God is able to graff them in again" (v. 23). This is as certain to happen as the continuation of the course of nature (Jer. 31:35-36). Jeremiah wrote: "He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock" (Jer. 31:10).

ALL ISRAEL TO BE SAVED

"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance" (vv. 25-29).

In verse 25 a great mystery is made known. Israel's blindness is in part and will last up to a certain time. Paul distinctly says: "Until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." At this time God will graft them into the good olive tree once again. All talk of Israel's conversion as a nation before this appointed time is idle chatter.

But what is meant by the fullness of the Gentiles? Some say it means the whole number of God's elect among the Gentiles must be saved. But Paul has already shown the conversion of the Jews depends upon God's ability to graft them in again, not the conversion of the

♦ (Continued on page 245)

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).



Tears On Our Pillows

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

By the time you read this, the Lord willing, I will have completed the Automotive Technology college vocational course and my first semester of college academic courses: Texas History and Intermediate Algebra. And registered for the new semester that begins in January.

Please pray for me as I take the full course load in the new semester: Composition I, Government II, General Psychology, and Interpersonal Communication. As many of you know, I must maintain a full time work assignment while going to school, so I need all the prayers I can get to help me apply strict time management skills and consistent study habits. I also need your prayers for protection from the secular, nonbiblical ideas of my instructors and course materials that I must endure to obtain my degree.

Now I would like to implore you to enroll in any class available to you. And if you are in segregation, as I was for many years, don't let that stop you from expanding your knowledge. There are several bookstores that send free books, textbooks, magazines, and journals to prisoners. Ask around, I'm sure it won't be hard to find the addresses you need, or write to Inside Books Project, 12th Street Books, 827 W. 12th Street, Austin, TX 78701. Request books by subject matter.

Learn this simple truth, dear reader, and learn it well: The powers-that-be may have your body incarcerated, but only you can lock away your mind. Use the time you're doing to better yourself and plan for the future, for the man who fails to plan, plans to fail.

Until next time, dear reader, please keep me in your prayers and I will do the same for you.

Now let us turn our attention to the following text: **"Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning"** (Ps. 30:5). At one time we were all children of darkness; we reveled in the shadows and inkiness of night. Then in the midst of the blackness we heard the calling of the Lord and were able to open our eyes to the joyous morning of His salvation. And from that moment on, all

was well in the world, right?

Well, maybe not so much.

True enough we walk in the Light of our salvation but we tread in a fallen world. While the darkness is no longer within us, it is all around us. So in a sense we are still weeping in a night, not the night of lostness, but the night of earth-boundness. We are still looking for that joyful morning when we will no more long for the gates of Heaven, but run through them with our King. And while we wait for that morning of all mornings we must endure other weeping nights and joyous mornings here on earth.

One of those dark nights that is very real to you, dear reader, is the blackness called incarceration. You and I are in the same boat--without oars, I might add--and the darkness we exist in can be overwhelming at times. When you open your eyes for a new day, do you see bleak concrete walls and savage steel bars and put on a scowl for all to see? Or do you thank God that He gave you the blessing of another day, put on a smile and make those around you wonder what you have inside?

I have both kinds of days. Sometimes I stub my toe, other times I scrape my knees, and on occasion I simply fall flat on my face. I am not proud of those moments when I shame my Lord by my actions, but I will not sweep them under some rug and pretend they don't exist. And if you're honest with yourself you won't either.

We can't expect the lost ones around us to understand the paradox of our two natures. So don't drive yourself crazy trying to explain it to them. Share the Gospel with them if they will listen, but stay away from trying to explain enlightened knowledge to the unenlightened.

While we wonder through this shadow of prison where our bodies are restricted from freedom we should do all we can to better ourselves from the inside out. Here are a few of the things I do to keep my mind on things outside of prison.

1) Bible study, whether it's a formal study or simply getting to know the Word better, you can't go wrong spending time in your Bible.

2) Listen to Christian radio, sure there are going to be bones to spit out but there is also some meat to be had. Besides aren't we commanded to **"prove all things; hold fast that which is good"** (I Thess.

5:21)?

3) Go to school; I'm very big on education. That is one of the things the Lord has put on my heart: harp on education. You've got nothing but time, so put it to some good use. If you don't have a GED, study and take the test. If you have a GED then get in college. If you have an Associate, then work on a Bachelor. If you have a Bachelor, then work on a Master. If you don't want a college degree, then take a vocational course.

And here is another thing--I wish the system would make this mandatory for everyone in prison--by any means necessary sign up for Cognitive Intervention. The ideas and principles taught in this class have kept me out of more wrecks than any other class I've ever taken.

4) Read, not just junk novels either. Read biographies, true stories. Read to learn and not just for entertainment. I'm not saying to never read a novel just for entertainment; I have a weakness for detective stories so I know the feeling. But what I am saying is make them like dessert, and make reading to learn your main course.

These are some of the things I do to help me through the weeping of my night of incarceration, and I hope they will help you through yours. Because one glorious morning, we will shout for joy when we walk into the morning of our release.

Krystal Ruthann, I love and miss you abundantly. You are in my thoughts and prayers daily.

Bro. Jeff & family, I love you guys. You, too, are in my thoughts and prayers daily.

Bro. Harold, thank you for your continued correspondence and encouragement.

Bro. Kevin, I miss you, man. Keep fighting the good fight, you are not alone.

Bro. Danny, keep working on the book, you can do a lot of good with it.

All of you and many others are in my thoughts and prayers daily, and I ask for yours as well.



Restoration of

(Continued from page 244) ♦

Gentiles. Others make the expression to mean that blindness will continue in Israel until the last Gentile is converted and completes the body of Christ, the universal, invisible church. This is bad ecclesiology and eschatology. The true churches at present are composed of two converted peoples, Jews and Gentiles (Eph. 2:14-18; 3:4-6).

The fullness of the Gentiles does not have the same meaning as the fullness of Israel in verse 12. The fullness of

Israel is the time they enjoy the fullness of covenant promises and the fullness of the Holy Spirit (Isa. 34:13-15; 44:3; 59:19, 21; Ezek. 36:26-27; 39:29; Joel 2:28-29; Zech. 12:10). The fullness of the Gentiles is the time when they shall have filled up to the brim the cup of their sins (I Thess. 2:16; Rev. 18:6) and be cut off for their unbelief (v. 22). The blindness of Israel does not end at the Rapture. There is only a remnant of saved Jews in the tribulation period. The blindness of Israel ends when Christ returns to the Mount of Olives (Jer. 30:7; Matt. 24:13), not at the beginning of the tribulation period.

The **"all Israel"** to be saved is the elect spared posterity of Jacob of the future (Dan. 12:1; Isa. 4:3; Zech. 13:8-9). It is the **"all Israel"** as contrasted with the Gentiles. The **"all Israel"** who survive the judgments of the tribulation and the reign of Antichrist, **"all Israel"** living when Christ returns to earth, those who say, **"Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord"** (Matt. 23:39). This is the national conversion of Israel. **"Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children"** (Isa. 66:8). Many Scriptures speak of this time (Deut. 4:30; 30:1-6; Ps. 14:7; Jer. 23:5-8; 32:34-41; Ezek. 37:21-28; Dan. 9:24; Hos. 3:4-5; Zech. 12:9-13:1; Matt. 24:29-31; Acts 15:13-17).

God has not cast off Israel forever; they are not antichrists. They are beloved for the sake of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (v. 28; Deut. 4:37; 10:15). When Christ returns to Zion the nation of Israel will receive their Messiah and be made to enjoy the blessings of the Covenant of Grace (v. 27; Ezek. 20:37; 37:22-28). The gifts and callings of Israel are irrevocable; they cannot be withdrawn, abrogated, or annulled (v. 29). By the example of Gentile mercy, they also will obtain mercy (vv. 31-32).

CONCLUSION

The end of apostate Judaism was judgment. Likewise, the end of apostate Gentile Christianity will be judgment. But just as the blessing came to us when judgment fell upon the Jews, so when judgment falls on Gentile Christendom, blessings will be restored to Israel. The re-engrafting of the Jews will be still fuller blessings to the Gentile world than any which they now enjoy (Rom. 11:12). Universal blessedness will not be introduced by the perpetuation and extension of the present Gentile dispensation as postmillennialist and amillennialists maintain, but by the restoration of Israel when Christendom has been cut off for its non-continuance in God's goodness.

Some are bold to assert that all the old Baptists believed God had

♦ (Continued on page 246)

Restoration of

(Continued from page 245) ◊

cast off Israel forever in order to take "a better Israel" (as if the Gentiles were not as depraved as the Jews). However, this is not the case. Many of the old Baptists such as Henry D'Anvers, Benjamin Keach, John Gill, James Bicheno, Robert Robinson, C. H. Spurgeon, Obadiah Holmes, J. R. Graves, and Albert N. Arnold believed in the restoration of Judah and Israel. They taught many of the Jews, or all of them, would be saved at some future time. They did not teach that all Jews were reprobated forever and only elect Gentiles could be saved.

James Bicheno, pastor of the Baptist Church in the Hop Garden 1811-1819, wrote a book on THE RESTORATION OF THE JEWS containing over 100 pages. It bears the date 1800. On page 29 Elder Bicheno said:

"The Apostle Paul, also, in his Epistle to the Romans, chapter 11, contends for the future deliverance and conversion of the Jewish nation. That though God had rejected the Jews, and chosen the Gentiles to be His people, yet that this rejection was neither universal nor irreversible; but, though blindness had happened to the greater part of them, a blindness which was to continue till the fullness of the Gentiles was come in, (and which is not to be until the latter days) yet, then, 'all Israel shall be saved;' and in confirmation of this he refers to a prophecy in the Old Testament, which promises, 'There shall come out of Zion the deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is my covenant unto them when I shall take away their sins.'"

I take my stand with this old Particular Baptist who pastored a Baptist church which was organized in 1481, if not long before this time. Furthermore, I take my stand upon the infallible Word of God as recorded by the Apostle Paul, a man who organized the churches of the apostolic age. If men seek antiquity I believe they can find it in Paul and James Bicheno. For those who do not care to join this holy band, I suggest the company of the African, and the Catholic, St. Augustine (the father of amillennialism).



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A Pilgrimage

(Continued from page 241) ◊

interested in those of his household. Sweet the thought of all the family, without the loss of one, reunited in the Kingdom of the Unsetting Sun. No more gracious or blessed invitation could have come to this man who was a stranger to Israel's God. It was a great opportunity for service. What a mighty service he could have rendered the friends of God. Acquainted as he was with the trackless desert he would be, as Moses said, "eyes" for them.

It is true, they greatly needed him, yet he needed them even more. There are probably those here who could be of infinite service to the cause of Christ, but Christ can render infinitely greater service to them. We can serve, but Christ only can save that we may serve. Let us never imagine that God's Kingdom cannot get along without us. Heaven will be none the poorer for the lack of our presence.

The invitation, perchance, seemed a trifle to this man of the desert, yet perfection is made up of trifles and perfection is not a trifle. It is not the extraordinary thing that is needed, but the ordinary thing done in an extraordinary way. After all, every timely invitation is a challenge and every rightful challenge a command. An opportunity for Christ is an obligation to God. We may reject the invitation to service, but we cannot escape the penalty of rejecting the invitation. When Christ invited Matthew to come with Him he did not hesitate but immediately rose up and followed Him.

There are but two things to do with the invitations of Christ---accept them or reject them. It is true the invitation involved hardship; yet in the Kingdom of God and man, there is no excellence without sacrifice and suffering. To have the power we must pay the price; to wear the crown we must endure the Cross. I would not have you believe that the Christian life is one of ease and comfort. To the contrary, it is one of toil and tears. I invite you to self-sacrifice and self-immolation. I invite you to lose your life here that you may find it by and by. I invite you to a living death that you may have a deathless life. In spite of the hardships of the way, it is the only way that leads home. It is our duty to enlist in His service, at whatever cost. We must choose between the firing line and the fate of the traitor.

When Commodore Dewey's squadron was entering Manila Bay the commander of the ship that was leading the attack signaled, "Torpedoes ahead." From Dewey's flagship back flashed the reply, "Steam ahead." A moment more and the signal, "Torpedoes are exploding about us." Quick the answer, "Steam ahead."

In spite of screaming shell and bursting torpedo, they steamed ahead to glorious victory!

The journey would prove profitable to Hobab. In spite of appearances, it pays to be pious, and righteousness shall have its reward. God had promised good to Israel and he would share in the promised blessings. The reverse side of every invitation extended by Christ is a promise made by Christ. The question of accepting Christ is one of profit and loss, and what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Eternity with Satan, and without the Saviour! The soul which is lost is lost in spite of all that Christ could do to save that soul. Omnipotence exhausted itself in the act of Atonement. Hard by the railway there was a little cottage on the hillside. The little girl in the home would wave to the engineer as the train passed. On nearing the home the engineer would blow his whistle and quickly the child would appear, waving a passing welcome. One day he blew his whistle and gazed expectantly at the door of the humble home. Missing his little friend his eyes turned to the track, and not far ahead, in the center of the track, stood the little girl waving her tiny hands. As quick as thought, he reverses his engine, applies his brakes, and crawls along the boiler to the pilot. As the train moves slowly to the child he reaches out his hand and snatches her from the track. Overcome by the terrible strain, his heart ceases to beat and he falls dead from the pilot! At the cost of His own life Christ rescues a lost world from impending doom!

Like many a lost sinner, Hobab rejects the invitation to return to his own people. Happy the man who knows his friends and properly appreciates their advice. Not our best friends, yea, not even father or mother, or child, should be permitted to stand between the soul and its duty to God. Evermore it is true that unless we would be willing to forsake father and mother and houses and lands and take up our cross and follow Him, we are not worthy of Him. Shall we not say, "**Master, we have left all and followed Thee**"? Like Moses, will we not choose affliction with the people of God rather than the pleasures of sin for a season?

Fortunately, Hobab reversed his decision and walked in the path that led to the glory of God and the good of his own soul. He did accompany the children of Israel and land was set apart in Palestine for his people. There may be a perverse and wicked young man who has often rejected the Saviour who will one day preach the glorious Gospel of the Son of God. Let us not be discouraged, because some loved one has oft turned a deaf ear to the entreaties of the Gospel. They may yet turn their step towards Zion!

Paul, the persecutor, becomes the prince of preachers. Lips that now speak

despitefully of Him may one day sing His praises. The world-famed Gipsy Smith was converted while yet in a gypsy camp. He and his mother were stricken with smallpox. The mother grew steadily worse, while "Gipsy" continued to improve. The father, who was nursing both, left for a moment the bedside of his wife to visit the tent where a "gypsy boy lay." Standing by his bedside he said, "Gipsy, your mother is mighty sick and I don't know whether she knows about Jesus or not. Do you feel able to go and speak to her?" Hardly had he spoken the words when, from the nearby tent, came the words of the song, "My Lord calls and I must meet Him in the promised land." The father supporting the son, silently and slowly they made their way to the mother's tent. She lifted her eyes, fast closing upon the scenes of earth. A smile parted her lips, soon to be set in death. As they approached her bed she pointed her hand upward and fell asleep! She was dead! It was growing dark; night was at hand, but her soul had winged its way to the realms of endless day and everlasting light!

Oh, come with us and we will do thee good, for God has promised good to Israel. Come, before a numbness chills your soul and your doom forever sealed!

We are one and all rapidly approaching our journey's end. To many of us it is, perhaps, much nearer than we have believed. Is there one here who cannot truthfully sing---

*"One sweetly solemn thought,
Comes to me, o'er and o'er;
I am nearer my home today
Than I have been before."*

Certainly you are nearer death and judgment than ever before. The Christ of God and the Church of God alike bid you come. Come, for all things are ready. He died that you might live forever! A representative was elected from one of the districts in Georgia with the positive understanding he was to vote against General John B. Gordon for the senate. In an exciting election which soon followed in the Legislature he cast his vote for General Gordon. On his return home his constituency, much displeased, called a mass meeting and charged him with betraying his trust. After several had denounced him for casting his vote for General Gordon he was given a chance to defend himself. He frankly admitted that he had been elected with the express understanding he was to vote against the man he voted for. "I fully intended," he said, "to vote against General Gordon, but just before casting my vote I happened to look to my right and my eyes fell upon his kindly face. On that fact I noted a scar that he received in fighting our battle. Fellow citizens, when I gazed upon that scar and thought of the courageous and chivalrous record of that man, I could not vote against him."

◊ (Continued on page 247)

Remembering Why We Give Thanks

by Dr. Alex McFarland

America's founding fathers believed that individuals and nations should give thanks to their Creator. Public praises and petitions—specifically to the biblical God—have long been part of our culture. But in our lifetimes, that foundation has eroded. Many public schools today downplay the role of Christianity in early American history, going so far as to teach children that the Pilgrims' first Thanksgiving in 1621 was organized to express gratitude to the Indians.

Setting the Record Straight

The truth of the matter is that, after two months at sea, the Mayflower's 102 passengers arrived in Massachusetts in late November, 1620, and on Dec. 11 signed the Mayflower Compact, stating that their purpose was "the Glory of God, and the advancement of the Christian faith." Although a harsh winter took half of the Pilgrims' lives, the summer's farming efforts yielded a bountiful crop, due in part to assistance from friendly Indians.

On Dec. 13, 1621, the Pilgrims began a three-day feast to thank God and celebrate with the Indians. The words of Pilgrim Edward Winslow give insight into the meaning of the event: "Our harvest being gotten in, our Governor sent four men on fowling, so that we might, after a special manner, rejoice together. Many of the Indians came amongst us, and their greatest King, Massasoit, with some 90 men, who for three days we entertained and feasted. And although it be not always so plentiful as it was at this time with us, yet by the goodness of God, we are far from want."

God's gracious provision prompted other American leaders to call for days of Thanksgiving. Gov. William Bradford proclaimed Nov. 29, 1623, an official day of thanks. He wrote, "I do proclaim that all ye Pilgrims, with your wives and little ones, do gather at ye meeting house, there to listen to ye pastor and render thanksgiving to ye Almighty God for His blessings."

National days of Thanksgiving to God were declared and passed into law as the years went by. As Governor of Virginia, Thomas Jefferson pronounced Nov. 11, 1779, a day of "public and solemn Thanksgiving to Almighty God." In 1785, New Hampshire Gov. John Langdon set aside Nov. 24, to "testify our gratitude to the Author of all our Mercies, and to confess our manifold transgressions." Langdon's official decree also asked God to "bless our seminaries, and spread the Gospel over all the earth." Other states passed Thanksgiving decrees carrying similar sentiments.

With the unanimous approval of

Congress, George Washington proclaimed that a national day of Thanksgiving be observed on Thursday, Nov. 26, 1789. In his official declaration, the President wrote that America was to thank God for His many blessings, ask forgiveness for national and personal sins, and pray that God would "promote the knowledge and practice of the true religion." In 1863, Abraham Lincoln passed a Thanksgiving resolution that quoted Psalm 33:12 and stated, "It is announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations are blessed whose God is the Lord."

God and Country Today

As recently as 1954, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Earl Warren said, "I believe that no one can read the history of our country, without realizing that the Bible, and the Spirit of the Savior, has from the beginning, been our guiding genius." He then cited a number of supporting evidences, concluding, "The same objective is present, a Christian land, governed by Christian principles."

Shortly after Warren's statements, rulings by his Supreme Court would begin to erode Christianity's prominence in the United States. Fortunately, godly men such as Dr. D. James Kennedy, David Barton (wallbuilders.com), and the Rev. Peter Marshall have stood in the gap, speaking boldly about America's Christian heritage.

Dr. James Kennedy spoke, "The voyage of the Pilgrims was very simply this: It was a church relocation project," Kennedy once told his congregation. Plymouth Plantation was simply an extension of the church in Scrooby, England."

Historical revisionism? Is such a thing happening in this country? Dear friends, it has happened. And we are the victims of it.



A Pilgrimage

(Continued from page 246) ♦

In a moment indignation had turned to tears. The silence was broken by a one-armed veteran, who mounted the platform and moved a vote of thanks to their representative for casting his vote for General John B. Gordon for a seat in the United States Senate. The motion passed without a dissenting vote. Oh, if you could but see the scars of Him whose visage was marred more than the sons of men, you could not reject His claim upon your life and your all.

*"Five bleeding wounds He bears,
Received on Calvary."*

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."



What A Friend

(Continued from page 241) ♦

This foolishness has its root in an incurably wicked heart and its fruit in a dirty mouth: **"The heart of fools proclaimeth foolishness"** (Prov. 12:23). Proverbs 15:2 says: **"The mouth of fools poureth out foolishness."** From the lips of the unrenewed man comes foolish talking and jesting. Such corrupt communication comes from an evil treasure within to debauch, degrade, and disturb the hearers.

The totality of his power of moral reasoning and spiritual perception is perverted: **"The foolishness of man perverteth his way; and his heart fretteth against the Lord"** (Prov. 19:3). This causes a man to make himself miserable by gathering grapes of thorns and figs of thistles (Matt. 7:16).

The Adamic man may be **"likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand"** (Matt. 7:26). His whole life is spent **"in foolishness and madness"** (Eccl. 7:25). Separated from the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, the preaching of the cross is unto him foolishness (I Cor. 1:18). Such a man is like unto one of the fools whom God despises. Such a manner of life would have brought our ruin unless we were visited by Divine grace.

In our unconverted state **"we ourselves also were some time foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another"** (Tit. 3:3). Even after we are saved there remains much foolishness in the old nature. Those who know God in their Christian experience must at times confess unto the Lord: **"I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O Lord, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly"** (II Sam. 24:10).

A BLIND IDIOT

Second, the unsaved man is "ignorant." This means he is a babbling idiot from the spiritual stand point. This Apostle Paul gives the same description of fallen man: **"Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart"** (Eph. 4:18). Every unregenerate man is an ignorant man. He has no knowledge of the true God and of many things concerning God, for he is alienated from the life of God. This ignorance comes from their hardness of heart, their resisting the light, and rejecting all means of illumination and knowledge.

The unrenewed man is ignorant of the ruin of continuing in sin. He follows the lusts of his flesh without any consideration of the judgment of God (I Pet. 1:14). The whole manner of his life is to accommodate and gratify his

unlawful desires and vicious appetites. He knows nothing of God and His gospel. He is totally **"ignorant of God's righteousness"** (Rom. 10:3).

A BRUTE BEAST

Third, the impenitent man is **"a beast"** before the holy eyes of God. The sinner is brutish and worse than a beast. He looks upon outward appearances and fleshly enjoyments in this mortal life. Like a sow who eats acorns under an oak tree, he never looks up to see from Whom his blessings flow. Man by nature is a wicked sinner, a monstrous and astonishing beast like behemoth. What a description of fallen human nature! Beasts mind present things only, and they never look at what is to come---even so of man!

If a man would be honest before God, he would say: **"Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man"** (Prov. 30:2). The Bible tells us in Job 11:12 that vain man is born **"like a wild ass's colt."** This reveals that the unsaved man is as wild and wicked as an untamed animal.

THE COMPANIONSHIP OF GOD

From this awful state Asaph was brought into a state of friendship and fellowship with God. He wrote: **"I am continually with thee"** (v. 23). Like a child under the care of his parents, Asaph was under the care of the Almighty. He has exchanged his folly for faith and fellowship with God. His sins were gone, and he was no longer separated from God.

The psalmist does not say that the Lord is continually with His people. He says that God is continually with him. He says that God is continually with me; He guides me, He holds me; and He will receive me after my life is spent on earth. Verily the elect are upon the heart of Christ, in His hands, and under His wings of protection and care. God will never suffer us to finally and totally depart from Him. He will never eternally banish the believer from His presence.

But verse 23 may be understood to say that the psalmist was continually with God. He may have meant that he ever abided in God's sweet fellowship. Foolish as he was and prone to backslide, Asaph could say, **"I am still with the Lord. I am still in union with Him."** Though chastened sorely and perplexed by strange providence, he could declare that God still was holding his right hand. With Paul he could say: **"Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day"** (Acts 26:22). I am still permitted in His gracious presence. I am allowed to hope in His mercy, though I be at times unkind and ungrateful. Heaven be praised! The unworthiness of man is no bar to the free grace of God!

A RECEPTION TO GLORY

The Lord is our great and glorious guide on earth: **"Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel"** (Ps. 73:24). Being ignorant

♦ (Continued on page 248)

A Blessed, But Not A Chosen Nation

By Dr. Gary Scott Smith

In November 1620, 102 English Pilgrims arrived at Cape Cod after an arduous 66-day voyage across the Atlantic. The first winter, half of their company died. Nevertheless, after the residents of Plymouth gathered their first harvest the next November, Governor William Bradford invited Chief Massasoit and other Wampanoag Indians to join them for a feast that lasted three days. Describing the first Thanksgiving in "A Journal of the Pilgrims at Plymouth" in 1621, Edward Winslow thanked the "goodness of God" for the venison, wild fowl, and other food they enjoyed.

In 1777, during another trying time in American history, the Continental Congress issued the first official Thanksgiving Proclamation. Twelve years later George Washington proclaimed a national Thanksgiving to give gratitude to God for the newly ratified Constitution. The first president urged Americans to render unto "that great and glorious Being, who is the beneficent Author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be" "our sincere and humble thanks—for his kind care and protection of the People of this Country... for the signal and manifold mercies, and the favorable interpositions of his Providence," evident in the nation's "tranquility, union, and plenty."

This belief that God has specially blessed America has been widespread in our history. Many Americans have insisted that this country has a unique calling from God. This theme is evident in the nation's sacred ceremonies, quasi-sacred scriptures, and presidents' inaugural addresses. Strongly identifying with ancient Israel, many Americans have concluded that God chose us to play a principal role in bringing his kingdom on earth.

The Puritans contended that they had a "divinely appointed errand in the wilderness." John Winthrop, the first governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony, whose residents came ten years after the Pilgrims, declared in his 1630 sermon, "A Model of Christian Charity," "For we must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill, the eyes of all people upon us." Jonathan Edwards, America's greatest theologian, expected a "great work of God" to soon begin in America. His grandson Timothy Dwight, an early president of Yale, claimed that the new nation was "by Heaven designed, the example bright to renovate mankind."

Numerous presidents have argued that God selected the United States to perform a special mission: to spread democracy, liberty, and biblical morality to the world. They asserted that its seemingly miraculous birth; rapid spread

across the continent; remarkable increase in population, industry, affluence, and might; successful assimilation of millions of people of diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds; modeling of republican government; and pivotal role in deciding the outcome of international wars all testified to God's choice, use, and blessing of America.

Washington announced in his first inaugural address that "the destiny of the republican model of government" depended on America's success. Thomas Jefferson labeled the American experiment "the last best hope of mankind," and Abraham Lincoln called the Union "the last best hope of earth." "Upon the success of our experiment," alleged Theodore Roosevelt, "much depends ... as regards the welfare of mankind." "Our nation is chosen by God and commissioned by history," declared George W. Bush, "to be a model to the world of justice."

The United States' success and support has encouraged people in countries around the globe to throw off the shackles of despotism and embrace democracy. As Dwight Eisenhower put it, "The American experiment has, for generations, fired the passion and the courage of millions elsewhere seeking freedom, equality, [and] opportunity."

Although the conviction that God has selected the United States for a special mission in the world has contributed to some good results, it is biblically suspect. The Bible provides no basis for believing that any nation enjoys a unique relationship with God, as Israel did in Old Testament times. This year we should thank God for the many blessings our nation has enjoyed. Our geographical location, rich resources, fertile soil, unique blend of peoples, numerous liberties, and outstanding leaders have indeed been great blessings.

At the same time, we must reject the idea that we are God's chosen people, a conviction that has helped motivate and vindicate America's actions at home and abroad. Belief that God has assigned the United States a mission has helped inspire Americans to engage in countless acts of self-sacrifice, generosity, and charity. However, it has also contributed to imperialism, concepts of racial superiority, cultural insensitivity, and unwarranted interference in the affairs of other nations. It has stimulated Americans to fight injustice at home and abroad, but it has also contributed to simplistic moralizing, overlooking of our national flaws, ignoring moral complexities, and a hatred abroad of American hubris.

Therefore, we give gratitude to God for His bounty and let us remember Christ's statement, "to whom much is given, much is expected."



What A Friend

(Continued from page 247) ♦

in so many ways man sorely needs such a guide: "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23). Even the renewed man is still in great ignorance of the steps he should take in this maze of mental reasoning. For this reason God guides His own with the counsel of His Word and Spirit. More than all is the truth that God guides us with His determinate counsel and purpose, which are from of old faithfulness and truth.

Those who live in this world sail a raging sea of doubt and uncertainty. Without a chart or compass, we will sink into the blackness of darkness for ever. We live in a foreign land which has many pits and snares. Without a good guide we are sure to fall into sin and be caught in Satan's traps. Jesus Christ is our omniscient Guide: "For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death" (Ps. 48:14). Can we find a better one? No, never! There is no guide to be compared with an infallible God.

In this vale of tears we only become wise when we reach the end of our earthly wisdom. It is spiritually wise to place ourselves unreservedly in God's hands. "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he will direct thy paths" (Prov. 3:5-6).

When our trials and labors are ended, after our crosses and afflictions, after our doubts and fears, after the hiding of His face, Christ will receive us up to glory. The psalmist said: "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." Oh, blessed "afterward" when clouds and darkness are passed. After our battles and fightings terminate how seasonably will be our reception in the glory world. In this evil world we are guided by Divine counsel, and in death we are received into the Divine presence in the glory world. Let us never fret with our present state in this temporal region, for it is small in comparison with the world of His glorious presence. Like ENOCH, at death the saint is received to glory.

Some day a person may walk up to you and say, "Milburn Cockrell is dead." If you ever hear such, don't believe a word of it. It will at best be only a half truth. It may be true of my body, but it shall never be true of my spirit. I will not have died, but I will have moved higher up. My spirit will be received by Jesus Christ in the highest Heaven above.

I will not cross Jordan alone, for Jesus died for my sins to atone. He will be at my side when I cross the valley of the shadow of death. Good angels will come to bear me away to my immortal home. When Lazarus died he "was carried

by the angels into Abraham's bosom" (Luke 16:22). Death will separate me from friends here, but it will unite with better friends over there. Paul told the Corinthians: "Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. . . . We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord" (II Cor. 5:6, 8).

AN INCOMPARABLE GOD

Whether in life or in death, there is none to be compared with our God: "Whom have I in heaven but thee." The saint looks more to God than at the things which are God's. He does not so much regard the land as the God Who is there. What are the multitudes of departed saints in the celestial city if Christ is not among them? Of what worth are myriads of the angels in Heaven without the Lord of angels? What are all the diadems of Heavens without the God of Heaven? What is the value of a fifteen-hundred-mile-square city of gold, garnished with precious gems, if the Lamb is not the light of it? Where is glory and joy without the God of glory? Heaven is not Heaven without God's presence. To remove God from the glory world is to make it Hell.

Years ago Elder Samuel Stennett penned these well-chosen words: "Majestic sweetness sits enthroned. . . Upon the Saviour's brow. . . His head with radiant glories crowned. . . His lips with grace o'erflow. . . No mortal can with him compare. . . Among the sons of men. . . Fairer is He than all the fair. . . Who fill the heavenly train."

On earth there is none as desirable as the Lord of glory: "There is none upon earth that I desire besides thee" (Ps. 73:25). He is saying there is no person, nor power, nor pleasure, nor possession in comparison and competition with my Redeemer on earth. The world may carry away the desires of some men, but the world does not allure the true believer. His Saviour is worth more to Him than all the houses, health, and honor so much envied by the worldling. He has no wish to ramble. No other object claims his attention or tempts him to stray. Christ is his all in all.

What do I care for the world and the social whirl? What are all of its pleasures and pomp, its power and promises, unless Christ is in it? What do I care for the daintiest food, the sweetest drinks, and the happiest company, unless Christ is there? I esteem His glorious presence more than the gold of Ophir, His grace greater than the grapes of Eschol, and His pleasant words more than my necessary food! He is not only superior to all on earth, but He is more excellent than all in Heaven. "Thou, O Christ, art all I want. . . . More than all in Thee I find." No one can satisfy the longing of my soul as He can by His grace and power.

♦ (Continued on page 249)

Mini-Edition by Joseph Harris

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A Thermostat or A Thermometer?

In almost every modern home, there is a little box on some wall called a thermostat. It controls the climate in the house. Also contained in the box is a thermometer, which measures the temperature inside the house. The thermostat responds to the temperature of the thermometer, based on its setting. One measures, one makes a difference.

As a Christian, are you a thermostat or a thermometer? A lot of Christians are nothing more than a thermometer. They take on the temperature of their environment. At church, they are holy, kind, patient and considerate. Away from the church crowd, they are rude, crude, impatient and act like their worldly environment. They do nothing more than reflect and emulate their environment.

Thermostat Christians make a change in the temperature of their environment. When backbiting begins, they refrain and instead use edifying words. When confronted in anger, they answer softly and not in wrath for **"The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God,"** according to Brother James. They are not affected by the cold or the heat. They walk to the beat of the Holy Spirit, since they are filled with Him and they *make* a difference in their environment.

When Peter stood by the fire warming himself, as Jesus was being tried illegally, he took on the climate of the world. When confronted with his identity and association with Jesus, he lied, then swore. Peter reflected the temperature of the world. He was a thermometer.

When Demas forsook Paul and loved this present world, he was a thermometer and of no use to Paul or God.

The Macedonian believers, however, became a thermostat and made a difference and along with Paul, became **"ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia"** (I Thess. 1:7) and they also became a thermometer as they took on the climate of Paul and God, **"And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord..."** (I Thess. 1:6).

Three well known thermostats in the Bible were the Hebrews in Daniel who would not bow to the king. When everyone else was doing it, they absolutely refused to bow to a man made image. They were so locked in to God that they vowed to not bow whether, God preserved them or not. The issue for them was not deliverance, but integrity.

Oh God give us some thermostat

Christians who will stop reflecting the temperature of this world and its filth, and who are more concerned about pleasing the Holy God of the universe, as they set the temperature of Godliness in their family, church, work place and community.



What A Friend

(Continued from page 248) ♦

AN EVERLASTING PORTION

Our outward man will fail by disease, duration, and death: **"My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever"** (Ps. 73:26). With old age in the body there usually comes a failing of conduct, courage, and comfort. One day life's sun will set, and some day the Christian race will end. The power of our natural body will be spent and our mind will be exhausted. But the love of God will survive. Even on our death bed we fill find strength and joy in Him. Verily in that hour I shall discover God is **"the strength of my heart."**

Instead of **"the strength of my heart"** some read it that God is "the rock of my heart" from the Hebrew text. This may be the true rendering. This would mean that God is a sure, strong, and immovable foundation. Though the winds blow when the storm of death comes, the house of my heart will not fail. It is built upon a solid and sure foundation. God is the rock of my heart. In death I will leave creature comforts and face the sharpest conflict with Hell, but I will stand in the whole armor of God and in the strength of the Lord at that hour.

Many people have their portion in this life. It was an ancient custom of the Jews to divide the inheritance so as to give every one his allotted portion. The righteous have a portion in this world: **"The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance"** (Ps. 16:5). The Author of all portions is the matter of my portion. My portion is not in money and materials, but my portion is in Him Whom the Heaven of heavens cannot contain.

Whether in life or in death God is my portion: **"For whether we live, we live unto the Lord: and whether we die,**

we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's" (Rom. 14:8). Throughout all eternity God is to be my immense and inconceivable portion: **"God is... my portion for ever."** He is not my portion for a year, or an age, or a millennium, but for all eternity.

Death shall not rend my portion asunder. It will merely carry me near its full realization. My inheritance is without diminution and without alternation. So many bonds are dissolved by death and so many knots loosed, but mortal death will only give me a perfect and everlasting possession of my inheritance. Aunt Fanny Crosby put it thusly: "Thou, my everlasting portion... More than friend or life to me... All along my pilgrim journey... Saviour, let me walk with thee."

A WORD TO SINNERS

Sinner friend, your portion is in this

life, and Satan and Hell is your ever lasting portion to come. If the Lord is to be your portion in the next world, you must be brought to the saving knowledge of Him in this world. Your desire must be toward Him and your delight must be Christ-centered. You must court and covet acquaintance with Him.

May the Spirit of God speak to your heart in conviction and conversion. May the God of all grace enable you to say with Paul: **"Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ"** (Phil. 3:8).



The Deity of the Lord

By Matthew Stepp
of Wayne, West Virginia

The doctrine of the Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ proclaims the fact that Jesus IS God. He is just as sovereign, omnipotent and immutable as God the Father and God the Holy Spirit are. The study is a very rewarding one. As are any of the attributes of God, it gets deep very quickly, but at the same time, even a child can comprehend this doctrine. Just tell a young child that Jesus is God and he will consider for a few seconds and then nod his head! Why?! Because the Bible and its stories clearly portray Him that way! He rules the winds and the waves! He saves lost souls! He lives eternally and is coming back to take us to be with Him forevermore in Glory!

All to the well. But if it's so clear, then why does one need to write an article on this doctrine of the Deity of Jesus of Nazareth? Because, like many other key cornerstones to biblical, Baptist doctrine, it has come under attack. The attacks are coming both from outright, frontal attacks, such as cults, Unitarians and liberal theologians that would deny the Trinity and the One God manifested in three Persons, and also more subtly in the general ecumenical movement that makes all the gods of the world equal to Jehovah Elohim the Creator and Self-existent One. **"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me"** (Isa. 46:9). How foolish for any to try to take God's glory from Him!

There are many witnesses to the Deity of our Saviour, but due to constraints in space, we will limit ourselves to but six. **I. CHRIST MADE HIMSELF AS AN EQUAL WITHIN THE GODHEAD**

Let's begin at a familiar starting point. **"In the beginning was the Word, and**



the Word was with God, and the Word WAS God. The same was in the beginning with God" (John 1:1-2 emphasis tms). This is a wondrous text verse for proving that Christ Jesus,

the prophet from Nazareth, is verily God. In verse 14, the writer John reveals the identity of **"the Word."** **"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."** So, the Word that was with God and was God, in time was made flesh very gloriously!

As we raise up our eyes from this awesome passage in the English King James Version to lean back and contemplate, there can be no doubt whatsoever, that Jesus is God manifest in the flesh for the purpose of fulfilling the Covenant of Redemption to glorify God and save the souls of the elect of eternity past. As already stated, it would be obvious to a child!

But what if the translators took God's Word mischievously and translated the above passage to read: "and the Word was a God." That changes everything, doesn't it? That puts a distinction between Jesus Christ and God the Father, which is unsupported in Scripture. What if a group of translators very craftily went through the entire Bible and changed just a word here and there, so as to have text verses that would seem to proclaim that Jesus was merely the first created being of God and thereby no more divine than Satan or any of the angelic host?

♦ (Continued on page 250)

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. What is your most favorite passage of scripture and why? - Mississippi

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Favorite verses tend to vary from time to time depending on anyone's stage of Christian maturity and the particular circumstances. I suppose my favorite verse would have to be Isaiah 40:31: **"But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."**

This verse, however, has always been a source of encouragement in times of fatigue and discouragement. This quote has been attributed to Whitfield but I have seen it from others as well. "Lord, I am not weary of your work but I am weary *in* your work." It is in times like that when Isaiah 40:31 is like the wind beneath my wings.

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I would have to say Ephesians 2:8-10 is my favorite passage of Scripture. **"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. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."**

Before the Lord saved me at the age of 21 I was an American heathen who had never heard the true Gospel of Jesus Christ. I didn't know any Bible at all. No one had ever witnessed to me until Bro. Greg Rittenhouse came to work for my Dad at our meat market in Cincinnati, Ohio. Bro. Greg began to share the Gospel and deal plainly with me about righteousness, sin, and judgment to come. The Lord convicted me and drew me to Himself after 6 months of conviction marked by fear and trembling. In November of 1980 a work of grace was done in my heart. The first verses I ever remember memorizing and

sharing with others were Ephesians 2:8-10. I knew first hand by experience that salvation was all of grace. I knew the gift of faith had to be given by God because I did not naturally possess saving faith. I knew then and understand now that I had no good works that could merit God's favor. I had been saved by free and sovereign grace, gifted with saving faith in the finished work of Christ alone, with no merit of my own to boast upon. I was God's workmanship, created anew in Jesus Christ to glorify Him with my life. From then until now my desire has been to walk in good works of obedience to the One who loved me and gave Himself for me. I owe the Lord every fiber of my being. How thankful I am that I know for sure that I am going to Heaven based solely on the merits of Christ's sacrifice for me and His righteousness that was imputed to me the moment He gave me grace to believe the Gospel. Praise God for His free and sovereign grace bestowed upon unworthy sinners!!

TOM ROSS



The Deity of the

(Continued from page 249) ◊

Actually, you don't have to imagine that, the Jehovah's Witnesses (so-called) have done exactly that! To prove a man-made doctrine, they have changed the Word of God! Very perilous, in light of God's condemnation of any who would add or detract from His Holy Script (Rev. 22:18-19).

But what I want to prove, if nothing else, from this article sermon is that the JW's have attempted the impossible. Sure, they can change a few words here and there in the Bible, but you can still prove the Deity of Christ in their perverted bible! Because the Divinity of Jesus Christ of Nazareth is not just shown in words, but in the very actions recorded in the Holy Writ. Entire events would have to be deleted to take away His equality within the Godhead. We'll get to those in a bit...

"Giving thanks unto the Father... . Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature" (Col. 1:12-15 emphasis tms). This passage claims that the Son "... is the image of the invisible God." The Greek word for image here is "ei-kon", or basically our English word "icon." How

fascinating! You know how icon is used on our computers today? It's an image or picture on our screen, say for MicroSoft Word, or my youngest son's Tonka Truck Game. All he has to do is click on the icon and the whole program comes to life and is manifest unto us! That's virtually what this passage is saying about God the Son. God is invisible. You can't tell that the entire computer program is in there, unless you see the icon and double-click on it! Likewise, God is made evident through the words and actions of God the Word, the Son of God who was manifest in the flesh for us to see, touch, study and behold. When we get to Glory and see God, do you really know what you'll see? You'll see Christ Jesus our Lord and God!

A very important point in our study, is that Jesus Christ is co-equal to God the Father. Yes, we believe in the Trinity. We believe that the three members of the Trinity are all completely God, but that they are also completely separate in their manifestation of their own specific Person. In other words, God the Father did not die on Calvary. Neither did God the Holy Spirit! God the Son suffered the death and God the Son garnered the glory for the perfect Triune Godhead. Fully God, yet wholly and solely personages with distinctive purposes and identities, perfectly attuned to the sole will of a single Almighty God.

Notice the phrasing of Jesus' answer to Satan in the final of three temptations of His own Person: **"And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God"** (Luke 4:12). Precisely as Philippians 2:6 states: **"Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God."** Our Saviour accuses Satan of tempting God, when he tempted the person of Christ! And this is true! The JW's will have to change this entire temptation answer to comply with their avowed heres! When the Apostle Paul refers to our holy walk and to refrain from tempting God, notice his quote: **"Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents"** (I Cor. 10:9). Now go back and read the same instance referenced in Paul's quote in Psalms 106:14: **"But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert."** The inescapable conclusion is that when one tempts God, they tempt Christ Jesus, the Son of God. And when Satan tempts Christ, he is tempting God Almighty. There is equality within the Godhead!

How much more clearly can the Word state it? I'm glad you asked! **"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory"** (I Tim. 3:16). Jesus was manifest in fleshly form;

justified countless times by spiritual evidences, not the least of which was His resurrection; seen of God's messengers; had His death, burial and resurrection proclaimed unto the Gentiles, saved souls by grace through faith and was taken in great glory up to Heaven. Who was? God was! Jesus was!

Conversations within the Godhead

I find it very interesting when the Bible gives us some insight into what I call *"Conversations within the Godhead."* Where God reveals His mind to us, through intimate revelations of the thought processes (if you can call them that!) that propagate the decrees of the Sovereign of the Universe. **"The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool"** (Ps. 110:1). Distinct harmonious cooperation between the Persons of the Godhead. Just like in Genesis 1:26: **"And God said, Let US make man in OUR image, after OUR likeness... (emphasis tms)"** and also Hebrews 1:8-10: **"But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands."**

Even more clearly can we see the rapport between God the Father and God the Son as the Loving Father speaks of His pleasure in His Son's actions and words several times in the gospels (see Luke 3:22; 9:35; 20:13). And none can deny the perfection of the unity of the Godhead in Gethsemane---**"And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt"** (Matt. 26:39).

Any further research only heaps up the evidence so clearly stated in Matthew 1:23: **"Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."**

II. CHRIST MADE HIMSELF AS ONE WITH THE FATHER

Perhaps this second point is just an extension of the first. Whereas I tried to emphasize the Trinity of the Godhead, in that all three Personages are separate and distinct, the TriUNITY of the Godhead must also be clarified briefly here if the Deity of our Saviour is to be comprehended. It's imperative nature is confirmed by our Lord in Mark 12:29-30: **"And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is ONE Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy**

◊ (Continued on page 251)

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. What is your least favorite passage of scripture and why? - Mississippi

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track of. I often find myself skimming through these passages. **"Every word of God is pure..."** (Prov. 30:5) so I know there is great value to be found even in the begats of the Bible.

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I'm not going to try to answer this question.

RAY BENNETT



(John 17:10). **"If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works"** (John 14:7-10). Those that would deny the Deity of Jesus of Nazareth would do well to use Jehudi's penknife of old and remove the entire Gospel of John! (Jer.36:23).

One other task of those deniers would be to erase the greeting of each of the Apostle Paul's letters below. By the very wording of these greetings, the apostle makes the Father and Son as one! **"Grace be to you and peace from God, the Father, and (from) our Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God AND our Father"** (Gal. 1:3-4 italic emphasis tms). The greeting comes from God. Manifest as both Father and Lord Jesus Christ! And verse four says that Christ gave Himself for our sins according to the will of God (Himself!) and our Father! "And" is a conjunction here, coupling two individuals! God the Son and God the Father! And so go all of the below greeting references in Bro. Paul's writings---

(Paul's greetings in the Name of God the Son: I Tim. 1:1; Tit.1:3-4; Rom. 1:7;

I Cor.1:3; II Cor.1:2; Gal. 1:1-2; Eph. 1:2; Php. 1:2; Col. 1:2; I Thess. 1:1; II Thess. 1:1-2; II Tim.1:2; Phil. 1:3).

III. CHRIST RECEIVED WORSHIP AS GOD ALONE CAN DO

Now we get past the powerful words of witnesses of Scripture, to the even more potent actions of our meek and humble Saviour as He walked among the men of this world. It was easy for both the common folk and the rulers to notice an air of authority about this unusual person. Obviously a prophet of great magnitude as was unilaterally acceded to His credit. **"And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee"** (Matt. 21:10-11).

The world as a whole, also will acknowledge that a great prophet changed the entire flow of history by His singular actions and revolutionary words of peace and love. Christianity is the fruit of His labors and has circled the globe with His blessings and the Light of the Gospel. But is that all He was? Another in a long line of Jewish prophets? The Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, etc., of the world will with eagerness assent. But contrary to any modern cults of Mormonism or Russellism, the Christian must say NO! The very actions of Jesus declare assuredly that He is GOD!

In the second temptation of Christ, He answers Satan's request of worship with a very interesting statement. **"And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve"** (Luke 4:8). This is a quote derived from the statements of a jealous God in Exodus and Deuteronomy, in particular. A combination of the first two of the Ten Commandments. No other gods, and no other worship! Therefore Jesus was forbidden by Scripture to worship Satan, as are we! But let's follow this thought for a few moments. If only God could be worshipped, that means none of His prophets could be worshipped, right? Look at the response to an attempt of the Lycaonians to worship and sacrifice to the God-called Prophets of Truth in Acts 14:14-15: **"Which when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein."**

What were the apostles here saying? "Thou shalt worship the Lord, the God, and Him only shalt thou make sacrifices unto!"

Well, yeah, one shouldn't worship mere men, but Christ is something more than that, right? Well, let's move up to created,

angelic spirit beings. What happens if you worship them? John found out when he fell down before a mighty angel in Heaven in Revelation 19:10: **"And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: WORSHIP GOD: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy"** (emphasis tms). Just imagine how powerful and awe-inspiring these created spirits are, as John is again overwhelmed just three chapters later and is swept away with a desire to worship the angels of the Lord. But notice again the admonition exhorted: **"And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: WORSHIP GOD"** (Rev. 22:8-9 again, emphasis tms).

I think you will agree that Scripture emphatically warns against worship of anyone or anything outside of God, Himself. No priest, no pope, no parent, no prophet! Well said, one has to agree, if reading according to Scripture...

Okay, now look at Matthew 28:17-18: **"And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."** Look what the eleven and the disciples did to Christ Jesus, the prophet of Galilee! They worshipped Him! And Jesus did not rebuke them, but accepted it and continued with the statement that, yes indeed, He does have all authority! **"And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God"** (John 20:28). Thomas here attributes Godly worship to the Person of the Son of God. Many instances throughout the gospels continue this course of action, from His childhood until His ascension. **"And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him..."** (Matt. 2:11). **"And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean"** (Matt. 8:2). **"Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God"** (Matt. 14:33). **"Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me"** (Matt. 15:25). **"And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him"** (Matt. 28:9).

The inescapable conclusion is that Jesus Christ is God, known simply by the fact that He alone is worshipped. In Acts 10:25-26: **"And as Peter was**

◊ (Continued on page 253)

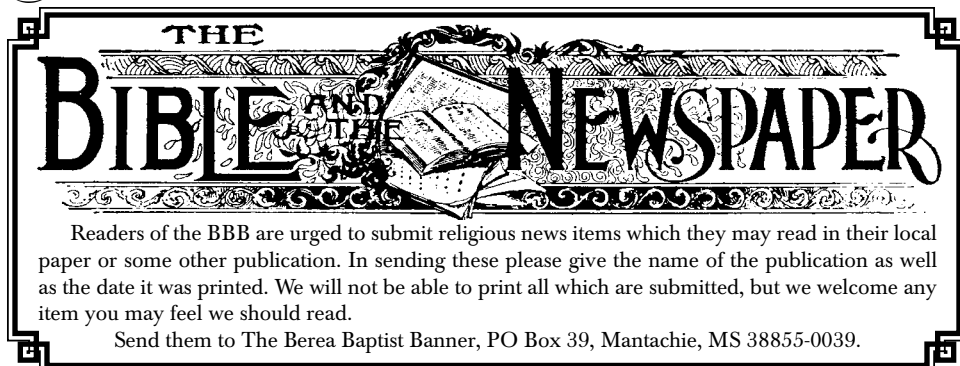
The Deity of the

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God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment" (emphasis tms). If you worship God, you are worshipping Christ Jesus. If you're looking for Jesus to come back, you're looking for God to appear in the clouds! **"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ"** (Titus 2:13).

The writings of the Apostle John in particular seem devoted to proving the Deity of John's Master. Note I John 5:20: **"And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life."** Jesus of Nazareth was clearly the God that John worshipped! The true God! He even puts together the Trinity in perhaps the clearest passage of Scripture in I John 5:7: **"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."** These three are one? YES! God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost!

If that's the words of the Apostle John, what of the words of our Lord, Himself? **"I and my Father are one."** (John 10:30). **"..ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him"** (John 10:38). **"And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me"** (John 12:45). **"And all mine are thine, and thine are mine..."**



PHILADELPHIA THREATENS TO BOOT THE BOY SCOUTS

(EP News)--The Boy Scouts of Philadelphia are facing the loss of their headquarters because the group encourages members to be morally straight. According The Washington Post, the city solicitor set a Dec. 3 deadline for the Scouts to either hire homosexual employees or lose the building the group has rented from the city for \$1 a year since 1928. The city tentatively set the market value of the building at \$200,000 a year. City officials have suggested the Scouts could remain in the building — if they pay the full rent. Jeff Jubelirer, a spokesman for the Philadelphia chapter, said his organization has not received any complaints claiming discrimination. He added that the Boy Scouts of America stands firm on its policy.

SEN. SALAZAR SUPPORTS TAKING BIBLES TO OLYMPICS IN CHINA

(EP News)--Sen. Ken Salazar, D-Colo., said Americans traveling to the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing next year should defy the Chinese government's rule that prohibits any traveler from taking more than one Bible into the country. Cybercast News Service asked Salazar whether Americans traveling to China should defy this rule. "I think so," he said. "It's a trampling on a freedom that we cherish in this country that's a universal freedom. I don't think that kind of constriction on something that is such an international global celebration is something that ought to be tolerated." The official Chinese policy prohibits anyone from bringing into the country "manuscripts, printed matter, films, photographs, gramophone records, cinematographic films, loaded recording tapes and videotapes, etc., which are detrimental to China's politics, economy, culture and ethics."

PENNSYLVANIA COURT STRIKES DOWN "HATE-CRIMES" LAW

(EP News)--Pennsylvania's Commonwealth Court on Nov. 15 struck down the state's expanded "hate-crimes" law as unconstitutional. A challenge to the law had been brought by a group that was charged with hate crimes after speaking out at a homosexual event in Philadelphia. Randall Wenger, chief counsel for the Pennsylvania Family Institute's Independence Law Center, said the law "was used in an attempt to punish people for their traditional views and to violate their right to free speech." The U.S. House and Senate have passed "hate-crimes" legislation. President Bush has pledged a

veto.

BOY SCOUT DRIVE TO SUPPORT TROOPS CALLED TOO POLITICAL

(EP News)--Troop 45 in Cambridge, Mass., just wanted to help the troops. So the Boy Scouts placed donation boxes at the city's 33 polling stations on Election Day to collect toiletries, magazines and other items for care packages. But city officials ordered the boxes to be removed after receiving just one complaint about it being a "political statement." "I told (the city) it had nothing to do with any political party or politician," Troop 45 committee chairman Jamisean Patterson told the Boston Herald. "It was just kids trying to do something nice for soldiers away from home."

CHILDREN ARE SAFER WHEN LIVING WITH BIOLOGICAL PARENTS

(EP News)--Child abuse in America is at a high, and experts warn the perpetrators tend to fit into one category. Reports show children living in households with unrelated adults -- usually their mom and her boyfriend -- are more likely to be sexually abused, and 50 times more likely to die of injuries, than children living with their biological parents.

"The demographers estimate that a child who's born out of wedlock will have something like five or six different father figures and co-residents in their household or in their mother's life before the age of 16," said Robin Wilson, a professor at Washington and Lee University professor. She said the boyfriend may see the child as a threat.

University of Virginia Professor Brad Wilcox said men often step into father-like shoes they are not ready to fill. "It's a very simple idea; it's an idea that's quite old," he said, "but we have to be attentive to the kinds of adults that we're putting in contact with our children."

FEDERAL JUDGE DISMISSES CHALLENGE TO HIGHWAY MEMORIAL CROSSES

(EP News)--A federal district court in Utah tossed out a challenge to roadside crosses that honor state troopers who died in the line of duty. The crosses had been challenged by the American Atheists, which claimed they represented a government endorsement of religion. The crosses were placed by the Utah Highway Patrol Association (UHPA), which did not use any public funds for the memorials. In his decision, Judge David Sam said a cross can bear multiple meanings

depending on where it is placed. "While the cross retains its religious meaning when placed in religious contexts, it has transformed into a representation of death and burial when placed in pop culture settings and when used as a memorial," he wrote. "The court finds a reasonable observer, aware of the history and context of the community, would not view memorial crosses as a government endorsement of religion."

COLORADO SUPREME COURT APPROVES PRO-LIFE BALLOT LANGUAGE

(EP News)--The Colorado Supreme Court has affirmed ballot language a group wants to place on the 2008 ballot that, if approved by voters, would say "personhood" begins at the moment of conception. The possible statewide constitutional amendment would define a human being and the beginning of life as starting at fertilization in three various parts of the state's constitution. Its backers hope that would challenge Roe v. Wade and ultimately result in full legal protection for unborn children from that point forward and the effect of banning all abortions in the state. After weeks of review, the Colorado Supreme Court this week released a decision granting Colorado for Equal Rights permission to move forward. The pro-life group will now begin gathering the 76,000 signatures required to put this issue on the November 2008 ballot.

WASHINGTON STATE PHARMACISTS WON'T HAVE TO DISPENSE PLAN B

(EP News)--Pro-life pharmacists in Washington state are getting a temporary reprieve after a federal judge suspended a state law that forced them to dispense drugs they objected to on moral grounds. The injunction stems from a lawsuit filed by two pharmacists and a drugstore owner, who accused the state of violating their religious rights. The injunction allows pharmacists to refuse to sell the "morning-after" pill on moral grounds, as long as they refer the customer to a nearby pharmacy. The drug may sometimes cause an early abortion. "In order to grant the injunction, the court had to make a finding that we will likely win at trial on the First Amendment ground," said Kristen Waggoner, who represented the pharmacists. "So that's a huge win, but it is just a beginning." The ruling said the law had put an undue burden on the pharmacists' free exercise of religion. The case goes to trial in October 2008.

POLL: FLORIDIANS SUPPORT TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE

(EP News)--The Republican presidential candidates gathered in Florida to answer questions submitted through YouTube, a popular video-sharing Web site. Likely GOP voters in Florida made their opinions known in a CNN poll released Nov. 27, designed to correspond with the CNN/YouTube debate. Nearly 80 percent of them support traditional marriage, between one man and one woman.

And 63 percent said abortion should be illegal or legal in just a few circumstances. The poll is similar to surveys done in other states, more than 35 of which have passed Defense of Marriage Amendments affirming a traditional definition of marriage.

MICH. GOVERNOR ADDS SPECIAL RIGHTS FOR 'TRANSGENDERED' STATE WORKERS

(EP News)--Michigan Gov. Jennifer Granholm has issued an order that grants special protection for state workers based on their "gender identity or expression." The order establishes special rights for those who behave, dress or identify as members of the opposite sex, the Associated Press reported. Granholm issued an order four years ago adding sexual orientation to the list of protected categories of race, sex, age, religion and marital status. Critics have said the decision was a political move aimed at the homosexual-rights lobby. They have also criticized Granholm for using an executive order on the day before Thanksgiving — without a vote by the Legislature or the people of Michigan.

NEW JERSEY LEGISLATURE SEEKS TO REDEFINE MARRIAGE FOR THE NATION

(EP News)--Last December, the New Jersey Legislature created civil unions that offer same-sex couples all the protections and benefits of marriage. The Legislature is using its lame-duck session to introduce multiple bills that would grant civil unions full "marriage" status. Brian Brown, executive director of the National Organization for Marriage, said there's a strong push for lawmakers to take on this controversial issue before the 2008 session, because the newly elected Legislature may be more inclined to defend the institution. "A number of those that were elected, including Declan O'Scanlon in the 12th District, are people that will vote to protect marriage," he said. "So, we need to do everything we can to make sure that it doesn't come up now and that there is not a vote."

CHANGING FAMILY STRUCTURE PUTS CHILDREN AT RISK

(EP News)--A growing number of children are living in homes that are not conducive to their overall health and welfare, according to Glenn Stanton, director of global family formation studies at Focus on the Family. "We find more and more kids being raised in homes that are unfortunately not suited to the well-being of children, but addressing and fitting the whims of adults, like cohabiting homes and single-parent homes," he said. Stanton made this announcement as Focus on the Family released a new report, Family Formation Trends and Analysis, that shows while most children are still being raised by their married biological parents, the trend is moving the opposite direction. Stanton reports that 40 percent of cohabiting-couple homes include children — and the number is

♦ (Continued on page 253)

Bible & Newspaper

(Continued from page 252) ◊

steadily increasing. At the same time, family form has replaced parental employment as the primary driver in child poverty. Among the findings: The vast majority of children who are raised entirely in a home where parents are married will never be poor during childhood. By contrast, the vast majority of children who spend time in a fatherless home will experience poverty.

YWCA WORKER FIRED AFTER INVITING PRO-LIFE SPEAKER

(EP News)--Shannon Nixon, a case manager and graduate student, was fired this month from the YWCA of Greater Cincinnati after she invited a pro-life speaker to address pregnant women at the club. Nixon said she was allowed to recruit speakers on both sides of several other issues, but only one view of the abortion debate was welcomed. Nixon asked a representative of Life Issues Institute to present a pro-life perspective during a seminar on employment and literacy. "Within the next couple of days, I was told that I was terminated, and when I was asked why I was terminated, the only issue that I brought up was this occurrence of this pro-life speaker coming." YWCA President and CEO Charlene Ventura said Nixon was not fired for her personal beliefs.

FLORIDA SCHOOLS CONSIDER SPECIFYING EVOLUTION

(EP News)--New standards released last week would require Florida public schools to teach students about evolution beginning in the third grade. The new science standards do not include intelligent design. The current curriculum uses the phrase "biological changes over time" in place of evolution. A 45-member committee began revising the science standards in May in response to a failing grade in a 2005 report on Florida's public school science curriculum. The Ledger of Lakeland, Fla., reported. The state Department of Education will vote in January on whether to adopt the new standards. Mickey Carter, pastor at Landmark Baptist Church, said there should be a balance between intelligent design and evolution in the curriculum. "We are denying freedom of ideas, speech and shutting down one side," Carter told The Ledger. "The kids ought to be able to study both sides of it, so we don't just turn out a bunch of rubber-stamped robots in the classroom."

PARENTS PLAY KEY ROLE IN TEEN CHOICES

(EP News)--When it comes to dating and sex, teens care more about what their parents have to say than their closest friends. According to the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, 65 percent of teens said it's "easy" to have conversations with their parents. Nearly one-third of teens called their relationship with their parents healthy and worth emulating.

Bill Albert, communications director for the campaign, said the goal of the study was to improve parent-child relationships and prevent unplanned pregnancies. "The thing that we are most concerned about is people that begin dating and romantic relationships at very early ages," he told Family News in Focus. "They are much more likely to report that the sex was unwanted or forced; they are far less likely to use contraception."

RHODE ISLAND ELECTION COULD AFFECT DEFINITION OF MARRIAGE

(EP News)--Residents in District 22 of Rhode Island will vote in a special election Tuesday to fill the seat of former state Rep. Peter Ginnatt. The outcome of this special election could affect the definition of marriage in Rhode Island. "Homosexual activists who want to redefine marriage and legalize so-called same-sex 'marriage' in Rhode Island know this is an important election," said Carrie Gordon Earll, senior director of issue analysis at Focus on the Family Action. "Pro-family residents who want to protect marriage should also take this election very seriously because the winner will influence future votes on the issue."



The Deity of the

(Continued from page 251) ◊

coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man." None can receive worship but God alone, and Jesus received worship. If you are going to deny the Deity of Christ, then start at the beginning of the Gospels and remove every instance of penitent sinners and petitioning saints falling at the feet of their Lord and God, because again, the Book would have to be changed!

IV. CHRIST FORGAVE SINS AGAINST GOD

Another action that Jesus Christ was continually performing that could only be done if He were indeed God in the flesh, was the act of forgiving sins of man against their Creator and Judge. Let's look at one such instance in Mark 2:3-12: "And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four. And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay. When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee. But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only? And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why

reason ye these things in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion."

What an amazing event! And even more amazing is the order in which God the Son accomplished them! He forgave the sins of this one sick of the palsy! What sins? Surely He had just met him in the flesh, so there were no sins against His physical Person to forgive. He was forgiving the palsy victim of all of his sins against God! The scribes certainly understood this! Their true statement is "who can forgive sins but God only?" Just as David realized that murder, fornication, lying and thievery are all things that hurt many people, but sin is against God Alone! "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. 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. 51:1-4).

Surely the majesty and sovereignty of the King of kings is seen whenever Jesus of Nazareth uses His Supreme authority as God of the universe to forgive our sins against an infinite God. "And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven. And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also? And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace" (Luke 7:48-50). Surely as Jonah said from the belly of the whale: "... Salvation is of the LORD" (Jonah 2:9). None else can forgive sins---no priest, no pope, no parent, no prophet! Jesus Christ the Lord God Almighty alone!

To remove all vestiges of Deity from this wandering miracle worker, you would have to expunge all of His conversations with the souls of His elect. You would have to call this Jesus, the supposed son of a carpenter a madman, a liar, a deceitful exploiter of both common and noble citizens of the land. No, my beloved reader, the Bible is inundated throughout with reference to my Master's unique and sovereign Godhood!

V. SON OF GOD EQUATES AS DEITY

Yet, another line of reasoning will lead us to the knowledge of Christ's Divinity.

Not only did He forgive sins, but He is continually named by Scripture as the Son of God. Now that may not mean as much to us, but to the Jews, that was exactly the same as saying that He was God Himself. Deity. Divine.

Let us discover in God's pages of revelation where impartial observers recognized that He was the Son of God, as He Himself claimed and as others bestowed upon Him the title. First of all, we see the demons/fallen angels know who this Jesus of Galilee is: "And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time" (Matt. 8:29)? The onlookers were convinced in Matthew 27:54: "Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God."

And what did His enemies make of this? "But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God" (John 5:17-18). And again in John 10:32-33: "Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God."

The Jews understood that royalty in the Father, means royalty in the Prince, the Son. Hence the Son goes in the authority of the Father! The Son is the manifest icon or image of the Father. Read in Proverbs 30:4: "Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?(underlined tms)" Every time that the Lord Jesus is referred to, or refers to Himself as, the Son of God, beloved reader, please understand that He is taking Deity upon Himself! God, the Son of God the Father. We are in the presence of royalty!!

VI. CHRIST REVEALED AS CREATOR

We could broach many more aspects and make many more points as to why we so firmly believe that "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" as Peter puts it in Matthew 16:16. But one more will do for this article. Jesus, the lone traveler on the road to Emmaus, the solitary figure hanging on the cross of Calvary, the weary soul sitting on Jacob's well- is the Creator of the Universe! "In

◊ (Continued on page 254)

The Deity of the

(Continued from page 253) ♦

the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life... (John 1:1-4). All things were made by Him! In Him alone is life! He is the originator of life and He only is the perpetuator of life!

“..Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Phil. 2:5-8). Jesus, God incarnate in the flesh, forsook the glories of Heaven and took upon Him the form of a servant, made in the likeness of men! Why? To fulfill the will of God! His Father's will, yes! But also His own will and purposes to glorify the Triune and Holy God, through and through!

He has indelibly put His mark upon this creation. **“For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist”** (Col. 1:16-17). He knows all the hearts of men, because He made them! He controls all the winds and waves, because He is the Creator of them! Surely, the weight of evidence is sufficiently clear to all. The Book tells the tale. The words proclaim our Lord and Master. And the actions portray the inexorable truth! Jesus Christ is God! Praise His Name!

CONCLUSION

Why do people deny the Trinity? Why despise the Deity of Jesus Christ? Because Satan can duplicate God, by causing other religions and superstitions to temporarily fill voids in lost humanity, but he can't duplicate Jesus Christ! Mohammed, Buddha, Pharaoh and all other imitations pass away and die. None of these stack up to the claim of Deity, because they perish in their tombs, pyramids and mortality!

But not Jesus Christ, the Son of God! He is risen and lives eternally! Don't believe me? Ask a child- she'll point you to the clarity of God's Holy Word, which has never been proven wrong in the slightest degree! You simply can't kill or destroy Jesus Christ--it's an impossibility! He is immutable, omnipotent and eternal!

Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life! He can't just be a prophet, as we've already covered in depth in this essay

into Scripture. Predicated as a result of His own words and actions, either He is God, or He is a liar, or He is deceived. Draw the line, as Joshua did of old. He is God, and if you'll not have Him, there's plenty of Amorite or Egyptian gods to serve. But don't insult my intelligence or yours by calling Jesus a “good man.” Either believe Him or condemn Him (and thereby yourself!).

“But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him” (I Cor. 8:6).



What God Hates

(Continued from page 241) ♦

pride from its first rise in the evil heart of man, and His hatred does not diminish when this evil is manifest outwardly in a man's conduct.

Pride pervades the whole human family to a greater or lesser degree, as the atmosphere does the globe. It often takes liberality by the hand, prompts advice, administers reproof, and sometimes perches visibly on the prayers and sermons in the pulpit. It proceeds from want of sense, or want of thought. Pride is a baseless propensity. It thrives in those places never reached by the air of Heaven and in the hearts where the sunshine of grace has never appeared.

ITS IDENTIFICATION

The word “pride” means “an over-high opinion of oneself; exaggerated self-esteem.” It grows out of a sense of one's own dignity or worth. It delights in its own achievements, possessions, children, etc. Its synonyms are vanity, conceit, self-esteem, self-satisfaction, self-respect, and vainglory. A proud man always esteems himself better than others.

Men cannot punish pride. There are no human laws against it. When men see it they either admire it or fear it. But God has a law against pride in man. According to the Bible, the proud man is a sinner: **“A high look, and a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked, is sin”** (Prov. 21:4). Pride is the glory, the joy, and the business of wicked men. It is this attitude in a man which is so hateful to God: **“Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD”** (Prov. 16:5).

The proud man is in direct conflict with God. He may not intend to be, but he is putting himself against the omnipotent One. In his high look and proud heart he believes there is something dignified, flashing, and luminous. But this evil disposition, so much admired by men, is regarded by God as the lamp of the wicked. This is the same light that showed on the faces of the apostate angels.

Pride is a sister to arrogance (Prov. 8:13) and the brother of egotism. A proud

person refers to himself in all things, thinks of himself, and studies himself until his own little self becomes his ruling principle of action. He is in love with himself and permits no rivals. His code is everything for himself and nothing for others. His philosophy is that he is always right and all who oppose him are wrong. In the same degree he overrates himself, he underrates others.

The proud heart says to all, “Look at me. What ability, what talents are mine! Who is so gifted and so graceful? Who is competent to be placed in a position of honor or authority as I? I am sure of success!” Such language is but an echo of the words of King Nebuchadnezzar: **“Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for honour of my majesty?”** (Dan. 4:30). It is the spirit of Phariseism (Luke 18:11-12).

ITS INFANCY

Where does pride come from? There is one thing for certain: It does not come from God. I John 2:16 says: **“For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.”** The boastfulness, vanity, egotism, ostentation, and self-congratulation so prominent among the children of men are from the Satanic world system. They do not proceed from God or meet with His approval. Whatever promotes pride in man, or is an index to pride, has its origin in the plane of this world and the carnal nature.

Pride springs from the incurably wicked heart in man inherited from Adam. This is what Jesus said in Mark 7:21-22. It is the depraved heart in man which causes him to make extravagant estimations of himself by which all thoughts and conduct of life are put upon a false basis. With pride dominant in the heart, no thought about one's self is correct. Hence no comparison of one's self with others is valid or in harmony with God's estimation. Looking down with scorn and contempt upon others is a sin which has its seat in the wicked heart of a man.

Pride proceeds from conceit: **“Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool than of him”** (Prov. 26:12). The proud man holds himself fit to be the ultimate standard. He thinks himself wise because he is ignorant of what real wisdom is. The knowledge of the most intelligent is as nothing compared with his ignorance. The common fool is cursed with his own ignorance; the conceited fool is cursed with both ignorance and self-delusion. The latter man is not sensible of his need for instruction (Rom. 1:22). **“And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know”** (I Cor. 8:2). Before man can learn anything he must unlearn everything. **“Let no man deceive himself. If any**

man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise” (I Cor. 3:18).

ITS INITIATION

Wealth sometimes generates pride in man: **“And Hezekiah was glad of them, and shewed them the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armor, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not”** (Isa. 39:2).

King Hezekiah had been blessed by God materially, nationally, spiritually, and healthwise. To impress the King of Babylon he showed him all the wealth of his kingdom. Even godly Hezekiah did not stay humble in the midst of his great advancements. He pretended his might and merit had purchased and procured his wealth, giving God no credit for blessing Him. God called him to account for this sin and severely punished him and his seed (Isa. 39:3-8).

At other times pride comes from an exalted position (II Kings 5:1-19). Naaman, the captain of the Syrian army, was a leper. Being told of a prophet of God in Israel who could cure him, he went to seek the cure. Elisha told him to wash in the river Jordan seven times. Naaman, filled with Syrian pride, refused. His pride momentarily prevented his cure. Finally, at the pleading of his servants, he laid aside his pride of position and washed to his cleansing.

Great social events fill men with pride. It was pride that caused Belshazzar to commit sacrilege. While the king tasted the wine before the thousands at his great feast, he commanded the vessels from the temple in Jerusalem to be brought to him to defile (Dan. 5:1-31). He sought to use the vessels of God for his own pleasure, much like some today use the church only for weddings and funerals. The actions of this proud tyrant resulted in his untimely death.

ITS INFECTON

Pride affects a man very injuriously. It is a fruitful source of contention: **“Only by pride cometh contention”** (Prov. 13:10). A proud man is ready to quarrel with every one who does not value his notions as highly as he does. Vain glory has lighted up all the sinful contentions which have ever been kindled in homes, nations, schools, and churches. Pride by means of contention will not rest until every rival is crushed or eclipsed.

Pride is the source of strife: **“He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife”** (Prov. 28:25). It is this evil in the hearts of presidents, popes, and potentates which has produced so many wars. Even in private affairs pride creates, fosters, and embitters divisions, alienations, and quarrels. All the foolish extravagances of social competition can be traced to pride.

♦ (Continued on page 255)

What God Hates

(Continued from page 254) ♦

Parents mar the lives of their children by refusing to consent to marriages below the dignity of their family. At other times parents push marriage on a child, hoping to improve their social standing. Prosperous people turn their backs on less prosperous relatives. People who dress in fashion turn up their noses at the less fortunate. This is all the work of pride and creates strife among people.

The heart lifted up with pride is destined to be brought low by God: **"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall"** (Prov. 16:18). When men are filled with pride they become self-confident. This produces carelessness which brings destruction. Those who feel themselves and look upon others with contempt will be brought down, either by repentance or ruin. Pride brought about the ruin of the prince of Tyrus (Ezek. 28:11-19). The downfall of Uzziah was clearly pride. The Bible says of him that **"his heart was lifted up to his destruction"** (II Chron. 26:16). Proud King Nebuchadnezzar was ruined by his pride. He boasted about Babylon and lost his ability to enjoy it. After his recovery he declared of Jehovah: **"Those that walk in pride he is able to abase"** (Dan. 4:37).

Proud men who desired to be rulers of the world have been brought low by God. The great Napoleon died a prisoner on the Island of St. Helena. Mussolini and Hitler died untimely deaths. The Bible teaches that God takes pleasure in bringing proud men low. **"A man's pride shall bring him low"** (Prov. 29:23). **"And the mean man shall be brought down, and the mighty man shall be humbled, and the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled"** (Isa. 5:15). The Lord says in Jeremiah 50:31-32: **"Behold, I am against thee, O thou most proud. . . for thy day is come, the time that I will visit thee. And the most proud shall stumble and fall, and none shall raise him. . ."**

ITS IGNOMINIOUSNESS

Pride produces self-deception: **"The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee"** (Obad. 3). The Apostle Paul wrote: **"For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself"** (Gal. 6:3). The proud person censures his brethren instead of bearing with their infirmities. He feels he is better than other men and qualified to prescribe to them. But his brethren know he does not possess the superiority he assumes. His self-conceit is but self-deception. The most dangerous cheat in the world is self-deceit.

The sin of pride cuts man off from reproof, rebuke, criticism, and counsel, without which it is impossible for a person to see himself as others see

him. Both constructive and destructive criticism tends to humble a man and lead to wholesome self-searching. One of the fruits of genuine humility is that it makes a person teachable. The humble mind has all the wisdom of the ages at its disposal, and all the folly of fools as an invaluable warning.

The sin of pride has been the ruin of many ministers of the gospel. I Timothy 3:6 list this as a qualification of a bishop: **"Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil"** (I Tim. 3:6). A young convert must not be put in the ministerial office. If he is, it is highly probable the commendations and flattery he may receive will fill him with pride and bring about his ruin. This villain called pride will be apt to lead him to **"fall into reproach, and the snare of the devil"** (I Tim. 3:7).

I have been told of a minister of the gospel who publicly professes to be so great it is hard for him to be humble. Such a man is neither great nor humble. He is a classic example of total depravity and utter self-deception. No mere mortal can ever expect to be greater than Jesus Christ, yet the Scriptures say He was **"meek and lowly in heart"** (Matt. 11:29). If it were not hard for the eternal Son of God to be humble, then it should pose no problem to a Baptist preacher.

Self-importance sends a man forth clothed in pride to brag and bully, to bluster and browbeat, and to ride roughshod over all his fellows. **"He is a proud man, neither keepeth at home, who enlargeth his desire as hell, and is as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gathereth unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people"** (Hab. 2:5).

From first to last this haughty spirit is a curse and a torment to everyone, and not least to itself. It is like a cold and biting wind. It is like an erosive acid. It produces more sorrows than the north wind produces icicles. It mars more lives than anyone but God is able to count. It breaks the hearts of the humble, it excites the passions of the wrathful, it corrupts the conduct of the weak. It ruins children, it poisons social life, it inflames differences, and plunges great nations into war.

"If it were permitted to enter Heaven, it would turn Heaven into Hell, it would range the hosts of Heaven in envious cliques and mutually scornful castes, it would make the meek spirit sigh for earth, where there was at least the hope of death, and would turn the very presence and power of God into a constant object of envy and an incentive to rebellion. It is obvious, then, that pride cannot enter heaven, and the proud man, if he is to enter, must humble himself as a little child" (THE BOOK OF PROVERBS by R. F. Horton, pp. 186-187, 1890 edition).

ITS IMPEDIMENT

Since pride has its seat in the carnal nature of man, we can never hope to perfectly rid ourselves of this moral malady. By the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit we can only hope to restrain it. We can prevent it from binding us like a prisoner (Ps. 73:8-9). Sober thinking impedes the progress of pride: **"For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly. . ."** (Rom. 12:3). To think modestly, soberly, and prudently about one's self prevents an inordinate self-valuation and pride.

To improve in the grace of humility causes pride to wane: **"God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble"** (James 4:6). The humble man thinks little of himself. He does not feel he deserves anything from anybody and has no ambition to have the preeminence. He is quick to confess his shortcomings and show real repentance for his sins. He realizes his dependence on the Lord and is content with what God gives him.

ITS IMPRISONMENT

Pride is a dangerous criminal in our being which must be kept in prison by our regenerate nature. To put pride in jail is easy, but to keep him incarcerated is no small task. All too often after we incarcerate him Judge Satan releases him on bond to our sorrow. But when this crook is kept confined, untold blessings follow. Love for the brethren is one of these blessings (Eph. 4:1-2).

When pride is restrained character assassination of our brethren passes away like dew before the morning sun. Pride is the egg of persecution, and pride and persecution go hand in hand. Psalm 10:2 reads: **"the wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor."** Tyranny in both church and state owe their origin to pride. When the tree of pride is cut down by the axe of humility, peace and love will always replace persecution.

CONCLUSION

Pride keeps men away from salvation in the blood of Christ: **"The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts"** (Ps. 10:4). Pride hates a superior and cannot endure a master. The very thought of an infinitely powerful God Who hates pride and is determined to punish it strikes fear into the heart of every man filled with pride. To admit the insufficiency of his own righteousness and need of Christ's righteousness is no small matter for a proud soul. The natural man wants to be his own savior. He prefers damnation to Hell to salvation by the blood of the everlasting covenant. If the Spirit did not come in His mighty power and slay pride in the heart of a sinner he would never be saved.

"How foolish, how absurd, how ruinous, how blindly destructive of its own object, does pride appear! By

attempting to soar, it only plunges itself in the mire; and while endeavouring to erect for itself a throne, it undermines the ground on which it stands, and digs its own grave. It plunged Satan from Heaven and Hell; it banished our first parents from paradise; and it will, in a similar manner, ruin all who indulge in it. It keeps us in ignorance of God, shuts us out from His favour, prevents us from resembling Him, deprives us in this world of all the honor and happiness which communion with Him would confer; and in the next, unless previously hated, repented of, and renounced, will bar for ever against us the door of Heaven, and close upon us the gates of Hell. O then, my friends beware, beware of pride!" (EDWARD PAYSON, 1783-1827).



To Judge Or Not To Judge, That Is The Question

By Raymond Bennett
of Ithaca, New York

"Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye. Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls under their feet, and turn again and rend you" (Matt. 7:1-6).

We live in a time when tolerance is the keyword in society, even with regard to sins and other social practices that only a few years ago were scorned by society. It seems that the first phrase of Matthew 7:1, **"Judge not"**, has almost replaced John 3:16 as the most loved verse of Scripture. Many people who show little to no knowledge of Scripture certainly know at least the first two words of this verse and are quick to quote it whenever their particular practice or sin is mentioned.

In our worship and Bible study a few weeks ago we looked at the woman taken in adultery, recorded in John 8:1-11. There are two outstanding features in that passage which those who have a casual knowledge of Scripture are quick to claim, not fully realizing the context and full teaching it contains. Both of them bring us to our text in Matthew 7.

"Judge" is rightly translated. It means

♦ (Continued on page 256)

To Judge Or Not

(Continued from page 255) ♦

to make a decision, pronounce final judgment. "Judge" is usually taken to refer to condemnation and punishment but the word also applies to making a decision in one's favor. "Final judgment belongs to God! He alone has the attributes of absolute righteousness and omniscience!" Therefore He alone knows all the facts of the case and He alone can make righteous judgment. That is the first reason we are not to judge.

It has been this writer's observation, however, that most people who are quick to plead this verse use it two ways. In the name of tolerance, they condemn preaching against any specific sin. The United States is one of few countries left in this world where preaching against specific sin has not yet been legally made a hate crime, but that day may be soon coming here as well. They also claim it in order to justify their sin, believing that they should be left alone or that their behavior is merely a matter of personal opinion or choice. But those who are so quick to use this passage quickly stop at the words "judge not", neglecting the remaining teaching of the passage. I suggest four areas where the context must be seen in order to properly apply this teaching.

ONE: "For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged." You will be judged by both God and society by whatever judgment you make for others. How often we are prone to accuse and judge others in the areas where we are strong or clean, but conveniently forget the areas where we fall. That was why Jesus told the self-righteous Pharisees, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her" (John 8:7). This is why Paul adds the caution in Galatians 6:1: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." (Italics mine.)

However, this verse may not be used to deny what Jesus teaches just a few verses later in this same "Sermon on the Mount", "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. 7:20). It is necessary that believers recognize sin, especially false teaching, in others so that they may follow the Scripture's admonition to be separate from them.

TWO: You must be pure yourself before you can make just accusations about another. "And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?" (Verse 3) For instance, as a preacher of the Gospel I must preach against sin. I should set a good example that can be followed. But rarely can I make personal accusations about another because there are areas in

my own life where I am not pure.

It is needful that I, as any other preacher of the Gospel, make sure that I am pure and forgiven (1 John 1:9) before I may preach any message. This is why we must spend so much time in prayer and in the Word.

THREE: This passage does not forbid preaching against specific sin! Jesus, and later the Apostles, often mentioned specific in mentioning specific sin, even in personal confrontation. It should be noticed that the two most productive sermons recorded in the Scripture were both direct accusations upon the hearers (Acts 2:14-36; 3:12-26).

FOUR: This passage does not forbid specific preaching; rather it warns against personal accusation and confrontation. Such methods rarely serve to bring anyone to a knowledge or conviction of the truth, at least at the point of confrontation. The Word of God will bring conviction, but personal confrontation will only serve to widen the gap between you and the one with whom you are dealing, bring counter accusations and may very well cause a convicted or unbelieving individual to attack you. "Give not that which is holy

unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you" (Matt. 7:6).

However, the public proclamation of the Word has often brought someone who was hearing or reading the message to such conviction that it seemed as if the message was aimed right at them. Dear reader, we do not judge or condemn even when we need to be blunt with the Scripture. We trust the power of the Holy Spirit to bring whatever conviction is necessary to whomever it is necessary. "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day... For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (John 12:48 and Heb. 4:12).

We use an old adage that has been around for years. "If the shoe fits, put it on."



A House On A Rock

By George A. Lofton
(1839 - 1914)

Ancient cities and houses were generally built upon high places, and especially in cities they sought some high eminence for the citadel, as at Rome, and as the Acropolis and the Acrocorinthus at Athens and Corinth. These places, however, were chosen rather for defense than for foundations; but in Matthew 7:24-27 we find a sort of parabolic illustration of the pictorial idea before us. It reads as follows, from the lips of Jesus: "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it."

The reason for the fall, of course, is implied in the fact that it was built upon the sand. It could not stand against the floods, built down in the sandy valley, where foolishly some built their houses in ancient times, just as they do today. The house built upon the rocky summit or hillside could never be affected by the flood, however severely the winds might blow or the rains fall or the storm beat



overflowing valley.

A certain village located at the foot of Vesuvius has been destroyed fourteen times, and yet successive generations continue to repeat the folly and risk the destruction which will some time certainly follow, unless old Vesuvius has exhausted her fiery bowels of wrath---not of compassion. There is a village in the Alps located under a huge precipice of hanging rock, and this great rock has been leaning farther and farther toward the village for years; and yet these villagers live and eat and work and sleep as comfortably beneath their impending doom as if that terrible boulder would never fall. Just so fools build and fools live under the threatening doom of that Rock, every day, against which to stumble they shall be broken to pieces, and which to fall upon them shall grind them into powder.

The wise man builds his house upon some elevated place; digs deep and gets a good foundation, and if he cannot find a rock, he puts a rock beneath his edifice, for a basal support. This is the figure of

the man who (1) *hears* the words of Jesus aright, and (2) *does* them according to his hearing. It is one thing to hear them, another thing to hear and heed them with a good understanding; and it is quite another and a better thing to do them. There are a multitude of "way-side" hearers, a large number of "stony-ground" and "thorny-ground" heeders, but there are but few "good-ground" believers and doers according to the Word and the will of God. These latter alone bring forth fruit to perfection---some thirty, some sixty, some a hundred fold, according to capacity and opportunity---and these alone are the wise and well-to-do hearers and doers of the Word of God. These alone will be saved by grace at last and rewarded for their words; for these alone have the wise, the "understanding," the "honest," and "good" heart of that wonderful parable of the sower. These not only sow in the common soil of the human heart, as the others do, but all the conditions of good sowing are added. The stones are piled out of the way, the thorns are plucked up, the fallow ground is broken by the Holy Spirit, and the soil is penetrated, without obstacle, by the seeds of eternal truth and divine life. These go down to bed-rock upon which to build, and their edifice is erected upon the solid foundation of Christ, the Rock of Ages---"the Rock that is higher than I" and deeper than earth.

It is not a surface and sandy foundation, and the work erected thereupon is not an unsubstantial air-castle, so often built in delusion upon the illusive and false foundation of mere religious fancy. The true hearer and doer of God's word is a solid builder upon a solid foundation, recognizing that there is no other name but Christ under Heaven, given among men, whereby we can be saved---no other foundation which we can lay than that already laid, which is Christ. Mohammed, Confucius, Buddha, will not do for foundations; the law of Moses and the philosophy of Socrates will not do for saving creeds; the systems of Joseph Smith, Swedenborg, Sandeman, and others will not do for guides to eternal life.

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,

Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word!

I always love to sing that splendid hymn, written by Edward Mote:

*My hope is built on nothing less
than Jesus' blood and righteousness.*

On the other hand, the foolish builder erects his house upon the sand. He is a hearer of God's Word, but he is a *doer not*. If he believes Christ, he takes Him as a formal and theoretical Saviour; and in his so-called belief of the truth he puts the sacraments before the blood of Christ and in order to the grace of God. The minister, the ordinance, the

♦ (Continued on page 257)

A House On A Rock

(Continued from page 256) ♦

Church, are his saviors at last; and Jesus Christ is only a Mediator through the immediators of human tradition and superstition thrust between God and the faith of the immortal soul. This is putting the signs of salvation before the salvation itself, and stopping, necessarily, at the sign---just as a man gets to a sign-board five miles from town, imagining that the sign-board is the town; and this is building on the sand, and not on the Rock, even in Christianity. These hear the Word and do it *not* in God's way, nor according to God's will; and salvation by Christ must be immediately through faith in Christ, the building afterward and upon Christ. The blinded ritualist or formalist proposes to build before he gets to Christ, and this is building on the sandiest foundation of the most illusive delusion.

The rationalist builds upon an airy Christ and pays no attention to forms and ceremonies. The ritualist believes too much, the rationalist too little; and either might as well not believe at all; for proving too much is the same as proving too little, and going too far is the same as coming short. The poor rationalist hears God's Word, knows of Christ, but he transforms him into a good man, a model and perfect character, an infallible teacher appointed of God, and salvation is without the atonement of blood and without the direct aid of the Holy Spirit. A man saves himself, under this system and model of a perfect pattern, by ethical culture; and this is but another sandy foundation upon which thousands build their hopes of eternal life. They are hearers, but do and will people Heaven in company with the angels! The Bible is an old curiosity-shop to them, prayer and preaching and Churches are good moral institutions, but they need no Jesus as a Saviour and Redeemer. All this is building on the sinking sand; and of all the men who will go down darkest and deepest beneath the overwhelming flood of the last great day, it will be this self-deceived class of people. They build to themselves pretty houses, but they have no foundation; and in the day of judgment we shall want a foundation rather than the building erected upon it.

The wise man's house may not be so beautiful and unique, but its foundation will stand. He will be upon a Rock. He may have put some "wood, hay, stubble" into his building, the loss of which he will suffer by the fire---yea, he himself may be "saved so as by fire;" but he shall be saved, nevertheless, because his foundation shall stand. The foolish man may put some "gold, silver, precious stones," into his building---most excellent works within themselves; but even these he shall lose, because his building shall go with

his false and unsubstantial foundation. Give me the good foundation and let my building be ever so humble and crude and worthless.

*On what foundation do you build, neighbor,
Your hopes for the future fair?*

*Do your walls reach down to the rock below,
And rest securely there?*

*Alas! what folly 'tis to build, neighbor,
A mansion so fair, so grand,
With its costly walls and its lofty towers,
On sin's delusive sand!*



The Intercession of Christ

By T. T. Shields
(1873 - 1955)

There are many other passages, of course, than those we have just read, relating to the high priestly intercession of our Lord in the heavens. That is the subject I want to discuss with you for a little while this evening, that Christ is a Priest for ever; and that while the atonement, as a fact, was completed when Jesus bowed His head and gave up the ghost, saying, "It is finished," yet the application of that atonement endures for ever; and Jesus Christ lives for ever that He may plead the merits of his own blood, and the imputation of His righteousness to such as believe. "But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

I.

I remind you, first of all, that THE INCARNATION IS A PERPETUAL FACT, an abiding reality. Jesus Christ did take on Him our nature. Before the worlds were made He dwelt with the Father, and in His high priestly prayer He prayed that He might be glorified "with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." He is the eternal Word, the eternal Logos. Then He appeared among men, clothed with human flesh, for "he took not on him the nature of angels," as we have read, "but he took on him the seed of Abraham." So, as we observed last week, by his union with our humanity, He rendered Himself a fit and suitable Substitute for sinful men, for He "was made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

I fear that sometimes believers think of the incarnation as a mere parenthesis in the life of our Lord, as something which began at Jerusalem, and which terminated at the ascension. Russellism

denies the real resurrection of Christ. It admits the emptiness of his grave, but is not quite sure whether the body of Christ was dissolved into gases or whether it was surreptitiously taken away and concealed, and perhaps miraculously preserved for some future exhibition; but it insists that the body of Jesus Christ did not rise. If you would know the anti-Christian character of that cult you have only to touch it at a few points, and you will find that every fundamental of the Christian religion is explicitly repudiated, the resurrection of Christ among them.

Jesus Christ took on Him our nature. There can be no question whatever as to the reality of His humanity, for He was "made of a woman, made under the law." He was bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, and during the days of His flesh He ate and drank with His disciples. He was wearied with His journey. He slept on a hard bench in a fisherman's boat. He gave every evidence of the genuineness of His human nature. He was one of us, and only because He was one of us could He die in our room and stead.

Thus, He went to the cross, and thus, He was laid in the grave. Then, He came out of the grave. It is important that we should be sure of the doctrine of the resurrection. We shall have more to say about that on Sunday, but I am calling your attention to that incidentally this evening to show you how indispensable that fact is to the whole course of redemption, that Jesus Christ became part of us for ever. He went into the grave for us and was raised again.

You will remember the proofs of the resurrection recorded in the Gospels, particularly His challenge to Thomas; the testimony that His disciples saw the wounds, and the marks of the nails in His hands, His feet, and His side, showing that it was the same crucified body which had been nailed to the cross that rose again. That it was changed in some way is quite probable. He was able to come through the shut door, whether because of the peculiar nature of His resurrection body, or by some other miracle, I do not know. The point I am insisting upon is that His resurrection body was identical with the body that was crucified. Even after His resurrection we read of His eating a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honey-comb, surely designed to establish the fact of the physical nature of His post-resurrection body.

He consorted with His disciples, and appeared to them again and again. Luke, in his second record---the first being his Gospel, and the second the Acts of the Apostles, for you remember he was the human writer of the Acts---said, "The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles

whom he had chosen: to whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God."

In that same chapter we read of His being with His disciples at the mount called Olivet; and there, when He had given them His great commission, He was taken up from them into Heaven. Whatever its nature, that body of His was carried up into the presence of God for us. He is described as the "forerunner." "By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." I say, the Incarnation is a perpetual fact. Jesus Christ, in His own person, has united Deity and humanity, and He has carried a redeemed and a glorified body with Him to the throne of Heaven. There He

♦ (Continued on page 258)

The Opolkas have remastered their former cassette tapes "My Eyes Are On Jesus" and "Trust In Him" to CD. The CD is 77 minutes of Christian music written and composed by Debbie and Karen Opolka with the exception of one song. The CD is available for \$12.50.

Also, they have a second CD called "Heaven's Road" with April Brewer on guitar. This CD is available for \$9.00. These can be ordered from our bookstore. Please add \$2.50 for S&H on one or both CDs

BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 11-1-2007 to 11-30-2007

Beginning Balance.....	\$12,598.81
RECEIPTS:	
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY.....	100.00
Berea M. B. C., West Point, TN.....	50.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY.....	100.00
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS.....	225.00
.....	475.00
TOTAL.....	13,073.81
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio Time.....	400.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES.....	400.00
.....	\$12,673.81
Interest Oct.....	2.10
.....	12,675.91
Less Corbin, KY des.....	-1,771.52
ENDING BALANCE.....	\$10,904.39
CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT	
Beginning Balance.....	\$1,971.52
RECEIPTS:	
.....	0.00
.....	2,131.52
EXPENDITURES:	
WCTT.....	200.00
ENDING BALANCE.....	\$1,771.52

Intercession of

(Continued from page 257) ♦

appears in the divine Presence for us.

It is well for us to always keep that clearly in mind, because He came to be the Head of a new race. **“As in Adam all died, so in Christ shall all be made alive.”** We were all in Adam, and sinned in him, and have inherited the taint and tendency of original sin. But, the second Adam came to be the Head of a new creation, and that redeemed human nature is already in the presence of God in the person of our Federal Head: **“He gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body.”**

You have in that a pledge of the redemption of the material world; a bit of this physical universe has actually been carried into the presence of God. I know we are a bad lot. I know that **“in our flesh dwelleth no good thing,”** but some day Christ will come again, and these bodies of ours will be made like unto His glorious body, and our physical natures will be perfected. I do not know what they will be like. They will be **“fashioned like unto the body of his glory, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.”**

And further, it is said that **“the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.”** This whole earth in God’s good time, and by the exercise of His sovereign power, is yet to be completely redeemed, so that **“instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off”; “They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord.”**

The whole material universe is to be purged of sin’s corruption. It is waiting for the time when our bodies shall be transformed at the coming of Christ and made like unto the body of His glory.

II.

WHAT RELATION HAS THIS FACT OF THE INCARNATION TO THE INTERCESSORY WORK OF OUR LORD? Well, *His presence itself in Heaven constitutes a prayer for us.* That is why He is there. Having taken upon Him the seed of Abraham, He is distinct and separate, as to His natural form, from all other denizens of that upper world. He is the Forerunner, the first Arrival of a new race; and, He is there in the presence of God for us.

A case is called in court, and there are several parties to the dispute upon which the court is to adjudicate. A man arises and says, “I represent Mr. So-and-

So.” Another lawyer rises and says that he represents so-and-so. He resumes his seat and says nothing further for the time being; but, the mere fact that he is there is evidence that the interests of that person whom he represents are to be looked after. He is there to appear in behalf of his client. So, the very presence of Christ means a prayer in our behalf.

We are disposed to confine prayer to a particular time and act, as though believers pray only when they say so many words, when they formally assume an attitude of prayer. In my view, and I think there is abundant scriptural warrant for it, prayer is much less an act than an attitude. It is an attitude of soul, an attitude of abiding trust which a man assumes as he goes about his business, as he does a hundred things when the formal bowing of the knee, or the utterance of words, may be an impossibility; but, he has taken up an attitude of trust toward God. He is counting upon Him. He is depending upon Him, and his whole attitude is one of prayer.

Of course, we ought to have our stated seasons for prayer beside, as there are times when children come to father or mother with specific requests; but if you see a boy doing the best he can to wear out his shoes---and stockings too---and clothes generally, and apparently without any concern as to where or how he is to obtain new ones, his attitude is an expression of confidence that he will be provided for. If he were questioned he would say, “Oh, never mind that. Dad will get me some more.” He knows that hitherto his needs have been supplied, and that they will be in the future. His attitude is one of trust that somebody who loves him will provide for him. So, it is with the believer, and so it is, if I may without irreverence say so, with our Lord. The very fact of His being there in an attitude of prayer means that He is our Representative; and, so long as He appears in the presence of God for us, God cannot forget us if He would. He is there appearing in our behalf.

There is another thing of which I would remind you: no promises are made in the Word of God directly to you or to me. The promise was made to Abraham and to his Seed: **“He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.”** Every promise that God made, He made to Christ, and to us only as we are in Christ. The promises of grace abounding in the covenant of grace were made to Him Who is the Mediator of the new covenant, and **“all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen.”** God has pledged Himself to Christ, and so the very Person to Whom all the promises were made is actually now in the presence of God for us.

Is not that an inspiration? I would point out further that the presence of Jesus Christ in Heaven is *itself a*

fulfillment of the promise that was made to Him. Why? Because **“he was made sin for us.”** He took our place, and He Who was made sin is now on the right hand of God. Every farthing of the world’s indebtedness is paid. Every obligation to the holy law of God is fulfilled. Every requirement of the divine holiness itself is supplied in Him. He has entered into Heaven itself, and has sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.

Are you troubled with doubts sometimes, my dear friends? Do you look to the cross and say, “Oh yes, He hung there as my Substitute. He died in my room and stead. I believe all that.” That is but a partial view of things. He is not now on the cross. I hear some people sing about “The Old Rugged Cross.” It is poor theology. We do not need an old rugged cross. A cross of wood is nothing to glory in. It was used as an instrument of death, and was significant of the curse; but, that is not our hope. What is our hope? That He Who died on the cross as my Representative is on the cross no longer; but, He is in the glory.

Do you not see that? He is actually in the presence of God. The One Who died as a sinner under the wrath of God so completely satisfied all the requirements of divine justice that the gates were flung open, and He was welcomed into the divine Presence as one against Whom even the divine holiness could lay no charge. Just as we are to see ourselves in Christ on the cross, and as we have professed in baptism that we see ourselves in Him in His grave, and then in the resurrection, so we are to see ourselves in the person of Him Who is in session on the right hand of God. For Jesus Christ is just as much my Representative in Heaven as He was when He was upon the cross. So then the promise that was made to Abraham and his Seed has already been fulfilled in the person of Him to Whom the promise was made, and Who is even now in the presence of God, the Forerunner, the Firstfruits, the Promise and the Pledge that as God has done for the Head so will He do for the whole body of His elect people.

I do want you to see that the redemption that is in Christ Jesus is not an experiment. It is not something which we may question and say, “After all, it is a problem; and it is somewhat doubtful whether we shall get there.” In the person of Jesus Christ, our Federal Head, we have already arrived. We are in the glory. He **“gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.”** That is the climax of that masterly argument in the first of Ephesians where Paul argues that the power that was released at the resurrection of Jesus, and which was adequate to subdue all principalities and powers and every name that is named not only in this world

♦ (Continued on page 259)

What the Bible Teaches Bible Commentaries



This is a series of commentaries for serious Bible students. The style is expository and practical without the cryptic jargon that encumbers so many otherwise fine commentaries. All the books in each volume have an introduction, an outline, a bibliography, and a careful verse-by-verse exposition. The writers are different, and therefore some books are better than others. They are pre-millennial but off on the church question. Although not infallible, they are in my honest opinion some of the best to come out in many years. These are hardcover books of 300 to 600 pages.

For shipping charges see chart below.

CURRENT VOLUMES

Volume 1 (Gal., Eph., Phil., Col., and Phile.)	\$37.99
Volume 2 (Matt., Mark)	\$37.99
Volume 3 (1, 2 Thess., 1, 2 Tim., Titus)	\$37.99
Volume 4 (1, 2 Cor.)	\$37.99
Volume 5 (1, 2 Peter, 1, 2, 3 John, Jude)	\$37.99
Volume 6 (John)	\$37.99
Volume 7 (Luke)	\$37.99
Volume 8 (Hebrews)	\$37.99
Volume 9 (Acts, James)	\$37.99
Volume 10 (Revelation)	\$37.99
Volume 11 (Romans)	\$37.99
Volume 12 (Genesis)	\$43.99
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Volume 14 (Numbers)	\$43.99
Volume 15 (Exodus)	\$43.99
Volume 16 (Song of Solomon & Isaiah)	\$43.99
Volume 17 (Joshua, Judges & Ruth)	\$43.99
--NEW Volume 18 (Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah & Malachi)	43.99

Shipping Chart

Order Value	Add
Minimum	\$5.00
\$25.00-49.99	\$6.00
\$50.00-74.99	\$7.00
\$75.00-99.99	\$8.00
\$100.00 and Up	FREE

Intercession of

(Continued from page 258) ♦

but in that which is to come, that that power is ours. We may be partakers of it, and share in the complete and glorious victory of our Lord Jesus Christ **“We are complete in him who is the head of all principality and power.”**

That is a great salvation, is it not? Are you glad of it? (“Amen!” “Hallelujah!”). It is not taking a book and learning something and reciting it and saying, “I subscribe to this, and I think God will have compassion on me for that.” What a paltry view of salvation that is! Salvation is the person of Jesus Christ, and wherever He is you are.

No matter how defective we are, no matter how inadequately we witness for Christ, no matter what poor samples of redeemed souls we may be, if we are actual believers, quickened by the Divine Spirit, and made partakers of His nature, wherever He is, we are. He is on the right hand of the Majesty on high, and potentially we are there already.

He is there to secure the fulfillment of the promise of God in all its completeness in respect to all His elect people. There are some people who apply rule and compass to the Bible. They read a verse, then look down at the bottom where there is a footnote, and say, “Now I know what it means.” Do you? When you have been a million years in glory you will say, “On earth, after a lifetime of study I got a glimpse into that great promise, but I had no idea of the height, or length, or breadth, or depth of it.”

There is more in the gospel than we have ever dreamed of yet. Salvation is a bigger thing, not only than we have ever experienced, but than we have ever imagined. When we speak of the glories of divine grace we enter a realm where exaggeration is impossible. You cannot touch the Infinite with all your finite reasonings or imaginings. **“Exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think”** is the measure of His grace, which He is able to do **“according to His power that worketh in us.”** It is a great thing to be a Christian? Talk about your millionaires---poor men they are! Or multimillionaires! What have we?

He is there to see that we get our inheritance. “I will go before; I will go and prepare a place for you.” What does that mean? **“And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”**

Would you like to own the whole earth? It did not take Him long to make it. He said, **“Let there be light”** ---and there was light. It was the Logos, it was the Word, in His pre-incarnate state, it was through Jesus Christ that God uttered Himself when the Spirit of God brooded upon the face of the water; and

the wisdom of men has been making microscopes and telescopes, and all the rest of it, ever since, trying to find out what God has done. But He says, **“I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself.”** While I am absent, may know that I am very busy, and that I am occupied in your interests. He ever liveth to make intercession for us.

What has He to do? Not only to prepare a place for us, but He has to prepare us for that place---and that is a still bigger talk. I have said that Jesus Christ is an Intercessor, that His very presence before God is an intercession, a prayer, in our behalf; and that His intercessory ministry is, in a large measure, however an attitude; *it is an act beside*, for **“if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”** If you and I should stumble into sin, and need forgiveness, He is there to plead our cause.

Then, me remind you of those verses which I read that tell us that He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. We have been studying in the School recently the story of Joseph. You remember how Joseph said to the butler, **“Think on me when it shall be well with thee, and shew kindness, I pray thee, unto me and make mention of me unto Pharaoh and bring me out of this house.”** When the butler got out of prison and delivered again Pharaoh’s cup into his hand, he forgot all about the prisoner in prison: **“Yet did not the chief butler, remember Joseph, but forgot him.”** It was a good while after that that Pharaoh dreamed a dream which the wise men and the magicians of Egypt could not interpret. Then, the butler remembered the Hebrew he had met in prison.

At the place called Calvary there was one who saw in the Sufferer on the central cross the One Whom God had appointed to be heir of all things, and he said, **“Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.”** He has not forgotten anyone since. He is yonder in Heaven now, and He never forgets us; He is **“touched with the feeling of our infirmities.”**

Some years ago I knew a certain motherly soul in a western city who, I believe, was God’s gift to a great many weak Christians. She had, before her conversion, occupied a position of some prominence socially. She was a finely cultured and keenly intellectual woman, but a simple believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. She was a woman who was mature, perhaps, about sixty years of age, and one of the most gracious souls I have ever met. There was a young man who was a member of the same church as

she. This young man’s mother and sisters were also members of the church, but they were only nominal Christians, very superficial in their religious life. They went to church on Sundays, they lived respectably, but were manifestly of that order which Paul described as “carnal.” They don’t have much to be proud of, except that they had a fair position in life---they were almost as proud as Lucifer.

This young man was very weak. He had a taste for alcohol, which he had inherited. Occasionally the poor fellow would get drunk; and when he “came to himself,” he did as other people had learned to do when in trouble, he gravitated to this motherly soul, ---and she would take him in. She told me the story how he would get down on his knees and, sometimes actually with his face in the dust, weep and plead with God to have mercy upon him. She said, “That boy gave such evidence of being a Christian that I could not doubt that he was, notwithstanding this physical weakness of his.”

For a while he would straighten up and go on for six months or a year; then, stumble again. Then, he would come back again to his spiritual mother. She would pray for him, and help him as best she could. Sometimes he would be washing dishes in a hotel kitchen. Of course, his mother and sisters were much ashamed of him, but he would find his comfort in this saintly woman. Her husband had occupied an important official position in political life. One day she said to me, “Mr. Shields, I sometimes think that God has some very weak children who, in this life, may always be weak; but I cannot doubt that that poor boy is really one of the Lord’s own.”

I have referred to this only to say that that boy went to this dear motherly saint because he felt she understood and sympathized with him. He knew his mother did not, he knew his sisters did not. He knew if he went to them they would turn him out and shut the door; but he knew if he went to this other home the doors of that beautiful house would be thrown open, and that together they would bow at the mercy-seat and seek forgiveness for his sin.

Do you not wish you had a friend like that? Have you not, as a Christian, been ashamed of yourself? Have you not sometimes said, “I seem to be making no progress at all?” Have you not wished somebody could understand you? You have just such a Friend! He carried your human nature with Him to the throne: **“For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.”** He is still touched with the feeling of our infirmities, though Himself without sin. As we pray, we pray into the sympathetic ear of our great Mediator, our Representative in Heaven, Who is still truly human as well

♦ (Continued on page 260)

BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 11-1-2007 to 11-30-2007

Beginning Balance\$7,723.83

RECEIPTS:

B. C. of Brimfield, Brimfield, IL	25.77
Berea B. C., Mansfield, OH.....	50.00
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	200.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL.....	60.00
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.....	150.00
Cedar Grove B. C., Millport, AL.....	50.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL.....	25.00
Clay Keys, Pensacola, FL.....	3.00
Eve Knowles, Scarborough, ME.....	200.00
Faith M. B. C., Lynn, AR.....	25.00
Gail Knowles, Scarborough, ME.....	20.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY.....	100.00
Grace B. C., Winston-Salem, NC.....	100.00
Grace M. B. C., Marion, IL.....	50.00
Grace M. B. C., Tulsa, OK.....	35.00
Indore B. C., Indore, WV.....	100.00
Joseph Jurzec, Richmond, IL.....	25.00
L. H. Farrell, Des Allemands, LA.....	200.00
Landmark M.B.C., Moncks Corner, SC.....	50.00
Leroy Bullard, Albuquerque, NM.....	100.00
Morris St. B. C., Hobbs, NM.....	500.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH.....	100.00
New Testament B. C., Bristol, TN.....	20.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN.....	50.00
Ocoonita M. B. C., Keokee, VA.....	80.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL.....	100.00
Southside B. C., Fulton, MS.....	25.00
South Park M.B.C., Seattle, WA.....	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
The Lord’s Church, Goose Creek, SC.....	100.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA.....	25.00
Walnut Creek B. C., Grove City, OH.....	50.00
Subscriptions.....	174.00
Anon.....	255.00
Dividing Checks.....	156.45
Sub Total.....	\$4,079.22
TOTAL.....	\$11,803.05

EXPENDITURES:

Printing.....	597.51
Postage.....	1,028.97
Supplies.....	207.94
Wages.....	2,000.00
FICA.....	153.01
Dividing Checks.....	156.45
Total Expenditures.....	4,143.88
ENDING BALANCE.....	\$7,659.17

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Elder Tom Cook, former pastor of Landmark Baptist Church of Moncks Corner, SC, went home to be with the Lord.

Please be in prayer for this church and Sister Barbara Cook.

The Lord’s Baptist Church of Tacoma, WA, and pastor Larry Killion would like to announce plans for a special meeting January 24th-30th. Elder Garner Smith is scheduled to speak nightly at 7 p.m. and at regular service times on Sunday.

This will also be the 28th anniversary of TLBC.

Please pray for this meeting.



WORLD SCENE

By
Capt. G. Russell Evans USCG (Ret.)



U. S. Border Patrol Against Illegal Immigration

"Mexico does not end at its borders--where there is a Mexican, there is a Mexico."

Mexican President Felipe Calderon has attacked our nation---No, not with bombs---instead; he promotes illegal immigration and encourages U.S. citizens of Mexican ancestry to remain loyal to Mexico first and foremost.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice should demand an apology from the Mexican government and request a diplomatic recall if an apology is not forthcoming.

TEDDY ROOSEVELT

Teddy Roosevelt said it best, "There is no such thing as a hyphenated American who is a good man. The only man who is a good American is the man that is American and nothing else."

But it is the long-standing policy of Mexico to promote illegal immigration and oppose assimilation. In 1995, President Ernesto Zedillo told a Dallas audience of U. S. citizens of Mexican descent, "You are Mexicans, Mexicans who live north of the border."

Syndicated columnist Pat Buchanan writes about Calderon's outrageous claims, "In an earlier time, U. S. troops would be rolling to the border, or (we) "would be on the verge of severing diplomatic relations."

BUT INSTEAD OF STANDING

But instead of standing up for our rights and against this invasion from Mexico, our government welcomes millions of illegal aliens with open arms. Kidnappings and murder are so rampant that the U. S. State Department has issued blunt warnings about traveling to Nuevo, Laredo.

However, the Laredo Border Patrol Chief, Carlos Carillo, doesn't think it is his job to stop the drug traffickers, gang members, and other illegal aliens invading our country from Nuevo Laredo. He says it's his job to stop "terrorists."

TWO FORMER

Two former chief patrol agents of the U. S. Border Patrol, Bill King and Ron Sanders, serve on the Board of American Border Patrol (ABP). ABP often works with the U. S. border patrol in stopping illegal immigration, and we have been in the forefront of the fight to get President Bush to pardon Agents Ignacio Ramos, and Jose Compean. If President Bush can give a pardon to his friend "Scooter Libby," then please tell me why he will not give a pardon to these two men who

did nothing wrong. They were only doing their job, which is more than we can say about the President sometimes!

That's why the work of the American Border Patrol is working right now with more than 200 "Minutemen" from the Patriots Border Alliance to document and shut down illegal immigration of our Arizona border.

PATRIOT'S BORDER

Our work with the Patriot's Border Alliance is giving us the manpower to reduce illegal immigration. It has given ABP the opportunity to display our use of the new technology we've developed to secure our border.

Like you, I am happy that amnesty legislation was defeated this past summer. Through our extensive aerial surveys, ABP uncovered that the Federal Government had built only two miles of the 700 miles of fence promised in last year's law.

In closing arguments against the amnesty bill, Senator Elizabeth Dale's main debate point against the amnesty bill was that only two miles of the fence had been built. So we did have an impact! Our government cannot be trusted to secure our borders. We MUST hold their feet to the fire.

"The great American statesman Daniel Webster once said, "God grants liberty only to those who love, and are always ready to defend it!" ---Daniel Webster

(Excerpts are from the newsletter, *American Border Patrol*, Glenn Spencer, President).



Intercession of

(Continued from page 259) ♦

as truly divine.

Often people come to me and say, "I wish you would pray for So-and-So." And I try to do it. Sometimes they write me letters and say, "I wish you would pray for Mr. So-and-So." People send

THANKFUL

I'm thankful for my family and friends with their kindness and loving care.
I'm thankful for every day I wake to see the sun rising in the eastern air.

I'm thankful for many blessings the Lord has given me.
I'm thankful for the birds that sing and fly so carefree.

I'm thankful for the knowledge God has given me to strive for excellence each day.
I'm thankful for the comfort of knowing that Jesus loves you and I in every way.

I'm thankful for the days, weeks, and years I've spent making memories.
I'm thankful for the relationship with God that set me free.

I'm thankful I have so much to be thankful for.
I'm thankful to know that one-day in Heaven I will see His face and more.

Shelby Thomas

Brother Greenway letters too, saying, "Please have the people pray at prayer-meeting for my boy," or "for my girl!" All that is very good; united prayer is effectual. But I wish we could all realize more clearly than we do that there is Somebody Who is always ready to pray for us. I wish we could remember that no prayer sent heavenward in the name of Jesus Christ fails to reach the throne, nor does it ever fail of an answer. "**He ever liveth to make intercession for us.**" Are you not glad we have a living Saviour, One who is alive for ever more?

When the multitude came together on the day of Pentecost, asking questions about that manifestation of supernaturalism, Peter explained it on this ground, that Jesus had ascended to the right hand of God, "**and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.**" He said that the presence of the Holy Ghost in the midst of His church on earth, in the midst of assembled believers, is itself a proof that Jesus Christ is on the right hand of God, for He has sent the Holy Ghost to convince men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, and to indict their petitions, to teach them how to pray. Just as Jesus Christ prays for us before the Father, so He has sent the Holy Ghost to pray in us to Him: "**For**

the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."

It comes, then, to this, that He Who knows what the atonement involved, and what it procured for us, the immeasurable inheritance which is ours, Himself being in Heaven, sends the Holy Ghost to dwell in our hearts, and to teach us what to ask for, "**for we know not what to pray for as we ought**", but the Spirit helpeth our infirmities and maketh intercession for us according to the will of God. The Holy Spirit comes to dwell in us and to teach us how to pray; and, as we thus pray the prayer divinely inspired, the mediator takes that prayer and brings it to the Father in His own name, as though it were His own.

That is what praying in the name of Jesus Christ is. It means that I have no right in myself to pray. I have no place to stand for myself. I have forfeited it all; but, I am in Christ. I was in Him at the cross, and in the grave, in resurrection, and ascension, and as I present my prayer He takes it and presents it to the Father as His own. Because the promises were made to Him they come through Him to me. We are not heard for our much speaking; we are not heard for long prayers---or for short ones; we are heard in the measure in which we feel our own nothingness, and depend on the fullness of grace that is in Christ. Then, for His sake we shall be made rich: "**Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.**"

That is an inadequate treatment, but I trust it may help you to think about it and study the scriptures which relate to the intercession of Christ, never forgetting that there is a perpetual prayer-meeting in Heaven, where we have an High Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.



ARTICLE INDEX

<i>A Blessed, But Not A Chosen Nation</i> by Dr. Gary Scott Smith	p. 248
<i>A House On A Rock</i> by George A. Lofton	p. 256
<i>A Pilgrimage</i> by J. W. Porter	p. 241
Bible and the Newspaper	p. 252
Cellblock to Cellblock	p. 245
<i>The Deity of the Lord</i> by Matthew Stepp	p. 249
Forum	pp. 250 - 251
<i>The Intercession of Christ</i> by T. T. Shields	p. 257
Mini-Edition	p. 249
<i>Remembering Why We Give Thanks</i> by Dr. Alex McFarland	p. 247
<i>Temperance</i> Part 2 by J. Harvey	p. 241
<i>Thankful</i> by Shelby Thomas	p. 260
<i>The Restoration of Israel</i> Part 2 by Milburn Cockrell	p. 243
<i>To Judge Or Not To Judge, That Is The Question</i> by Raymond Bennett	p. 255
<i>What A Friend We Have In Jesus</i> by Milburn Cockrell	p. 241
<i>What God Hates</i> by Milburn Cockrell	p. 241
World Scene	p. 260