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The Old Whore that is Riding the Beast

By John Osburn

Greensboro, North Carolina

My text comes from Revelation 17:3-5 which reads as follows: **"So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."**

The Bible refrains not from calling this woman (v. 3), which is riding this beast what she really is, A WHORE!



If our sovereign God who is so holy He can not be touched with sin, calls this woman a whore, then we Baptists need to use the same language as well when we talk about this woman; which I have no doubt is the Roman Catholic Church! I believe there are many signs in Revelation that tells us

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Man's Responsibility in Light of God's Sovereignty

By Bruce Allen

New Albany, Indiana

The Scriptures are very plain concerning the fact that God is in complete control of all of His creation. The Psalmist proclaims that, **"Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places"** (Ps. 135:6).¹ This complete control of all things is an essential characteristic of God's divine nature,² which is described as being the attribute of God's sovereignty. Without such an attribute, God could not be God, for if anyone or anything would be able to dictate to Him how to run His creation, that source would be God instead. Thus, the prophet wrote, **"None can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"** (Dan. 4:35). Pink states: "The sovereignty of God may be defined as the exercise

of His supremacy. Being infinitely elevated above the highest creature, He is the Most High, Lord of heaven and earth. Subject to none, influenced by none, absolutely independent; God does as He pleases, only as He pleases, always as He pleases. None can thwart Him, none can hinder Him. . . . Divine Sovereignty means that God is God in fact, as well as in name, that He is on the Throne of the universe, directing all things, working all things after the counsel of His own will."³

The sovereignty of God, then, must be an absolute attribute in order for God to exist. Because of this providence, He must be able to order "all issues and events of things, after the counsel of his will, to his own

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The Fear of God

Part 3

By Milburn Cockrell

Mantachie, Mississippi

SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS PROMISED

First, God has a special delight in the person who fears His name: **"The LORD taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy"** (Ps. 147:11). God highly approves of the fear which is of Himself. It is one of the marvels of divine grace that God takes pleasure in insignificant houses of clay whose foundation is in the dust. But we know from this Scripture He values them who fear Him above all the men of the world. They are so valuable to Him that He chose them, Christ purchased them with His blood, and the Holy Spirit effectually called them. They are His Hepzibah in whom He greatly delights. **"For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people"** (Ps. 149:4).

Second, they have been received

by God: **"Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he**

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Biblical Stress on Spiritual Growth

By Milburn Cockrell

Mantachie, Mississippi

"We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth" (II Thess. 1:3).

You never have to tell a child to grow any more than you would tell a plant to grow. But Paul does tell Christian men and women to grow, and he commends them when they

grow. Why? because believers are not plants, but men and women with wills that can either further or hinder their spiritual growth.

Spiritual progress in the Christian life is very important. It is clear proof that we are real Christians, not nominal believers. Pastors who can observe growth in their church members can know that they are feeding sheep, not worrying with

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Watch Out for Global Taxes on the Sly

By G. Russell Evans

Norfolk, Virginia

UN-sponsored global tax "on the sly."

After all, it would only be seven-tenths of one percent of our Gross Domestic Product (GDP)—all of which is reminiscent of how, in 1914, the federal income tax began as an ittsy-bittsy tax, and then grew to Gargantuan proportions.

PATTERN SET

The pattern has been set and the handwriting is on the wall. U. S. Ambassador John Negroponte signed the Monterrey Consensus for global taxes on march 22, 2002, for President George W. Bush, following the precedent set on December 31, 2000, when U. S. Assistant Secretary of State David Scheffer signed the International Criminal Court (ICC) Treaty for President Bill Clinton.

Both men carried out their orders—but neither had authority to commit the United States to the terms of these

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"THOU HAST GIVEN A BANNER TO THEM THAT FEAR THEE, THAT IT MAY BE DISPLAYED BECAUSE OF THE TRUTH" (PSALMS 60:4).



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The Fear of God

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that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" (Acts 10:34-35). The fear of God and the working of righteousness are not the ground of their acceptance, but these are descriptive of the persons accepted by God in Christ. By these fruits and evidences such persons may be assured they have had an experience of grace. This verse does not prove the knowledge of the gospel is not necessary to the salvation of the heathen as some teach. No man is saved by his righteous works (Tit. 3:5). He can only be saved by faith in the blood of Jesus Christ.

Third, those who fear God enjoy the pity of God: **"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD piteth them that fear him"** (Ps. 103:13). An earthly father pities his children who are weak in knowledge, and he instructs them in truth. When they fall he lifts them up. He forgives them when they do wrong and repent of it. So does God the Father. **"I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning**

himself thus, Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: turn thou me and I shall be turned; for thou art the LORD my God. Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth. Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore my bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the LORD" (Jer. 31:18-20).

Oh, the parental heart and affections of God! Isaiah 63:9 declares: **"In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old."** Our Lord taught: **"If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"** (Luke 11:11-13). God graciously gives and forgives because He is our **"Father who art in heaven"** (Matt. 6:9; cf. Mal. 3:17; Luke 15:20). James tells us: **". . .the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy"** (Jas. 5:11).

Fourth, if a man has a holy dread of God, his prayers will be heard by God: **"He will fulfill the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them"** (Ps. 145:19). The Lord will grant the petitions of those who respect His name and will. He grants a willing audience to those who approach His throne in humble prayer. He hears those who cry day and night unto Him, and He delivers them out of all their troubles, tribulations, temptations, and trials. At His second coming He will deliver us from this body of death.

Fifth, they have the secrets of the heart of God revealed to them: **"The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant"** (Ps. 25:14). The great secret of all truth is hidden in God (Deut. 29:29). But He is pleased to disclose some of these to men who fear Him as did Daniel and John. God reveals to all His elect the secrets of His everlasting love and gracious design toward them. He causes them to make their calling and election

sure, and He brings them to see they have an interest in His covenant of grace.

Sixth, God has those who respect His law and Word in everlasting remembrance: **"Then they that fear the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name"** (Mal. 3:16). **". . .the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance"** (Ps. 112:6). God does not need a book to remind Him of things as we do. The expression in Malachi 3:16 indicates His affection and promises are kept in remembrance as if they were written in a book. He remembers we are but sinful dust and ashes, and then He remembers His mercy toward us. He remembers our services, and He will reward us on the great day.

Seventh, they are objects of everlasting mercy: **"But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him. . ."** (Ps. 103:17). **"And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation"** (Luke 1:50). The God-fearer is a vessel of mercy afore prepared unto glory. They are objects of everlasting mercy from predestination in eternity past to glorification at the coming of Christ. The mercy of God is perpetually the same to His true worshippers.

Eight, great goodness is laid up for those who have a filial fear of God: **"Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!"** (Ps. 31:19). A father does not give his sons their portion when they are too young to enjoy it. Even so it is with God. There are many good things which God has laid up in the covenant we are not able to bear in our present state of spiritual growth. When we have grown to maturity and know how to appreciate these finer things laid up, the celestial treasures will be bestowed upon us.

NATURAL MAN HAS NO FEAR OF GOD

No man is born with the son-like fear of God in his heart. Man's depraved nature is destitute of it. Romans 3:18 says: **"There is no fear of God before their eyes."** The natural man has not that reverential fear of God that is the beginning of wisdom, which is connected with departing from evil and obeying the Holy One. They have no regard for His authority, His majesty, His threat, nor His wrath.

Though God sends trouble a plenty upon these graceless men, it does not

convert them. **"Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God"** (Ps. 55:19; cf. Rev. 9:20-21). Though trouble and trials come, they experience no moral change or reformation. They go on in their wicked course. Nothing seems to awaken any dread of the judgment of God. They cannot have the fear of God in their hearts until God gives them a new heart and a new spirit (Ezek. 36:26-27).

The Bible describes a number of people who have no fear of God before their eyes. First, the proud man is void of this grace: **"Be not high minded, but fear"** (Rom. 11:20). High mindedness and the fear of God do not mix, for where the fear of God exists a man has a low opinion of himself. **"God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble"** (Jas. 4:6; I Pet. 5:5).

Second, the covetous person is without the fear of God. The Holy Writ sets covetousness and the fear of God in opposition. Exodus 18:21 says: **"Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens."** Those who believe there is a God believe they are accountable to Him, and they stand in awe of Him. A covetous man's eye is not on God, but on earthly things (Ezek. 33:31; Eph. 5:5).


Third, the glutton has no fear of God, for Jude describes them as **"without fear"** (Jude 12). A glutton feeds himself, not others. He feeds his body, not his soul. He has no fear of God's presence or judgment (Ex. 18:12; Num. 11:32-33). Proverbs 23:2 says: **"And put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite."**

Fourth, a liar has no dread of the God of truth: **"And of whom has thou been afraid or feared, that thou hast lied, and hast not remembered me, nor laid it to thy heart? have not I held my peace even of old, and thou fearest me not?"** (Isa. 57:11). The fear of God and a lying tongue cannot abide in the same breast. There may be many different kinds of liars, but none of them fear the God who cannot lie.

Fifth, there is no fear of God in those people who call upon God only when they get into trouble. Moses told Pharaoh: **"As soon as I am gone out of the city, I will spread abroad my hands unto the LORD; and the thunder shall cease, neither shall there be any more hail; that thou mayest know how that the earth is the LORD's. But as for thee and**

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Cockrell's



Corner

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

DON'T LISTEN TO SANBALLAT AND TOBIAH!

About 446 B.C. Artaxerxes Longimanus allowed Nehemiah and others to go to Jerusalem and to rebuild the city. In 52 days they restored the city walls. This was not accomplished without opposition and much criticism. Sanballat and Tobiah poured a torrent of abuse and contempt upon all engaged in the work. **"But it came to pass, that when Sanballat heard that we builded the walls, he was wroth, and took great indignation, and mocked the Jews. And he spake before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, What do these feeble Jews? will they fortify themselves? will they sacrifice? with they make an end in a day? will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which was burned? Now Tobiah the Ammonite was by him, and he said, Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall"** (Neh. 4:1-3). This criticism was designed to weaken their resolve and to destroy their morale.

Did Nehemiah panic at their opposition? Did he lose sleep over it? Did he debate with them? Did he retaliate? What did he do? **"So built we the wall..."** (Neh. 4:6). Nehemiah just kept on building the wall and ignored them, for **"the people had a mind to work"** (Neh. 4:6). He was not smitten with self-pity, nor was he discouraged at such difficulties. He merely concentrated on doing the work God had assigned him to do.

Young Christians and young preachers, learn an important lesson here. Do not let opposition and criticism from friends or foes hinder you in the work of our Lord. Do not

let Sanballat and Tobiah get you down in the dumps. Do not waste a lot of time answering your critics (I Pet. 2:23; Isa. 53:7), lest you spend valuable time butting heads with fanatics, which would better be spent in building the wall. Do not be always trying to defend yourself. God and your friends do not need any explanation, and your enemies will not believe whatever you say.

You do not have time to answer all your critics, nor to debate all your opponents. If you are going to accomplish much for our Lord, then don't listen to Sanballat and Tobiah. Like Nehemiah, just be content to build the walls as God instructed you. The important thing is doing what God called you to do.

If I had spent the time that many thought I should have spent answering all my critics and debating all who disagree with me, I would have no time to preach and teach God's Word. I would have no time to write articles or books. I would have no time to spend with my family and friends. I could not pastor my church or do anything which is really important. As I get older and see that my time is short, the less time I care to spend listening to Sanballat and Tobiah.

When Nehemiah's enemies failed to discourage him by harsh criticism, then they tried to get him to compromise. **"Now it came to pass, when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and Geshem the Arabian, and the rest of our enemies, heard that I had builded the wall, and that there was no breach left therein; (though at that time I had not set up the doors upon the gates;) That Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me, saying, Come, let us meet together in some one of the villages in the plain of Ono. But they thought to do me mischief"** (Neh. 6:1-2).

They wanted Nehemiah to come down to their level. They, in a manner of speaking, said: "Don't be so radical and hard-nosed! Don't be so narrow-minded!" When a man leaves off the work of God to negotiate with his enemies, from that moment of compromise Satan has got him where he wants him. That person has become useless as a channel of blessing in the work of God. When you negotiate with your enemies, you lose! Be assured that if you do not compromise, your enemies will lie on you and misrepresent your motives. A man cannot allow himself to be governed by what other people say or think.

Consider the conduct of Nehemiah and be wise: **"And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a**

great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?" (Neh. 6:3).

Purpose of the Death of Christ

XIII. TO BRING US TO GOD.

In I Peter 3:18 it is written: **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit."**

Christ did not suffer for well doing, but for the redemption and salvation of His people. This work of Christ was done in the past once for all time. Peter said Christ **"once suffered"** (not *pote*—once upon a time, but *hapax*—one time only). The atonement of our Lord requires no repetition; it has perpetual validity. Catholics say that in the mass Christ still suffers for us. This is contrary to the Scriptures. **"For in that he died, he died unto sin once..."** (Rom. 6:10). **"...but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself"** (Heb. 9:26). **"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many..."** (Heb. 9:28).

Our Lord did not suffer on account of any sins He committed Himself, for He **"did no sin"** (I Pet. 2:22) and **"knew no sin"** (II Cor. 5:21). But the message of the gospel is that Christ Himself suffered for our sins, or account of our sins. As our Substitute and Surety, He died for the sins we had committed. All the sins of all the elect were made up into a huge bundle and laid upon His shoulder (Isa. 53:5). The Just One died for many unjust ones. Here was Piety scourged for impious men; Wisdom derided for the sake of fools; Truth denied for the sake of liars; Mercy afflicted for the sake of cruel men; Life poured out for the sake of dead men. Christ's death was vicarious.

The design of His sufferings and death was to bring a people to God. Christ rent the veil of the Holiest in twain, and He caused His people to draw near to the immediate presence of God (Heb. 10:21-22). We have access to the Father by the work of Christ (Rom. 5:2; Eph. 2:18; 3:12). The truth of I Peter 3:18 is that Christ's atoning sacrifice really and truly brought a people to God. Our works could not avail. Only Christ by means of His sufferings could reconcile us to God.

By nature we were far off from God by reason of sin. At the first, sin, as the breach of God's moral law, broke us off and separated us from God. Ever since the fall of man in Adam the soul remains naturally remote from God. Ever since

Eden man has been condemned to banishment from God. Sin separates him from God, and sin keeps his soul captive. Man increases in distance and enmity day by day from His Maker. Hence the lost sinner can never come to God on his own.

On the cross Christ endured the sentence pronounced against man. Our Redeemer suffered exile from God, for He cried: **"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"** (Matt. 27:46). By suffering the sentence pronounced, He took our sins upon Himself and took them away. By removing our sins as far as the east is from the west, he made a new and living way back to the Father.

"Being put to death in the flesh" refers to Christ as a man as distinguished from His Divine nature. The usual way of denoting the human nature of our Lord is to speak of Him being in the flesh (John 1:14; Rom. 1:3; I Tim. 3:16; Heb. 5:7; I John 4:2; II John 7). So far as His human nature was concerned, He died on the cross.

What is the meaning of **"but quickened by the Spirit"**? It surely does not mean when His body died His spirit was preserved alive. The spirit of no man dies at death (Eccl. 12:7; Luke 23:46). I do not believe it is the Holy Spirit because no definite article is used in the Greek text. I understand **"by the Spirit"** to mean the Divine nature of Christ as it does in other places (Rom. 1:3-4; I Tim. 3:16; Heb. 9:14). Quickened stands in opposition to being put to death. What was put to death was the body of Jesus Christ. What was made alive? the body of Jesus Christ. This harmonizes with the words of our Lord: **"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself, I have power to law it down, and I have power to take it again"** (John 10:17-18). It was also in His Divine nature that Christ preached to the spirits in prison (I Pet. 3:19), announcing the good news of an accomplished redemption.

The main purpose of Christ's coming and suffering was to reconcile and bring a people to God. I believe that my Savior accomplished what He came to do. The Arminian teaches that the sinner must bring himself to God. The Arminian does not see that Christ by His death actually brought the elect to God. The Arminian fails to see that the **"us"** in I Peter 3:18 looks back to I Peter 1:2 where the **"elect"** are addressed. If Jesus died to bring a people to God, and some He died for are not brought to God, His death is a failure. Jesus can do anything but fail. The old prophet said of Him: **"He shall not fail nor be discouraged"** (Isa. 42:4).

The Fear of God

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thy servants, I know that ye will not yet fear the LORD God" (Ex. 9:29-30). Like the King of Egypt, many ask God for help only when they get into trouble. Then when they are delivered, they return to their former rebellion. Many cry to God in sickness, but when He restores their health, they return to the service of Satan. Such things prove there is no fear of God in the heart.

Sixth, there is no dread of the wrath of God in those who persecute God's people: "Remember what Amalek did unto thee by the way, when ye were come forth out of Egypt; How he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and weary; and he feared not God" (Deut. 25:17-18). Amalek's attack upon Israel was unprovoked and cowardly, for it was upon the feeble and faint. It was a defiance against the God of Israel of whom the Amalekites had heard. The fear of God alone can restrain from cruel persecution. When this is cast off, there is no regard for man.

Seventh, there is no fear of the Lord when God's punishment of sinners is witnessed and men take no warning: "And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also" (Jer. 3:8; cf. 2:19). Judah saw how sin brought about the ruin of Israel. Instead of avoiding the sin of apostasy, Judah did the same. If Judah had feared God, she would have trembled at the judgment of her sister; she would not have gone a whoring from God.

Eighth, men are void of the fear of God in the heart when they can see a nation wallowing in sin and not be humbled at the sight of it. "Have ye forgotten the wickedness of your fathers, and the wickedness of the kings of Judah, and the wickedness of their wives, and your own wickedness, and the wickedness of your wives, which they have committed in the land of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem? They are not humbled even unto this day, neither have they feared, nor walked in my law, nor in my statutes, that I set before you and before your fathers" (Jer. 44:9-10). Those who do not walk in the law of God show by their actions they are destitute of the fear of God.

Ninth, sorcerers, adulterers, false swearers, and employee oppressors

have no fear of God: "And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts" (Mal. 3:5). No reverence for God is the source of all kinds of sins. Those who "fear not God" have no regard for man (Luke 18:4). Atheists are not, as a rule, humanitarians.

Tenth, there is no fear of God in those who offer lip-service instead of heart-worship: "Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men" (Isa. 29:13). These people had not abandoned public worship, nor had they relinquished religious ordinances; they observed them. Their worship was formal and full of hypocrisy. They merely followed human direction. There was no spontaneous uprising of a heart inspired with the fear and love of God (Ezek. 33:31; Matt. 15:9-10). Such worship is unacceptable and unsuccessful.

JUDGMENT ON THOSE VOID OF FILIAL FEAR

First, the man who is without the fear of God has less sense than brute beasts. The beasts of the field have enough sense to fear man: "And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered" (Gen. 9:2). All creatures fear man, but man has no fear of God. A dumb dog or a muddy hog has more sense than a man who has no dread of God. Animals observe the law of creation better than men.

Second, those empty of the fear of God have many things to fear (Eccl. 12:5). It is written in Isaiah 66:4: "I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear; but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not" (Isa. 66:4). God will turn them over to their enemies. He will make their sin their punishment. Their worst fears shall come upon them.

Third, the Lord will laugh when their worse fears come upon them: "I also will laugh at your calamity; I

will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD" (Prov. 1:26-29).

These are fearful words indeed. Those who do not choose the fear of the Lord shall experience the fears of an ever-burning Hell. God will forsake you in your worse fears, and He will exercise sovereign justice without mercy upon you. Oh, the misery of a deserted soul! "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. 10:31). The Lord says: "To me belongeth vengeance, and recompense; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste" (Deut. 32:35). Jesus Christ said: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matt. 10:28).

CONCLUSION

1. It is our solemn duty to "pass the time of" our "sojourning here in fear" of God (I Pet. 1:17; cf. 3:2, 15). "And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great" (Rev. 19:5). It is written in Proverbs 23:17: "Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the LORD all the day long." There is no time a believer is not to fear God. This holy fear will banish from our minds being envious of sinners.

2. There is no greater blessing than to have God put His fear into your heart. This is a covenant blessing: ". . . but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me" (Jer. 32:40). This grace will keep from total and final apostasy.

3. Hypocrites take warning! A pretended religion is no religion at all. "The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness has surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" (Isa. 33:14). A man devoid of the fear of God is going to be left to the wiles of the Devil and the damnation of Hell. "They shall lick the dust like a serpent, they shall move out of their holes like worms of the earth: they shall be afraid of the LORD our God, and shall fear because of thee" (Micah 7:17).

Global Taxes

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documents. That's the job of the U. S. Senate where two-thirds must give "Advice and Consent" (Art. II, Sec. 2, U. S. Constitution). Then, the President ratifies, and the United States is committed—not before!

PEOPLE SAY 'NO'

The American people are not going to stand for global taxes, nor for a World Court, the latter already rejected by a 99-0 "test vote" in the Senate.

President Bush, if he values his popularity, better get busy and "unsign" these two ridiculous documents—both undermining our sovereignty and freedoms—notwithstanding the opinions and pressures of the Europeans and the rest of the world.

The big show was staged in Monterrey, Mexico, during the period March 18-22 and was billed as the UN International Conference on Financing and Development. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and the international stars were in glory-land for shaking down Uncle Sam, i.e., more American taxes for more American foreign aid *right away* and implementation of UN-controlled global taxes from rich nations for a better world *forever*. Share the wealth and get used to more taxes to do it.

They came up with a grandiose 73 item Monterrey Consensus, replete with fancy terms for common things, for example: "innovative sources of finance" means "global taxes," "improve policies to enhance aid effectively" means "more taxpayer-funded foreign aid" and "Official Development Assistance" means "government-to-government aid."

JIMMY CARTER AT IT AGAIN

Former President Jimmy Carter was there lambasting America for "stinginess." Criticizing his country on foreign soil seems to be a specialty of Mr. Carter since he left the White House and an economy with a high double-digit misery index.

He called the U. S. \$10 billion per year foreign aid "embarrassingly low" and berated President Bush for not supporting abortion programs with U. S. aid, adding, "In the U.S. we give 1/1000th of our Gross National Product to foreign aid. . . just a drop in the bucket to what's needed."

What Jimmy Carter and his globalist buddies fail to credit America for are the following: billions in aid via the IMF and the World Bank loans and grants, UN membership dues, billions for U. S. peacekeeping around the world and

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U. S. bases in Europe and Japan that have been protecting other nations from Soviet aggression for years.

THE MONTERREY MOOD

Even so, the Monterrey mood for more and more from the Americas evidently moved President Bush to promise the Inter-American Development Bank \$5 billion *more* in foreign aid over the next five years.

Not enough, screamed the Monterrey Moguls who demanded 0.7 percent of the GNP of rich nations—or, \$70 billion from the USA instead of \$10 billion. President Bush gave in, promising \$9.99 billion in additional foreign aid over the next three years, and \$5 billion extra each year thereafter. Of course, the U. S. Congress has to OK this shakedown.

THE MONTERREY STARS

Some of the stars on the Monterrey stage included the following and their wants:

* Norway's Gro Harlem Brundtland bucking for international socialized medicine under the World Health Organization.

* Mexico's President Vicente Fox bucking for more U. S. aid and general amnesty for Mexican illegals in the USA.

* UNICEF Director Carol Bellamy bucking for more U. S. aid for the world's children.

* South Africa's left-wing President Thabo Mbeki, Haiti's U. S.-installed President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and Venezuela's new Marxist President Hugo Chavez—all bucking for more U. S. bucks and permanent handouts via the UN global tax. And Cuba's Dictator Fidel Castro bucking for anything loose.

* World Bank President James Wolfensohn bucking for an International Tax Dialogue for collection of global taxes by UN member states.

KOFI ANNAN TOO

And leave us not forget the star of stars, UN Secretary-General Annan, whose fervent support of global taxes was toned down in the final draft of the 73 item Monterrey Consensus—whose Item No. 1, nonetheless, challenges the heads of States to “promote sustainable development as we advance to a fully inclusive and equitable global economic system.”

The UN-envisioned near-perfect world under a world government with peace and wealth-sharing cannot be. Human nature says “NO.”

Compassion and charity by nations and individuals, with generous “faith-based initiatives,” are practical solutions. UN-coerced global taxes is

not a solution, except for those favoring world government.

ENVY OF THE WORLD

Americans have cherished over 200 years of freedoms and limited government—the envy of the world. They have prospered, amassed treasures which they have shared, as they became famous for their generosity—not the “stinginess” alleged by Jimmy Carter. As for global taxes, it is safe to say, the people vehemently oppose, despite pressure from media and academia.

It is unfortunate that the United States demonstrated willingness to participate in the Monterrey Consensus, much less sign it—all of which helps give credibility to the UN global tax scheme and its ensnarement of the United States. All this could have been avoided.

President Bush is on the spot again. He should forthwith “*unsign*” both the Monterrey Consensus and the International Criminal Court Treaty with appropriate sweet-talk diplomacy, punctuated with clear finality and resolve to use whatever force is necessary to protect Americans at all times—two more courageous acts by President Bush, to be sure, but ones he can handle.

(Captain Evans lives in Norfolk, Va. His columns are distributed by the Americanism Educational League, Buena Park, Cal.)

Biblical Stress on Growth

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goats. The Bible puts much stress upon spiritual growth. The need of this is seen in various ways in the Scriptures as we shall see in this article.

I. BY POSITIVE COMMANDMENTS

In II Peter 3:18 Peter commands us to grow spiritually: “**But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.**” This can be translated from the Greek as “keep on growing” or “grow continually.” Peter does not command us to grow “into grace.” Rather, he commands those who have already been saved by grace to continue in spiritual evolution. Growing in grace is not an option; it is a command of God. Those who do not grow spiritually are in a state of disobedience to God. It is a sin for a Christian to fail to grow up into Christ.

II Peter 3:18 is an active imperative: Keep on growing in both the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. Growth in the knowledge of Jesus Christ is indispensable to growth in the grace of Christ. “**Then shall we**

know, if we follow on to know the LORD...” (Hos. 6:3). “**Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls**” (Matt. 11:29). “**That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death**” (Phil. 3:10).

Having condemned the Hebrew Christians for their spiritual immaturity and dullness of comprehension (5:12-14), the writer says: “**Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection...**” (Heb. 6:1). This could also read: “Let us press on to maturity” or “Let us be borne along to full manhood” (See *Hebrews* by E. Schuler English, p. 155). The idea is that there ought to be a continual moving forward toward spiritual maturity. The difference between a hypocrite and a true believer is this: A hypocrite is satisfied with a form of godliness, while a true believer in never satisfied with his spiritual progress.

II. BY BIBLICAL EXAMPLES

The greatest example of spiritual growth in the whole Bible is Jesus Christ: “**And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man**” (Luke 2:52). This must be understood of the human nature Christ assumed, for it could not be true of His divine nature. The incarnate Word grew from youth to manhood. His soul deepened with the passing of the years by the ordinary channels of instructions, study, and thought. His increase in wisdom and stature was such that God magnified His grace and favor toward Him. This resulted in Jesus gaining favor with people in Galilee.

The more I study Luke 2:52, the more I marvel at what it says. How God could become a man and increase in wisdom is amazing. How it proves the true humanity of Jesus Christ. If the all-wise God could stoop to take on a human nature and increase in spiritual knowledge and

wisdom, His servants should have no problem whatever with spiritual growth. Those who do not mature mentally and spiritually are not followers of Jesus Christ.

The Apostle Paul is another example of spiritual increase: “**But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ**” (Acts 9:22). Please observe the words about how he increased in strength in his Christian life. More literally these words could read from the Greek “But Saul was continually strengthened more and more” (See *Acts of the Apostles* by Thomas Walker, p. 245). The verb suggests inward and spiritual strength obtained in the Lord which increased his faith. It indicates not only his spiritual progress, but it also suggests why he preached with such convicting power to the people.

The more Paul examined the Scriptures regarding Christ, the warmer and more energetic became his affection for Christ and His preaching about Christ. Christianity is not a bunch of dry notions of people sick in the head. It is living germ. Once planted in the soul, it roots go deeper into our very being. This growth increases our moral strength or holy boldness. He who does not become a stronger and stronger Christian is not a Pauline Christian.

III. BY BEING SAVED FOR SERVICE

It is written of Jesus Christ: “**A seed shall serve him...**” (Ps. 22:30). It is a mark of Christ and His people that they render obedience to God. Jesus Christ did not save us merely to keep us out of Hell, or so He could take us to Heaven. We were saved to serve the Lord: “**Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness... But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life**” (Rom. 6:18,22). Those who are saved by grace are “**the servants of Christ, doing the**

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Berea Baptist Broadcast

STATION	TIME	DIAL	WATTS
WFTA, Tupelo, MS	Sunday 9:30 - 10:00 a.m.	101.9	3,000 FM
WJOR, Saint Joseph, TN	Sunday 1:00 - 1:30 p.m.	101.5	1,000 FM
WVSA, Vernon, AL	Sunday 7:00 - 7:30 a.m.	1380	1,000 AM
WLZA, Starkville, MS	Sunday 1:00 - 1:30 p.m.	710	2,500 AM
WCNA, Myrtle, MS	Sunday 12:30 - 1:00 p.m.	95.9	3,000 FM
WCTT, Corbin, KY	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.	680	5,000 AM
KARI, Blaine, WA	Saturday 10:30 - 11:00 a.m. .	550	5,000 AM
KORE, Springfield, OR	Sunday 8:00 - 8:30 a.m.	1050	5,000 AM
WDBS, Sutton, WV	Sunday 6:30 - 7:00 a.m.	97.1	50,000 FM
DXRA, Davao City, Philippines	Sunday 8:15 - 8:45 a.m.	783 Khz ...	10,000 AM
DWSS, Manila, Philippines .	Sunday 5:30 - 6:00 p.m.	1494	16,000 AM

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will of God from the heart" (Eph. 6:6). At conversion true believers give up earthly idols **"to serve the living and true God"** (I Thess. 1:9). Those whose sins are washed away in the blood of Jesus have their conscience purged **"from dead works to serve the living God"** (Heb. 9:14). The greatest privilege any man can have on earth is to be a servant of Jesus Christ.

We must serve Jesus Christ faithfully: **"Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful"** (I Cor. 4:2; cf. Rev. 17:14). We must be continually in our service to Him. The king of Babylon asked: **"O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?"** (Dan. 6:20). The Christian life is not serving God a few weeks, months, or even years. It is to be a life-long service: **"That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life"** (Luke 1:74-75).

To serve Christ is to follow Christ's life and teachings. Our Lord said: **"If any man serve me, let him follow me..."** (John 12:26). This may involve poverty, persecution, and many perils. It could cause you to go over cold, dark mountains to seek His sheep, or it might necessitate that you help the poor and lowly in this world. To follow Christ is to give up earthly riches, worldly honors, and kingly crowns. We must be content to be a cross-bearer (Matt. 16:24; Rom. 8:17). Even when we have done our best we will remain unprofitable servants (Luke 17:10; Job 22:2-3). But if we are loyal to Christ during our life on earth, we shall reign with Him in the millennium. Christ will say to such loyal followers: **"Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord"** (Matt. 25:21).

Our service to the Lord never ceases. We are to serve the Lord Jesus throughout our earthly pilgrimage. In Heaven we are to **"serve him day and night in his temple"** (Rev. 7:15). In the millennium the glorified saints and **"all nations shall serve him"** (Ps. 72:11). The margin of Daniel 7:27 informs us that **"all rulers shall serve and obey him."** Another prophet says that all will **"serve with one consent"** (Zeph. 3:9). Even into the ages to come **"his servants shall**

serve him" (Rev. 22:3). Professed Christians who do not serve the Lord here on earth in His church will be out of place in Heaven, in the millennium, and in eternity to come.

I have heard some professed Christians say: "I have quit serving the Lord." If you can quit, you should, for hypocrites and reprobates always quit at some point (I John 2:19). The Bible tells us that the Lord has no pleasure in quitters (Heb. 10:38). Christ went so far as to say that quitters are unfit for the kingdom of Heaven. **"And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God"** (Luke 9:62).

IV. BY REVEALING THAT CONVERSION MUST BE FOLLOWED BY CONSECRATION

Those who experience converting grace are to consecrate themselves to God: **"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him"** (Col. 2:6). The word "received" (*paralambano*) signifies to take to one's self, usually with respect to a personal object (John 1:12). The Colossian Christians had not merely received the doctrines about Christ, but they had received Christ Himself in all His offices. This is the language of free grace. "Received," not earned, purchased, or won by human effort. This strips of all boasting, for all we did was receive **"Christ Jesus the Lord."** We received Him as the glorious Messiah, the sovereign Lord to rule and reign over us in an individual way. We received a whole Christ into our understanding and affections.

"So walk ye in him" is more literally from the Greek "go on walking in Him." Christ is not merely the object of our faith, but He is the sphere in which the child of God must live out his life to God's glory. Christian progress is not growing up from Christ as a starting point, but into Christ as our goal. To grow you must remain in friendship and fellowship with the risen Lord.

"Walk" implies motion, activity, and progress (Gen. 5:24; 6:9). It suggests personal activity and progress to some end. The person who remains where he started is not walking! We must not remain at the starting point, or as some would term it merely be saved and satisfied. To take a few steps is not to walk. To walk in Christ is a constant, permanent, persevering, and continual thing. Each day we should obey the command of Moses: **"Consecrate yourselves to day to the LORD, even every man upon his son, and upon his brother; that**

he may bestow upon you a blessing this day" (Ex. 32:29). Luke 9:23 discloses that cross bearing is to be done **"daily."**

John Frederick Oberlin wrote: "In the name of the Lord of hosts, I this day renounce all former lords that have had dominion over me, the joys of the world in which I have too much delighted, and all carnal desires. I renounce things in order that God may constitute my All. I consecrate to Thee all that I am, and all that I have; the faculties of my mind, the members of my body, my fortune, and my time. Grant me grace, O Father of mercies, to employ all to Thy glory, in obedience to Thy commands. For ardently and humbly I desire to be Thine through the endless ages of eternity."

V. BY DISCLOSING THERE IS NO EXCUSE FOR FAILURE TO GROW

That some fail in the Christian life is a sad fact, but there is no excuse for this failure. First, God has provided abundant resources for our spiritual development. In II Peter 1:3 it is written: **"According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us unto glory and virtue."** All spiritual things are given to us in Christ (Rom. 8:32; I Cor. 3:21-23; Eph. 1:3). The same divine power, which gave us spiritual life, also gives us everything necessary to foster and nourish this life. We never experience a power failure. Any human weakness is taken care by divine power. This applies to two spheres, the inner life of the soul and the outer life of conduct and relations.

Second, God has give us His unerring Word: **"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works"** (II Tim. 3:16-17). The Bible educates and inspires the soul to holiness and righteousness. It is a manual on Christian living as to what God expects of His people. It is a sufficient guide at all times, in all places, and to all Christians. We never grow so much that we do not need to read and study the Bible.

Third, the Lord has granted us the infallible guide of the Holy Spirit: **"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth..."** While the Bible is an unerring guide to faith and practice, it is not a universal encyclopedia of all spiritual knowledge. The Holy Spirit alone can

lead into the fullness of truth. The perfect knowledge of truth is in God, and so the Spirit is the true Illuminator of truth to a mind darkened by sin. Believers are taught and enlightened in a manner wonderful to behold. The word **"guide"** in the Greek means the Spirit not only reveals a fullness of truth to our understanding, but He also makes us bow the will to the doctrines of truth (See Matthew Pool here).

Fourth, divine succor is offered: **"For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted"** (Heb. 2:18). Trials and temptations will surely come upon us in this world as they did on our Lord. In all of these Christ sympathizes with us and inspires us with courage to press on. The word **"succour"** means Christ hastens to come to our aid in times of need; He runs to help those who call upon Him. Every trial is an opportunity of our ever-present High Priest to succor us. Why fail when such divine help is freely offered in time of distress?

Fifth, power to prevent apostasy is promised us by God: **"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy"** (Jude 24). God's ability to keep us from failing in the Christian life is not based upon our perseverance. In truth, our perseverance is conditioned upon God's ability keep to us from failure to grow and to fall out of fellowship with Him (Ps. 121:1-8; 37:23-24). If Christ has the power to keep us from being spiritually stunned, why should we fail in our service to Him?

Sixth, victory is promised us in the Christian life: **"But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ"** (I Cor. 15:57). Christ is our Victor, for He has fulfilled the law and given us victory over the world, the flesh, and the Devil; yea, even over death itself! In Christ **"we are more than conquerors"** (Rom. 8:37). We need not fear our adversaries. In the conflict with the forces of evil, we have the assurance of final victory. So there is no excuse for standing still or retreating. We must press on to victory under the banner of King Emmanuel.

Seventh, there is a remedy for those who experience failure in spiritual advancement: **"My little children, these things write I unto you, that you sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous"** (I John 2:1). A child of God should not go around sinning. He has no

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need to sin and thus slow down his spiritual growth. Sin should be exceptional, an unusual occurrence, not a habitual practice. But when we sin and stop growing in the spiritual realm for a time, we have help at the Father's throne. Christ is our Advocate, our public Defender, who pleads our cause. He does not try to excuse or explain our sins, for He is righteous. By the eternal satisfaction of His own blood, He puts away sin from our conscience and restores us to fellowship with His Father.

VI. BECAUSE BACKSLIDING IS CONDEMNED IN THE BIBLE.

Many in running in the Christian race stumble and fall (Rom. 14:4; I Tim. 3:6-7; Heb. 4:11; Rev. 2:5). I Corinthians 10:12 says: **"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."** Some never lose the scars from their fall, like Peter who denied his Lord three times. What causes one to fall from his own steadfastness (II Pet. 3:17)? Personal injury by other Christians, worry, the lust of the flesh, and false teacher may cause us to fail to achieve spiritual development. One of God's elect may fall down, but he will not stay down. **"The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand"** (Ps. 37:23-24). Proverbs 24:16 says: **"For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again..."**

Because the old nature tends to draw us away from the divine and spiritual things, we must strive to maintain and enlarge our steadfastness. We must be faithful and unflinching in our loyalty to Christ. **"For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord"** (I Thess. 3:8). In Scripture there are many areas in which we are to stand fast.

First, we are to stand fast in the faith: **"Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong"** (I Cor. 16:13). Compromise is the order of the day. In such a time we must take special care to take a definite stand for the truth at all cost. If we do not stand for something, we will fall for anything. Paul told the members of the church at Thessalonica: **"Hold fast that which is good"** (I Thess. 5:21). He also told Timothy: **"Holding fast the faithful word..."** (Titus 1:9).

Second, we must stand fast in Christian liberty: **"Stand fast**

therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Gal. 5:1). By His sufferings and death Jesus Christ has freed us from the law and its curse. He has also freed us from needless human rites and ceremonies. But Christian liberty is not the right to live as we please (Gal. 5:13). He freed us from sin that we might serve Him without fear. We must not allow Antinomians and legalists to rob us of this liberty.

Third, we are to hold fast our profession without backsliding: **"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering..."** (Heb. 10:23). Our profession of faith and hope in Christ must be steady and constant. Trials and persecutions must not cause us to waver from it. In I Corinthians 15:58 we are admonished: **"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."**

Having urged believers to add Christian graces to their faith, Peter goes on to say: **"Wherefore the rather, brethren, give all diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall"** (II Pet. 1:10). Here Peter strikes a blow to antinomianism. He demonstrates that the natural effect of believing is doing (Ps. 15:5; Matt. 7:24; John 13:17; Jas. 1:22). There can be no assurance of election and effectual calling without progress in the Christian life. Those who advance in steadfastness shall not fall into sin nor become a backslider in heart.

VII. BY VARIOUS EXPRESSIONS IN SCRIPTURE

In the oldest book of the Bible it is written: **"The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger"** (Job 17:9). By strenuous effort a true believer holds on his way though there is much to discourage him and there are many evil powers to resist him. Many afflictions may befall him in his way, and men may cast many reproaches upon him as he travels in the way of righteousness, but he will hold out faithful until death. The person who does this has a clean hand and a clean heart washed in the blood of Jesus. Such a person will not only hold on his way, but will **"grow stronger and stronger."** An Arminian would have said that he would "grow weaker and weaker," for he denies the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. A righteous man will advance in strength of his attachment to God. He will become

more confirmed in his religious principles.

"FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH"

In Psalm 84:7 it is written: **"They (the pilgrim of Zion) go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God."** The literal Hebrew may read: "Going they increase in strength until they shall appear before God to Zion." If an Arminian had written the Bible, it would have read: "They go from strength to weakness, and very few of them shall appear in Zion." But the Bible says a saint goes **"from strength to strength."** Progress is the great law of life. Where there is life, there is progress. As we travel toward the heavenly Zion, we bear trials better; we overcome difficulties more easily;

we walk more cheerfully and triumphantly. None of the pilgrim in the highway of holiness perish during the journey; they will all appear before God in the heavenly Zion (John 10:28; Heb. 2:13; Jude 24).

"SHINETH MORE AND MORE"

King Solomon wrote: **"But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day"** (Prov. 4:18). Those made alive unto God are lights **"in the Lord"** (Eph. 5:8), and they **"walk in the light, as he is in the light"** (I John 1:7). Their light shines before men (Matt. 5:16). They are not like a meteor or a candle which burns out, but like the sun which shines more and more (Ps. 19:4-5; Matt. 13:43). Arminians would write that

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The Rantings and Ravings of Brother Ritechus N. Dignation

by Joseph Harris



BLACK CLOUD CHRISTIANS

I'm fired up about mully grubbed, persimmon suck'in, bitter herb Christians. They ain't never happy and they always got aches and pains. I heard about a Christian sister recently who was happiest when her misery was the deepest. Her motto was "every silver lining has a cloud." The "woe is me" syndrome ain't scriptural.

Now if you always look for the bad in life, you are probably going to find it. Wallowing in misery just begets more misery. The Christian's motto should be, "This is the day the Lord hath made, I will rejoice and be glad in it, even if it is a rotten day." Let's face it, some days are not just as good as other days, but dragg'in your jaw on the ground won't make it better.

Do you think Jesus ever walked around murmuring, grumbling, and complain'in about His problems? No, and He had plenty of them. He didn't start His day by saying, "Woe is me. Today I will be rejected in Nazareth, next week scorned by the Pharisees and in a few years, be nailed to a Roman cross." Hebrews 12 says that "...for the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross and despised the shame. . . ."

I once heard about a farmer who

went all over town with pig slop on his boots, complain'in the whole town stunk. Well, it was him, not the town and if your whole life stinks, then the problem is you. Quit whin'in, ask God for forgive you (cause it's a sin) and start being thankful for all the good things you have.

I'm also mad as hornets over people who are always sick. . . or want to be. I'm not talking about folks with some genuine illness, just those that think they are sick. You know, hipe-o-kondriaks. They're always runn'in a fever, or about to. When you talk about your illness, they've already had it or will next week.

I know one brother who gets jealous every time someone goes into the hospital. He's had so many surgeries, he's a walking breathing, scar. Folks nicknamed him Stitch. He "glories" in his infirmities, but not like the apostle Paul. Tarnation! No one wants to be around a body like that.

Land sakes, Christians, snap out of it. Life's too short to moan and mourn all day. Pack up and move out of the valley of doom and into the land of God's blessings. Thank God for the good and the bad. He is glorified as we receive His blessings and He is glorified when we faithfully endure trials.

Brother RND

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the light of a believer shines “less and less,” but the Bible says “**more and more.**” This illustrates gradual growth and increases of the saved in knowledge, holiness, and joy until they be perfected and swallowed up in glory. We shall never know perfection during our days on earth, but the Spirit of the everlasting covenant will bring us to a day without cloud, without night, without morning, without evening.

“GRACE FOR GRACE”

In John 1:16 it is written: “**And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.**” The expression “**grace for grace**” means God gives us grace to receive more grace. There is always a constant, fresh, abundant supply of new grace to take the place of old grace. This unfailing supply of grace is continually filling up and supplying all our needs. The great principle of the kingdom of Heaven is: “**For whosoever hath, to him shall be given**” (Luke 8:18). Those saved by grace cannot live a life of disgrace because of the constant flow of grace from Christ who is “**full of grace**” (John 1:14). Thank God that “**of his fullness have all we received.**” The Bible knows nothing of Christ exhausting His grace.

“FROM FAITH TO FAITH”

I read in Romans 1:17: “**For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: The just shall live by faith.**” The phrase “**from faith to faith**” is literally “out of faith into faith.” The righteousness provided by God springs out of faith and is adapted to a life of faith. We go from a lower degree of faith to a higher degree of faith. We do not go from faith to unbelief as Arminians teach. Paul commended the Thessalonian church: “. . . **because that your faith groweth exceedingly.** . . .” (II Thess. 1:3).

“FROM GLORY TO GLORY”

II Corinthians 3:18 declares: “**But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.**” True Christians behold the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ in the written Word as revealed by the Holy Spirit. This view of the glory of Christ causes us to be transformed from one glorious stage of spiritual growth to another. We go from victory to victory (Rom. 8:37), from doctrine to doctrine, from virtue to virtue (II Peter 1:4-7). We go “**from glory to glory,**” not from glory to shame and Hell. The changing of the redeemed into the likeness of Christ is progressive.

Mini Edition

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



THIN SKINS

You’ve probably noticed the big flap recently about the offensiveness of certain mascots. “Native Americans” are offended because of mascot names like Braves, Redskins, Indians, Chiefs, etc. They claim that these names perpetuate myths about their ancestors being hostile, aggressive and warlike. Well, the truth is, a lot of early native American Indians were warlike with the invading palefaces who began claiming land they had lived on for centuries. The Indians were not warlike without reason. (By the way, don’t email me with similarities about America and Israel/Palestine, because there is a difference. God didn’t divinely deed any American dirt to Indians or white men, but did give land to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and their descendants.)

Mascots are named after people, animals, or forces of nature for a reason. Cowboys, Vikings, falcons and tornados are all aggressive and destructive. It’s all in keeping with the spirit of fighting that is a part of competitive sports. Not all Native American Indians are offended, but a thin skinned, liberal minority of the politically correct are offended. If they had their way, high schools, colleges and professional teams would be known as the Westside Weeping Willows or the Pennsylvania Mighty Oaks or the Davidson Daisies or the Washington Redwoods. But then, tree hugging EPA nuts might get offended. Of course we could then turn to lower forms of plant life like the Atlanta Algae or the Kansas City Kernels until champions for this underclass group arose for their defense.

Here is a tidbit to prove my point. I was recently in Philadelphia, Mississippi, and drove through the Choctaw Indian Reservation. The Mississippi Choctaw Indians have done well with several profitable businesses and have become one of the states largest employers. I commend them on everything but their casino business. As I passed by the Choctaw High School, I was shocked to see the word “Warriors” followed by a picture of an Indian brave. I immediately thought that I needed to tell the Choctaws they are absolutely politically incorrect and should get with the times. I do not think, however, they would take very

kindly to being told they need to become the Choctaw Acorns or Choctaw Chickens or some other non-aggressive, inoffensive name.

Apparently, the Choctaws haven’t been approached by their politically correct brethren yet. If they ever are tackled by the PC Police, I hope the Choctaws will use good common sense and tell them to get real. Freedom of choice is important, even if it’s only over the issue of being able to choose a mascot that fits an aggressive athletic team. The other option is to join the ranks of the insane and become politically correct.

THE PARADOX OF FREEDOM

Even though July 4 is still 5 weeks away, I have some pre-independence Day thoughts about freedom. Freedom is not free. Liberty is one of the most misunderstood and least appreciated privileges enjoyed today. The desire for liberty is built into every man by God, the Creator of all men. Men desire to be free from oppression and exercise volition for self determination, and pursuit of this desire has led to the death of many men, women, and children who chose to take risks and seek liberty, rather than remain in bondage.

Freedom is what America represents and is the main reason she is hated and despised by those who seek to enslave people religiously and politically. Freedom may appear to be “free” to its recipients, but rest assured, when freedom is obtained, someone, somewhere, paid a price.

Freedom is often the result of bondage. In order to have the freedom to purchase services and products, one must first be in bondage to employment to have money, to be able to purchase. The bondage of a 9-5 job (or any other hours) secures money which gives the ability to purchase. Even if someone purchases merchandise with money received as a gift or a grant, someone, somewhere, provided that money through their bondage or commitment to produce through their labor.

Even the freedom of a juggler to juggle comes only after the bondage of lessons and practice, which requires work. It is only after the price of study and practice has been paid, that the freedom to perform becomes a reality. Try juggling with no lessons or

practice and you will get the point. Men and women are free to have sexual intimacy with one another, but only after the commitment (some would say bondage) of marriage has been made. Marriage is a type of bondage, however, because husband and wife promise to be bound exclusively to one another, hence this bondage produces the freedom for intimacy with one another. “**Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge**” (Heb. 13:4).

Not only must a price be paid to secure freedom, but there is also a maintenance fee. Freedom costs. The recipients of freedom must ever be aware of those who would steal liberty under the guise of promising “more freedom for all” by playing on emotions and using “discrimination and inequality” as a battle cry. The erroneously named American Civil Liberties Union and other groups, promote an unlimited, one-sided freedom for abortionists, pornographers, pedophiles, homosexuals and other transsexual deviants, while trampling on the freedom of normal Americans, especially conservative Christians. Believers in God must walk the tightrope of being active, yet never becoming activists to the point of promoting morality above the Gospel of Jesus Christ. However, if ungodliness is free to reign, eventually all freedoms will be destroyed, and bondage to sin, Satan, and ungodly government will result.

The greatest freedom in the world is liberty from sin and freedom from eternal punishment in the lake of fire, through eternal salvation, but notice the paradox of price this FREEdom required. It was secured by the payment of the Son of God on Calvary with the highest price ever paid for any purchase. We only have freedom through Christ by first surrendering totally to Christ. And we do not have freedom to “come boldly unto the throne” as God’s children, until we first submit at the throne. An absolute freedom, in the sense of no price being required by anyone, does not exist. Where freedom is a reality, someone, somewhere, has paid and is paying the price and carrying the burden of liberty, so freedom can exist. Let freedom ring.

FORGET THE ALAMO!

“Remember the Alamo” is a cry of independence recalling the Texas revolution with Mexico. The Battle of the Alamo is a historic event that is not only a part of Texas history, but

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Mini Edition

American history as well. However, changing times bring changes in school curriculum. . .and historical events. Since over 40% of the Texas student population is Hispanic, and the majority of those Hispanics of Mexican descent, some in the school system are afraid true history will be offensive. The squeamish never want to offend, even at the cost of being dishonest.

I have written the following statement more than once in the past Mini Editions and it is time to proclaim it again. *You can only do one of two things with history: (1) Believe it and accept it or (2) Choose to ignore and reject it. But you can never change it.* History is set in stone. Whether it's the Alamo, American slavery, or the slaughter of millions of Bible believers by the Roman Catholic institution throughout most of church history, what's done is done. Period. You can't change the past. Right or wrong, history is history. I may love or hate a certain historical event, but my feelings and opinion do not affect its historical validity.

Even though history cannot be changed in reality, it can be changed in the books and in the minds of students by revisionists in rewriting history. This has certainly occurred in the recording and teaching of true history as it relates to the War of Northern Aggression, erroneously called the Civil War (though there was nothing civil about it) and sometimes called the War Between the States. It was a war between a divided country where the southern half of its states tried to defend themselves against an invading group of northern government which was violating states rights. Abraham Lincoln has all been but canonized as a saint and heralded as the great emancipator, when in reality, his main objective was not to free slaves. States rights standing against an ever growing dictatorial government was the main issue, and as far as Lincoln was concerned, not a slave would have been freed, if it was not necessary to his main cause. Revisionists present a blurred picture of bad relations between Southern Whites and Blacks, but fail to acknowledge how many Blacks fought willingly for the freedom of their South, when it was aggressively invaded from the North.

Changing history to protect the feelings of others is nothing more than outright lying. Multiculturalism in Texas, and everywhere else, is divisive and hurtful and leads to more hate and separation among the different groups which make up humanity. The

melting pot has ceased melting and has become partitioned with each group demanding respect and preferential "rights" above, and at the expense of all other groups. For a proper perspective, consider the thinking of the Apostle Paul. He said that in Christ, there is neither Jew nor Gentile, bond or free, male or female. In Christ, all are one, in hope, goals, and destination, yet without relinquishing gender, class, culture or ethnicity and always preferring others above self. That's good doctrine and it will work as a philosophy anywhere.

The Old Whore

Continued from page 361

this is the Old Roman Whore – The Catholic Church!

HOW DO I KNOW THIS IS THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH?

Well, the first and foremost reason is found in Revelation 17:9, which reads: **"And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which THE WOMAN SITTETH."** There is only one city that is known as the city that dwells among the seven hills, and that is Rome! The famous seven hills that Rome sits among are as follows: The Capitol, Palatine, Aventine with the Caelian, Oppian, Esquiline, Viminal, and The Quirinal. I believe that the geographical location is very clear in Revelation 17:9.

SECOND REASON I BELIEVE THIS IS THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Is that the scriptures here in Revelation 17 speaks of a "woman" or a "whore" (Rev. 17:1-7, 16). God the Holy Spirit uses feminine terminology to speak of the Lord's Bride in the New Testament, which is all of His blood-bought churches (Eph. 5:22-25). There is only one type of this blood-bought church; and the first one was formed at Jerusalem (Matt. 16:18-19), during Jesus' earthly ministry, and was given the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20).

I believe this is the reason John marveled when he saw this "woman" riding the beast, for he was familiar with the feminine terminology that was used for the Lord's local churches, and here is a religious institution being one with Satan's system even before the Antichrist comes on the scene (Rev. 17:10-11). What was this religious institution doing riding this evil beast? Why is this "church" drinking the blood of God's saints instead of having her own blood shed?

John was familiar with only the Lord's churches, and he no doubt is

wondering where this "other church" came from! John has been shown by God in these visions of Revelation that there are two "women" that God loves, and they are: His Son's wife which is His blood-bought churches (Baptist) and Israel, which is the wife of God (Book of Hosea). But God knows nothing of this "woman" in Revelation 17 as being His! This "woman" is married to someone else, and his name is Satan!

THIRD REASON I BELIEVE THIS IS THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Is because of what Revelation 17:4 says about this "whore," and what is her attire, gold, and precious stones. What other "church" can you think of besides the Roman Catholic Church, that is decked with all the gold and precious stones as she? I can think of none! What other "church" can you think of that is not only decked with gold and precious stones, but dwells among seven hills or mountains (Rev. 17:9)? What other "church" can you think of that wears the attire as the Roman Catholic Church? This is Rome anyway you want to look at it!

FOURTH REASON I BELIEVE THIS IS THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Is because Revelation 17:2 says that this "whore" has committed fornication with the kings of the earth! Who does this sound like? Does it not sound like the Roman Catholic Church and the grip she had on Europe all through the Dark Ages? Does it not sound like the Catholic Church and the grip she has on places such as Mexico and Brazil? What city and church are you aware of that has ambassadors sent to it, as Rome and the Catholic Church has sent to them? Did not this old Roman "Whore" have the power to set up or tear down kings all through the Dark Ages?

FIFTH REASON I BELIEVE THIS IS THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Is because of this whore's favorite drink which is the blood of the saints (Rev. 17:6)! Can you not see this old "whore" in your mind with a glass filled with blood, and as she is drinking it the blood is running down both sides of her mouth because she is drinking it so fast? What church are you aware of that is guilty of 50,000,000 murders? Is it not the Roman Catholic Church? Did she not murder all through the Dark Ages because some did not believe in infant baptism? From about 500 A.D. to the 1400's, it was just the Anabaptists who were murdered!

SIXTH REASON I BELIEVE THIS IS THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

In Revelation 17:4 it speaks of the **"abominations and filthiness of her fornication."** Underneath all that gold and glitter of the Roman Catholic Church is nothing but dead men's bones! They have found in the basements of these old church buildings the remains of little babies that were evidently produced by priests and nuns! It will never be known how much fornication and adultery has gone on in the Catholic Church in centuries past on this side of Heaven, but it will be revealed one day (Rev. 20:11-15)!

It is evident by what we have seen in the news lately that the Roman Catholic Church has been, and still is, a haven for sodomites and child molesters! The reason there are so many of these "animals" in the Catholic Church is because the Catholic Church does not require the new birth (John 3:1-8), for membership. They believe that the Kingdom of Heaven is in the Catholic Church, and therefore when they baptize a baby, they view that baby as saved, for through its baptism it has become part of the Catholic Church – (Kingdom of Heaven)!

THE SEVENTH REASON I BELIEVE THIS IS THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Is because this old "whore" is **"the mother of harlots"** (Rev. 17:5)! No other "church" has reproduced so many false "churches" as the Roman Catholic Church. As whores commit physical, illicit sex; so has the Roman Catholic Church "laid" with many men in a spiritual sense! Men such as: John Huss (Moravians), John Calvin (Presbyterians), John and Charles Wesley, and George Whitfield (Methodists), King Henry VIII (The Church of England), Martin Luther (Lutherans), and others who started the Episcopalian and Anglican churches.

It is hard to tell how many false churches there are today that have come into existence, that are "descendants" of many of these original **"harlots"** (Rev. 17:5), that came from Rome! The Bible teaches that there is: **"One Lord, one faith, one baptism,"** according to Ephesians 4:5.

THE EIGHTH REASON I BELIEVE THIS IS THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Is the origin of this old "whore" that is riding the beast in Revelation 17:1-5. God, as I have stated earlier in this article has used women to represent either His Son's bride (Eph. 5:22-25; II Cor. 11:2), and to represent the nation of Israel (Rev. 12:1), and then to represent false religions (Rev. 17:1-5; Zech. 5:5-11).

Continued on page 374

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit questions on any Bible topic

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PO Box 39

Mantachie, Mississippi 38855

What does the Bible say about interracial marriage? Is it worse for a Christian to marry a non-Christian, or a person of another race? --- Alabama



David O'Neal
2750 South 53rd
West Ave
Tulsa, OK 74107

Pastor
**Grace Missionary
Baptist Church**
2750 South 53rd
West Ave
Tulsa, OK 74107



Jimmie B. Davis
309 Carroll Road
Fulton, MS 38843

Pastor
**Sovereign Grace
Baptist Church**
100 James Street
Fulton, MS 38843

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?” (II Cor. 6:14-15)?

A child of God should not marry an unbeliever. There can be no true fellowship between one who is righteous in Christ and one who is still in unrighteousness. The one has the light of the knowledge of the glory of God (II Cor. 4:6) and the other is still in spiritual darkness. The believer is in Christ, and the unbeliever is called an infidel (one without faith in God). There will always be problems in a marriage between one who is in light and one who is still in darkness. The difference is just too great for them to have the relationship that God has intended in marriage.

In the Old Testament, God chose Israel. **“For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth”** (Deut. 7:6). He instructed Israel not to marry with those of other nations (Deut. 7:1-4). The seed of Abraham was chosen as a special people and instructed not to give their sons and daughters in marriage to the evil people of the land which they were to possess, for it was a land filled with the filthiness of the people (Ezra 9:1-12). It appears to me that this was more because of the sins of those nations and not because of race.

I know that when there is an interracial marriages, there can be problems; but I am not able to find in the Bible where interracial marriages are forbidden. I do believe that the Bible teaches that a Christian should not marry a non-Christian.

DAVID O'NEAL

People who have given serious consideration to the subject of intermarriage are aware of God's instruction to Israel in relation to this matter. One need only to read Gen. 34, Deut. 7, and Josh. 23 to see the will of God for the people of Israel on intermarriage with the people constituting heathen nations. The great danger in disregarding His will in this matter could, and did result in the acceptance of false gods and pagan practices.

Even though one might say that Christians are not subject to these stipulations imposed upon Israel, it can still be considered seriously that the same things can happen to Christians who could be introduced to other gods through interracial marriage. It is also a well known fact that interracial couples and their children often face difficulties that couples of the same race do not face.

Scriptures give instruction (I Cor. 7:12-16) to Christians who marry non-Christians, but the best instruction to the believer on marriage is found in II Cor. 6:14. Should a believer in Christ find himself/herself in the position of marrying a person of a different race, the other person should also be a Christian. Christians sometimes marry outside their race, but if this happens they should know that the person they marry is not devoted to pagan practices directed to a false god.

JIMMIE B. DAVIS



Tom Ross
6339 County Rd. 15
South Point, OH
45680

Pastor
**Mount Pleasant
Baptist Church**
6939 County Rd. 15
Chesapeake, OH
45619

As far as I can tell the Bible has little

or nothing to say for or against interracial marriage. I really believe the subject of interracial marriage is more of a cultural issue than a scriptural one. Most black people prefer marrying in their own race, the same holds true for white people. However, there are times when they marry outside of their race. For many years the social prejudices of both black and white people have frowned upon such unions usually because of the difficulties encountered by mixed race children. I know that my preference is that my sons and daughter would marry white people. My preference is based on what I am comfortable with, not with any Scripture that I can definitely point too. All races trace their ancestry back to a man and a woman in the Garden of Eden named Adam and Eve. Acts 17:26 declares: **“And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.”** God's Word declares that we are all of one blood, the difference lies in the pigment of our skin and the cultural mores of a given society.

To answer the second part of the question is simple. The Bible definitely forbids the marriage union of a believer with a non-believer in several places (Deut. 1:1-11; I Cor. 7:39; II Cor. 6:14-18). It would be culturally difficult for a Christian to marry another Christian of a different race, but it would not be unscriptural.

TOM ROSS



Garner Smith
113 Keith Drive
Clarksville, TN 37043

Pastor
Faith Baptist Church
2590 Madison Ext.
Clarksville, TN 37043

I look at all races as God's creation. I do not know why God created different races of people, but I do know He had a purpose in the matter, and I can truthfully say I harbor no ill feelings toward any race.

I personally have an adopted dark skinned Indian from Thailand for a grandson and an adopted Korean girl

for a granddaughter. I honestly cannot tell any difference in my love for them and my love for my white biological grandchildren.

My answer to this question is offered without any prejudice toward any race of people.

As II Corinthians 6:14-18 states concerning relationships between believers and unbelievers there is no option, believers are to never marry unbelievers. I do not know of any Scripture that forbids Gentiles from interracial marriage. I know under God's ceremonial law in the Old Testament God forbade the Jews from marrying other races (Ex. 34:16; Deut. 7:3).

I must confess that I believe God had a purpose in creating different races and I believe that mixing them by marriage is against God's purpose and causes many hurtful and unsolvable problems. It is not a matter of superiority or inferiority but a matter of God's purpose. The different cultures and practices cause untold conflict, broken homes, fatherless and motherless children, children that do not know where they belong and are mocked and mistreated by society.

Marriage should be for the purpose of having and raising a family to worship and glorify God. It is very difficult in most cases to carry out this plan in a mixed racial family.

For Christians there should always be great care in the marriage plans to refrain from any plan that would increase problems in having a loving, harmonious, sharing family that can be happy together and bring honor and glory to God.

It is certainly worse for a Christian to marry a non-Christian as shown by II Corinthians 6:14-18 than for one to marry someone of a different race, but I believe for the welfare of the family and society it is far better to refrain from interracial marriage.

GARNER SMITH

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Do the scriptures teach using wine or grape juice in the Lord's Supper? -- Texas



Tom Ross
6339 County Rd. 15
South Point, OH
45680

Pastor
Mount Pleasant Baptist Church
6939 County Rd. 15
Chesapeake, OH
45619

The Scriptures are clear that wine was used in the Lord's Supper, and it is still to be used by New Testament churches today. The Corinthian church was rebuked for profaning the Lord's Supper by getting drunk (I Cor. 11:21-26). You can't get drunk on grape juice. Wine is the liquid element that symbolizes the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Prior to the Temperance Movement and Prohibition you would be hard pressed to find any churches that used grape juice for the Lord's Supper.

Before I was saved I had a serious problem with alcohol abuse. When I was saved I had a natural hatred and prejudice against using wine in the Lord's supper because of the alcohol content. After the Holy Spirit taught me that wine was the scriptural element to be used in the Lord's Supper I was able by God's grace to partake without any desire for more alcohol. In fact, the only time I use wine is in the sacred setting of the Lord's Supper. I despise the private and social use of alcoholic beverages. I see only two permissible uses of alcohol, sacred and medicinal.

I am stating my position without a desire to engage in quarrels with those who differ from it. There are good and godly men that I love and respect who differ with me. I refuse to break fellowship over the liquid element of the Lord's Supper. I have learned to agree to disagree on some matters.

TOM ROSS



David O'Neal
2750 South 53rd
West Ave
Tulsa, OK 74107

Pastor
Grace Missionary Baptist Church
2750 South 53rd
West Ave
Tulsa, OK 74107

The Lord instituted the "Lord's Supper" while the Passover Supper

was still being observed. The cup used by our Lord was a part of the four cups of wine used in the Passover Supper. The disciples had prepared the elements for the Passover which was wine mixed with water (Luke 22:8-13). The Passover was observed in the spring of the year and at a time in which there was no grape juice. At the time the grapes were harvested, the weather was very hot and the juice would begin the process of fermentation almost immediately. There could have been no fresh grape juice in the early spring.

The Corinthian church used wine (I Cor. 11:21), for no one could become drunken by drinking grape juice. Paul had nothing to say to them about the use of the wrong element, but that they had drunk the cup of the Lord unworthily (I Cor. 11:27). It is very clear that wine was the element used in the Lord's Supper.

When the Passover was observed, all leaven must be taken from the house (Ex. 12:15). Leaven is a type of sin (I Cor. 5:7-8); therefore, unleavened bread must be used in the Lord's Supper to represent the sinless body of Christ. **"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?"** (I Cor. 10:16)? Grape juice contains leaven and could not be used to represent the blood of God's perfect sacrifice. Unleavened bread and wine must be the elements used in the Lord's Supper.

DAVID O'NEAL



Jimmie B. Davis
309 Carroll Road
Fulton, MS 38843

Pastor
Sovereign Grace Baptist Church
100 James Street
Fulton, MS 38843

It is a well-known fact that many Baptist brethren use wine in the Lord's Supper, while other of our brethren insist on using grape juice. Many articles have been written and many sermons preached in support of both positions, and I am sure that my position on the use of wine will not

have much effect upon those who are well entrenched in the use of grape juice. However, being convinced by my understanding of Scripture, I will give some of the reasons for my view.

(1) I am fully convinced that fermented wine more accurately pictures the purity of Christ's blood. The process of fermentation removes many impurities which remain in unfermented grape juice.

(2) I believe it is a historic fact that the Jews used wine in their observance of Passover. I believe Jesus used the same ingredients that Israel used before Him. I cannot believe that our Lord abruptly changed ingredients when establishing the Lord's Supper immediately after observing Passover.

(3) I believe it was the misuse or abuse of the element of wine that caused some in the church at Corinth to become drunken (I Cor. 11:21) not the abuse of grape juice. It is also hard to understand how grape (fresh grape juice) could be kept for a long period of time before the process of pasteurization was developed.

(4) I dare not assume to speak for brethren who use grape juice in the Lord's Supper, but through observation I believe some do it because of their position on temperance—a total abstinence from any form of alcoholic drink. Perhaps there are some who are not fully convinced of the position they should take and use whatever is traditional.

I affirm that the Scriptures strongly condemn drunkenness, and I would not under any condition approve of the abuse or misuse of wine. But I am also convinced that there are lawful uses for wine set forth in Scripture. It is a fact that if one practices total abstinence from all forms of alcohol they would have to throw away the majority of their bottled medicine.

JIMMIE B. DAVIS



Garner Smith
113 Keith Drive
Clarksville, TN 37043

Pastor
Faith Baptist Church
2590 Madison Ext.
Clarksville, TN 37043

I am personally convinced by the Word of God that the Bible teaches

that wine is to be used in the Lord's Supper.

If one believes that the King James Version of the Bible is the Word of God, and that God has preserved His Word in this English version that there is some significance in the fact that the term "grape juice" is not found in the Scriptures having reference to the Lord's Supper. If we believe that God has preserved this version for us today we must accept the fact that there must be a God-ordained reason for the term "grape juice" to be left out.

I believe there are many scriptural reasons for using wine in the Lord's Supper. The Lord established the Lord's Supper from the same elements used in the Jewish Passover (Matt. 27:17-29; John 17:1-17). This had to be fermented wine without leaven in it because all leaven had to be removed from the place where the Passover was observed. The apostle Paul refers to the Lord's Supper as the "cup of blessing" in I Corinthians 10:16. This title was the name for the third cup in the Jewish Passover that was always filled with wine mixed with water.

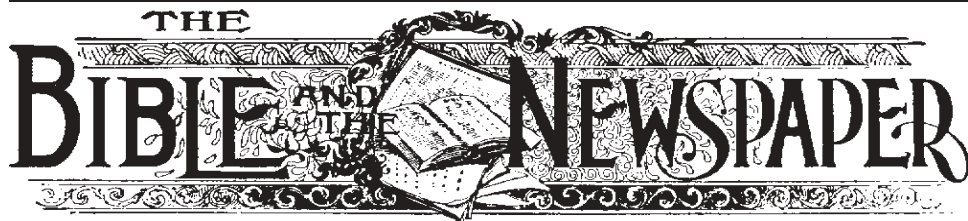
Christ called the liquid in the cup "fruit of the vine" in Matthew 26:29, Mark 14:25, and Luke 22:18. This was the technical term for the drink in the "cup of blessing."

Until the time of Louis Pasteur there was no way known of preserving grape juice from harvest time to Passover time without fermentation taking place so undoubtedly wine must have been used.

I also believe that wine far more correctly symbolizes the blood of Christ than grape juice (I Pet. 1:18-19). Grape juice even though pasteurized still has leaven in it though killed by pasteurization. In the Bible leaven always represents sin or evil. Wine has no leaven in it; therefore it represents the pure blood of Christ, which is incorruptible rather than grape juice that has dead leaven in it. Wine contains neither leaven nor rotteness. Grape juice will rot; therefore it is not pure. As wine is used for medicine to cure so also is the blood of Christ used to cure the sin sick soul (I Tim. 5:23; Luke 10:34). As wine cleanses, purifies, and aids in healing, the blood of Christ cleanses and heals the soul having been made incurably sick by sin.

The elements of the Lord's Supper are pictures of the pure body and blood of Christ, which was broken and shed for the sins of His people. I do not believe leavened bread and leavened grape juice can properly represent the body and blood of Christ.

GARNER SMITH



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

CC

President Clinton, once dubbed the "first black president," "exploited" blacks, said an activist at a meeting of leaders gathered in Detroit for a fund-raiser for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. "He exploited black sentiment because he knew the rituals of black culture," said Michael Eric Dyson, a professor of religious studies at DePaul University in Chicago. "Bill Clinton exploited us like no other president before him (*The Washington Times*, May 6-12, 2002).

The Internal Revenue Service currently has rules that can be used to revoke churches' tax-exempt status if they engage in anything that the agency considers "political" activity. The House of Worship Political Speech Protection Act (HR 2357), sponsored by Rep. Walter Jones (R. -N. C.), would strip the IRS of this power and restore churches' and clergymen's right to say what they wish—a right taken away by a provision slipped into the law by then-Sen. Lyndon Johnson (D. -Tex.) in 1954. Critics contend the IRS rarely enforces the provision on churches—particularly if they are liberal or black—but threat hangs over them, especially if they run afoul of government officials. Says the American Conservative Union, "We all know and respect that it was in the pulpits of this nation that the abolitionist and civil rights movements were fostered, and under the present tax laws they would have been silenced." The House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Oversight will hold hearings on the bill May 14 (*Human Events*, May 6, 2002).

The liberal press has often reported that the Oklahoma bomber and mass murderer, Timothy McVeigh, was a Christian. This is a lie. McVeigh was an agnostic. He told his friends, "Science is my religion." To worship at the altar of science is idolatry and not Christian (MRC).

NASHVILLE (BP) - Membership in Southern Baptist churches topped 16 million in 2001, an increase of more than 92,000 members over the previous year. The record total of 16,052,920 members was an increase of 0.58 percent, slightly less than the gain of 108,000 or 0.68 percent in 2000. The total number of churches grew to 42,334 a 1.97 percent

increase, or 746 churches more than the 2000 total of 41,588. At the same time, church-type missions operated by churches declined by 5.91 percent or 310 to a total of 4,933.... While membership grew, baptisms declined by 18,727 or 4.52 percent to a total of 395,930. The decline in baptism for the second year in a row ends four years of baptism totals above 400,000 (*The Western Recorder*, 4-30-02).

An Alabama Baptist church has been ordered to pay \$950,000 to the family of a 16-year-old boy who drowned while on a mission trip in 2000. A Baldwin County jury awarded punitive damages April 3 in a wrongful-death suit against First Baptist Church of Columbiana, Ala. Terry White drowned May 31, 2000, while on a mission trip with other youth to migrant camps. Pastor Mike Miller said the church has insurance but the decision could set a dangerous precedent for Alabama churches (*ibid.*).

A recent story in the *New York Times* reports that Christian Coalition founder Pat Robertson invested \$620,000 in a horse name Mr. Pat that he had hoped to enter in one of the Kentucky Derby prelude races. "I don't bet and I don't gamble," he told the *Times*. "I just enjoy watching horses running and performing" (*ibid.*).

The late criminal Communist dictator, Kim II Sung, was responsible for the Korean War in which 50,000 Americans were killed and 100,000 wounded. How appropriate that our draft-dodging ex-President sent "condolences to the people of North Korea on behalf of the United States." What condolences did this lousy hypocrite send to our veterans and the families of Americans killed or wounded? (Tom Anderson in *Straight Talk* (5:2-02).

The U. S. Congress is considering a federal "hate crimes" bill that effectively create a special harsh penalties, for those motivated by "bias" in committing a crime. The effect is that a conservative Christian crime victim has less protection under the law than a homosexual crime victim! The "hate crimes" bill is really a victim's discrimination bill! (*ibid.*).

John Paul II joined representatives of ten major world religions on January 14

to pray for peace. According to an AP report, the group that gathered in Assisi, Italy, included Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, and African tribal religions (*Challenger*, March-April, 2002).

Influential Catholic priest Michael Manning gave the following answers to Larry King's questions (12-1 show): "King asked: 'Now Father, if you don't believe in Christ when you die, are you going to hell?' Manning replied: 'No, not at all. It's the Catholic belief that Jesus is the source of salvation, Jesus is God; we believe that. But what (do) we say to the millions and billions of people who don't even know about Jesus, are they just thrown into hell? Or about a Rabbi who really follows the Lord as best he can? As a Catholic, I'm very comfortable that he attains salvation by doing this.' King: 'So he achieves it without believing in Christ?' Manning: 'Correct.' [He added that it's not the goal of Christ to try to throw people into hell.] King: '...How do you view Mohammed?' Manning: 'As a very wise man. I see the beauty in Islam in a very strong way. A simple approach to God.... I'm very touched by Ramadan, by the fasting; the beautiful presence of God and the power of God. And as a Catholic, I need to learn from that'" (p: *Calvary Contender*, 5-02).

Roman Catholic seminary president Donald Cozzens says that at least half of the priests and seminarians in the U.S. may be homosexuals and that the priesthood is becoming a gay culture (*Christian News*, 4-8-02).

Baptist World Alliance Gen. Sec'y Denton Lotz participated in Pope John Paul's interfaith prayer gathering for world peace at Assisi, Jan. 24 (*Foundation*). Lotz said: "I went to Assisi to affirm as Baptist Christians that we are people of peace and that we will join the other Christians to pray for peace. His "other Christians" included Catholics, Muslims, Hindus, etc (2-15 C.C.). He has reached out ecumenically to Catholics before (See 2-1 C.C.). The testimony of conservative So. Baptists are tainted by its membership and support of the apostate BWA (*Calvary Contender*, 5-02).

Minnesota Gov. Jesse Ventura irked many Christians recently when he proclaimed June as "Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Pride Celebration Month," and at the same time refused again to issue a proclamation, noting May 2 as a "National Day of Prayer," according to the Minnesota Family Council (*Western Recorder*, 4-16-02).

As scams go, this one's a whopper. More than 100,000 Americans have filed claims with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) for \$2.7 billion in nonexistent tax credits for slave reparations in the last two

years alone. What's even more amazing, the IRS has mailed checks totaling more than \$30 million to those make the false claims. And what's being done about it? Not nearly enough (*Human Events*, 4-22-02).

Because of their political liberalism, many Jews are uneasy with conservative Christians— the bulk of the "religious right." But they are being advised to reconsider, given Christians' support of Israel, particularly in the current flare-up of the eternal Mideast tension. "I was deeply moved by Monday's rally for Israel in Washington, where Jews like Binyamin Netanyahu and Elie Wiesel stood shoulder-to-shoulder with Christians like Rep. Dick Armev and activist Janet Parshall, " said Rabbi Daniel Lapin of Toward Tradition last week. "It is striking how, on the question of Israel's right to defend herself from terror, Christian America stands apart from lapsed-Christian Europe and the rest of the non-Christian world.... For ten years, Toward Tradition has been calling on American Jews to recognize who our friends are. One could not think of a better time than the present to do and to express appropriate gratitude (*ibid.*).

Congress noted last week that the United States last year paid Iraq about \$6.58 billion for oil—money Iraqi President Saddam Hussein is no doubt using to pay, at \$25,000 a pop, to the families of each Palestinian suicide bomber (*The Washington Times*, April 15-21, 2002).

More than half of high school students cheat on tests or homework and most of them aren't ashamed of it, a recent Rutgers University study has found. The survey of 4,500 high school students nationwide found 74 percent have cheated on a test at least once, and another 72 percent said they have cheated on at least one written assignment (*ibid.*).

The average Israeli woman bears two to three children, but the average Palestinian woman bears five to six. What this means is that by 2050 about 8 million Jewish Israelis will be sitting cheek-by-jowl with approximately 20 million Palestinian and few million Israeli Arabs (*ibid.*).

The Rev. Jesse Jackson's newly released tax forms for 2000 reveal that his top donors that year were a who's who of companies that had been threatened with boycotts or other sanctions by Mr. Jackson. The forms also show that Mr. Jackson's Citizenship Education Fund, his primary tax-exempt group, accepted a \$50,000 donation from Kevin Ingram, a convicted criminal and the former head of the mortgage-backed securities tests at

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Goldman Sachs and Deutsche Bank. Igram—friends with Mr. Jackson for several years—last year pleaded guilty to federal money-laundering charges related to Pakistani arms deals. He is in federal prison (*The Washington Times*, April 22-28, 2002).

In the year 2025 there will be around 2.6 billion Christians, of whom 633 million will live in Africa, 640 million in Latin America and 460 million in Asia. Europe, with 555 million will have slipped to third place. Soon, the phrase 'a white Christian' may sound like a curious oxymoron, as mildly surprising as a 'Swedish Buddhist.' The era of Western Christianity has passed within our lifetimes, and the day of Southern Christianity is dawning (*ibid.*).

According to the March 25, 2002 issue of *The New American*, David Eisenberg said that the Iranian shipment of 50 tons of arms and explosives to the terrorist PLO may have been paid for with money supplied by American taxpayers through the U.S. government's foreign aid program.

Communist North Korea is the most repressive nation in the Communist world. It receives more food aid than any (3-9 *World*). The U.S. supplies 300,000 tons of food each year, but food aid is not reaching the starving; it goes to the government where it is stockpiled to feed soldiers and the ruling elite (*Calvary Contender*, 4-02).

Forty percent of Zimbabwe's adult population is HIV-positive. Over 1.5 million children are orphaned as a result of losing parents to AIDS (3-25 *H. Times*). Catholic Marxist Robert Mugabe was recently re-elected president in a flawed election. An international ecumenical team from the World Council of Churches and the All Africa Conference of Churches, sent to observe the fraudulent election last month, in a summary statement said various aberrations "preclude us from confirming the election to be universal, transparent, fair or free" (3-13-02: jenk email). Ironically, Mugabe praised the WCC (at its 8th assembly, 1998), hosted by Zimbabwe, for having supported his armed [Marxist] revolution (10-15-99 *CC*).

Roy Fuller attends a Baptist church and graduated from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary but he still says there are times when evangelical Christians can worship with Muslims, Buddhists and followers of other faiths (*Western Recorder*, 3-19-92).

Just when we thought the country was steering toward the right, Harper's Index reports that 30 percent of first-year U.S. college students in 2001 embraced "liberal" or "far-left" politics, compared with 21 percent in 1981, the year President Reagan took office (*The Washington Times*, March 25-31, 2002).

North Carolina abortion rate shows steady decline. The abortion rate—the number of induced abortions per 1,000 women of reproductive age—was 21.7 in 1990, declining to 15.1 in 2000. The abortion fraction—the number of induced abortions per 1,000 reported pregnancies—fell from 247.0 in 1990 to 181.9 in 2002. Another contributing factor may be changes in the laws. In 1995, the legislature passed a parental consent bill as well as legislation to tighten requirements for tax-payer-funded abortions. Beginning in that year, the available money in the State Abortion Fund was reduced from 1.4 million to \$50,000. In addition, North Carolina would only pay for abortions for rape, incest, and the life of the mother (*National Right To Life*, 3-02).

There are 1,113,000 pages of Federal Code (U.S. Laws) that the average American is legally responsible to comply with. It would take you 23,000 years to read. Get started (*Straight Talk*, 3-21-02).

A Roman Catholic priest shot himself to death in his car three days after being accused of molesting a girl two decades ago, authorities said yesterday. The Rev. Don A. Rooney, 48, was found slumped over the wheel Thursday in a pharmacy parking lot in Hinckley with a gunshot wound to the head. Cuyahoga County coroner Dr. Elizabeth Bairaj ruled it suicide (*Lexington Herald*, 4-6-02).

BOSTON - The Archdiocese of Boston knew that one of its priests, now accused of rape, spoke in favor of sex between men and boys at a 1979 meeting that apparently led to the founding of a national group advocating the practice, according to court documents released today. The document also show that archdiocese officials knew of sexual misconduct allegations against the priest, the Rev. Paul Shanley, since at least 1967, but continued to give him access to children in different parishes for three decades, and that Vatican officials had been told as early as 1979 about Shanley's teachings on homosexuality. He continued to serve as a parish priest. "All of the suffering that has taken place at the hands of Paul Shanley, a serial child molester for four decades—three of them in Boston—none of it had to happen," said Roderick MacLeish, an attorney for the family of alleged abuse victim Gregory Ford, 24....Ford, who says he was repeatedly raped by Shanley in the 1980s,

also alleges that Cardinal Bernard Law allowed the priest to remain as pastor at St. John the Evangelist Parish in Newton until 1989, despite knowledge of his behavior (*Lexington Herald*, Lexington, Ky., 4-9-02).

An Owensboro man who claims he was molested by a priest more than 30 times years ago is suing the Roman Catholic Diocese of Owensboro, saying it failed to supervise the priest and concealed its knowledge of the alleged abuse.... The suit claims that, on numerous occasions during 1968, Waldruff abused the plaintiff by abducting him, forcing alcohol down his throat, fondling him, and forcing the plaintiff to engage in masturbation and acts of oral sex.... (*ibid.*, 3-29-02).

IRVINE, Calif. - The Roman Catholic dioceses of Orange and Los Angeles paid \$1.2 million yesterday to a 37-year-old woman who alleged in a lawsuit that a popular priest molested her as a teen-ager, got her pregnant and paid for an abortion. The church's settlement with Lori Haigh was the second high-profile settlement the two dioceses have paid in eight months to an alleged victim of priestly abuse. It was the largest in a mounting string of cases throughout the nation that have focused attention on church's tolerance of abusive clergy (*ibid.*, 4-2-02).

Two Baptist churches in North Carolina are under fire for calling woman as pastors and declining to align with the Southern Baptist Convention. Providence Baptist Church in Hendersonville received word it does not qualify for church-starting funds from the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina after Carolina Baptist Association rejected the church's request for membership. The church, which called a woman as pastor, is affiliated with the state convention and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, but not the Southern Baptist Convention. Cullowhee Baptist Church near Asheville is facing possible dismissal from its association for calling a woman as co-pastor and not financially supporting the SBC (*Western Recorder*, 5-7-02).

NEW YORK- Canada, Australia, Ireland, Britain, France, Germany, Mexico, Poland. It may be the American cardinals who are headed to the Vatican, but the Roman Catholic Church has faced clergy sex scandals around the globe—with the most widespread problems in English-speaking countries.... Some observers suggest that victims in English-speaking countries—along with journalists, lawyers and prosecutors—just have more support if they dare to speak up. Canada has faced devastating sex-abuse scandals. Indians in that nation have filed 2,500 compensation claims over physical and sexual abuse at boarding schools run by the Oblates of

Mary Immaculate, and the order filed for bankruptcy protection last week. Australian cases began surfacing in the late 1980s, and during the past nine years, at least 50 priests and brothers have been sentenced for sexual offenses. In Ireland, the church faces "the greatest institutional crisis in its history," the Irish Times editorialized last week. An estimated 3,000 victims at church schools and orphanages will share \$110 million in compensation under a January deal, with the church paying perhaps a fourth and taxpayers the rest. Between 1995 and 1999 in England, 21 priests were convicted of molestation.... In France, the secretary general of the bishop's conference says nearly 30 priests have been convicted of molestation over the past decade. In Italy, Lithuania, Portugal, Spain and Switzerland, few or no cases have been reported (*Lexington Herald*, 4-20-02).

Sex between clergy and adult women is a more serious offense than molesting minors under an obscure but important bouy of Roman Catholic rules known as canon law, experts in the field agree. Church law emphasized restoring wrongdoers to active priesthood over removing them from the clergy. Some Canonists complain that the system grants abusers more protection than their victims (*Commonwealth Journal*, Somerset, Ky., 4-12-02).

Sen. Clinton recently met with the Rev. Al Sharpton's National Action Network to tell them that she support its goal of strengthening black-owned media outlets by increasing the amount of federal advertising money they receive (*Human Events*, 4-15-02).

"Things could always get worse in the Middle East," according to New York columnist Rod Dreher. "For example, the Palestinians and the Israelis could take up Jesse Jackson on his offer to step in and mediate their war." Writing on National Review Online (www.nationalreview.com), Mr. Dreher says "Jackson's offer to insert himself into the Israeli-Palestinian dispute is so outrageous as to beggar belief," because Mr. Jackson has a "love affair" with Yasser Arafat that dates back to 1979. During Jackson's visit to Beirut to meet with Arafat, who was living in exile there, Mr. Jackson publicly kissed Mr. Arafat, whom he called "my friend and the friend of justice and humanity."

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The Old Whore

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I believe that Zechariah 5:5-11 gives us some detailed information as to the origin of **"the woman"** that we read of in Revelation 17:1-5. First of all, it was **"a woman"** in Zechariah's vision (Zech. 5:7), just as it is **"a woman"** in John's vision in Revelation 17:3. It is the singularity of the woman that is catching my attention in both of these books.

The woman in Zechariah 5:5-11 represents evil just as the woman in Revelation 17:1-5. How do I know this? In Zechariah 5:9 we read of two women that have the wings of a stork bearing the ephah away to the land of Shinar (Zech. 5:11). The stork, according to God, is an unclean bird (Lev. 11:19); therefore, this woman who is in the ephah (Zech. 5:7-8) is being lifted by evil and uncleanness which is represented by **"the wings of a stork"** (Zech. 5:9).

It is in **"the land of Shinar"** (Zech. 5:11) that the first ungodly and demonic organized society was founded (Gen. 10:8-10; 11:1-9). This woman was there at the building of the Tower of Babel, for when Zechariah saw this vision, Babylon was already destroyed by the Persians and Medes (Dan. 2:36-44). The destruction of Babylon took place around 539 B.C. Zechariah's vision was some time around 520 B.C., and in this vision this "woman" was to have a house built in Shinar, which once again I believe refers back to the Tower of Babel, and into our future, as part of a system.

THE NINTH REASON I BELIEVE THIS IS THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Is because **"the great whore"** (v. 1) is actually riding this seven-headed beast (v. 3). Why is she allowed to not only sit on this beast, but to ride or be carried by this beast? Well, in previous statements in this article I have mentioned how the Roman Catholic Church has been tied in with the world's system since the days of the Tower of Babel. She has been "married" to this world's system since then!

In these last days, this ungodly demonic system of the world that had its first organized society at the Tower of Babel, is now beginning to take the shape that we read of here in Revelation 17 on this side of the rapture! This picture we have in Revelation 17:1-6 began to take form in the days of Constantine, and formed into this last day shape all through the Dark Ages!

We have witnessed the **"harlots"** that have come out of her, for they

MARK OF THE BEAST

Look at your name on the front page of this month's paper. If you see the mark 7-02, so detestable to a Baptist, wash it out by renewal of green-backs. If not your paper will stop next month. We are not able to credit. It is not a good plan.



are with us even today! This **"mother of harlots"** has now become known by all on the earth (excluding Baptists), as the church. The world even today is aware of the political ties this "whore" has. When the Pope (Satan's tool) comes out into the public millions line up to just get a glimpse of him. Some will even bow down to him and kiss his hand!

"The great whore" is right now riding on this beast! The only difference between Revelation 17:1-6, and right now, is the resurrection and rapture (I Thess. 4:13-18; I Cor. 15:35-58)! Think of the untold millions of religious people that will be left behind that will make up this "whore" as well as the millions that will make up the nations of the world, and especially this beast.

ONE THING WE MIGHT WITNESS BEFORE THE RESURRECTION AND RAPTURE!

The Protestants ("harlots") going back to **"the mother of harlots"**! There has been a great movement in and by the Anglican Church in the 1960's to unify all Protestants to the Catholic Church. In the 1940's, the Anglican Church unified in India with the Methodists, Presbyterian, and Congregational churches!

We just might see a great movement of the daughters of Rome going back home! The reason I say this is because in Revelation 17:16, when **"the great whore"** is killed, you read of none of her daughters anywhere! Why is that? Because they all have returned home!

THE DEATH OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Revelation 17:12-16 reads as follows: **"And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and**

chosen, and faithful. And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire." What will cause **"the whore"** to be hated to the point she will be killed by those ten kings? I believe there are two reasons: the first reason is that the Antichrist will be jealous over the power the Roman Catholic Church has gained right after the resurrection and rapture, for she is the center of attention as she rides this system that **"the man of sin"** (II Thess. 2:3) will eventually come through, to take over Babylon's system (Rev. 17:10-11, 18). For a while, the Roman Catholic Church will be seated with the power she had in the Dark Ages! But only for a while!

The second reason is that there will not be enough room on this earth after the resurrection and rapture for two religions! The Antichrist expects to be worshipped as God while he sits in the temple (II Thess. 2:3-4). As the religious Beast in Revelation 13:11-18 performs miracles that will cause the world to not only follow after the Antichrist, but make an image to him, and then surrender to his mark either in their foreheads or right hand (Rev. 13:14-16). There will be no room for **"the whore"** at this time; therefore, those 10 kings who receive their kingdoms in one hour with the Beast (Rev. 17:12-13), will destroy the Roman Catholic Church sometime in the Tribulation Period.

Man's Responsibility

Continued from page 361

glory."⁴ For Scripture declares, **"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. . . whom he did predestinate. . . them he also called. . . them he also justified."** (Rom. 8:28-30), in that nothing **"shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord"** (Rom. 8:39), which includes the responsibility of one's sins when found in Christ (I John 1:7-9).

However, in light of this teaching that God is sovereign, there are still those who continue to ask with suspicion; how then, can man be held accountable for his actions? If God is sovereign, how can He justly accuse man of doing something wrong? If God is sovereign, is not man, then,

merely a machine doing the dictates of the operator? If God is sovereign, then is not man justified in accusing God of responsibility for man's actions? Thus, making his rallying cry towards God; "What have you done?" such as Adam did in the garden when he was called upon by God to give an accounting for himself, **"And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me,"** (Gen. 3:12), as if all of Adam's problems were God's fault.

Bruner (one such questioner) states: "The Bible, when taken as a divinely inspired historical record, teaches that we are members of a fallen race. Because of a transgression which was committed thousands of years before we were born and of which we have no recollection, we are born in original sin and total depravity and are consequently the objects of the eternal wrath of God.

"This has always been a stumbling block to faith, but in our day it is more so than ever. The modern democratic mind finds it hard to believe such a thing. It seems to contradict all that we have been taught about the justice, goodness, and love of God. It apparently cancels out all personal responsibility for our sinful and lost condition

"How can a child be held accountable for a guilt that he was born with? How can he be blamed for giving expression to his sinful nature when that is the only nature he has? And how did he get such a nature? Are not the laws of heredity God's laws? How can a just and loving Creator inflict such a hopeless handicap upon an infant just because another man sinned? If we are simply the helpless, irresponsible victims of natural heredity or divine imputation, how can we be truly judged or punished? heaven alone knows how many sincere hearts this problem has tormented and how many it has driven into infidelity!"⁵

The word responsibility dictates accountability from one source toward another. Accountability requires one source to be answerable to another. And to be answerable shows that one source must, in turn, be responsible to the other. What makes man a responsible being? According to Bruner, it is not a sovereign God, but a self-thinking, free moral agent who determined his own destiny outside of God's knowledge,⁶ a thought which, when carried out to its fullest extreme, makes man the sole authority in his destiny. This eliminates the need for God and then causes one to arrive at the only other solution for our existence; man was evolved, not

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Man's Responsibility

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created, and thus is not a responsible being. If the theory of evolution is correct, then man is a creature by chance and he is not responsible to anything or anyone other than his own self-imposed laws, for when he dies he will cease to exist. Evolution "proposes that there is no personal, transcendent God; that ultimate reality is to be found in the eternal cosmos itself and that the development of the universe into its present form is contingent solely on the innate properties of its own components."⁷ Evolution's proponents proclaim it as fact, but it has never been elevated above a theory. Thus, with that in mind, it seems best to reject such ideology when it comes to determining man's responsibility. However, if man is a created being, as indicated by Scripture (Gen. 1:26), it would seem reasonable to assume that he must be accountable for his actions before his Creator (Rom. 14:12), which is how Simmons defines human responsibility: "By human responsibility we mean man's accountability to God for all of his actions."⁸ Since God requires man to be accountable for all of his actions, it seems best to examine man's ability to determine his actions before the fall of Adam, to examine whether or not man has the freedom of choice in his actions after the fall of Adam, and if he has such freedom, can he, then, act contrary to God's sovereign will because of this freedom of choice.

Mankind both processes and exercises his ability to determine his actions as long as he is not limited by circumstances beyond his control. One may wish to pilot an airplane from the Atlantic coast to the Pacific coast, but without the proper training, he will not be able to exercise that ability. Or, one may be confined to a wheelchair because of some crippling disease. He may desire to walk across the room, but due to his circumstances, he is unable to exercise that action. However, if he so desires, he is still able to go from one side to the other even though limited to the boundaries imposed by his disability. This too, is the case with man concerning his ability to determine his actions. Adam, the first man, was created good (Gen. 1:31) with the ability to make decisions (Gen. 2:16-20), of which his most famous is found in Genesis 3:6, "[Eve] **gave also unto her husband [Adam] with her; and he did eat,**" thus bringing forth sin and death upon Adam and his human progeny.⁹ "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world,

and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. 5:12). When Adam made his decision, he did so within the boundaries on his freedom of choice. These boundaries of Adam's freedom of choice, according to Matthew Henry, were not hindered, "He [Adam] had no corrupt nature within him to betray him; but had a freedom of will, not enslaved, and was in his full strength, not weakened or impaired."¹⁰ Therefore, Adam, before the fall, had the right within his circumstances (God's garden) to fully exercise his "freedom of choice" without hindrance from God. Once Adam exercised that right, he became completely responsible for his actions giving an accounting of them to God.

Even though Adam had no boundaries preventing him from exercising his freedom of choice, this is not true concerning his offspring. For God told Adam that the day in which he would eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil he would die (Gen. 2:17). Since we know God does not lie (Titus 1:2), something must have happened to Adam that day. Of course, that something is that he died spiritually, passing on the penalty to his progeny. "When God was pronouncing this sentence [Gen. 3:17-19], Adam doubtless understood, that God had respect to his posterity, as well as himself."¹¹ "What then, are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God" (Rom. 3:9-11). What happened when Adam fell? It is not that God took away his own or his offspring's freedom of choice, for Adam proved his ability to act on his own volition when he decided to hide from God (Gen. 3:10), it is that his circumstances had changed and he was now obligated to work within the boundaries of his fallen nature.¹² "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (I Cor. 2:14). These boundaries of Adam and his offspring, which once was called "good" by God, now are corrupt, his nature which once was alive unto God is now dead and separated from him, and Adam's desire to commune and walk with God, his creator, cleaves to another, Eve, his created companion in disobedience.

The story of the rich young ruler from Mark 10:17-27 who had a

discourse with Jesus about inheriting eternal life went away grieved for he had great possessions, is another good illustration of someone having a freedom of choice in his actions. The young man weighed his options within his mind and decided that the price that Jesus had demanded was too much and consequently said no, I will not pay that price, with his actions. However, the context of this story says that he went away grieved. This indicates that even though he had the freedom to choose what his action would be, this was done only out of his own capabilities. "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh" (Luke 6:45).

Wycliffe Commentary states: "Jesus looked intently and searchingly at him. . . . No doubt He recognized the sincerity of the man's search for something to meet his spiritual need. . . . Then He went to the heart of the man's problem, his devotion to his

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The organization of the North Baptist Church in Seattle, Washington, is interesting. Not only is its actual organization of interest, but also it is worth noting that the Pastor of the organizing church became the pastor of the newly organized church. J. C. Baker, the Baptist historian, relates the following information: "In 1886, under the pastorate of Rev. D. J. Pierce in the First Church, a mission Sunday-school was started in North Seattle, which proved to be nearly as large as the home school. It had for leaders such solid and influential men as Judge R. S. Greene and Robert Knipe; but after a time of marked prosperity, its property and members were given over to other churches.

"Early in 1889, however, a Baptist family of strength and vigor moved into that section, that namely, of Dea. Alonzo Hall, whose name was familiar to all Baptists on the coast at that time and subsequently. He began to agitate the question of a church and Sunday school. At a meeting in his house, he secured the names of twelve persons who promised to unite in any practicable effort to organize a Baptist Church in North Seattle. At a subsequent meeting, held at the residence of Robert Knipe, August 26, 1889, thirty-five members of the First

Church took their letters and united in organizing the North Seattle Church, securing Rev. D. J. Pierce to supply their pulpit for six months" (*Baptist History of the North Pacific Coast*, p. 208, 1912 edition).

Then there is this information about the Forest Baptist Church, which is equally interesting: "Located in Clark County, near Salmon Creek Church. This church was organized by Rev. Alvin Clark, after his exclusions from the Salmon Creek Church, and consisted of about a half-dozen members who agreed with him in his feetwashing notions. He preached for it about a year; some moved away; Brother Clark died, and the church came to nothing. It made an application to come into the Puget Sound Association in 1873, but the committee to which it was referred did not recommend its reception, and it made no further efforts for recognition" (*ibid.*, p. 153).

The Oysterville Baptist Church was organized June 4, 1871. In November of the same year it adopted the following resolution: "That baptisms administered by any other than a Baptist will not be considered by this church as valid administration of the rite" (*ibid.*, p. 153).

The Kiokoe Baptist Church was the first organized within the bounds of Georgia. Here is the act of incorporating of this church:

"An ACT for incorporating the Anabaptist church on the Kioka, in the county of Richmond.

"WHEREAS, a religious society has, for many years past, been established on the Kioka, in the country of Richmond, called and known by the name of 'The Anabaptist church of Kioka';

"Be enacted, That Abraham Marshall, William Willingham, Edmund Cartledge, John Landers, James Simms, Joseph Ray and Lewis Gardener be, and they are hereby, declared to be a body corporate, by the name and style of 'The Anabaptist church on Kioka.'

"And be it further enacted, That the Trustees, (the same names are here given) of the said Anabaptist church, shall hold their office for the term of three years; and, on the third Saturday of November, in every third year, after the passing of this Acts, the supporters of the Gospel in said church shall convene at the meeting-house of said church, and there, between the hours of ten and four, elect from among the supporters of the Gospel in said church seven discreet persons as Trustee," etc. (*History of the Baptist Denomination in Georgia* by Samuel Boykin, Vol. I, p.15, 1881 edition).

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wealth rather than to God. Therein lay the one thing he lacked. In order to follow Jesus, he must remove the obstacle, his love of money."¹³

Herein lies the problem, "he must remove the obstacle, his love of money." The rich young ruler did what he could with the capacity of his nature. Paul declares that, "**For the love of money is the root of all evil**" (I Tim. 6:10). There is no doubt that this young man was a moral up-standing person within the community, ("Master, all these have I observed from my youth"), someone who had great character and stature, 'justitia civilis,' 'things external.'¹⁴ However, despite all of his great and marvelous traits, he could not get past the workings of his heart, which according to Jeremiah, the prophet, "**is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked**" (Jer. 17:9). Jesus did not interfere with this young ruler's right to exercise his freedom of choice in his decision. Instead, He allowed the young ruler to make his decision in his natural state without any interference at all. Consequently, the rich young ruler could only follow the path that his nature (Eph. 2:3) dictated as he exercised his right to freedom of choice. Paul says, "**For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not**" (Rom. 7:18).

Pink writes: "But does not Scripture say, 'Whosoever will may come'? It does, but does this signify that everybody has the will to come? What of those who won't come? 'Whosoever will may come' no more implies that fallen man has the power (in himself) to come, than 'Stretch forth thine hand' implied that the man with the withered arm had ability (in himself) to comply. In and of himself the natural man has power to reject Christ, but in and of himself he has not the power to receive Christ. And why? Because he has a mind that is 'enmity against' Him (Rom. 8:7); because he has a heart that hates Him (John 15:18). Man chooses that which is according to his nature, and therefore before he will ever choose or prefer that which is Divine and spiritual a new nature must be imparted to him; in other words, he must be born again. . . .The sinner's will is biased toward evil, and therefore is free in one direction only, namely, in the direction of evil. The sinner's will is enslaved because it is in bondage to and is the servant of a depraved heart.

"In what does the sinner's freedom consist? . . .The sinner is "free" in the sense of being unforced from without. God never forces the sinner to sin. But the sinner is not free to do either good or evil because an evil heart is ever inclining him toward sin. . . .Let all Divine restraint be removed and every man is capable of becoming, would become, a Cain, a Pharaoh, a Judas. How then is the sinner to move heavenward? By an act of his own will? Not so. A power outside of himself must grasp hold of him and lift him every inch of the way. The sinner is free, but free in one direction only – free to fall, free to sin. As the Word expresses it: "for when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness" (Rom. 6:20). The sinner is free to do as he pleases, always as he pleases (except as he is restrained by God), but his pleasure is to sin."¹⁵

There is nothing here that shows the rich young ruler was hindered in his decision not to follow Christ, for the Scriptures are very plain in teaching that whosoever will may come to Him. Jesus said in Mark 8:34, "**Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.**" As has been shown, this is the course that the rich young ruler decided he could not take, a choice that he made because of the freedom he had in dictating his actions, a freedom that was found in the realm of his flesh, which could only bear forth fruit to death (Rom. 7:5), a freedom that was not interfered with or hindered by God, a freedom of choice in his actions that the young man exercised willingly, knowing that he was responsible for exercising his freedom of choice, for "**he went away sorrowful**" (Matt. 19:22). To close this section, it seems correct to say that man, after the fall, does have the ability to determine his actions, but this ability is limited only as far as his circumstances (fallen nature) will allow him to go. "**And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins**" (Eph. 2:1), "**And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled**" (Col. 1:21).

Daniel Webster was once asked, "What was the most serious thought that had ever entered his great mind?" and he replied, 'My personal accountability to God.'¹⁶ His reply did not refer to what a sovereign God required him to do. His reply did not state that he could not be held responsible for his freedom of choice. No, instead, his reply was that his freedom of choice in his actions was so serious that he would have to give an account before God. The

seriousness of this thought is what every individual should have in his or her mind. Human responsibility entails accountability and accountability entails freedom to do what one chooses in order to be accountable. It has been shown that this freedom of choice was originally a part of man and that Adam exercised it freely before his fall. Since the fall, even though Adam and his offspring have been limited by the boundaries of their sinful nature as to what their freedom of choice can allow, it has been shown that they still have freedom of choice in their actions. Since man is limited by his freedom of choice, being subject to his nature, which is at enmity with God (Rom. 8:5-8) and cannot please God, how is it, then, that God can hold man responsible for his actions?

This question of human responsibility before a sovereign God is one that Pink calls a "Gordian knot of theology. . . a [difficult] relationship to define. . . a [difficult] meeting point to determine."¹⁷ The reason for this is that it is difficult to reconcile how a God who is sovereign in all of His ways (Dan. 4:35) and in every aspect of individual lives (Acts 17:26) can hold man responsible for his actions (Rom. 14:12).

Hick writes: "Whether or not we speak of God being ultimately responsible for the existence of evil depends upon our definition of responsibility. For there are both differences and similarities between the sense in which men are responsible and any sense in which God could be said to be responsible. Human responsibility occurs within the context of an existing society of moral beings. But God is Himself the source of moral law and the Creator of all beings other than Himself. In His original decision to create He was accordingly not responsible under any moral law or to any existing person. Nevertheless, there is a technical sense of 'responsible' that can be applied to God as well as to man. . . .His decision to create the existing universe was the primary and necessary precondition for the occurrence of evil, all other conditions being contingent upon this, and He took His decision in awareness of all that would flow from it.

"However, even this ultimate omniresponsibility of the Creator does not take away each human individual's accountability for his own deliberate actions. Our moral liability is not diminished by the fact that we have been created by a higher Being who bears the final responsibility for His creatures' existence, with all that this contingently encompasses. The divine and human responsibilities operate

upon different levels and are not mutually incompatible. Man is responsible for his life within the creaturely world, whilst God is ultimately responsible for the existence of that creaturely world and for the fact that man lives responsibly within it."¹⁸

Man cries out, it is not my fault that I have been born with a nature that is at enmity with God and because of this fleshly nature I must yield to its boundaries in my freedom choice decisions. This exclamation tries to instill upon God the blame for man's sin, but God does not make man sin, instead man sins because that is what he desires to do. "**Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin**" (John 8:34). "What would the reader say to a man who robbed him and who later argued in defense, 'I cannot help being a thief, that is my nature'? Surely the reply would be, then, the penitentiary is the proper place for that man."¹⁹ With this thought in mind, is it not Scriptural to say to the man exclaiming that he is not responsible for his actions that he should be prepared to give an accounting of his decisions? The answer would be an emphatic, "yes!" Man acts according to his nature. He purposely decides the actions he wants to take.

An example is the crucifixion of Christ. In Acts 4:27-28, the Apostles declared that God's purpose determined what was to be done to Christ by Herod, Pontus Pilate, the gentiles, and the people of Israel. Then, in Acts 5:30, while addressing the chief priest and elders of Israel, the Apostles declare that these leaders were the ones who hung Christ on a tree and murdered Him, which can be gleaned quickly from reading the Gospel accounts, that their desire was to put Him to death. No one forced these religious and political leaders to make the decision to crucify Jesus. These men based their decisions on their hearts' desire and then simply followed that desire to fruition. Nowhere in these Scriptures were these men denied their freedom of choice. God did not force them to crucify His Son. He simply allowed it to happen to fulfill His eternal purpose and plan (Acts 2:22-23). The same thought is true about the rich young ruler; all he did was follow the desire of his heart. Jesus did not force him to choose his riches over following Christ; He simply allowed it to happen. Therefore, how is it that man then complains about his responsibility

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before a sovereign God. God is not forbidding man from making his free choice decisions; on the contrary, God is allowing man the freedom to choose whatsoever he wills. Being responsible for one's actions before a sovereign god is not unfair, for God is the Creator of the creature and does with His own as He pleases. **"Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another, unto dishonour?"** (Rom. 9:19-21).

Carroll writes: "God made the world. He made it and all things therein. It is his workmanship. He made men, all men. Not only is the judgment based first upon the fact of God's creative act, but also upon the fact of his providence. His providence controls the world now and has always controlled it; and not merely by a general providence, but by a personal, moral government he rules over the world. That moral reign of God extends throughout all ages and to all men. Not only this, but it is by his decree that our times are allotted to us and the boundaries of our habitation. And not only this, but in everything it is his decree that men should seek after him, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he be not far from every one of us. In his omnipresence he is accessible to all men. Now, this creative act of God, this general providence of God, and his special providence, and the special revelation of God, when followed by the special revelation of God, constitute the broad foundation upon which judgment rests. . . . You will see at once that unless the mind takes hold of the fact that God has made the world and God governs the world by his providence, and God rules the world by his moral law, and God holds men responsible to that moral law, we cannot have an idea of the judgment."²⁰

In conclusion, nowhere is there a denial that man must have free will. "Humans would not be genuinely human without free will."²¹ Man must be able to decide for himself as to his fleshly matters, emotional matters, and Godly matters. Does man take care of himself, his family, and his needs? Does man take care

of his well-being, his character, and his insight? Does man take care of his need to obey and serve God? The answer for all of these questions is, "Yes!" For making decisions is the most natural thing for mankind to do. This freedom of choice in making decisions for one's own actions has been demonstrated here that man was able to do so freely before the fall and freely after the fall. Man's freedom of choice to determine his actions has never changed, only the boundaries of the circumstances in which he has been made to abide, which changed through the action of man, not God. This human action, man will be responsible for and give an accounting to a sovereign God.

(End notes)

¹ Unless otherwise stated all Scripture references are to the *King James Version*.

² Claude D. Cole, *The Doctrine of God, vol. 1 of Definitions of Doctrines* (Lexington: Bryan Station Baptist Church, n.d.), 37.

³ Arthur W. Pink, *The Attributes of God* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979), 32.

⁴ Thomas Watson, *A Body of Divinity* (Carlisle: Banner of Truth, 1974), 119.

⁵ William T. Bruner, *Children of the Devil, A Fresh Investigation of the Fall of Man and Original Sin* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1966), xv.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 26-30.

⁷ Henry M. Morris, *The Genesis Record* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1980), 38.

⁸ Thomas P. Simmons, *A Systematic Study of Bible Doctrine* (Daytona Beach: Associated Publisher, 1969), 174.

⁹ Claude D. Cole, *Sin, Salvation, Service, vol. 2 of Definitions of Doctrines* (Lexington: Bryan Station Baptist Church, n.d.), 10-11.

¹⁰ Matthew Henry, *Genesis to Deuteronomy, vol. 1 of A Commentary on the Whole Bible* (Old Tappan, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell, 1983), 25.

¹¹ Clyde A. Holbrook, ed, *Jonathan Edwards, Original Sin* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), 252.

¹² John L. Dagg, *Manual of Theology* (Harrison: Gano Books, 1982), 148-50.

¹³ Charles F. Pfeiffer, and Everett F. Harrison eds., *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1975), 1010.

¹⁴ James P. Boyce, *Abstract of Systematic Theology* (Greenwood: The Attic Press, n.d.), 245.

¹⁵ Arthur W. Pink, *The Sovereignty of God* (Pensacola: Mt. Zion Publications, 1996), 92-3, 98-9.

¹⁶ Milburn Cockrell, "Human Responsibility," *The Berea Baptist Banner*, 15, March 1986, 8.

¹⁷ Arthur W. Pink, *The Sovereignty of God* (Pensacola: Mt. Zion Publication, 1996), 105-6.

¹⁸ John Hick, *Evil and the God of Love* (London: Macmillan and Company Limited, 1966), 326-7.

¹⁹ Arthur W. Pink, *The Sovereignty of God* (Pensacola: Mt. Zion Publication, 1996), 113.

²⁰ B. H. Carroll, *Baptists and Their Doctrines* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1913), 147, 149.

²¹ Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2001), 448.

THE EMPTY GRAVE

By George W. McCree

"Come, see the place where the Lord lay" (Matt. 28:6).

The sublime tragedy of Calvary has been finished. Jesus has died on the cross for the sins of men.

But we are not now in search of the Cross. Where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new sepulcher, wherein was never man yet laid. The first garden became the grave of man's glory. There sin entered into the world and death by sin. The cedars and roses and lilies of Eden witnessed the moral entombment of the first Adam. But in this garden there may be found the new life through the second Adam, the Lord from Heaven.

The grave is empty! The Lord said: "How that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders, and be raised again the third day."

But, if Jesus left His grave empty, He did not leave Himself without witness. **"He showed Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs,"** etc.

He was with them "forty days." What opportunities they had of knowing that it was **"the same Jesus"** who **"died and rose again."**

From this empty grave of Jesus there springs the Gospel of immortality. Coming to Jesus is coming to immortality. Eternal life is

not in me; it is the gift of God through Jesus Christ. It is a pearl of great price, which we are to seek. It is a golden door at which we are to knock.

As the flowers wait for the spring, and the yellow corn waits for the summer, and the stars wait for the morning, and as Lazarus waited in sweet silence for the voice of Jesus to awake him out of sleep, so do the blessed dead wait for the resurrection.

Our friends, then, are not lost to us, although we buried them out of our sight; no, they are safe, restful, bright, immortal, in the Paradise of God.

The fact that Jesus was laid in the midst of a garden, in the midst of tender grass, and flowers, and herbs, and trees, and birds, should teach us something as to the burial of the dead.

Let this be to us a place of penitence, of faith in our risen Lord, of much praise and fervent prayer. **"Come, see the place where the Lord lay,"** and muse on the greatness of His love, the purity of His life, the atonement for sin made by His death, and the immortality secured by His resurrection.

Are you serving and waiting for Jesus? Do you answer—no? Alas, my friend, alas, for thy soul—thy future lot. No cross—no crown; no Christ—no Heaven.

Come to the Lord Jesus, and you shall go home saying: "The Lord hath risen indeed, and hath appeared unto me." May that glorious vision be ours. (*The Pulpit Treasury*, Sept. 1886).

Funnybone

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

Deacon Jones got tired of his wife always bossing him around, and so he decided to go to a Psychiatrist. The doctor gave him a book on assertive training. He read it on the way home. When he walked through the door of his home he told Sister Jones, "From now on, I'm the man of this house and my word is law. When I come home from work I want supper on the table. Now, get upstairs and lay out some clothes on the bed because I'm going out with the guys tonight. Then draw my bath. When I get out of the tub, guess who is going to dress me and comb my hair?"

Sister Jones replied, "The undertaker!"



Pastor Brown heard a noise outside his house the other day. When he opened the door he saw a skunk standing outside, which immediately fell over dead. Not exactly knowing what to do about the situation, he called Sheriff Smith and told him what was laying before him.

Sheriff Smith said, "Pastor, I thought the first duty of a preacher was to bury the dead."

Without hesitation, the Pastor Brown said, "No the first duty is to notify the next of kin."

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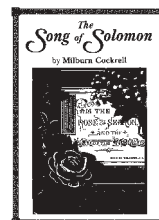
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The Spirit Filled Church

Part 2

By Billy Holbrook

Oblong, Illinois

“God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24).

Introduction: In our previous lesson we saw that a church that is filled with the Spirit will have worship. We have seen that our goal in coming to the house of God is to worship the true and living God. We mentioned how that in some places that are supposed to be filled with the Spirit there is nothing but foolishness going on in those services. The Word of God teaches us that the word worship when used shows reverence and respect for God. Often times in the Bible they would “bow their heads and worship.” We see also that a church that is filled with the Spirit will have people coming to the house of God with thanksgiving in their hearts for all that the Lord has done and will do.

In this lesson we will see that a church that is filled with the Spirit will not only have a desire for worship, but also they will have a desire for truth because without truth we cannot worship God. When people reject the truth they also reject true worship.

NEED TRUTH TO WORSHIP

The text says that we “. . .**must worship him in spirit and in truth.**” So we see by this verse that we cannot even worship God unless we have Spirit and truth. Psalms 71:22 also says: **“I will praise thee with the psaltery, even thy truth.”** If you are going to praise and worship God, then the place that you go *must* be a place of truth. Without a doubt it could be said to many what Jesus said just before our text when He said, **“Ye worship ye know not what.”** Sure, millions of people gather on the Lord’s Day for worship but they know nothing about what real truth is. Seems odd to me that in those places that are supposed to be “slain in the Spirit” they reject so much truth of God’s Word.

As a Church of the Lord Jesus Christ we must uphold the truth. For we are a **“church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.”** If we are a true church of the Lord Jesus Christ, then we will have and uphold the truth. Maybe there are some like Pilate who said to Jesus, **“What is truth?”** That is the question that we need to ask, seeing that we must have truth to worship God. You may be wondering how that I am relating this to the subject at hand. It’s fairly simple, for if we are filled with the Spirit then we will be a place of

truth.

THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH

In John 15:26 Jesus says: **“But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.”** A place that rejects the truth is a place without the Spirit. I believe that we can determine how much we are filled with the Spirit by how much truth that we receive. If a place holds a little truth, then no doubt there is little of the Spirit of God there and little worship going on. The Spirit of God never leads us into error, for Christ told us in another place that His Spirit will guide us into all truth. Be careful of any church that rejects any of God’s truth.

Now, how is it that the Spirit leads us into the truth? By the Word – Daniel 10:21 makes mention of the **“scripture of truth.”** In John 17:17 Jesus praying to the Father said concerning us: **“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.”** A church that is filled with the Spirit is led by truth, which is the Word of God. Any church that says they are led of the Spirit of God to do something that is contrary to the Word of God is either deceived or a liar. Show me a place in which the Word of God is not preached and held to and I will show you a place that the Spirit of God has nothing to do with. All truth that we have comes through the Word and the Spirit. So if the Spirit leads us into all truth, then what will He use to guide us? The Word. For there are many places in which they think they are filled with the Spirit, but yet they do not have any concern with what the word teaches. The true worshippers must worship in spirit and in truth. So, how much worship is going on toward the true and living God in places that are supposed to have the Spirit but yet reject the Word?

A church that is filled with the Spirit will also obey the Word. Remember John 17:17 says: **“Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.”** It’s not enough just to know what the Word says, but we must also obey it. We are prepared and made fit to serve God by His Word. If we are a church that is filled with the Spirit, then there should be a growth in obedience. For it concerns me when I see a people that is satisfied with their spiritual growth. We should be growing together as a church in the things of God. Living better lives for

God and growing in knowledge. A church that is filled with the Spirit will be growing in obedience to God and His Word. Another Scripture to prove this teaching is I John 2:4 which says: **“He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”** If we have the truth in us, then we will be striving to obey God’s commandments, and if you don’t have any concern with obeying God, but yet you say that you know Him, then you are a liar and have no truth in you. I Peter 1:22 also says: **“Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth (how?) through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren.”** The Spirit of God is what teaches us the truth and then enables us to obey it. Some places just don’t have what it takes to carry out the commands of God because the Spirit of God is not there.

CHRIST IS TRUTH

John 14:6: “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” The only way that our worship is received of the Father is through the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus in John 16 tells us that the Spirit’s job is to glorify Him. I hope that you can see how all of this is related. The Spirit is called the **“Spirit of truth”** and He will guide us **“into all truth.”** Christ calls Himself truth and also speaking of the Spirit He says: **“He shall glorify me.”** Can we possibly believe that the Spirit of God is filling a place in which Christ is not being glorified and man is glorifying himself by teaching works for salvation? Jesus Christ is the only Mediator between God and man, and without Him ye can do nothing. Not even worship. If the Spirit of God is in a place, then the Lord Jesus Christ will be the one exalted, not the preacher or the singers. If we ourselves are filled with the Spirit of God, then when we go to the house of God our desire will be to glorify Jesus as that is what the Spirit does.

CONCLUSION

You hear much today about people wanting God to fill the house with His Spirit. To hear them talk you would think being filled with the Spirit is to act crazy and act out of control. The fact is that when we really want the Spirit of God to fill the place then we want the truth of God to fill the place. Many people just want “Jesus” and the Spirit of God, but yet they reject the Word of God. To reject the Word of God is to reject Jesus who is called the Word and to reject His Spirit. Our focus should be Jesus Christ and His Word as we go to God’s house. If we have the Spirit of God, then certainly it will be. How do you respond to the

Word of God? That may tell you just how much you are really worshipping God. Often times people may come to services, but they don’t like them because they are not “lively” enough. They want a place that has “spirit” The Word of truth that we preach isn’t enough for them.

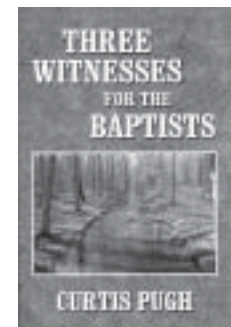
May I close with this verse in I John 4:6: **“We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.”** Those people aren’t interested in the Spirit of God and real worship, but rather another spirit.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mt. Lebanon Baptist Church near Fayette, Ala., and Pastor Jimmie B. Davis will have special services July 28-31. Services will be at 10:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. with Elder Raymond Spann as the speaker.

The Northside Baptist Church, Elkton, Ky., and Pastor Irving J. Cummins will have a Bible Conference Aug. 1-3. Starting time will be 7:00 p.m. on the 1st and 10:00 a.m. on the 2nd and 3rd. The speakers will be Elders Don Titus, Randy Titus, Mark Clark, Sr., Gary Allen, Garner Smith, Roger Jones, Parvin Hall, Jimmy Sharrod and Bob Asbury. For more information call Pastor Irving Cummins at 270-265-9665, or write the pastor at 532 N. Main St., Elkton, Ky. 42220.

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WORLD SCENE

By G. Russell Evans - Norfolk, Virginia

Jimmy Carter's Grand Slam for Glory



Jimmy Carter's recent trip to Cuba to commiserate with his indulgent pal, Fidel Castro, could be his grand slam for glory, his quantum leap to fame—except it won't work. People don't take him seriously and most don't like his criticisms of American foreign policy on foreign soil. They see the former president as wanting to do good, but, in this case, out of his element.

Truth is, ever since he left the White House in 1981, it has been pretty clear that he wanted a Nobel Peace Prize. After all, Henry Kissinger got one in 1973 for bringing "peace" to Vietnam. Kofi Annan got one in 2001 for a "more peaceful world" via the United Nations.

CARTER EXPERTISE

Neither Kissinger's or Annan's "peace" worked out, famous and elegant though they were, so why not an award for Jimmy Carter for spreading his "peace" expertise around the world? Mr. Carter has been doing that for the past 20 years.

For example, he went to Panama in 1999 to celebrate the surrender of the Panama Canal, to Haiti in 1994 to encourage civilian rule instead of military rule and to North Korea in 1994 to offer his expertise in the missile threat. He has often criticized America's foreign policy and, in some cases, undermined it with careless and unsolicited proposals.

His quantum leap, however, for more and more fame and glory came this year (2002) when he starred twice—first, at Monterrey, Mexico in March at the United Nations-sponsored International Conference on Financing and Development where he berated his country for "stinginess" in its "embarrassingly low" foreign aid and for refusing to support the UN-proposed "global taxes" on the American people.

ON TO CUBA

Fresh from his Monterrey "success," Mr. Carter took on his second starring role, the much-heralded visit with Dictator Fidel Castro. This is the man who ruled Cuba as a despot for 43 years, abolished all vestiges of human rights, imprisoned critics and opponents, allowed no elections and no freedom of speech or assembly. As a special insult to Carter when he was U. S. president, Castro dumped thousands of crooks, crazies and other undesirables via the infamous Mariel

boat lift into South Florida.

On May 14th, Carter addressed students, faculty and the Cuban nation at the University of Havana, with Castro in the front row. He called for human rights, freeing of political dissidents and democratic elections, as expected—all noble goals and apparently appreciated by all hearers, present and via radio and television.

TRADE EMBARGO

His challenge for the United States to lift the trade embargo was not surprising, but certainly inappropriate at that time and place. He was butting into American foreign policy.

President Bush promptly rejected the idea, saying, "The trade embargo is a vital part of America's foreign policy and human rights policy towards Cuba. Trade with Cuba does not benefit the people of Cuba and is used to prop up a repressive regime."

MIKE WALLACE SAYS

Even so, there's Mike Wallace of ABC-TV "60 Minutes" fame praising Carter's courage for going to Cuba and speaking out, adding that we have to do business with Cuba. Not true. The U. S. policy has contained communism to the island of Cuba, for the most part. Trade with Cuba would help keep Castro in power, but any benefit to the United States would be minimal, if at all.

Mr. Wallace's logic has usually been on the liberal side. He has expressed admiration for Yassar Arafat, terrorist leader of the Palestine Authority. With that kind of reasoning, one could also admire Al Capon, Adolph Hitler and Joseph Stalin. Admiration, in a civilized

sense, does not apply to mass murderers, cowards and terrorists.

'MOST AMAZING MAN'

President Carter has been called the "most amazing man ever to occupy the presidency"—until Bill Clinton came along. Critics have called him a politician of limited and uncertain talents, a well-meaning man whose power derived far more from the office he occupied than from any personal leadership.

Seeing the former president parading around Havana in a guayabera shirt, arm-in-arm with the cruel Cuban dictator, does not conjure up visions of statesmanship and well-being—but mostly, a grandstand play of a free-lancing, self-appointed secretary of state, naïve and ill-informed as he meddles in his country's foreign policies.

CREDITS AND DISCREDITS

We remember President Carter for the Camp David Accords that brought temporary peace between Israel and the Palestinians, for the failed rescue of American hostages held by Iran and the historic high "misery index" of high inflation, high unemployment and high interest rates. Especially, we remember his shameless manipulations in ratifying the unconstitutional 1977 Panama Canal Treaties surrendering the "world's most strategic waterway" to unstable Panama that today, for bribes under-the-table, allows Communist Chinese agents to control the Canal ports.

His judgment and leadership have always been questionable—but not his desire to do good. Even so, his try for a "grand slam to glory" didn't work and he should quit traipsing around the world with the Carter foreign policy when it's the Bush foreign policy voters selected.

(Capt. Evans columns are distributed by the Americanism Educational League.)



GLEANINGS

The Great Valley Baptist Church, Chester County, Pa., was organized April 22, 1711, with the approval of the Welsh Tract Church, in Delaware, whose pastor, Elder Hugh Davis, was present and conducted the services. It was admitted to the Philadelphia Association this same year. Here are a few choice gems from its history.

"It has also been a missionary church, and its pastors were wont to visit remote places, preaching the blessed gospel wherever opportunity offered. Such was the case in later years with David Jones and Thomas Roberts, the latter two going, in 1821, as missionaries to the Cherokee Indians in Tennessee. At the same time, Isaac Cleaver, John Farrier, Elizabeth Roberts, Elizabeth Jones, and Rachael Cleaver were also dismissed for the same purpose; and when the great question of foreign missions was presented to the Baptists of America, the sisters of the Valley Church formed a society for mission purposes and were able to contribute about \$130 each year.

The Valley may, with great truth, be termed a mother church for from her membership and labors of her pastors, eight churches have been formed, viz:

1. The French Creek, Seventh-Day Baptist Church, 1726
2. The Vincent Church, Chester County, 1771
3. The Lower Merion Church, Montgomery County, 1808
4. The Phoenixville Church, Chester County, 1830
5. The Norristown Church, Montgomery County, 1832
6. The Willistown Church, Chester County, 1833
7. The West Chester Church, Chester County, 1834
8. The Radnor Church, Delaware County, 1841

(History of the Baptist Church in the Great Valley by Horatio Gates Jones, 1883. This material is printed in the back of "... To Set Them In Order: "Some influences of the Philadelphia Baptist Association Upon Baptists of America to 1814, pp. 416, 420-422).

Coming in the next issue . . .

- The Pulpit, the Press, and the Government* by J. B. Hawthorne
- Satan, an Angel of Light* by Milburn Cockrell
- What Spiritual Growth is Like* by Milburn Cockrell

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