

The Berea Baptist Banner

"Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth" Ps. 60:4

The Divine Order of the Sexes

C. D. Cole
(1885 - 1968)

There is a Divine order of the sexes. To deny this order is to deny the Bible. To deny the Bible is to plunge into the sea of human experience without any real hope of surviving. This, many are willing to do in order to be in the swim. Much of the Bible is a dead letter to the average church member. He has no more use for the Bible as the rule of faith and practice than a hog has for breeches. What



a settlement many are going to have to make with God for their arrogant setting aside of His holy Word as impracticable! and out of date!

According to the Divine order, the woman is subordinate to the man. This can be established by many passages of Scripture. **"Wives, submit yourselves unto**

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Deceitful Hearts

By Wm. Doyal Thomas
(1932 - 2018)

"Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the



LORD is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit. The heart is deceitful above all things, and

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What Is Your Desire?

By Glenn Gilbreath
of Decatur, Alabama

I Peter 1:16-2:3

The word "desire" is found in the Word of God 111 times, in 109 different verses. The words desirous, desiring, desireth and desired are also found many times. It is used in the form of a noun (a thing) as found in Romans 10:1: **"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved."** It is also used in the form of a verb (action word) as found in I Peter 2:2: **"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that**



ye may grow thereby." Vine's Dictionary gives the meaning of desire as: craving, longing, to deem worthy, a strong affection.

Men may pray thankfully for the "desire" to be in His house when the doors are open. That kind of desire is given of God. But man can also desire things that are not what God would have for us, nor does He give that desire within us. Satan gives that kind of desire.

The natural man can desire
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Urgency to Living by Faith

By Joseph M. Sidders
of Guntown, Mississippi

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" (Heb. 11:1-3).

To understand the subject of having an "urgency to living by faith" we must first define the word "living." Living is defined by Webster's Dictionary as "the state of existing; alive; having life; or simply not dead." The Bible defines



"living" in John 11 in analyzing the situation of Lazarus of Bethany. In verse 14 we read, **"Then said Jesus unto them plainly,**

Lazarus is dead." And then in verses 43-44, **"And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go."** Praise the

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The purpose of the Berea Baptist Banner is as follows:

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

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KARI, Blaine, WA	Saturday 10:30 - 11:00 a.m.	550	5,000 AM

What Is Your Desire?

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good and bad of this world. Good things: good education; good marriage; good family life; provide adequately for your family; have a good retirement; etc. Bad things: things you can not afford; something your neighbor may have; someone's wife or husband; hurt to come to someone; to do drugs or alcohol; etc. Deuteronomy 7:25 says: **"The graven images of their gods shall ye burn with fire: thou shalt not desire the silver or gold that is on them, nor take it unto thee, lest thou be snared therein: for it is an abomination to the LORD thy God."** He is not saying the silver and gold is an abomination, he is saying "desiring," or longing for it, is the abomination. In Job 21:14-15, he is speaking of the judgment of the wicked when he says, **"Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? And what profit should we have, if we pray unto him?"** Our government and schools are pretty much saying that same thing today. All I can say to that is one day they will know Who God Almighty is and it will be too late. They cannot speak as Asaph did in Psalm 73:25: **"Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee."** The priority of our desire should be the Lord.

Saved men desire good, bad, and spiritual things. The difference between a lost man and a saved man is that the saved man is able to desire spiritual things, as our text verse says **"desire the sincere milk of the word."** The lost man can read the Word, but he cannot "truly desire" it like a saved man.

The saved man says as Job did in Job 13:3: **"Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God.** But, Psalm 10:3-4 says - **For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the LORD abhorreth. The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts."** I heard the Gospel many times before I was saved, as I know many of you had heard before the Lord saved you. The Lord was dealing with us, in that He was revealing to us how that Christ had died on the cross of Calvary for our sins, and that those sins and the sins we would still commit would never be put to our account but that He bore all of them for us. The Lord was showing us things in our life that would have to change - things that as being a child of God are not needed or to be desired. He also revealed to us that we needed to be a member of one of His churches, because that is where we would learn what He would teach us from His Word. He gave us the "desire" to be in His house at every opportunity because we came to know that is where we should be. He has given us the "desire" to study His Word, to teach His Word, to proclaim His Word.

How do we desire good only and not bad? The answer is to "desire spiritual things" first in your life, and the desire for the bad things become not as important to us. Isaiah 26:8: **"Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O LORD, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee."** Do we put God in remembrance above all other things?

Are we to pray for our desires?

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Brief Truths

By Randy Johnson of
Texarkana, Texas



"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation" (Ephesians 1:13).

THE POTTER AND THE CLAY

"Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour" (Rom. 9:21)?

The object of studying the Bible is to, **"Study to shew thyself approved unto God.."** that as Christians we are able to, **"..rightly dividing the word of truth"** (II Tim. 2:15). The words **"rightly dividing"** means "to make a straight cut, to dissect the Word of God." When we "dissect" something, we do so to understand the internal parts, to understand the functioning or proper working of something. We do not just read the Bible or look at it and move on, we focus on it so that our understanding is proper and right. I say often that searching the Bible is like searching a diamond field: so that we can be rich in knowledge and understanding. The more time and prayer you spend in God's Word the more truth God is going to bless you with.

Our life, as Christians, is designed to bring glory to God, therefore our studying His Word will make us wiser to what God choose to reveal to us. Therefore, the question is, what exactly does God mean when He calls Himself "the Potter" and us "the clay?" The clay is never responsible for self-creation, the clay is the product of the Potters grace and mercy. We sometimes enjoy pointing out that God has made us Christians,

but some Christians want to stop there and say that we make of ourselves what we choose. However, we need to understand the work of the Potter is not complete after salvation, God's work is not complete until we are what He has elected to make us by His ordained will. God's hand of ordination and predestination has decided what we will be in this life, and what happenings in our life are accomplished or not accomplished. God said in Ephesians 2:10, **"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."** God has ordained our good works, and ordained that we will walk in those ordained works. God does not leave His accomplishments in the hands of the clay. God does not save us and trust us to bring His will to a conclusion. God brings it to a conclusion through us by His power and the Holy Spirit.

If we are well educated in God's Word, if we are good pastors, or church workers, it is not our works that brings it about? God, who is the Potter, has sufficiently fine-tuned us by the Holy Spirit's power to walk us step by step through the completion of His ordained will. The works of God are accomplished "through us" and by us by His power, we can no more take credit for any of our accomplishments than we can take credit for our own salvation.

People go to church because

God has inserted them into the church, people become ministers as God has made them, and their work is what God has ordained and accomplished in them. Should people be criticized for not attending church? Yes. Because we should all go to church, we cannot blame God for not making some church members and not others. Regardless of what God does, the responsibility is ours. It is like sin. Should people be charged with sin? Yes. Because people are responsible for their sin, we are also charged with disobedience to God's commandments. We are responsible for our failures; we cannot blame God, who causes some to walk and work in righteousness and not others. We are responsible to study God's Word, but if the Holy Spirit does not teach us, God is not to blame for the ignorance of the uneducated. God is taking nothing but dead clay and making something wonderful and sometimes great, but He is not responsible to make every ounce of clay the same righteous vessel. The clay is His, and as He choses is what the vessels will be.

God is not required to be what people consider fair. If God were fair, we would all die and go to hell. God has a will, and that will be what will control the population of this world in righteousness or unrighteousness. Therefore, we give God the thanks for His grace that brought salvation, then for anything else God has gifted to us. God warned us with these words, **"For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith"** (Rom. 12:3). One writer said, "God has given every person

the same amount of grace, what we do with it is up to us." This writer could not be more wrong, God has given us the measure of grace He elected to. We will do with it as He has elected and ordained the Holy Spirt to empower us with. We are never due credit for our accomplishments in our Christian life. If we expect the credit of man, let us not expect the rewards of God. Let us end with these words, **"So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness"** (Rom. 12:5-8).

(Randy Johnson is pastor of the Sovereign Grace Missionary Baptist Church of Texarkana, Texas.)



What Is Your Desire?

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Christ said we are. Mark 11:24: **"Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."** When we pray for our desires, we are first to have faith in God that what we pray for will come to pass. Our problem sometimes is that our faith is not strong enough for our true desires to become real. Read Matthew 17:14-21. Even the disciples' faith was not strong enough. The mustard seed is a very tiny seed that when planted can grow into

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What Is Your Desire?

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a large tree that even the birds can nest in its branches. There are times when God's people cannot work up enough faith to fit inside a mustard seed.

What is the saved man to desire? There are six things that I will list: 1) We are to desire the Word of God. I Peter 2:2: **"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."** What is the level of your desire for the Word of God? Is it a great desire or just a small desire? Do you desire it every day, or just on Sunday and Wednesday when you go to church? 2) We are to desire kindness to others. Proverbs 19:22: **"The desire of a man is his kindness: and a poor man is better than a liar."** 3) We are to desire for others to be saved. Romans 10:1: **"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved."** In order for others to be saved, we must proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world. 4) We are to desire spiritual gifts. I Corinthians 14:1: **"Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy."** We are to first have charity (love), and then we will desire spiritual gifts that would enable us to go out and prophesy the Word of God unto others. 5) We are to desire that others be filled with the knowledge of the Word of God – teaching others the truth and doctrine so that they may grow spiritually. Colossians 1:9: **"For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding."** 6) We are to desire to be in heaven. Hebrews

11:16: **"But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city."**

How do we know if a desire is good or bad? The answer is in the reason for the desire. If the desire is self-centered, then it is bad, because sin is the determination to have your own way. We might say: "God, I desire a new car because mine does not have all the new 'gadgets.'" Or "God, I desire a new set of golf clubs because my old ones are last year's model." Self-centered desire is an act of idolatry in that you put yourself in the place of God. Good desire is simply the opposite. It is putting the desire for God's will first. When the Lord is our greatest desire, all other desires find their proper place. John 15:7: **"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."** We must have the abiding spirit within us in order for our desires to be good.

What are desires of the heart? Psalm 37:4: **"Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart."** This is one of God's promises for each of His children. This means spiritual desires, and not desires that Satan might put within us. Satan will imply that in order for us to get what we desire, we must go and get it ourselves, by our own power, and by our own ways. That is not the instruction God gives. Psalm 37:5: **"Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass."** God tells us to trust Him by committing our lives, desires, and hopes to His care. He commands us to walk by faith and wisdom, which only He can supply. As we trust in Him, we can be sure that

God will do what is good, right, and pure. God is deserving of our trust and surrender because He is good. Psalm 23:6: **"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever."**

What did Christ desire? His desire was always to do the will of God the Father. John 5:30: **"I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me."** Christ's desire was to love His people. John 13:34-35: **"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."**

What is your desire today? Is your desire to be in the Lord's house when the doors are open? Is your desire to learn from God's Word every day? And as you learn, is your desire to tell others what you have learned? And as you tell others what you learned, is your desire to pray that the Lord Jesus Christ will reveal Himself to them in salvation? God puts that "domino effect" within us.

My desire today is that this message has given each of you a greater desire to follow Christ and His teachings.

(Glenn Gilbreath is a member of the Philadelphia Baptist Church of Decatur Alabama).



Urgency to Living

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Lord that God is not subject to man's definitions but rather we should be subject to His.

Secondly, Let us define faith. Faith is defined by Webster's

Dictionary as "belief, trust, unquestioning trust, anything believed." The Bible says in Hebrews 11:1-2, **"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report."** By this definition I must ask you today what EXACTLY it is you hope for? Are you hoping to get rich? Hoping to find Mr./Mrs. Wonderful? Hoping to be the boss one day soon? Hoping to stay healthy?

Thirdly, let us define holy living. There is an urgency to this subject matter in that now we have context of what it is to live and what it is to have faith, we must now answer for how God would have us to handle this, and we must do so with the knowledge that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. The reality of how you answered those questions above is that faith in anything but God will still result in your "living by faith" as you are living by the faith of whatever you are hoping for! If you are hoping to get rich, then your very definition of success, and as a result peace, is based on seeing that hope fulfilled.

"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end; While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation. For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whom

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Narrow Paths

By Doug Newell IV of
Clendenin, West Virginia

"Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matthew 7:14).

WHIPPERSNAPPER WISDOM?

"I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts" (Ps. 119:100).

Without the second clause, this would be the life verse of most teenagers because the psalmist said he has more understanding than his elders. We are not reading a haughty young man disparaging the wisdom that generally comes with age and experience. This is not the prideful denunciation of some "boomer" who would not get in line with "progress." Really, the only way this makes any sense is if it were an unusual situation, the point being a rather remarkable thing has occurred — a young man has surpassed the elders in understanding. "I understand more than my peers" does not really have the same punch and "I understand more than toddlers" is certainly not any better.

The second clause tells the story. There is a reason why there is more understanding and it does not have anything to do with age, but with the Word of God. The wisdom the Psalmist has does not come from experience, otherwise the elderly would have it. The reason the psalmist outstripped others was the source of his understanding and the means he procured it. The source of his understanding was the Bible and he got it through reading, study, meditation, and practice. We are dealing with a godly young man, who has put his heart to learning more of his Lord and Savior.

Since he has "more under-

standing" he actually knows the Bible. He is not just "familiar" with themes and stories, but he has dug down deep and studied the Word and grasped its truth. I believe that young people are capable of understanding the Scriptures. Listen to any group of 10 year old boys talk about their hobby and you will see rather quickly that if they care about something, they can dig deep and know and understand complicated subjects. The fact is, we do young Christian people a disservice by not pushing them to understand and grasp Biblical concepts.

He does not merely know the Word but puts it to practice. In order to keep a precept, you have to know the law and know what it means. I know a person could be charged with "assault and battery" and until just a few seconds ago when I looked it up, I did not know the difference between the two. I have heard the terms for years but never bothered to look them up. I knew they both had something to do with violence but was not familiar. Now, I know a little more, but if I were charged with either, you better believe I would want a lawyer, someone who has more understanding, regardless of his age. Why? Because he would know the law, understand the law and what it says and does not say, and has practiced the law. Christian, your age does not give you understanding. Church membership does not either. Time will not give you an abundance of this wisdom.

Get in the Word. Read it, study it, then put it to practice for the glory of Christ.

JUST BE QUIET

"A prudent man concealeth knowledge: but the heart of fools proclaimeth foolishness" (Prov. 12:23). A prudent person is cautious and careful. He looks before he leaps and thinks before he speaks. Prudence is wisdom in action. Maybe that is why you do not hear the word very much anymore. The prudent man does not have to tell all he knows but speaks when it is time to speak and by using his wisdom, knows when the time is right.

The prudent conceals his knowledge, not out of fear of man, but out of fear of God. It would be easy to convince yourself you are being prudent when you are just afraid, but wisdom is our guide and the Bible discerns the thoughts and intents of the heart. The prudent uses his knowledge as a tool for good, knowing when and where to lay the hammer down. **"A word fitly spoken,"** is beautiful, pleasing, and valuable (Prov. 25:11). There is power in words, good and evil, and even the right word at the wrong time can, perhaps, not produce the desired effect. Having a heart to heart with a loved one about their health, and needing to make better choices in their diet may be a worthy endeavor. Having that talk at their wedding reception probably would not be received well.

The prudent man thinks about his answer before blurting it out (Prov. 15:28). In many situations, you do not have to give an immediate answer to a question, and "I do not know, let me think about it and get back with you," is a perfectly acceptable response. Of course, there are situations where you need to be quick on

your feet or the opportunity to speak is gone, but it may be better to think a minute before just blurting out the first thing that comes to mind. Some people have a quick wit and naturally have a ready response and a quick answer is not necessarily a bad one. The wise can answer quickly because they studied the thing out long before you even thought of the question. But it may be better not to reveal the answer, but turn it back to the questioner and guide them to think it through for themselves. Jesus did this often.

The foolish man uses his words like a four year old boy with a hammer, whose goal is more focused on pummeling anything in his path than using the implement for a useful purpose. The fool opens his mouth and lets his words fly. Will his words do good? Will they help? Will they heal? It does not matter as long as he can give vent to what is on his mind. His main purpose is to be heard and let fly the words bouncing around his brain. When the torrent of words is released upon society, there would not be much worth hearing, because the **". . . mouth of fools poureth out foolishness"** (Prov. 15:2). The wisest thing a fool can do in this situation, is just be quiet (Prov. 17:27-28).

(Doug Newell IV is pastor of the Buffalo Valley Baptist Church of Clay, West Virginia.)



Urgency to Living

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was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that

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Urgency to Living

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they could not enter in because of unbelief" (Heb. 3:12-19).

An evil report was given back in Numbers. The nation of Israel had seen such signs and been the recipients of great miracles by the faithfulness and grace of God, and yet, an evil report was given. What was worse is that this evil report was accepted by the multitude. Living with the hope of having sweet water at every rest; maybe one day having the meat and seasonings again that their flesh remembered from Egypt; many of the nations had set their hopes and expectations on fulfilling the flesh rather than coming out from Egypt to worship the one true God. Was God not forthcoming in His purposes for the nation? How could they come to such conclusions?

Has God, through His Holy Word, not been as forthcoming with us? Yet so many have strayed from Holy living and living by faith. Those four questions I asked earlier, I am sure most of us responded in our minds "well of course that is not my ONLY goal, but it would be nice, right?" How many idols did God say He would permit us to have? Santa, tree, presents, money, alcohol, self-fulfillment, big house, big boat, big car? The answer is NONE!

Looking back at 2020, the year of essentials...kids, jobs, toilet paper, all of the political drama one could ever hope for...What did God show you last year? Has He enabled you to see that you can survive all of this on your own? Has He brought you closer to the church? Closer to your pastor and/or your loved ones? Hebrews 11:3: **"Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed [or made perfect]**

by the word of God [Jesus], so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." By faith Abel offered an acceptable sacrifice. By faith, Enoch walked so close with God that it pleased Him and he just kept right on walking! By faith, Noah did not become some "zoo-whisperer" but became the heir of righteousness. By faith Abraham became the father of a nation. Hebrews 11:10: **"For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."** Charles Spurgeon wrote "Those who are not sustained by faith soon weary of holiness and provoke the Lord."

For us to truly live by faith we, too, shall die, possibly to never have received the fulfillment of all the promises God has made unto us through Christ, but we will have seen them afar off, and been persuaded of them, and truly have embraced them and confessed to all the world that we are strangers and pilgrims here on the earth. We should declare plainly, beloved, that we seek a country **"a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called (our) God: for He hath prepared for (us) a city."** (Heb. 11:16)

The remainder of Hebrews 11 is a great blessing indeed as it shows us some of the trials these heroes of faith experienced. Were they heroes because they proved their persecutors wrong? Heroes because they got the last word? No. Beloved they were heroes of the faith because they never lost sight of the hope they were living for. Their hope was not in their own abilities, but in God's. What great trial lies before us that is harder to overcome than what we see in verses 29-38? **"By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land; which the Egyptians**

assaying to do were drowned. By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days. By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace. And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth" (Heb. 11:29-38).

What is the urgency to living by faith, dear reader? That the Lord might teach us contentment and dependency upon Him. **"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me"**

(Heb. 13:5-6).

If you do not know the Lord Jesus Christ to be your Savior, you cannot live by this type of faith. You will get as far as your money, looks, and pride can take you in this life and that is where it will end. You will, perhaps, accomplish great things in this life in regard to your self-fulfillment, but your eternal reward will be that of misery and suffering. In hell you will no longer desire such petty things as sports cars, fame and fortune "just a drop of water, please"... "please go warn my families and preach to them the Gospel of Jesus"...you will still be living by that same faith you took to your grave, for all eternity. Believe on Jesus, dear friend. Believe on the One who saw fit to take on the eternal judgment for my sins. The one who stands ever-ready as my intercessor.

I pray the Lord has given you questions this day, and if He has, trust beloved that **"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"** (1 John 1:9).



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desperately wicked: who can know it? I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings" (Jer. 17:5-10).

There is an awesome matter before us today, and every day it continues, and will continue so long as we dwell in mortal flesh. And that matter concerns the heart. It concerns the depraved nature of the heart. It concerns the deceit that lurks within the heart of sinful man. We cannot

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Light Contemplations

By Luke Austin
of Cadillac, Michigan

"Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the LORD" (Psalm 107:43).

A RETURN TO THE TOWER OF BABEL

Why is the world in such chaos? Why does it seem like every day we are spiraling faster and faster down the tubes? Well, in the author's opinion, I believe it is a return to Babel. **"And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech"** (Gen. 11:1).

Now we know the overthrow of the Tower of Babel, how God scattered the people by confounding the language. So the chapter opens with the whole earth being of one language. Why does this matter? What is the significance? What did God accomplish by scattering the languages?

1. Babel was a city built in direct defiance of God's commandment. God's command to the descendants of Noah was to be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth. (Gen. 9:1) But the inhabitants of Babel said, "no" we will make a name for ourselves here in Babel. We will not scatter, we will stay right here (Gen. 11:4). All of that city was unified in this matter (Gen. 11:6).

2. Babel had set up a works-based religion. Mankind had barely made it off the Ark and immediately set up a false religion. From the fall, God had made it clear that to approach Him, a bloody sacrifice was required. God made coats of skins (Gen. 3:21). I believe God from that time set forth the requirement of innocent blood to cover our sins. Without a doubt, Abel understood this

precept bringing the firstling of his flock (Gen. 4:4). But Babel, said "no" we will not have God's way, we will make our own way to heaven. So they went to building a tower.

3. Babel had a desire for self glory. Let us make a name for ourselves (Gen. 11:4 cf). Throughout Scripture, the people of God have a desire to glorify God, to give Him the honor, the preeminence, to make His name known for He is worthy to be known. But the pride of sinful man wants the glory.

So seeing all the failures of Babel, we need to understand this is inherent in the sinful race of Adam which is all mankind. Now imagine if the wickedness of all mankind was able to unify under one banner. What would that look like? Well exactly what we see in Babel. Open defiance against God. Rejecters of God's commandments. All types of works-based religion. And a desire for making a name for ourselves. Leaving behind a legacy that our descendants might revel in.

Now we ask ourselves how did God overthrow this evil? He confounded the language. Mankind could no longer be "one" in purpose and intent because he could no longer conspire one with another. So mankind scattered upon the face of the earth as He commanded them to do (Gen. 9:1).

Fast forward to modern day. Consider what is happening because of technology. Babel is

being rebuilt. No longer does language offer the same barrier it once did between man and man. I can speak to just about anyone in the world. With the click of a button, their speech is translated into my speech. Man is becoming one in purpose again. The mob is being stirred up. Consider social media. A dentist shoots a lion and the mob reacts. A cop kills a man and the mob reacts. A virus comes from China and the mob reacts. And make no mistake it is a mob mentality. You have to think with the majority or face the mob. You do not dare think outside the box. You would not dare say something along the lines of "let's wait for the whole story." You have to be enraged. You have to pander to the mob. **"And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do"** (Gen. 11:6). The people are one again.

Think just twenty years ago how different the world was. Remember what it was like to not have a phone in your pocket that kept you constantly enraged. Remember when you could go fishing completely oblivious to the troubles of the world around you. Do you want to know why the world is in the mess it is? Because sinners are as one. As awful as some of the things that go on in the world are, the world is worse for knowing about it. Oh, to live in a time without such instant access when man could live without the mob. Evil has always existed in the world: but the ripple effect one act has now is worldwide. That same act fifty years ago could only reach the local news. This is not to discount the heinousness of any act of evil. But the evil now begets evil

worldwide. And before anyone would be tempted to accuse me of having an "holier than thou" attitude, except for the grace of God I would be running with the mob. **"For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries: Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you"** (I Peter 4:3-4).

Now for all that darkness, here is the light. All of this is under the sovereign rule of almighty God. These things are all within the eternal plan of God to save a people unto Himself. To glorify Himself in the earth. To seat His Son upon the throne of David. To do away with this heaven and earth and create a new heaven and new earth (Rev. 21:1). A one world economy must come to pass before the visible return of Jesus Christ to this earth (Rev. 13:17). That one great worldwide reunified city, Babylon must fall (Rev. 18:2). So I say as John **". . . Even so, come, Lord Jesus"** (Rev. 22:20).

(Luke Austin is a member of the Cadillac Baptist Church of Cadillac, Michigan.)



Deceitful Hearts

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cast it out, nor can we hope to reform it so as to alter its nature. We may, to some degree, restrain, but we cannot reform.

I call your attention to verse 9 of the reading from Jeremiah, chapter 17, and ask that you prayerfully enter into a concentrated study of the text within the context of what is

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recorded. **“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”** This text will occupy our thoughts as we seek to examine the great truths that God presents to His people. May we be taught. May we examine.

One other text comes to our minds, which is also connected with what we seek to declare to you during the course of this message. Look to chapter 14 of the same writing: **“Then the LORD said unto me, The prophets prophesy lies in my name: I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart”** (Jer. 14:14).

I stand firmly convinced that the heart is deceitful. I stand firmly convinced that the heart is deceitful above all things. I stand firmly convinced that the heart is deceitful above all things, and that none can know it so as to understand, nor exercise sufficient control over it.

Yet, I must speak to myself, and to each of you who hear or read these words, what I consider to be a heavenly dictated maxim. And that is, “Know thyself” God’s Word enjoins us to consider our circumstances, and our state. Not only what is our condition, but also what is our nature. Not only what is our conduct, but more vitally, what is our character.

It has been reported that John Bunyan said, of himself, that he often prayed that God forgive his sins. But, he then declared that when he, John Bunyan, was permitted and caused to see himself as God saw him, his prayers then became, “Lord,

forgive me for being sin.” Not only for sinning, but for being sin. And so it is with every one who is so brought to look at themselves as they ought, and to “know thyself.” May we all be so brought.

Whatever knowledge we may possess in matters of the things around us, the world and all its many and varied subjects, the universe and all its myriad arrangements, is of little real value to us if we do not know ourselves. Whatever knowledge of these things we might strive to attain throughout the entire span of our lifetime will avail us nothing if we pass through that span being destitute of any real knowledge of ourselves. For without knowledge of ourselves, we will never be made to see our need to know God. The Apostle Paul wrote, **“What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet”** (Rom. 7:7).

Paul said, **“...I had not known sin...”** Did he say, or did he imply when he thus wrote that he was not infected by sin, when he conducted himself as he said that he did? Did he say that while he lived most manifestly as a “Pharisee of the Pharisees,” that he was not then a sinner? If he was not then a sinner, when did he become a sinner?

No, dear ones, he did not say that he was not a sinner. What he said was that he did not know that he was a sinner. He did not know himself to be what in actuality he was. He had a totally misguided opinion of himself, for he said concerning his life then as Saul, that, **“I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth”** (Acts 26:9).

But take note of this same one,

who, following a work of grace having been performed on his heart, made this resounding statement concerning himself. **“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief”** (I Tim. 1:15).

Paul said of himself that he was before, **“...a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief”** (I Tim. 1:13). He, previous to this transaction by God in his behalf, was ignorant of his condition, and while in that awful state, went about doing those things that were injurious to God’s people and to His cause. His heart was so deceitful until it had convinced this highly religious man that he was doing God service, when in reality, he was a blasphemer and a rebel against the God whom he thought he was faithfully serving. How deceitful was his heart?

Dear reader, ignorance of ourselves is a willful blindness, for which we cannot plead extenuations. Men who do not know themselves and their state of blindness are in that deplorable condition because of sin. And sin was willful on Adam’s part, and consequently on all our parts, for we sinned when Adam sinned, and are fully responsible before God for our sins. **“... Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it...”** (Gen. 3:17). Did Adam willfully sin?

Ignorance of ourselves is willful. **“Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen,**

being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse” (Rom. 1:19-20). **“Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of...”** (II Peter 3:3-5).

Ignorance of ourselves likens us to a traveler who prefers to go on in the darkness with all its attendant dangers to the journey being taken in the fullness of light. To grope in darkness is to be desired over moving in light? How foolish is the darkened heart of man?

God’s Word is the only resource which is available to us so that we can find the way. God’s Spirit is the only source of enablement that we have for the self-examination that we all need so that we can “know ourselves,” as we must be brought to do in order to know of the deceitfulness of our own hearts; and then be brought to lean not upon our own arm of fleshly strength, but instead upon Him who is our Strength.

God’s Word is our resource. It is our only sure haven of safe harbor. It is our only light to enable our journey to be taken in full illumination; in full safety. **“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path”** (Ps. 119:105). **“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart”** (Heb. 4:12). Note that

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Small Drops

By Joseph M. Sidders of
Guntown, Mississippi

"My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: Because I will publish the name of the LORD: ascribe ye greatness unto our God" (Deuteronomy 32:2-3).



REUNITING FOR THE FIRST TIME

When my little brother and I were younger our parents worked a lot. As a result, they always strove to make the most of our vacations and I believe they succeeded. They took us to 49 of the 50 states. It was an incredible journey to get to do this as a family!

As we travelled there were many landmarks we got to see along the way, and at each one we would make a point to stop and get a picture holding our hometown paper. In Bellefontaine, Ohio where I grew up, they would share your pictures in the paper if you were holding a copy while in front of these landmarks. Newspapers, our first social media!

It was on one of those photo shoots in front of Mount Rushmore where my dad and brother and I were standing with the paper that total strangers came up and called to us as though we were long lost friends. They saw the newspaper and used to live in Bellefontaine. This couple did not know any of us personally, we likely had never met them in town or attended the same church services, but we had this one thing in common of which gave us a bond and familiarity with each other.

Paul wrote to Timothy in II Timothy 2:19 that "**The Lord knoweth them that are his.**" In my small writing for today, I would like for us to consider whether or not we know or might recognize one another. Now we understand

that God foreknew us before the foundation of the world so I am not suggesting that we might have such a lengthy relationship with one another, but is it possible for us to recognize other born-again believers? It should be.

The Apostle John, writing to a born-again woman, wrote: "**I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father. And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another. And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it. For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward**" (II John 1:4-8). John says that he recognized these children by their walk. I was recognized by holding a newspaper 1200 miles from home. Will my walk reveal who it is I'm walking after, or will it betray me?

I John 1:7 says, "**...if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another...**" Here John confirms that we will recognize and have fellowship with one another. I know that the times we are now

in are difficult, but they are no excuse for us to lose "those things which we have" which is love for the Father and love for our neighbor, for this is not a new commandment. Let us desire now to recognize and be recognized in this life; to reunite for the first time and praise our Heavenly Father by our walk!

(Joseph Sidders is pastor of the Berea Baptist Church of Mantachie, Mississippi.)



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God's Word is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart!

The text that we have presented to initiate this look into ourselves gives us a fearful, yet most accurate and revealing picture of ourselves. It also shows forth in vivid and unequivocal terms the moral condition of the soul. "**The heart is deceitful...**" Thus, our subject can be seen as the spiritual anatomy of the heart, and we most surely need to carefully examine ourselves in light of this declaration that God has made concerning the condition of our hearts.

First, let us verify the great and grand truths of this text. Then, we will seek to picture these truths so as to place the deceitful hearts on open display. And finally, we will seek to apply the truths of this text so as to be benefited in our lives, and to magnify the grace of God in living those lives as pleasing Him.

VERIFICATION OF TRUTHS

When we begin to analyze what is told us in the text, we discover that what is said of the heart actually relates to the whole soul, to the entire mental man. In this analysis, we see that included here in this overall statement is the understanding, the judgment, the

conscience, the will, the passion, and all other faculties of man, without exception. We see the depravity of man described when the heart is opened to view.

Man's understanding is darkened. "**This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart**" (Eph. 4:17-18).

Note that the believing Gentiles in the Lord's church were not to walk, or conduct themselves, as other, unbelieving, unregenerate Gentiles walk, in the vanity (emptiness) of their darkened minds, and this due to the fact that their hearts were blinded.

Man's judgment is impaired. When Adam rebelled against God, and sinned against His Holiness, what did he then do? The inspired record bears out that he exercised his judgment as to what he imagined he ought to do under these circumstances, and did exactly opposite what sound judgment would dictate. Instead of fleeing to God so as to seek His forgiveness and corrective action, he fled from God and sought to undertake for himself. Was his judgment impaired? His actions say so. What about those fig leaf aprons he fashioned? What about his seeking to hide himself from God?

Man's will is alienated from God. To captive Israel God said, "**Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith**

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the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye" (Ezek. 18:31-32). To His own people, God has frequently spoken that they might be instructed in the ways that please Him. Yet, because of their sin and the consequences of their sin, their darkened hearts and demented wills remain at odds with Him. Their will is toward themselves and their ambitions, and is contrary to His will.

To Israel also the Lord Jesus Christ said, **"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not"** (Luke 13:34). **"And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life"** (John 5:40)

It seems to be needful as we proceed in this examination of our deceitful hearts, and the abject wickedness that these hearts exhibit to take a moment and look at the words "deceitful" and "wicked" since these two words have been chosen by the Holy Spirit to describe the heart of sinful man, as He superintended the writing of the Bible.

The term, deceitful, literally means crooked, perverse, and totally lacking in conformity to that which is right, both as right pertains to rule, and to action. Crooked means tricky, as regards conduct; not to be trusted; dishonest. Perverse means turned aside; distorted from the right; obstinate in the wrong; disposed to be contrary.

The term, deceitful, also means that what goes forth is false and fraudulent, both as to motive and

intent. False signifying all that is not the truth, and fraudulent signifying that the falseness is motivated by a deceitful intent to defraud, or to do, or cause evil to ensue. It is a monstrous display of self-will seeking to assert itself at whatever cost that may be incurred. In the case of rebellion against God, the cost to be borne is the cost of condemnation, resulting in separation from God. What an awesome cost this is. And yet man insists upon his own way, even when these costs result. Folly!

The term, wicked, signifies corrupt, criminal, and totally given over to evil. It means, evil in principle and in practice; deviating from, or contrary to moral or divine law; addicted to vice; sinful; immoral; depraved; vicious. This description is of the heart. It is deceitful. It is wicked.

Now, as we seek to verify the truths of this text, we will do so by presenting to you such evidence as cannot be denied nor successfully gainsayed. We will prove conclusively what the text declares. We will call forth the testimony of Scripture. We will call forth from the history of wicked men. And we will present also the record of the weakness and sins of those men who are generally regarded as "good men."

First, we declare that the statements that God has made concerning men of old time are true, even today, as they were true when God spoke them. **"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually"** (Gen. 6:5). Jesus testified of the same truth when He said, **"But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.**

For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashed hands defileth not a man" (Matt. 15:18-20).

Scripture likens man's deceitful heart to a cage of unclean birds, and to a corrupt fountain, and to a bad tree that can bring forth no good fruit. Scripture declares that the heart is not right with God, that the heart is forward to evil, that it is full of evil imaginings, that it is full of hypocrisy, etc., etc. The heart is said to be hard, impenitent, perverse, rebellious, and set to do evil.

Then, we will call upon recorded history from the Scriptures, from man's recorded history, and from contemporary knowledge that the life and conduct of wicked men will verify the truths of the text into which we are looking as we seek to examine ourselves, to "know ourselves." Without going into great depths of detail, I will call your attention to some whom God has been pleased to tell us of. As we call your mind to these, I ask you to look into the Scriptures so that the record may be verified; so that the truths of the text may be verified and established in our minds.

Examine the scriptural account of Cain. Did he exhibit a wicked, rebellious heart? Did he bring forth, in faith, a suitable and acceptable sacrifice? Did he? Why did he not? Was his heart deceitful and wicked? Did not his sinful nature show itself when his heart convinced him that surely the best that his hands could produce would find favor when he presented the produce of his fields and of his labor?

Look also to Pharaoh. Did not his heart lead him to continuously

defy God and insist upon his imagined mastery of his own destiny? Did he not openly and flagrantly pronounce his independence from the God of the Hebrews? In fact, the heart of sinful Pharaoh manifested itself in all its grotesque arrogance when from the abundant evil that lurked in the deepest recesses of his depraved heart, his mouth was led to issue forth this terribly blasphemous statement: **"..Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go"** (Ex. 5:2). From the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh. And so, from the abundant wickedness of Pharaoh's heart, his mouth spoke.

Look also to the wicked inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. Look to the envious, sensual inhabitants of those cities as they sought to promote their "alternate life style," and to walk totally contrary to principle and practice of both divine order and moral precept. From the abundance of their wicked hearts, having been fed by the deceit from within, their mouths spoke, and their wicked and sinful lives defied God and His prescribed ways. And so it is, even to this dreadful day. Nothing is different.

Look to Judas, to Pilate, to Saul, and to numerous others whose miserable lives are set forth for our examination in the Scriptures. In each of their cases, we may correctly view the outpouring of evil that dwelled within their darkened, depraved hearts. We may even be caused to wonder at God's willingness to tolerate such enmity against Himself as is so clearly exhibited by these, and other monsters who have lived while they so openly defied the God who rules supremely over

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Little Hills

By Nathaniel Hille of
Plant City, Florida



SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON - BIBLE SURVEY #24 THE BOOK OF II KINGS

TEXT: I Kings 8:22-25

DEVOTIONAL READING: I Samuel 8:10-18; Deut.17:14-20

AIM: Over-View of the Book of II Kings

INTRODUCTION: We now look at the 12th book of the Bible; the 7th in the Historical Section: II Kings. Originally, I and II Kings were one book. When translated into the Greek and English they were separated into 2 books. The New Scofield Reference Bible says: "II Kings contains the record of two great national tragedies—the fall of the Northern kingdom, Israel, in 723 BC; and the fall of Judah, with the destruction of Jerusalem, in 586 BC—as well as an account of the mighty ministry of Elisha. During the period recorded in this book, Israel received warnings and exhortations from Amos and Hosea, and a number of prophets arose in Judah, including Isaiah and Jeremiah. The books of Kings conclude with the people of Judah in captivity in Babylon"

I. AUTHOR: Unknown, Jewish tradition holds that the prophet Jeremiah is the author.

II. THEME: In II Kings, we see the end results of perpetual disobedience unto the Lord. We find that the decline and collapse of the two kingdoms occurred because of failure on the part of the rulers and people to heed the warnings of God's messengers. God is in charge of human affairs. Those who obey God's commands will enjoy His blessings. Those who disobey will experience God's discipline. While this was specifically applied to Israel with the covenant with God, there are principles here for each nation and their societies.

III. OUTLINE: A basic outline of II Kings

1. Elijah's Ministry and Translation II Kings 1:1-2:11
2. The Ministry of Elisha: II Kings 2:12-8:15
3. The Kings of Israel and Judah to the fall of Samaria: II Kings 8:16-17:41
4. Accession of Hezekiah to the Captivity of Judah: II Kings 18:1-25:30

IV. KEY PERSON(S):

1. God: God was still King over Israel.
2. Kings:
 - A. Hezekiah: II Kings 18:1-20:21. Hezekiah is a tremendous king. II Kings 18:3--"And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that David, his father, did." This tells us the great majority of what we need to know about Hezekiah.

It is stated concerning Hezekiah that "He trusted in the LORD God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him. For he clave to the LORD, and departed not from following him, but kept his commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses" (II Kings 18:5-6).

Hezekiah did all of this under various trials and testings. He was greatly supported by the Lord through the prophet Isaiah. Rabshakeh, the Assyrian, was a great nemesis to Hezekiah. Yet, Hezekiah found comfort in the Lord and trusting in His Word. Hezekiah became ill during his reign. Yet he turned unto the Lord, and the Lord added years to his life. Hezekiah did make a great blunder of showing the great wealth of his house to the king of Babylon (II Kings 20:12-19).

B. Kings of Israel: Many kings succeeded Jeroboam. Everyone of them did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord. Not one did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord. Not one.

a. Joram (II Kings 3:1-9:26); Jehu (II Kings 9:1-10:36); Jehoahaz (II Kings 13:1-9); Jehoash (II Kings 13:10-13; II Kings 14:8-16); Jeroboam II (II Kings 14:23-29); Zechariah (II Kings 15:8-12); Shallum (II Kings 15:10, 13-15); Menahem (II Kings 15:14,16-22); Pekahiah (II Kings 15:23-26); Pekah (II Kings 15:27-16:5); Hoshea (II Kings 17:1-6; 18:9,10)

C. Kings of Judah: Judah also had a succession of kings. Many of them did that which was right in the sight of the Lord.

a. Jehoram (II Kings 8:16-24); Ahaziah (II Kings 8:25-9:29); Queen Athaliah (II Kings 11:1-20); Joash (II Kings 11:21-12:21); Amaziah (II Kings 14:1-20); Uzziah (Azariah) (II Kings 15:1-7); Jotham (II Kings 15:32-38; Ahaz (II Kings 16:1-20); Hezekiah (II Kings 18:1-20:21); Manasseh (II Kings 21:1-18); Amon (II Kings 21:19-26); Josiah (II Kings 22:1-23:30); Jehoahaz (II Kings 23:31-34); Jehoiakim (II Kings 23:34-24:7); Jehoiachin (II Kings 24:8-17); Zedekiah (II Kings 24:17-25:7).

3. Prophets: II Chronicles 36:15-16—This shows us how the prophets were predominantly treated by the nation of Israel and eventually Judah. There were prophets of which God raised up to aid the kings that they might serve the Lord. Amos and Hosea were prophets to Israel with warnings and exhortations (See the Books Amos and Hosea). A number arose in Judah, including Isaiah and Jeremiah (See The Books Isaiah and Jeremiah).

A. Elisha: The most notable prophet in II Kings. Elisha was known for raising the lost ax head; feeding the hungry, healing Naaman of leprosy, raising the Shunammite woman's son.

NOTES: The students (with aid of teacher) should comprise a chart of each Israel, then Israel and Judah—of each king. The chart should show the order of the kings, the prophets (if mentioned) who were raised up during their reign, and if they followed the Lord or not.

(Nathaniel Hille is pastor of the Bible Baptist Church of Plant City, Florida.)

Deceitful Hearts

(Continued from page 10) ♦

all His creation. "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction" (Rom. 9:22).

And what of wicked men of our age, even of our day? What

of Adolph Hitler? What of Saddam Hussein? What of Jeffrey Dahmer? What of wicked men of every age, innumerable in number, but alike in their character? What of sodomites today? What of wickedness of every stripe and species that runs rampant in the societies of the entire world today? What of sinful man in

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. The social networking site Facebook is very much against Christians. Is it right for us as Christians to be a part of, and associate with it?

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“Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you” (Eph. 4:31-32).

“But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth” (Col. 3:8).

“Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye” (Col. 3:12-13).

I have spoken out against using Facebook several times because of what I have seen and what I have read. Like many others, I got on Facebook about 12 years ago thinking it was a good way to communicate and meet new people, and even write people I had not seen in years from back in my school days.

But then one day as I was on Facebook, I started to see children of Baptist Church Members

wearing skimpy, vulgar looking clothes. And then what really upset me was the conversations mocking and making fun of other Baptist people of the same faith and practice. So, what happened to Colossians 3:12-13?: **“Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.”**

Just so we are clear, I am not pointing the finger at anyone, nor am I accusing anyone of being guilty of (Eph. 4:31-32 and Col. 3:8). There are many fine Baptist people I have known for years that are on Facebook, and I even believe I have some members at the mission that are on Facebook.

I have learned not to condemn people anymore, I believe in preaching the truth, and if someone does not agree with me then it will take the Holy Spirit to straighten us out. I can not do it.

In my opinion, Facebook is evil and I have made the decision to stay off it. What really made the decision for me is when I received a message from (in my opinion) one of the godliest women I have ever met. It had all her information, but it was not her, I do not know who it was, and I do not care, but she wanted to have sex with me. So, I called this dear sister and told her what had happened and she said others had contacted her

too, about it, but she had tried to delete her account before this even happened.

I soon discovered you can not just delete your account. Once you create an account it is always there, you are never off (unless it has changed in 12 years). I have had many arguments with people about it, but if you delete your account, or try to, you are no longer on it, BUT all you have to do is retype your username and password, and oops you are right back on it. For what it is worth... stay off Facebook. God Bless!

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The worldly nation of America is also very much against Christians right now, yet we must continue to be a part of it. Our part is to be different, to be salt and light, as Christ remonstrated in Matthew 5:13-16: **“Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”** Our part is to be a highly visible light in the darkness of surrounding evil and a salty rebuke to the soured sweets of the reprobate palates of modern

America. Selah! Think about it!

We are never to sanction the evil among us, but we must use every weapon at our disposal to combat the evil of Satan and his minions. An excellent example is the use of Twitter by our 45th President, Donald J. Trump. He knew that the bigwigs of Twitter were evil at the top, just like Facebook, but he used that platform to bypass the fake news media to get his message across to the multitudes. He did not allow the evil ones to change his message, but rather confounded those that hated him. I am reminded of Christ’s encounter with the Pharisees over another of His servants in Matthew 21:23-27: **“..the chief priests and the elders of the people...said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority? And Jesus answered and said unto them,... The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him? But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet. And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell...”** In reality, they would not say.

For a while Twitter was helpless to stop our great president, because they likewise “feared” the people of the Constitution, but eventually Twitter gained enough public and media backing that they did not fear public opinion as much anymore and they banned our true president (as did the cheating Democrats in critical battleground states). I think it is intriguing, though, to note that the Lord did not allow Twitter to ban him, until He was finished using him to make America great

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. Could you please comment on Psalm 130:4?

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“If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared” (Ps. 130:3-4).

The true understanding of “The Fear of the LORD” is tied up in these two verses. Verse three brings out the awful terror of a sovereign Judge that knows EVERYTHING we have ever done. Have you ever felt that sinking feeling in the pit of your stomach in that moment when you know your guilt is visible to the authorities? When your sin has found you out? What a terror of fear will wash over us. It is over for us, now. **“If thou, (JEHOVAH), shouldest mark iniquities, O (MASTER), who shall stand?”** Selah!

How awful! But can we really imagine the dreadful penalty of our iniquities? If we could imagine the hellfire and brimstone starting to fall on Sodom, Gomorrah, and us? Maybe, but the stark devastation of even the scorched earth sites of World War 2 and Vietnam have faded from our imaginations in this current generation of America. What about the adrenaline rush of fear if we hear the siren and see the blue lights in our mirrors when we have been going 55 in a 40 mph zone? Feeling fear, yet?

From another perspective, maybe imagine that the entire church body is witness to us succumbing yet again to our worst iniquities and sins? Would the aghast look of horror on their faces cause you to shrink and fear? Cringeworthy!

The temerity of our continual audacity to harden our hearts to sin needs to be seen in this light more often, beloved reader. We know that we get tired of someone presuming upon our good graces, right? Imagine that God Himself has finally had enough of these stiff-necked servants. What kind of fury would be at His omnipotent disposal? Oh! Woe is me! **“If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?”** Hopeless and helpless? Selah! Think about it!

But then comes vs. 4: **“But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.”** As our hands cover our flaming faces and when we should be cringing from the blows of the righteous Judge, we could peek through our fingers, expecting to see a terrible and Holy Master, but what do we see? Our Heavenly Father! Wonder of Wonders! He is reaching out to take us in His arms once again. How we weep at the mixture of guilt and sorrow that our sin has caused. The emotions wash over us, do they not? As we joyfully receive the comfort of His forgiveness, our hearts fill with love and wonder at His limitless grace and mercy. Eventually all of these emotions merge into one, and we pull back from His embrace to look into the eyes of our wonderful God, and then fall to our knees in adoration

and worship. **“If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.”**

That last word of the fourth verse “yaw-ray” is marvelously translated **“feared.”** Awesomely it sums up the amalgamation of emotions from our 1) terror and blood guiltiness on through the 2) resilient graces of mercy and love, all the way back to the 3) reverence of His condescension to come and die for me. If I had to find a synonym of what this word means to me right now it would be precious, “that thou mayest be precious!” Feared? Yes! Reverenced? Yes! Properly reverenced finally and forever, someday, but how precious in my current need, right now. How precious, as I am brought again to the point of considering the awesome, fearful task of my Saviour and our Heavenly Father. **“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved”** (John 3:16-17).

Oh! How deep the Father’s love for us. How vast beyond all measures. And how terrible must be the sacrificial love of Christ. **“But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.”** Read the whole 130th Psalm, beloved reader. Infinitely precious and reverential worship shall be procured for our fearful and wondrous God Almighty. **“Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him...”** (Rev. 14:7) Selah! Think about it!

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“But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared” (Psalm 130:4).

The context has the Psalmist crying out to God from the depths of sorrow over sin that has brought him to an end of himself. He is greatly troubled over the magnitude of his iniquities as well as the the iniquities of Israel as a nation. He acknowledges that no one would be able to stand before the Lord apart from the grace of Divine forgiveness. On account of God’s promise of forgiveness, the soul of the Psalmist waits upon the Lord, hoping in His Word, and looking for plenteous redemption.

Even though his sins were many, the Psalmist rejoices in the truth that there is Divine forgiveness. What a joyous thought! God is so gracious, kind, merciful, and compassionate He can forgive the worst of sin and sinners through the mediation of Christ, the power of His blood, and His resurrection glory! What a balm for an aching heart that is burdened and guilt-ridden over the devastation of sin! There is forgiveness with God in Christ! This gracious realization prompted the Psalmist to fear the Lord and wait upon Him. It filled him with a profound sense of reverence, respect, and godly fear for the Lord. This attitude must prevail in all those who profess to know Christ and are dedicated to serving Him in an acceptable manner. Hebrews 12:28-29 declares: **“Wherefore**

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Forum Question #1

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again (evidently not President Trump's job, but ours to Keep America Great?). I expect that if we have the opportunity to use the Facebook platform to openly and powerfully proclaim Jesus Christ and His Holy Word, that we ought to do so, until eventually Facebook will ban us too, and then we will not have to worry about any affiliation with their wickedness any longer. Eventually the goats will tire of sheep food, as our Bible teacher, Deacon Pete Chadwick used to say, and they will separate themselves from us.

We need to recognize the importance of the question, though. It is imperative for our eyes to be open to Facebook's liberal bias and devilry. Satan is indeed using social media (almost) as expertly as God used President Trump to get across His message. We need to be adamant and open in our proclamation of the truth. It is not necessary to get bogged down with infighting and inbiting on social media. **"Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you"** (Matt. 7:6). We can distance ourselves from unchristian actions and persons on Facebook. We do not need to answer every heretic. As long as we continue to post peaceful, yet strong doctrinal truth on our profiles, they will have their answers. It is not like they do not know the truth, they just do not want to believe the truth. Selah! Think about it!

With A. W. Tozer, we need to get off our own personal playgrounds within our home churches, and get out onto the battleground of the world before it is too late to fight

the good fight of faith with other Baptist warriors of the truth. It is not right to be a member of Facebook for the sake of social media, or as a time-waster, but if we can subversively attack the evil one with guerrilla warfare tactics to undermine their evil agenda and successfully win a few battles with the Sword of Knowledge, I say, go for it! Selah! Think about it!

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Way back in the 1400's with the advent of the printing press there was a controversy that raged whether or not it would be a tool of the devil or whether it could be used of God. The same controversy has taken different forms over the years depending on advancements in technology. Think how many Bibles, godly books, and tracts have been printed and distributed since the advent of the printing press! On the other hand think of how many vile, wicked, ungodly, and satanic books have been printed and distributed since the advent of the printing press! How many copies of the heresies of the evolutionist Charles Darwin have been printed and read? Point being that a lot of good and a lot of bad has come to pass since the advent of the printing press. It is all in how it is used.

I would venture to say that Facebook has an overwhelming bias against genuine Christianity. A lot of what is on Facebook is not good at all. However, for those who want to use it to

connect with other Christians, family members, and friends it can be selectively used for good. I have used it to publish Biblical essays, articles, and expositions of Scripture. I started posting Plodding Through Proverbs a couple of years ago as I preached through it in Adult Sunday School class. Our church started using Facebook Live to broadcast all of our church services in March of 2020 during the plandemic. As far as I know, none of the sermons have been edited or deleted. Whether or not the messages are beneficial and being used to bring glory to God is up to the Lord. We have shut-ins who regularly tune in that are blessed by the messages. So again, it is all in how you use it. There have been times that I have wanted to completely unplug from the modern world and do away with my phones and the internet and go off the grid. There may come a day when I will decide to do that. However for now, I will try to use what is available to get the Gospel and truth out through every lawful means available.

There is a lot of evil in the world. Jesus made it clear that the world, that system of evil that is in opposition to God, His Word, and His Christ, would hate His followers just as it hated Him. Think of all the big corporations who have promoted things that are anti-Christian like the LGBTQP (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Queer, Pedophile) agenda and Critical Race Theory. We could easily say that Walmart, Coca-Cola, and many other "woke" corporations are decidedly against Christianity. The United States Government under the current administration of leftist Politicians is decidedly anti-Christian. What are we to do? **"Do all things without**

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

TOM ROSS

...AND FROM THE PASTOR

My answer to this question has changed over the years and honestly it is on the calendar to be revisited again soon. The issue for me is not so much that the site Facebook is against Christians nor even the multitude of users. The issue for me is my own propensity to sin when I feel like I am securely hidden behind closed doors.

What Facebook is against should not matter to me nearly as much as what God is against. Psalm 66:18 says **"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me"** and there are 7 other reasons to consider as well: **"These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren"** (Pro 6:16-19). Oh how easy it is for me to check all 7 of these boxes when I do not have to look another human being in the eyes!

No doubt we have seen over the years how even our own brethren have utilized this online fellowshiping tool to sew discord among one another. It so easy for us to disagree dogmatically

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Forum Question #1

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and fiercely when we are not compelled to (literally) walk together for even a few feet.

Now, is it right for us as born-again believers to be a part of it. If you can suffer the exhaustion of being tempted around the clock then yes there are opportunities to witness through Facebook. There are even wonderful opportunities such as what we had in 2020 with a virtual type of bible conference. Even with this though comes the danger of forgetting what church truly is and how it is defined in God's Word. Paul calls for us to **"Prove all things"** but he also says to **"hold fast that which is good and abstain from all appearance of evil"** (I Thess. 5:21-22). It is a wonderful way for us to grow in our faith, even as a preacher I have been sharpened by hearing the teaching of my other preacher brethren, but this does not permit me to forsake the local assembly nor the mission field for which I have been called.

Any social media platform can have an outreach, but it should not take the place of our being willing to go to our neighbor's door and offer them the Gospel. It should not be a method for us to pretend that we no longer have convictions. I would not scold a fellow Christian for being on Facebook, I do urge however that you do so with wisdom and discernment.

JOSEPH SIDDEERS



Deceitful Hearts

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total?

In these wicked men that we have named specifically, and those we have generally identified or

alluded to, can we not see what man can become? Can we not see how vile, wicked, and terrible men in their depravity may become?

As further study into the lives of men that are generally identified as "good men," as opposed to the adamantly wicked men that we have been viewing will reveal, we see evidence that substantiates what we have said. From the so-called worst to the best of men, and from the lowest to the highest of men, we find conclusive proof, when the facts are verified, that tell us of man's deceitful heart.

Look at Noah as an example of what we are saying. Here is a man who has been commended by his exemplary life. Here is a man who is said to be one who found grace in the eyes of the Lord, and whose life, generally, is a life that was found to be pleasing unto the Lord. And yet, because of excesses, he is also seen as being clothed in shame, as drunkenness is displayed. And this conduct from Noah, whom God set apart from all other men, and was pleased to save he and his family when judgment came upon men.

Look at Lot. A man who is said to possess a righteous soul. A man who, being one of God's men, yet goes after the allurements and benefits, though fleeting, of the world. Lot looked upon the well-watered plain and chose him that way and that place in which to live, not giving proper regard to what would please the Lord. He looked. He chose. His choice being influenced by the deceitful testimony of his own heart. Many today do likewise. They look, and choose, without regard for what God would have them do.

Look at Jacob. Here is a man chosen of God to an exalted position. Yet, by fraud he robs his brother of the natural birthright, and by deceit he tricks his father

into the bestowal of blessing. Jacob is a cunning and sly one. His heart led him to conspire and to act as he did. But so are many of us and of our contemporaries.

And we could go on, but space and time are limitations upon our look. So, we just call your attention to the names of others, and ask you to consider their lives so that you will be able to affirm that what we are saying is true. Look at Moses, and Aaron, and David, and Solomon, and Peter, and you and I. Oh, to our shame, we, too, are included, the evidence is in. We, too, have deceitful hearts!

As we continue the examination of our hearts, so that we can better know ourselves, we see the truths of this text illustrated as our deceitful hearts are displayed. We would not want to admit to their depravity, but we find no avenue open to us that allows us to escape the truth. The picture is too clearly drawn for further evasion, and we are left to the stark reality that confronts us.

Our deceitful hearts must be viewed and acknowledged. We must see them as they present a picture of ourselves. Oh, how often are we deceived as our hearts flatter us by representing our state as being better than it actually is. How often we are led to imagine that all is well with us while all the time we are being further drugged by the opium of conceit and self pride.

We might admit to ourselves that the general wickedness that is all around us has some vague but remote effect upon us and upon our actions. We might even concede to the weakness and feebleness that infects all of mankind. But we are so unwilling to even discuss our own personal sinfulness in any great detail. We are reluctant to even consider that our specific sins can be truly ours.

Always someone else's. But surely not ours. We try to be examined and judged by the more favorable aspects of our character. We strive to magnify the benevolent and kind acts that we may perform, and to totally ignore, or at least to minimize, our short-comings and our failures.

Have you ever read a person's autobiography? I surely can not place each and every person's account of their lives into this exact mold, but generally, it can be said that man's account of himself reflects the same appraisals as he would give of himself were he to be asked. There are, of course, some exceptions. But as a rule, the autobiography of a person majors on good, while minimizing bad.

Then too, our hearts often deceive us by providing for us a veritable endless supply of excuses and extenuations for our particular sins. Our hearts plead as a cover-up for our constitution, that is, our physiological and psychological make up to always give us a way out, an escape path so as to avoid responsibility. And so it is also with our education, or our examples, or the general influences by our environmental surroundings.

It is so evident that sin and evil always finds other people, other things, other times, or other circumstances to place the blame for our sins upon. And it is our own deceitful hearts that conceive these excuses. We are mortally infected with this malady.

Our hearts so often prevent us from any in-depth consideration of the consequences for our sins. It is as if our consciences have literally been seared over with a hot iron, so as to eradicate any sensitivity. This opium effect causes our hearts to shut out from our view the certainty of death

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Deceitful Hearts

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and judgment, and of eternity and loss. It even can cause God's people to imagine that there is no chastening hand of the Lord to be feared.

The inducement to put off until some other time the needed repentance and striving toward a corrective manner of life comes also from within the depths of our hearts. And yet the Scriptures teach the necessity of the repentance that we seek to delay or to avoid. There is no way out. We cannot escape. God requires men everywhere to repent. The lost are commanded to repent. The saved are commanded to repent. The Lord's churches are commanded to repent. But our hearts tell us, not now. Sometime, but not now.

The deceitfulness of our hearts are also shown when we consider our thoughts and our actions toward other men. Are there those who read these words who would dare to submit himself and his life to the test of permitting and inviting another man to take a long, searching, revealing look into his heart? Would you, or I, ask that every sin, overt or covert, be placed on public display, enumerated, labeled, and in every way, made known to others? Would you, or I, consent to the drawing back of the curtain that conceals from view our innermost thoughts?

“Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill: and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger

of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire” (Matt. 5:21-22). **“Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart”** (Matt. 5:27-28).

Then, the deceitfulness of our hearts is shown when we consider our thoughts and actions toward God. As we take a correct and careful look at our heart-dictated thoughts and actions toward God, we are found to be displaying utter and complete madness. To be, and to act deceitful toward God is the utmost folly.

So often we present to Him mere external service. In our foolishness, we present to Him our lips, our hands, our feet, our knees; even our PROFESSIONS. But, the spirit, the heart, the lowliness, the humility, the dedication, the DUTY are so frequently lacking. **“This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me”** (Matt. 15:8). **“And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness”** (Ezek. 33:31). **“And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say”** (Luke 6:46)?

When we confess our sins, and follow with a vow of abandonment of those sins, and then persist in those same sins as if we had not confessed and vowed at all, we are so clearly demonstrating that our hearts are still filled with deceit and evil. Oh, dear one, please look carefully at your life! Please seek

grace daily so as to be enabled to acknowledge and confess your sins, and then to come away from them. It is pleasing to God when we do so. It is folly on our part not to do so.

Our hearts also are shown in their true colors when we plead God's grace at the expense of His justice and His righteousness. We foolishly imagine that because “where sin abounds, grace does much more abound,” is an excuse to be claimed by us each time we sin. But, hear the Scriptures: **“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein”** (Rom. 6:1-2)?

When we expect God's mercy, even when we are daily refusing His mercy, we are demonstrating the deceit that lies within our own hearts. **“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”** (I John 1:8-9). We do not keep short accounts with God. We do not confess our sins as we should, thus the chastening hand of God is upon us, and will not be restrained. May we see our need, and act accordingly.

Just how deceitful is the heart of man? The text has declared, **“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”** How deceitful is the heart? Superlatively deceitful! Deceitful above all things. There is nothing more deceitful than the heart of man. It is the epitome of deceitfulness, and has no peer.

The Scriptures announce, and confirm, that Satan is a deceiver. But, the heart, acting under the influence of evil, sins, even against

the greatest love that any creature could know. For God's people, who are, and have eternally been the objects of God's love, sin against Him. This cannot be said of Satan; of the fallen angels; of the reprobate; nor of any other creature. God's love has never been upon these. But it is, and has always been upon God's elect, even when they were alien sinners. **“But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)”** (Eph. 2:4-5).

Because Satan introduced sin to man, and is the originator of it, it is assumed by some that he is the continuing cause of it. But this is not the case. When Adam willfully sinned, he, being an accountable, responsible creature before God, now bears his own guilt. He cannot correctly plead, “the devil made me do it.” Not so. His own will was to eat of the forbidden fruit. He was not deceived by Satan. Eve was. Adam was not. But when he sinned, the result is that his own heart is now irreconcilably darkened. He is sin. So, from that moment on, his ruined heart is the source of the on-going deceit. His heart is not repairable. It must be replaced. And only the Great Physician is qualified to perform that transplant.

The old, stony heart of man is now the source of deceit. The old heart is said to be the fullness, the fountain, the root, the womb of all deceit. **“From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members”** (James 4:1)?

Not only is the heart the source of deceit, it is also an instrument that is deceitful under all

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Deceitful Hearts

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circumstances, and at all times. When prosperity is our portion, our hearts remain deceitful. When adversity is upon us, our hearts remain deceitful. When we are blessed with good health, or with sickness; when we face life or death; when in our youth or in old age, our hearts remain deceitful.

The heart is deceitful beyond our knowledge or description. We cannot, within the limits of our knowledge, and within the limits of human language, describe, nor fully know the awful depths of our depravity, and of the deceit that has permeated every fiber and particle of our human make-up. The Scriptures have asked, "... **who can know it?**"

Not the wisest and best among men can know the heart of man. God ONLY sees it and understands it. God ONLY knows the thoughts of men. All men. **"But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man"** (John 2:24-25). The heart is deceitful and wicked beyond our capacity to restore. It is **"desperately wicked"**. It is true that human influence and effort may, to some very limited degree, restrain and modify. But God alone can heal and restore. God alone can renew. Desperately wicked hearts are outside the realm of control, so far as the power of man is concerned.

Therefore, we conclude, that what man whose heart as here described needs, is more than his resources are able to supply. What he needs is to have the stony heart taken out, and a new heart given to him. And he cannot perform such as is required. But, God can!

"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh" (Ez. 36:26).

TRUTHS APPLICATION

The text has addressed these profound truths, and they concern every one who hears, or reads these words. Not one of us can escape the stringent demands that are placed upon us, nor can we meet these just and righteous demands, which require us to serve God with no deceit or conceit in our hearts, or evidenced in our lives. Therefore, let none of us seek to evade what is declared. Rather, let "every mouth be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God" (Rom. 3:19). May we cry out, "Oh Lord, have mercy on me!"

Surely, we should be able to see that our hearts ought not to be trusted. **"He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife; but he that putteth his trust in the LORD shall be made fat. He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered"** (Prov. 28:25-26).

We could more safely trust in the deadly serpent than to trust in the deceitful heart of man. We could more safely trust in the deep darkness with its sure dangers than to trust in our hearts.

Let us not be satisfied with the performance of such hearts as we possess in our mortal flesh. Let us seek, rather, to take our case daily before the Lord so that we may there receive cleansing, and transformation, and continual sanctification. Let us lean hard upon the Lord, and trust Him, and put ourselves at His mercy so that we may be made pure.

There is a fountain filled with blood,

*Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,*

Lose all their guilty stains.

Oh, my dear reader, let us know of our most desperate needs, and let us, with all haste and constancy flee to Him who knows us and knows our needs, and is able to meet all those awesome needs. Let us flee to Jesus Christ, the Saviour. Let us look to Mount Calvary where the Prince of Glory died.

Jesus is willing, and He is able to save them that come unto Him. He has never been found to be lacking, at any time, under any circumstances. He is able to save. He will give new hearts, and then He will make those new hearts the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. He will fill those new hearts with His peace, and will never, never, ever leave, nor forsake His own. (*The Baptist Herald*, April, 1992).



Forum Question #2

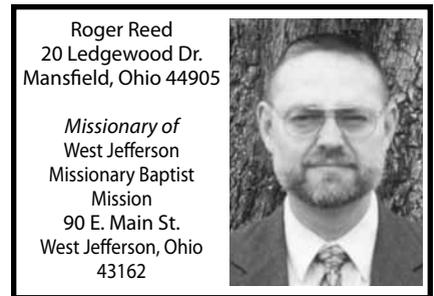
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we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire."

I love C.H. Spurgeon's comment on Psalm 130:4 in his *Treasury of David*, Volume 3b page 119: "Blessed but. Free, full, sovereign pardon is in the hand of the great King: it is His prerogative to forgive, and He delights to exercise it...The power of pardon is permanently resident with God: He has forgiveness ready to His hand at this instant. 'That thou mayest be feared.' This is the fruitful root of piety. None fear the Lord like those who have experienced His forgiving love. Gratitude for pardon produces

far more fear and reverence of God than all the dread which is inspired by punishment. If the Lord were to execute justice upon all, there would be none left to fear him; if all were under apprehension of His deserved wrath, despair would harden them against fearing Him: it is grace which leads the way to a holy regard of God, and a fear of grieving Him."

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The psalmist relaxes in the radiance of God's never-ending forgiveness. **"And enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified"** (Ps. 143:2).

Just imagine how wonderful and blessed we are that the almighty Judge, who will judge the quick and the dead...is He not to be feared? But yet, He forgives His people of their sins. **"And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead"** (Acts 10:42). **"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"** (I John 1:9).

I will never forget when I got my second speeding ticket, I was doing fifty in a twenty-five. It was a school zone and even though it was in the summer, I was not paying attention and was going too fast. I had to go to court and appear before a judge. There was like twelve people in the court

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room all at the same time, all different in age. I believe I was 19.

I was one of the last to be called to stand up and plead my case before the judge. I had just graduated from High School in 1970, and I remember having a pair of bell-bottom pants on. I was so nervous that my knees started shaking so hard you could almost hear my bell-bottoms ring. I lost my license for three months, and I never have had another speeding ticket. The reason the judge was so harsh, it was my second ticket in less than three months.

But here is the psalmist, knowing that God is a judge to be feared, yet is relaxed, knowing that there is forgiveness with God the Almighty Judge. Oh, what peace, oh what respect and honor to the One who is the Judge of the quick and dead. That is just awesome, praise His Holy Name. God Bless!

ROGER REED



The Divine Order of

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your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore, as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything (Eph. 5:23,24). **“The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be keepers at home, good, obedient to their**

own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed” (Titus 2:3-5). See also Gen. 3:16; I Cor. 11:3; 14:34-35; I Tim. 2:11-12; I Peter 3:1-6.

THE NATURE OF THIS SUBORDINATION

This subordination does not involve personal character. It does not imply personal inferiority of the woman to the man. The writer does not hesitate to say that in many things woman is superior to man; in the nobler qualities that go to make up character, in patience and endurance, in gentleness, in unselfishness, in ministering to the suffering, in love, the woman is superior to the man.

Nor does this subordination touch the question of salvation. In respect to salvation, **“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus”** (Gal. 3:28). To quote this verse in an effort to overthrow the doctrine of woman's subjection to man is to ignore the context and oppose Scripture with Scripture. This verse teaches that all are saved alike, namely, by faith in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:26).

Neither is it a question of ability. It is often claimed for some women that they are able speakers. This is not denied, but ability is not criterion of what is right. A man may be skillful as a gambler, but this is no reason why he should be licensed to gamble. The success women have had in the pulpit has deceived and turned many away from the once delivered faith. By such parity of reasoning, it can be proven that Moses did right when he struck the rock (Num. 20:11). He was successful in getting water, but he disobeyed God, and thereby, forfeited the privilege of entering the promised land. It will be through his marvelous

success that the Anti-Christ will command the worship of men. Read II Thess. 2:1-11 and Rev. 13.

The subordination of the woman to the man is a matter of position. It is inferiority of rank rather than of person. President Hoover is superior to every other man in our country in position and authority, but this does not necessarily mean that he is superior to every other man in character and ability. The woman is subordinate to the man with respect to authority and its corresponding obligation. We miss the mark entirely when we talk about women's rights. It is not a question of equal rights, but of identical duties. Whether in the state, in the home, or in the church, woman is to occupy a subordinate place. This means that the man has a greater measure of responsibility before God.

In public worship the responsibility for speaking and teaching is not placed upon the woman but upon the “man.” **“Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church”** (I Cor. 14:34,35). **“Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence”** (I Tim. 2:11-12). What a need there is for the men of our churches to realize that the chief responsibility for the condition of the churches rests upon them. They cannot escape this responsibility. This thing of turning the work of the churches over to the women and children, as is often done, is contrary to the

Word of God. Let us make some observations: God never made provision for a woman to occupy the throne of Israel. Woman had no part in the priestly ministrations in the tabernacle or the temple. God never made a covenant with a woman. When the government of Israel had broken down. God described the conditions in a figurative way by saying, **“As for my people, children are their oppressors and women rule over them”** (Isa. 3:12). The same principle applies to women in the new dispensation as in the old. Christ never called a single woman to be His apostle. Christ never called a woman to preach His gospel. All the deacons of the Jerusalem church were men. If Christ calls women to a public ministry, how do we account for His waiting nearly 1900 years before doing so? Until recent times, no woman claimed such a call. The practice of women speaking to mixed assemblies in Baptist churches is an innovation that has been decried by such men as Broadus, Eaton, Carroll, Lorimer, Harvey and Hawthorne, and others too numerous to mention. The scholarship of Baptists from Paul to Boyce Taylor is practically unanimous in its opposition to this innovation.

In the home the place of authority is vested in the man. To talk of equal authority between man and wife is to talk nonsense. Equal authority, no authority. Authority must be placed either in the man or the woman. Where has God placed it? With the husband or the wife? The Bible says it is with the husband. The father is more responsible for the conduct of the children than is the mother. **“And ye fathers, provoke not your children to**

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wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). In his song of thanksgiving, after his life had been lengthened 15 years, Hezekiah said, **"...the father to the children shall make known thy truth"** (Isa. 38:19). The Lord said of Abraham, **"For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him..."** (Gen. 18:19). The father and not the mother is chiefly responsible for the daughter's dress, for where she goes, and for the company she keeps. The responsibility of the husband and the father, in the light of God's Word, is a tremendously solemn matter. And this responsibility is the result of divinely ordained authority.

THE REASON FOR THIS SUBORDINATION

The subordination of the woman to the man has its origin and ground in creation. **"...Adam was first formed, then Eve"** (I Tim. 2:13). The man and woman were not created simultaneously. The man was created first and the woman was created for the man (I Cor. 11:9). Another reason given for the subjection of the woman to the man is in the fact that the woman was deceived in the transgression (I Tim. 2:14). These are the only reasons found in the Bible for the subjection of the woman to the man. To talk about local conditions at Corinth or anywhere else as the ground of the command for the women to keep silence in the churches is to add to the Word of God. It is a case of the wish being father to the thought.

Much skill is being used today in an effort to set aside the plain teachings of the Bible.

Those who have a conscience upon the question are ridiculed and browbeaten. They are called woman haters and non-cooperants because they will not support that which is obviously opposed to the Word of God. The commands of the Bible may be classed as moral and positive. A moral command is a command for which a moral reason can be seen, such as, **"Thou shalt not kill,"** (Ex. 20:13) and **"Thou shalt not steal,"** (Ex. 20:15) etc. A positive command is a command for which no moral reason is apparent. It lies in the sovereign pleasure of God. God's command to Moses to speak to the rock rather than to strike it is a positive command. The prohibition against touching the ark, for which Uzzah lost his life is a positive command. The command to baptize is a positive command. The command for women to keep silence in the churches is a positive command. The only reason that can be given for obedience to positive commands is that God has given them. The greatest test of spirituality is not obedience to the moral commands for the unregenerate may observe them. But to keep God's positive commands is to walk by faith.

THE SYMBOL OF SUBORDINATION

The truth of the subordination of the woman to the man has a divinely appointed symbol. This truth is to be symbolized by the woman wearing long hair, and when in church, an additional covering. This covering is a sign of headship. Headship means authority. Long hair is the sign by which the wife acknowledges the authority of her husband, who is her natural head; and a hat or veil as an additional covering, when in church, to acknowledge the authority of man in religious

matters. Let us examine I Cor. 11:3: **"But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God."** This verse tells us that order and subordination pervade the entire universe. The woman is subordinate to and under the rule of man; the man is subordinate to and under the rule of Christ; and Christ, in His mediatorial character, is subordinate to and under the rule of God.

"Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoreth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven" (I Cor. 11:4-5). The fifth verse is sometimes given as a warrant for women leading in public prayer and speaking in the church. To this it has been replied, that when the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to write this, He knew what He was going to move him to write in Chapter 14, verse 34. He merely refers to prayer and prophecy here without either approving or condemning. His object here is to condemn the failure of symbolizing the truth of headship. My personal belief, however, is that public worship is here expressed by prayer and prophecy. The men are to worship with uncovered heads, while the women must be covered. Failure of the woman to wear a hat or veil is the same as if she were shaven. **"For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered"** (I Cor. 11:6). The word **"if"** here does not express a doubt. It does not open the door for debate. It has the meaning here that it frequently

has in the New Testament. **"If I go away I will come again,"** that is **"Since I go away I will come again."** **"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above,"** or **"Since ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above."** Thus, we see the meaning **"Since it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered."** As further proof that I am not giving an arbitrary meaning to the word **"if,"** let me cite verses 14 and 15: **"Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering."** Here it is declared to be a shame for a man to have long hair, but for the woman, it is her glory. Observe that Paul did not appeal to custom, but to nature. God's law upon the question is in harmony with the law of nature. Lest the reader does not discover it for himself, let me say, that in the passage before us, there are two coverings in view. This is clear from Verse 6: **"For if the woman be not covered (veiled), let her also be shorn: but if (since) it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered (veiled)."** In the original, the word translated **"covering"** in the 15th verse is a different word from that translated **"covered"** in the other verses. The Revised Version maintains this distinction.

"For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man" (v. 7). Behold the accuracy of Scripture. It is not said here that man is the likeness of God, but the image of God. There is a difference between image and likeness. Image means

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representation; likeness means resemblance. Man was originally created in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:26). In the fall, man lost his likeness to God, but he is still the image or representative of God — he occupies the place of authority as God's representative. This meaning of the word "image" is enforced by a reference to Matt. 22:20: "And he said unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? They say unto him, Caesar's..." The Jews had asked Christ if it was lawful to pay tribute to Caesar. He answered by calling for a coin and, when given Him, He asked whose image or authority did it represent, and they said Caesar's. Now since a covered head was a sign of subjection, man, being in a position of authority, must not have this sign on his head. But the woman, being in the place of subjection, is to have this sign on her head: long hair as a permanent sign of the headship of her husband; and a veil or hat when in church as a sign of headship of man in public worship.

"For this cause ought the woman to have a sign of authority on her head because of the angels" (v. 10, R.V.). This opens up a field of study which we cannot enter for lack of space. This is a clear inference that angels attend church services in the hope of learning of the mysteries of human redemption. Read I Peter 1:12 and Eph. 3:10.

What God appoints is best. Obedience to the Divine order concerning the sexes will result in blessing to both men and women. As the spirit of lawlessness increases, the word "subjection" becomes more and more despised. Many associate the word "subjection" with the

thought of degradation. It is claimed that woman is degraded by the position given her by Paul. On this point, Atheism makes a bid for woman's patronage by seeking to prejudice her against Christianity. I now quote from *The Bible in the Balance*, by Charles Smith, President of the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism:

"Elizabeth Cady Stantor: 'I know of no other books that so fully teach the subjection and degradation of woman.'

"Helen Gardner: 'Women are indebted today for their emancipation from a position of hopeless degradation, not to their religion nor Jehovah, but to the justice and honor of the men who have defied His commands. That she does not crouch today where St. Paul tried to bind her, she owes to the men who are grand and brave enough to ignore St. Paul and rise superior to his God' (*Men, Women and Gods*, p. 30)."

What an awful thing it is to become an ally of Atheism! But this is exactly what Baptists are doing in their effort to set aside the plain teachings of Holy Scripture regarding the position of women in our churches and religious assemblies.

Woman is given the place of subjection, not for her degradation, but for her honor and protection. And her safety and happiness lie in her acceptance of that place. In Romans 13, all Christians are commanded to be in subjection to the civil authorities. Are they thereby degraded? Who but anarchists will say so? In Ephesians 5:24, the church is said to be subject to Christ. Is the church thereby degraded? No, a thousand times no! The relation between husband and wife is illustrated by the relation that exists between Christ and the

Church. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Eph. 5:25). Is a woman degraded by being in subjection to the man who loves her enough to die for her? And the woman who has promised to obey any other is pitied. And no woman ought to marry a man whom she cannot promise to obey.



Proverbs 16:27-32

By Roy Mason
(1894 - 1978)

Turning now to Proverbs the 16th chapter, I wish to begin reading with verse 27 and continue through verse



32, "An ungodly man diggeth up evil: and in his lips there is as a burning fire. A froward man soweth strife: and a whisperer separateth chief friends. A violent man enticeth his neighbor, and leadeth him into the way that is not good. He shutteth his eyes to devise froward things: moving his lips he bringeth evil to pass. The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness. He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."

I want to call your attention now to something to be found in this passage of Scripture. We have four kinds of men diagnosed here. The first is the ungodly man, mentioned there in verse 27, "An ungodly man diggeth

up evil: and in his lips there is as a burning fire." He is a man totally unlike God, and not only that, Anti-God in his attitude. You will find men like this no matter which way you turn. You who work with a group of any size are thrown among men of all kinds, and especially of his kind. They have never in all their lives lifted their faces toward Heaven to ever thank God for anything. The only time they mention God is to use His name in cursing and blasphemy. Let churches, preachers, religion be mentioned, and they run them down and find something the matter with all of them. Their lives are in standing defiance of God Almighty. Listen, if it were not for the presence of Christian people in this world, God would not put up with people like that for twenty-four hours. He drowned a world full of people who were like that once when He sent the flood. Sodom and Gomorrah were filled with people like that, and God rained down fire and brimstone and blasted those two cities from the face of the earth. Just remember this one thing when you see ungodly people and hear them blaspheme and curse the name of God, keep in mind that the day is coming when such persons are going to stand before God to receive sentence, and when they stand there before the Great White Throne, all of the arrogance and all of the blasphemy is going to die off their lips, for they are going to be face to face with Hell.

The second man who is diagnosed here is the froward man in verse 28, "A froward man soweth strife: and a whisperer separateth chief friends." He is the biggety, brassy sort of a fellow who butts in where he has no business. He is the sort of

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fellow who leads mobs, and stirs up trouble. I used to live in a coal mining country where I knew just such men. They were the first to want to go on strike about every little thing. I have known those miners to strike and to try to destroy the very mine from which they obtained their living. Why do they do a foolish thing like that? Because they got under the leadership of some froward men, as they are called here, who are men of violence, who led men to tear up, and wreck, and destroy. I have seen men of that kind in churches. When disagreement arose over something, when things ought to have been settled peacefully, they incited others to such violent attitudes that the church was split into pieces, and I think of two churches where controversy was so violent that the police had to come in and keep order. Is that not a disgrace for Christian people to get into such a mess as that? Beware always of the froward man who wants his way, and who is willing to tear things all to pieces to get his way.

In the third place, the next man diagnosed here is the whispering man. **“A whisperer separateth chief friends,”** it says here. The whisperer is the underhand gossip. He is the kind of fellow who slips back and forth and tells others what has been said about them. In short order, he has two people who were formerly friends ready to fight each other. The whisperer is the kind of fellow who does not get up like a man in church business meeting and discuss matters of business. He waits until the business meeting is over, and then he begins to call people on the quiet, and to say, “I do not like what was done awhile

ago, do you?” Listen, when you see a sneak like that start that kind of thing, stop him and ask him why he did not have the manhood to stand up in open business meeting and express his opinions when the matter was open for discussion. No person ought to belong to a Baptist church unless they believe in majority rule. When a matter comes up and is thoroughly discussed and is settled by a clear majority, that ought to settle the thing for the whole church, and people who are not willing for it to be settled in that way, want minority rule. They want to run the church, and they are not willing for the church as a church to run its own business. The whisperer is the kind of fellow who gets a pet notion and he does not come to the church and state it openly and fairly, but he begins to run around and talk the thing up, trying to arouse sentiment in favor of it. That kind of underhanded propaganda has caused strife and dissention in churches countless times. I like openness and honesty, do you not? The fellow who runs around and whispers rumors and peddles gossip, breaks up friends and stirs up dissention in churches, is about the most despicable character that I can think about.

But now let me turn to the fourth kind of man who is diagnosed here, and he is the violent man. Verse 29 says, **“A violent man enticeth his neighbor, and leadeth him into the way that is not good.”** Here we have described the rabble rouser. Adolph Hitler was a man of that stripe, and he plunged the whole world into bloodshed. He brought his nation down to defeat, and he caused the death of millions of people, and he brought about his own violent death. The violent man is a man who plays on human prejudice. He is not ruled

by reason, he is not ruled by common sense or what is best, he is ruled by temper and violent anger. A man like that can stir a mob to lynch somebody, whether the man knows what it is all about or not.

But now let us pass on and take note of something else that is said here in this Scripture. We are told here when gray hairs are a crown. It says there in verse 31, **“The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way**

of righteousness.” Gray hairs are not honorable just because they are gray, for anybody, good or bad, can grow some gray hairs if they live long enough. It says gray hairs are a crown of glory **“if.”** Take a look at that **“if.”** **“.. if it be found in the way of righteousness.”** An old fellow who had one foot in the grave said to my Father, “I do not think there is anything to God and Christianity.” He did not say that out of a lifetime of study, he said it out of godless prejudice. What else did he have to take the place of God and Christianity? He did not have anything. When he shortly afterwards died, he went on out into the blackness of a lost eternity. Oh, if there is anything I hate to see, it is a godless, worldly old man or woman. There are plenty of them. That is the kind who live to play bingo around these tourist places in Florida. Oh, I tell you, when people get old and are crippling right along on the edge of the grave, they need to

Peter and Andrew



Caleb Newell, 2021

“And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, ... And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” (Matthew 4:18-19).

be thinking of something higher than bingo and a deck of cards. When people are within months of an endless eternity, they need to be giving some thought to where they are going to spend that eternity. I was in a barber shop some time ago, and an old, gray-headed fellow came in and sat down to await his turn, and he could hardly open his old mouth without a cuss word falling out of it. I looked at him and I thought, “You are ripe for Hell right now, and the moment that wicked old heart of yours stops beating, there is where you are going.” I am glad that all old people are not like that. I remember a Deacon that was in my church back when I first came to Tampa. His hair was as white as snow, and he lived down the street from the church a little ways, and often I would see him walking up the street on Sunday morning with his Bible in his hand, and I always thought of this verse when I saw him coming.

♦ (Continued on page 22)

Proverbs 16:27-32

(Continued from page 21) ♦

“The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.” He was a blessing to my life, and I shall never forget him. Our congregations began to grow after we built a large auditorium, and when the house began to fill up on Sunday morning, I would look out and I would see the tears in this old Deacon’s eyes. It stirred his soul to see the church filled with people, and he almost wept with joy when he saw people saved. It is a wonderful thing to see old people who love God, who are devotedly in their places when worship time comes. It is a wonderful thing to see a man or woman who are ripe for eternity, with the very light of Heaven on their face. It is a wonderful thing to see old people who have not grown bitter from the experiences of life, people who set a right example for the young people, people who are softened and mellowed by the years, people who are clean in speech and pure in heart. In my first pastorate, I had an old Deacon who lived four miles down in the country, and I visited in his home many times. He was one of the finest men that I ever met. His son-in-law who lived in Houston, Texas, always spent his vacation down on that farm, and he said to me one day, “You know why I always come back here to Kentucky for my vacation? I am out in the world, where I have to come in contact with all sorts of people, and I meet crooked people and people who are enough to shake my faith in mankind, but when I come back here, I work with my Father-in-law out on the farm, and it is like a tonic to be with him. His heart is as pure as that of a child. I never heard him say a dirty thing

in my life, and when my visit is over, I always go back spiritually refreshed. That old white-headed man there on that farm lived his life in the way of righteousness, and that white head was a crown of glory. The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.

But now let us look further into our Scripture. We have here a strong word about self-control, and it is found in verse 32, **“He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.”** Men have lived in this world who had the ability to appeal to people, to lead armies, and to conquer, but there was one they could not conquer, and that one was self. Alexander the Great at an early age was a political and military master of the world, but he could not conquer his own appetites, and he died from a loathsome disease, or complications of it, at a time when he ought to have been in his very prime. Jack London was a brilliant writer. His books sold by the millions during the period of my early manhood, and he had overcome all kinds of obstacles in his rise to fame as a writer, in fact, he overcame everything but himself. He became a drunk, and his chronic alcoholism wrecked his life and put him in a premature grave. I think just here of a man who used to be my favorite news commentator. He had the clearest, finest voice, and I used to just wish that I had a fine voice like that for preaching the Gospel. I noticed that he was no longer sponsored by a big commercial concern, and I spoke about it to a man at the radio station, and he said, “That man is a fine commentator, but he is a drunk. They have a hard time keeping him sober enough for him to make his broadcast,” and

finally he disappeared from the air, and I did not hear anything from him or about him for several years, and he is dead now. A man of talent, but the slave of alcohol. The writer says here that the man who can conquer his own spirit is greater than he that taketh a city. Listen, a man or woman ought not to be mastered by a little roll of tobacco, man or woman ought not to be mastered by a little bottle of liquor. A man or woman ought not to be the slave of pills. Some people run for the aspirin every time they even have a hint of a headache. A lot of people have come to feel that they just could not get along without a bottle of tranquilizer tablets. They lack self-discipline, they lack self-mastery, they are not rulers of their own spirit. **“He that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city,”** this says. How very, very true that is, and that is God’s estimate.

Now I want to ask you to go back with me to a verse that is found near the beginning of this Scripture which we have just been studying. It is the 12th verse, and it does not appear in the passage that I read a few moments ago, but it says, **“There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.”** There is a Scripture for the fellow who says, “Well, I do not know what the Bible says, but I think thus and so.” Or here is the fellow who says, “Now it seems to me,” and then he goes ahead to give his notion about a thing. It is a bad thing to go on guesswork where one’s health is concerned. It is a bad thing to go on “I think” in relation to many things, it is supremely foolish to substitute “I think” for what God says here in His Word. Yet that is exactly what many, many people are doing. What are some of the ways that

seen right unto men, but that lead to spiritual death? Let me name some of them.

In the first place, there is the way of “Do the best you can” for salvation. Many a person who has never spent a straight thirty minutes reading the Bible to find out God’s way of salvation, will tell you, “Now, I think, I think that if a fellow does the best that he knows how, it will be all right with him.” In the first place, I have never seen the color of a fellow’s eyes who did the best he knew how. We all know better than we do, and you know that just as well as I do. A few years ago, I planned to make a trip to Palestine, and I was to sail on a ship that left from New York. Suppose that I had just assumed that all I had to do was to show up at the time of sailing, and I would be taken aboard, and taken across to my destination. I would have been in for a sad disappointment. I had to have a Passport to get aboard that boat, and I had to have that Passport viewed by the proper authority. I had to have a certificate of vaccination. I had to have a certificate showing that I had taken shots for several different diseases. I had to have a reservation on the boat for that trip. I did not go on “I think.” I set out to find out exactly what the requirements were, and I carefully met all of those requirements. Shall a person take such precautions as regards a brief trip of a few weeks to a foreign land, and then take no precautions as concerns a trip out yonder into eternity that is forever. God tells us exactly what He requires here in this book that we call the Bible. Have you ever given any consideration to it? Men’s ways of getting to Heaven are not God’s ways. **“There is a way that seemeth right unto a**

♦ (Continued on page 23)

Proverbs 16:27-32

(Continued from page 22) ♦

man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

What are some of the ways of men? I answer again by saying that another way is presuming upon the mercy of God. I have heard people say, "Well, I think now that God is too good and too merciful to ever let anybody go to Hell." That is man's way, the way of assuming something that is not so. To the contrary, Jesus said, "Fear not him what is able to kill the body, but is not able to touch the soul, but rather fear him who is able to cast both body and soul into Hell. Yea, I say unto you, fear him." Who is he speaking about there? He is speaking about God. He says, you had better fear God, for He is able to cast into Hell. He is not only able, He will do that thing when one ignores or rejects His terms of entrance into Heaven. Had I willfully ignored the requirements that related to my sailing on that ship to Palestine, and had I been turned away when I tried to walk aboard that ship, I would not have charged the authorities on that ship with cruelty. It would have been foolish for me to have ignored all the requirements and said, "I think the ship authorities are just too merciful and too good to refuse to take me on board." I would have been very quickly disillusioned. It was my business to find out what I must do to be able to sail on that ship, and it is our business to find out what we must do in order to walk through the gates of Heaven, too.

But in the third place, passing from this, what are some of the other ways of men? Well, another way of man is the way of putting off, the way of putting off. "Well, I intend to become a Christian sometime or other, but I figure

that I have plenty of time to attend to that yet." There is no telling how many thousands of human beings are in torment right now as a result of their declining salvation by putting off. There was a Christian doctor who was one day called to go to a home of an old man whom he had frequently visited before. He had talked with the old fellow about the need of becoming a Christian, but always that old fellow would put the matter off until some other time. The old man was suffering from an attack of bronchitis, and the doctor told him that he would have a prescription filled at the drug store, and that it would be delivered from there. "When must John begin to take his medicine?" asked the old man's wife. "Let me see, let me see," he said, "you are not desperately sick, not desperately sick, so suppose you begin to take it a month from today." "A month from today," exclaimed the man and his wife in astonishment. "Yes, why not?" "Is that too soon?" "Too soon! Why, sir, I might be dead by them." "Well, that is true, but you must remember that you are not dangerously sick now. Still, maybe you had better begin to take it in a week or two." "But, doctor," said the sick man, "begging your pardon, sir, but I might not live until next week." "Of course, that is a possibility, John," said the doctor, "but you see you will have the medicine in the house, and if you get so bad that it looks as if you are going to die, you can start in taking it. If you should get worse by tomorrow, you can take it." "But, look here, said the sick man, "I might be dead tomorrow." "Then when would you suggest that you begin taking the medicine?" "I would begin taking it right today, by all means," he said. "All right," said the doctor, "begin taking it today, then. I have just been trying

to teach you something, John. Time and again I have tried to get you to take the remedy for your soul that the Great Physician has provided you with, and always you put it off until some other time. You are not willing to trifle with your health and your life in such fashion, but your soul, which is worth a whole lot more, you keep trifling with. You have just said that you might be dead by tomorrow. Suppose you are, what about your lost soul?" Now there is not a one of you but that can see the foolishness of that old man in putting off in that way, but can you see it as it relates to your own self? One man's way is the way of putting off, and often it leads to death. **"There is a way that seemeth right unto man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."** I earnestly beseech every one of you who are out of Christ to turn to Him right this hour, take Him now as the Savior of your soul, the Lord of your life, then confess Him at the very first opportunity--indeed, make an opportunity to confess Him publicly.

Our Father in Heaven, we pray that Thou wilt help those who have been listening in to see the seriousness of this thing about which we have been speaking, and to see how dangerous it is to put off and put off and put off, the most important thing that one can ever be concerned about, the salvation of one's soul. Oh, help them to realize that God's time is now, for He says in His Word, "Today is the day of salvation, today if you hear His voice, harden not your heart." Grant, we pray, that there may be those who shall turn in faith to Christ now, and receive Him unto their own salvation. We ask in His name. Amen.



BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 5-1-2021 to 5-31-2021

Beginning Balance	\$1,098.13
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	300.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL	60.00
Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX	50.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV	200.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	150.00
Bruce Allen, Cross Plains, TX	25.00
Carol Willett, Cottonwood Shores, TX	100.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL	25.00
Faith B. C., Lynn, AR	25.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
Grace B. C., Gladwin, MI	50.00
Grace B. C., Rural Hall, NC	50.00
Grace Missionary B. C., Tulsa, OK	50.00
Indore B. C., Indore, WV	100.00
The Lord's B. C., Goose Creek, SC	50.00
Mike Sherman, Ashland, KY	35.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Cheapeake, OH	100.00
Parkway Landmark B. C., Springfield, OR	100.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL	100.00
Portland B. C., Plumerville, AR	50.00
Southside B. C., Fulton, MS	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Silsbee, TX	30.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Wellington, KS	100.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA	25.00
Subscriptions	16.00
Anonymous	2,200.00
Dividing checks	150.00
Sub Total	\$4,291.00
TOTAL	\$5,389.13
EXPENDITURES:	
Printing	507.15
Postage	570.27
Wages	2,300.00
FICA	175.96
Dividing checks	150.00
Bank charge	13.00
Total Expenditures	\$3,716.38
ENDING BALANCE	\$1,672.75



BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 5-1-2021 to 5-31-2021

Beginning Balance	\$3,431.80
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	225.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	100.00
Calvary Ind. B. C., Sumas, WA	200.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
.....	625.00
TOTAL	4,056.80
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio time	363.98
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	363.98
.....	3,692.82
Interest	+0.03
ENDING BALANCE	\$3,692.85

The Short Pews



Brief Articles
by Curtis Pugh
(1944 - 2018)

TWICE THE CHILD OF HELL

Jesus Himself spoke plain words to the most religious people alive in His day saying: **“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte [convert], and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves”** (Matt. 23:15). Here Jesus spoke to the Pharisees about themselves and their missionary program. He first pronounced **“woe”** upon them. This word is used to express distress. He is saying that judgment without mercy is coming upon the religious leaders. Their expectation of happiness for eternity was not going to happen. Alas!

Next the Lord Jesus spoke of their missionary zeal. The lesson for us here is that the sending out of missionaries does not guarantee that either the senders or those sent are doing a good thing. Just because people go door to door in an effort to make converts does not mean what they are doing is right. Jesus uses a bit of hyperbole: intended and obvious exaggeration in speech to make a point. He said they would go around the world just to make one convert! That is zeal! That is dedication! That is sacrifice and commitment to a cause.

But Jesus is saying that their zeal, dedication, sacrifice, and commitment are to the wrong message. Their goal is to make converts to their false religion!

Oh, they made converts, but each convert was **“twofold more the child of hell”** than they were! In this statement, Jesus first of all says directly to these religious leaders that they themselves were children of hell. They were headed for eternal punishment! They were religious, but lost! They had never been born again of the Spirit. This was the personal message to one of them who came to Jesus by night, for Nicodemus was **“a ruler of the Jews”** (John 3:1). Jesus told him **“ye must be born again”** (John 3:7).

But these converts were twice the children of hell than those who evangelized them were! Their religious instructors were deceived deceivers and their end would be eternity in the Lake of Fire. But their converts were twice as bad. How can that be? How can these people be twice as bad off as the people who converted them?

While their instructors were religious hypocrites having only a false outward religion that was empty of any spiritual life or inward change, their converts only added to their former pagan ideas and practices the outward hypocrisy of their teachers. They continued in their observances of pagan feasts, celebrations, and devotion as well as their old

immorality and sinful lifestyle although they outwardly conformed and appeared to be changed.

It is also recorded that Jesus said to the Pharisees: **“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres [tombs], which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness”** (Matt. 23:27). Outwardly clean, but inwardly corrupt! Beware of mere outward religion. It leads to hell!



ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Grace Landmark Baptist Church of Buckhannon, WV, is seeking a pastor. The church is Sovereign Grace and Landmark in doctrine and practice. Any interested called pastor of like faith may contact Brother Brad Butcher at (304) 669-4738 or (304) 745-6226.

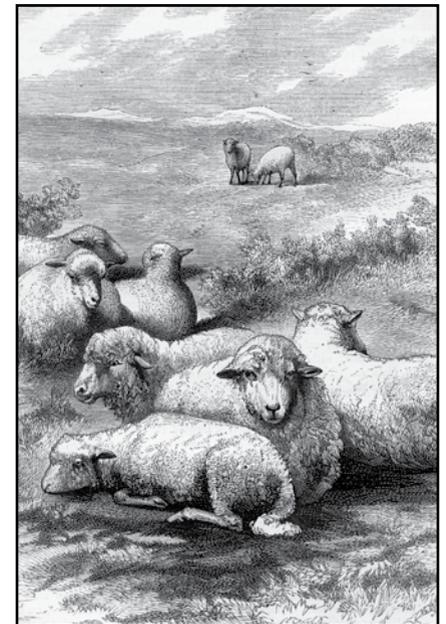
The Stephens Branch Baptist Church of Martin, Kentucky is in need of a pastor. They are an Independent, Sovereign Grace, Landmark, Missionary Baptist church holding to the doctrines

of grace and the King James Bible. If you are interested in being considered or would like more information on the church you can call Brother Lonnie Edwards at (859) 629-1413 or write the church at: Stephens Branch Baptist Church, 1025 Stephens Branch Road, Martin, Kentucky 41649.

The Lord’s Baptist Church in Tacoma Washington is in need of a pastor. For more information please contact Gaylen Russell at 360-879-5565 (home) or 253-495-4567 (cell) or by Email: gaylenr@rainierconnect.com.

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Caldwell, KS is in need of a pastor. For more information please contact the church in writing at SGBC, 400 N. Main St., Caldwell, KS 67022, or by phone Brother Darin Wiley 620-863-2431.

The Victory Baptist Church of Chehalis, Washington is in need of a pastor. Any interested brother may call Gerry Greisen at (360) 985-7975, or Mark Fenison at (360) 751-2929.



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