

The Berea Baptist Banner

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God Forgive America!

By Wayne Reynolds

Troy, Missouri

The United States of America is the greatest nation on the face of the earth. It is the nation I was born in, the nation I grew up in, the nation I was educated in, the nation I live in. It is the nation I love, the nation that protects me from invasion from foreigners, the nation that provides me with a government that allows me to have a say. I love the United States of America. The United States of America is truly the greatest nation on the face of the earth.

The United States is not great because of our armies, or wealth, or our people. It is because God gave *his* understanding and heart to our forefathers when they formed this great nation. The United States of America will remain strong only as long as its people seek God, and



Wayne Reynolds

remain true to Him.

After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, America as a nation stood united for the cause of freedom. We, as Americans, asked God to bless us. Flags waved once again, and people were very united and patriotic. This is as it should be, but there is something the American people did not do, and have not done. There is something the leaders of this nation have not done, nor have they asked

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The Passover

By F. C. Gilbert

(A converted Hebrew)

"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water" (John 7:37, 38).

WHY THE FESTIVALS WERE GIVEN

In order ever to keep the fact before the minds of the Israelites that they were a separated and peculiar people (Ex. 19:5-6) unto the Lord, a people through whom He wished to reveal to the world the Messiah, and the many experiences connected with His life, — a number of festivals were given to them, which were to be observed at different seasons of the year, and at a specially appointed place (Deut.



F. C. Gilbert

16:16). A fast day was also set apart by the Lord (Lev. 16:29-30; 23:26-32; Num. 29:7), which was intended to teach precious truths concerning the work of the Anointed of God.

2. It never was the intention of the Lord that no other people save the Israelites should observe these feasts; everyone could keep them, who would conform to the laws governing the same (Num. 15:15-16). If they did

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How to Scrap the ACLU Anti-God Agenda

By G. Russell Evans

Norfolk, Virginia

The way to scrap the ACLU's sweep-ing anti-God agenda—and to shake that august organization to its core—is the simple constitutional amend-



G. Russell Evans

ment (HJR81) already in the works by Oklahoma Rep. Ernest Istook ® with 81 co-sponsors and now sitting in the House Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution under Chairman Steve Chabot (R-Oh.) of Cincinnati.

So, what is the holdup? Public opinion polls show 85 percent of Americans wanting school prayer. The time to strike is now—while the iron is hot with the nation's return to religion after the murderous terrorist assaults against our freedom and institutions.

CLARIFIES FIRST AMENDMENT

This proposed constitutional amendment would merely *clarify* the

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Growth Presupposes Life

By Milburn Cockrell

Mantachie, Mississippi

"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins"(Eph. 2:1).

Contrary to the thinking of some, man in his natural state is **"dead in trespasses and sins."** Man is not sick and in need of the hospital. He is dead and in the cemetery. Until given life by God, the Father of spirits, he is blind, deaf, dark, and dead to the spiritual world (Luke 15:24,32; Rom. 5:12;6:23; 8:6). Such a person is alive

But it is not meant by this description of the Christian to raise him above the rank of humanity, or to give a coloring to the picture which it will not bear. He is still a man, not

physically and mentally, but he is dead spiritually: **"But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth"** (I Tim. 5:6). Such a person is spiritually incapacitated and inactive. We can expect nothing good from a person spiritually dead.

THE DEAD MUST BE QUICKENED

Death is a state of separation. By nature man is cut off from the Source

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Sincere Hearers

Part 2

By Samuel Stennett

(1727-1795)



Samuel Stennett

an angel. To fix the standard of real religion at a mark to which none can arrive, is to do an injury to religion itself, as well as to discourage the hearts of its best friends. Absolu-

te perfection is unattainable in the present life. The best of men have failed in one or other, if not each, of those graces which have been described. Abraham was the father of the faithful, yet his faith was more than once shaken by the violent assaults of unbelief. Jacob had an honest heart, yet there was a time when he dissembled. Job was a pattern of patience, yet in a paroxysm

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



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Sincere Hearers

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of grief he uttered words that bordered on rebellion. Moses was the meekest man on the earth, yet passion once got the mastery of him. And those mighty champions in the case of Christianity, the apostles Peter and Paul, were not without their failings which the Scriptures have faithfully recorded. "In many things we all offend" (James 3:2). Nor is there a Christian living, however exemplary, but is disposed with all humility to acknowledge, that he every day fails in his duty, and that his best services are disgraced with folly and sin.

But though perfection in the strict sense of the term is not to be admitted, yet the fruit which every real Christian bears is good fruit. It is so denominated by Christ; and such it truly is, as it springs from right principles, and is conformable in general to the rule laid down in the word of God. And however the holiness of the best of men must infinitely defective to the eye of Omniscience, and therefore can have

no merit in it; yet there is a real obvious difference between the character of a man of this world, and that of a genuine disciple of Christ; one who is renewed by the grace of God, and one who is under the power of unbelief and sin.

From this view of the kind of fruit which Christians bring forth, we are led to consider the great variety there is among them in regard of degrees of fruitfulness, and the reasons of it. But this we must refer to another opportunity, and add only a few remarks at present on what has been said.

1) How gracious is that influence which the blessed God exerts to make the heart honest and good, and to dispose it to receive the word and profit by it!

The corruption of human nature is universal, and much greater than superficial reasoners, and those who are little acquainted with themselves, care to admit. The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Men are set upon criminal indulgences, and are averse to the holy exercises and sublime pleasures of religion. Now how is a new turn to be given to the mind? How are men to be persuaded cordially to love that which they so much dislike? The reasonings of philosophy, however good, will go but a little way in this business. Yea, the nobler reasonings of the gospel too often prove ineffectual. How gracious then that influence of the Holy Spirit by which a revolution is brought about in the mind! It was by virtue of this influence that Cornelius became a devout man, and was disposed to send for Peter to preach the gospel to him and his family (Acts 10). It was the Lord that opened the heart of Lydia to attend to the things which were spoken to her by Paul (Acts 16:14). And it is God, who is rich in mercy, that quickens all those who were once dead in trespasses and sins, but are now alive to God and religion (Eph. 2:1). To that grace then, by which we are regenerated and saved, let us cheerfully render our noblest tribute of gratitude and praise.

2) From the nature and tendency of the gospel, which has been just delineated, we derive a strong presumptive evidence of its truth.

The direct positive evidence of prophecy and miracle, must have its weight with every considerate person. But when this of the spirit and intent of the gospel is added, it cannot fail of bearing down all opposition before it. We appeal to the common sense of mankind, upon the question respecting the holy tendency of this divine institution. Let men admit or reject the gospel itself, let them enter into the spirit of it or harbor prejudices against it; still they cannot deny that

we have here the purest system of morality, and that it is enforced by motives admirably adapted to touch the noblest feelings of the hearer's heart.

Now whence could this doctrine so infinitely beneficial to mankind come, if not from God? Is it imaginable that Satan would or could change his nature and views, and adopt a plan to emancipate men from his cruel dominion, bring them back to their allegiance to God, and secure to them greater felicity than that of which he had in the beginning deprived them? Is it imaginable that any of his emissaries should have ingenuity enough to devise a scheme so noble, generous, and god-like as this? Or if they had, that they would with mighty zeal forward a design so repugnant to their own character and views? In short, would any man living, at the hazard of his temporal not to say his eternal interests, take pains to palm on his fellow-creatures a known falsehood; in order to persuade them to be the very opposite to himself, holy just and good? Whoever answers there questions in the affirmative, must have a stronger faith than that required to make a man a Christian. But if we could for a moment suppose the gospel to be a cunningly devised fable, it were yet worth our while, for the sake of the present advantages which result from the belief of it, to embrace it.

3) Of what importance is it that we converse intimately with the gospel, in order to our bringing forth the fruits of holiness!

Admitting the gospel to be true, the holding back its peculiar glories from our view, under the pretence of their being too mysterious to be apprehended, or too bright to be beheld by the feeble eye of human reason, is not only absurd, but greatly injurious to the cause of real piety and genuine morality. If there be a display of consummate wisdom, transcendent goodness, and immense power, in the contrivance and execution of the plan of redemption; it was no doubt brought forward to our view in the Scriptures, that it might be considered by us. And the contemplation of it, if no other end was to be answered, must afford divine entertainment to a mind rightly disposed. Are the perfections of deity more strikingly delineated in the volume of the gospel than in that of nature and providence, and may we not reasonably expect a more sublime pleasure in the study of the former than in the latter? But the main thing is, that there are stronger incentives to be met with here to love and obedience than anywhere else. And since the arguments to be drawn from natural

religion will go but a little way to dispose and animate us to our duty, ought we not to have recourse to those which are of such higher and nobler consideration?

If then we would have our hearts elevated to God by a devotion the most sublime and ecstatic, if we would have our bosoms warmed with affections the most animating and generous, if we would have our wonder, reverence, confidence, gratitude, and delight kindle into a flame, if we would, in a word, be imitators of God as dear children; let us with open face behold in the mirror of the gospel the glory of the Lord; so shall we be changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord (II Cor. 3:18). Let us dwell in our meditations on this divine doctrine, and cordially embrace those exceeding great and precious promises which are here made us; so shall we be partakers of the divine nature (II Pet. 1:4). The soft and tender emotions of ingenuous sorrow for sin, are both pleasant and salutary. If then we would keep alive in our hearts a penitential sense of sin, and a prevailing aversion to it; and if we would enjoy the heartfelt comfort arising from the hope of forgiveness; let us often ascend Mount Calvary, and survey the bleeding cross of the Son of God. Contemplating by faith on his sufferings, our eyes will stream with sorrow and sparkle with joy; we shall at once tremble and rejoice. Would we, again, excel in the social virtues of justice, truth, compassion, benevolence, and friendship; let us sit at the feet of Jesus, listen to His instructions, bind His gospel to our hearts, and make it the man of our counsel. Would we, in fine, be humble, meek, patient, and temperate, be crucified to the world, and have the appetites of sense subjected to the dictates of reason; let us make this divine science our chief study, and glory in nothing save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. *The life I live in the flesh*, says the apostle (Gal. 2:20), *I live by the faith of the Son of God*. And if Christians should thus live, ministers should no doubt thus preach as well as live. Would they convert sinners to God, spread the favor of genuine piety, and promote the interests of substantial morality; the gospel must be their daily study, their continual theme of discourse.

4) And, lastly. How vain a thing is mere speculation in religion!

The great end of preaching the gospel is to make men holy and good; nor has God afforded us any discovery of His will, but is adapted some way or other to this end. We are to judge therefore of the

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Cockrell's



Corner

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

IS THIS STATEMENT TRUE?

"God has to give every man a chance to be saved." I guess I have heard this statement hundreds of times in my life. Many believe this statement is law and gospel. This whole idea is so deeply entrenched into religious philosophy that any person who dares to question its theological correctness is immediately branded a religious wacko. But the Word of God must try all creeds and human opinions. Any religious teaching, which is not according to the law and testimony, must be rejected as heresy and its contenders dubbed as heretics.

Where is the verse of Scripture which says: "God has to give every man a chance to be saved"? I know of no such verse in Holy Scripture. Can you help me? Can you give me book, chapter, and verse for this statement? If so, perhaps some readers will send it to me soon.

This Arminian statement is full of errors. First, it makes God accountable to man. It presupposes that man has the right to demand that God save him, if man so wills it, and that God is duty bound to do what man demands. This is all wrong. God is in no way accountable to man. Job 33:13 says: "**Why dost thou strive against him? for he giveth not account of any of his matters.**" In Daniel 4:35 it is written: "**And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?**" God is in absolute power. No man or angel has any authority to call God to an account. We are all accountable to God (Luke 16:2; Rom. 14:12), but He is in no way accountable to us. The

man who would make God accountable to man (that is, say He must give man a chance to be saved) had denied His eternal power and Godhead. He has attempted to humanize God. The Lord complained to the wicked in Psalm 50:21: "**Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself.**"

Second, this statement denies God's sovereignty. It would be right for God to save all, some, or none. No man can dictate to God. No man can tell the Most High what he must do. God did not see fit in His sovereignty to save any of the fallen angels. He would have been equally God and just if He did not see fit to save any man. As sinners, all men deserve Hell, and, if they got their just desserts, they would all suffer eternally in Hell-fire. It is only of the Lord's mercy and grace that any are saved from this awful place. Nothing keeps a sinner out of Hell but the good pleasure of God. We have no claims on God. We can make no demand on the Most High. The man who thinks he can make demands on God is in fact a religious wacko.

Third, this idea teaches that God saves men by chance. I know of no verse of Holy Scripture which says that God saves men by chance. The word "chance" occurs only six times in the Bible, and in none of the six verses is spiritual salvation under consideration. God does not save men by chance. He saved them on purpose: "**Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not**

according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began" (II Tim. 1:9). We are saved by grace (Eph. 2:5), by God's mercy (Tit. 3:5), by the gospel (I Cor. 15:2), and by faith (Eph. 2:8), but no verse in the Bible says we are saved by chance.

What does the word "chance" mean in English. It means: "1. The unpredictable and uncontrollable element of an event or occurrence. 2. luck or fortune: a game of chance. 3. a possibility of anything happening: a fifty-percent chance of success. 4 an opportunity: Now is your chance" (*Webster's American Family Dictionary*, p. 159).

Now let me ask a few questions. Is the salvation of a sinner an unpredictable and uncontrollable event? Is there nothing God can do about it one way or the other unless man gives Him permission? If so, then God is not all-knowing and all-powerful. In other words God is not really God.

Is salvation a game of chance (a gambling casino type thing)? Is a man saved by good luck or good fortune? If such is the case, then all lost sinners should move to Las Vegas, Nevada. I am told there are all kinds of chances out there.

Is salvation a mere possibility? Does man have a fifty-percent chance of being saved? If so, then he must also have a fifty-percent chance of being lost. Does he have a fifty-percent chance of staying saved after

being born again? If so, he has a fifty-percent chance of being lost as well. Hence there can be no such thing as assurance of salvation. There is no assurance in a chance.

Man surely needs more than a mere chance to be saved. If he only has a chance, he would be of all men most miserable. About 100 verses in the Bible tell us the person who believes in Jesus Christ can be assured of spiritual salvation. Romans 8:28-30 makes it plain that all the links in God's golden chain of grace holds together. The people God foreknew with the intent to do good, He predestinated to glorification (Rom. 8:29). These same people are called and justified, and they shall all be ultimately glorified. John 10:28 tells us that all the sheep Christ died to saved shall be given eternal life and never perish. Salvation is certain to all of God's elect and to all believers in Jesus Christ.

The Arminian man have has "chance" of salvation if he feels he must have it. I care nothing for such a thing. There is no assurance in such a salvation. A chance to be saved implies a chance to be lost, or maybe even a chance to be lost after being saved. I have "**have an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure**" (II Sam. 23:5). I have been reconciled to God by the death of Jesus Christ (II Cor. 5:18), and my salvation is sure and certain. I have "**an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast**" (Heb. 6:19). I do not have a mere chance of going to Heaven. My inheritance is reserved in Heaven for me, and I am kept as a garrison by Divine power until my glorification at the coming of Jesus Christ (I Pet. 1:4-5). I can say with the Apostle Paul: "**For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day**" (II Tim. 1:12).

Purpose of the Death of Christ

XII. TO REDEEM A PEOPLE FROM A VAIN MANNER OF LIFE.

"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a the lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times

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THE EYE

By Milburn Cockrell

The eye is the light of the body,¹
And without it sight is very shoddy.
If even one eye is full of light,
One is able to see some sights.

God first formed man's eye,²
And caused us to see the sky.
But if our eye offend our Maker,
God can become its Taker.

Into the kingdom it is better to go
With one eye or so
Than into the fires of Hell³
Where things are not well.

That which God takes away
Will be forever from tears stayed.
The eye at best cannot fully see⁴
The glories of Heaven yet to be.

(Footnotes)

¹ Matt. 5:28

² Ps. 94:9; Prov. 20:12

³ Matt. 18:9

⁴ I Cor. 2:9

* This was written on May 3, 2002, after my left eye was removed on April 24, 2002.
(MRC)

When the eye is gone the vision is dim,
But this does not hinder our faith in Him.
Whatever God does is always right,
And is done because it seems good in His sight.

The eye is gone but not for long.
Soon the rapture will come along,
And the saint shall in the air meet,
And cast our crowns at Jesus' feet.

Oh, to think of the glories of His return,
And our new bodies no more food for worms.
The eye I have lost for a time
Will be restored to this body of mine.

All glory to the Lamb on high,
Who will give me new sight in the sky.
The first sight my new eye shall behold
Will be Christ and the streets of gold.

Cockrell's Corner

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for you" (I Pet. 1:18-20).

Peter speaks of a "vain conversation." "Conversation" means "manner of life" or "behavior." The word "vain" means "empty, unreal, unprofitable, self-deceived, fruitless." Before regeneration and conversion we were leading unprofitable lives. This vain manner of life in the case of the Jews was received from the traditions of their fathers. In the case of the Gentiles they had received a sinful and corrupt manner of life from their fathers (I Pet. 1:14; Rom. 1:21). Peter speaks here of hereditary depravity which has its root in the sinful nature passed from father to son (Ezek. 20:24). The design of Christ shedding His precious blood was to redeem us, not only from the misery of Hell-fire, but also from a worthless life in this world.

The word "redeemed" (*lutoo*) is found only here and in Luke 24:21 and Titus 2:14. It means to set free by payment of a ransom. The thought is how slaves were set free by payment of silver and gold. There is probably also an allusion here to the redemption of the people of Israel and the firstborn by shekels (Ex. 30:12-16; Num. 3:44-51).

The Lord's people are not redeemed by silver and gold. These can buy much in the modern world, but they cannot redeem a soul to God (Ps. 49:6-8). In fact silver and gold often hinders the conversion of many sinners (I Tim. 6:9). The Lord does not need gold. The streets of Heaven are solid gold. Earthly wealth is corruptible, and it cannot redeem an incorruptible and immortal soul. Neither can silver and gold paid to some church official get a man out of purgatory.

The truth of I Peter 1:18-20 is that believers have been redeemed, or bought back by a ransom paid to God the Father. For some Christ actually paid the ransom price and set the captives free. These were not put in a redeemable state as some teach, but they were really and truly redeemed to God and given spiritual liberty. They were so redeemed and liberated when Christ died at Calvary. The ransom price was not merely Christ's death, but His precious blood. Christ paid the ransom to the incensed Judge of all the earth. This ransom price was accepted by the Father as a vicarious satisfaction for our sins, inasmuch as it was the Father's love as well as His righteousness which appointed it.

This blood of Jesus Christ is precious (or costly). Some see nothing special about the blood of Jesus

Christ. They will tell you it was no different from the blood which flows in our veins, and they also teach there is no sin in human blood. Thus they would exclude a part of man's body from sin, and thus subtly deny total depravity. They see no need of the blood of the God-man (Acts 20:28). They hold that Adam in his unfallen state might have done as much as Christ. These people have a very low view of the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ. Such persons are welcome to their heresy. I do not share their opinion, nor can I entertain such foolishness.

The redeeming blood of the God-man is precious to the Father, for it is the blood of His dear Son. It is precious to our Savior, for it represents His life offered to the Father. It is precious to the saints, for it is the price of our redemption and the theme of our heavenly song (Rev. 5:9). It is precious because it is the only ransom price acceptable to a holy God. It is precious because it alone can wash away the stains of sin in the elect. It is precious because its great power and infinite value are undiminished by the passing of time, and its efficacy will remain until all believers are glorified and in Heaven. Silver and gold will perish (I Pet. 1:7), but the precious blood of Jesus abides.

Peter sees Christ as the antitype of the paschal lamb whose blood ransomed from Egyptian bondage (Ex. 12:3-14; John 1:29; I Cor. 5:7). The Old Testament writers often referred to the Messiah as a lamb (Gen. 4:4; 22:7-8; Isa. 53:7). A lamb pictured Christ's innocence, purity, meekness, and uncomplaining suffering. Lambs in the Old Testament were to be "without blemish and without spot." This typified a sinlessly perfect Redeemer (Ex. 12:5; Lev. 22:20-24; I Pet. 2:22).

In verse 20 Peter discloses how Christ was manifested in the flesh for the salvation of His people. Christ was foreordained as the sacrificial Lamb of God. The Father determined and decreed that His Son should die for all the elect (Acts 2:23; 3:18; 4:28; Rom. 3:25).

The incarnation, death, and resurrection of Christ were not the results of a change of purpose to meet unforeseen circumstances. All things are foreseen and foreordained in the eternal counsels of God (Job 24:1; I Cor. 2:7; Col. 1:26; Eph. 1:9-11; Rom. 16:25). The scheme of redemption, which saves from Hell and a worthless life, was drawn up in eternity past. A Redeemer was provided before sin entered the Adamic race. The means of man's recovery was settled before the ruin took place. This was done without any regard to the merits or

demerits of men. It was all owing to the free grace and everlasting love of God.

Christ died to do two things: to free us from Hell and from a servile, slavish manner of life. He died to save us and to sanctify us, and you cannot separate salvation from sanctification. All for whom Christ died are saved from destruction and from living a fruitless life. As to this Peter said: "Ye know." If the chains of sin are still upon you, then do not delude yourself into thinking you are redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ. If the love of sin and of the world works stronger in your heart than the love of Christ, you are not a partaker of His redemption. Hell will be your everlasting portion.

I believe what Peter wrote. I believe the death of Christ saved and sanctified all for whom it was intended. Seeing all men without exception are not saved and sanctified, then I must conclude that Christ did not design to save and sanctify the entire human race. Jesus Christ is no failure. He did not fail in His redeeming work, for the old prophet said: "He shall not fail nor be discouraged" (Isa. 42:4).

Sincere Hearers

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importance of a doctrine by its practical tendency. To this standard every truth is to be brought, and by it our zeal is to be regulated. If this idea were duly attended to, we should escape the extremes of bigotry and neutrality: we should neither be indifferent to the faith, nor value ourselves on our profound speculations.

Ah! my brethren, to what purpose is it that we are skilled in controversy, can decide on nice questions, and draw the line to a hair between points on which we best of men have differed; if we are without that unction from the Holy One which diffuses a divine favor through the soul, and adds a grateful perfume to our words and actions? *Though I have all knowledge, if I have not charity, I am nothing* (I Cor. 13:2). Let us therefore be persuaded, having received the word of the kingdom, to be anxious above all things to maintain a character and conduct agreeable to our holy profession. *Herein is my Father glorified, says our divine Saviour, that ye bear much fruit, so shall ye be my disciples* (John 15:8).

(Discourse on the Parable of the Sower, pp. 188-195, 1736 edition).

Scrap the ACLU

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freedom of religion guaranteed by the First Amendment—the "free exercise" that was mutilated by the 1962 Warren Supreme Court in *Engel v Vitale* in banning school prayer and again in 1963 in *Abington School Board v Schenpp* in prohibiting Bible reading.

The new amendment would specifically allow public schools to set aside time each day for children to pray voluntarily—all denominations—carry and read Bibles and post the Ten Commandments, just as in the old days before our activist law-making Supreme Court and the agitating American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) came along. We did fine for 171 years; children were safe, secure and mostly happy.

'FREE EXERCISE'

If the great majority of Americans want school prayer, just as our Constitution authorizes, they should have it—without instructions by the courts and the ACLU. The First Amendment clearly states, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

"Respecting an establishment of religion" means showing honor or deference to some particular religion—and the Congress is *prohibited* from such deference and from prohibiting the free exercise of religion in general.

The Supreme Court findings in *Engel* and in *Abington* have been called penumbral rulings that reach far beyond the written law—a far stretch with no real "light" from the Constitution. Indeed, Justice Robert H. Jackson once said, "Our Constitution is not a suicide pact." Any honest reading of the First Amendment should include Jackson's wisdom and certainly, the importance of the "free exercise" clause.

Now, the Istook proposal, house Joint Resolution No. 81, calls the hand of the liberal Supreme Court and the bumptious ACLU in specific clarification and authorization of the privilege of religious expression: voluntary school prayer, voluntary Bible reading and posting of the Ten Commandments in public schools.

TELL CONGRESS NOW

What's left to do is *action*—and often, the Congress will dilly-dally until they feel the heat. So, they need heat. If 85 percent of Americans are serious, they must immediately contact their two senators and representatives and demand action on HJR81, the proposed Istook constitutional amendment.

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Scrap the ACLU

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And follow up! Refuse to accept non-responsive form letters because form letters constitute 98 percent of congressional responses in today's climate of "We-know-best." Find out definitely if the legislator is serious and make him/her tell you what action is contemplated.

SUBVERSIVE CAUSES

The ACLU calls itself "our national guardian of liberty," but, in truth, since its founding in 1920, has been exposed by many government investigations as "supporter of many subversive movements against the State" and as promoting "attacks against our institutions." Its affiliation with Communist and subversive causes has been legion and, at one time, "fully 90 percent of its efforts were for Communists and Communist causes." People should know this.

The ACLU, founded by Roger Baldwin, anarchist and convicted draft-dodger of World War I, has a long history of anti-Americanism and pro-Communist actions, without question, and has long been dubbed the "American Communist Lovers Union" (ACLU)—obviously for good reasons.

Among its "successes," the ACLU lists protection of flag-burners, draft-dodgers and subversive fronts; fighting against national security measures, capital punishment and all religious symbols in the public domain, especially religious activists in the public school systems, such as prayer, Bible study and Christian and Hanakkah celebrations.

50-STATE NETWORK

For over 30 years, the ACLU has vigorously pushed its anti-God agenda in a 50-state network of staffed, autonomous affiliate offices—a Washington office to lobby the Congress and a national office in New York to coordinate. Under non-paid President Nadine Strossen of the New York Law School, they are truly big time—confident and very clever, savoring past victories and quietly scheming for more disruptive lawsuits to bamboozle judges and the media to shape American into their socialist and internationalist Utopia.

l: They have power and they feel it—over 60 staff attorneys, 2,000 volunteer attorneys, all handling 6,000 cases per year and backed by over 300,000 dues-paying kindred-soul members, including big names.

Among the outrageous claims by the ACLU is that school prayer "serves as a temporary jail for students who won't go to church." But, who

can deny that Bible study and prayer help youngsters distinguish between right and wrong—particularly in today's culture of disruptive homes, drugs, alcohol and violence?

THE BIBLE COULD HELP

Perhaps a little prayer and Bible study could have helped:

- * the 15-year-old girl who left her new-born son to die in a toilet bowl in First Colonial High School in Virginia Beach on March 15, 2002.

- * the two teenagers who murdered 15 children and teachers in Columbine High School, Littleton, Colo., in April 1999.

- * the two boys, aged 11 and 13, who shot to death four little girls and a teacher in Jonesboro, Ark., in April 1998.

- * the 16-year-old who killed his mother and shot nine students, killing two, in Pearl, Miss., in October 1997.

- * the four teenagers who drugged and gang-raped an eleven year old girl in Santa Cruz., Calif., in April 1998.

- * the teenage girl who gave birth to a baby at her prom in a bathroom, threw the baby in the trash and returned to the dance floor in New Jersey in June 1997.

And who can forget the arrogance and insult of Barry Lynn, ACLU lawyer and Executive Director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, in ridiculing the praise given to Cassie Bernall, the young girl who was killed at Columbine High School because she refused to deny her Christian faith as the killers aimed a gun at her head and then blew her face off?

OTHER ACLU GOALS

The ACLU and other anti-Christian organizations, such as the Americans United are pressing on

- * for removal of "God Bless America" signs from school property and highway bridges.

- * to block moments of silence in public schools following the terrorist attacks when the whole nation was in mourning.

- * to ban Christmas and Hanakkah celebrations in public schools.

- * to eliminate Christmas as a national holiday.

- * to remove chaplains from all branches of the U. S. military.

- * to remove all crosses, stars of David and other religious symbols from America's military cemeteries.

- * to remove our national motto, "In God We Trust," from all currency.

- * Remove all religious symbols and scriptural passages from public buildings, statues and public places in America.

Many of these ACLU goals have been previously reported. It is now time to be serious and act forcefully with the Istook constitutional

amendment to scuttle the ACLU anti-God agenda. In an 1892 ruling, the Supreme Court officially stated, in its finding, that America was founded as a Christian nation—and the copious sprinkling of Biblical passages on walls, monuments and in procedures has fully confirmed our religious foundation.

So, why should we knuckle under to the subversive ACLU and a handful of atheists and agnostics? They need to be put in their place.

LIBERAL MEDIA TOO

Let us not forget our liberal media in our do-good-at-all-costs culture that seems hell-bent to replace our time-tested-and-proven old fashioned principles that made America great.

Often, with today's extremely competitive media, it is sensationalism that takes priority over good judgment—and the matter of religious tolerance may be a case in point.

Recently, a media headline reported a fading religious fervor presently in America after the sharp rise as a result of the Sept. 11th assaults. This headline may or may not be accurate—depending on how pollsters ask the questions.

Clearly, the print journalists and the TV talking heads seem to relish headline-grabbing defeatist type stories for the war in Afghanistan—which, in truth, is going very well. They also seem to yearn for whatever home-front setbacks will continue bold headlines for a sensational story—in this case, a recent Pew Research poll finding religious influence declining.

Not reported, however, by Will Luter in his Associated Press release of March 21st are the potential causes of what pollster Andrew Kobut calls "such a dramatic change." Perhaps fear is a factor—fear of lawsuits by organizations like the ACLU and Barry Lynn's Americans United.

TIME magazine reported in its Oct. 22, 2001 issue: "Tens of millions of Americans broke the law on September 11th and in the days that

followed. . . Kids prayed in school."

'BURST OF BRAVADO'

In this burst of bravado, school children and teachers ignored the Supreme Court and the ACLU threats, and followed President Bush's spontaneous call for prayer. For example:

- * Students rallied at school flag poles for sunrise prayers.

- id: * Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee proclaimed October "Student Religious Liberty Month."

- * In California, "GOD BLESS AMERICA" appeared on the Marquee at Breen Elementary School.

- * The principal of Springfield High School, Fla. said students were praying openly.

How ironic that the radical ACLU and our very own United States Supreme Court have made us cower with fear and threats about freedom to worship God—and that it took a national tragedy to assert the rights that we have always had.

And how fortunate that "Jeff F." of Indiana came along with just the right words for this situation in his letter of Sept. 25, 2001, published in *The Sword of the Lord* issue of Dec. 21, 2001, excerpted, as follows:

"How far would the ACLU get if it attempted to convince our nation this week that the prayers offered last week in schools and courthouses or the messages mentioning God on street corners and billboards across the United States were unconstitutional?"

"If they would not get far now, why should they be allowed to insidiously convince us that such prayers and messages are unconstitutional anytime? Does the Constitution have effect only during peaceful days? Are we to lay it aside for times of national tragedy?"

"We have been herded like so many cows for the slaughter into pens of prayerlessness until we are afraid to mention God anywhere lest we "offend" some atheist or cult extremist. So now, the extremists have offended me.

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Berea Baptist Broadcast

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

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“Let the name of God be heard, not just this week and next, but for the next year and decade and century. Let prayers be offered unto Him, not just in tragedy and turmoil, but in peace and tranquility. Let flags be unfurled and waved, not just at half-mast this week, but at full mast for the generations to come.”

The way to keep the flags flying and the prayers flowing freely is the Istook constitutional amendment (HJR81)—and the time to tell Congress is now. The ACLU and Barry Lynn will find out for themselves—the hard way—but only if the Congress listens to the people!

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

God Forgive America!

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the American people to do.

We have not asked God to forgive us. Our leaders have not asked God to forgive us.

I have seen many bumper stickers, many billboards, many placards stating in bold letters, “GOD BLESS AMERICA”

I have not seen *one* – *Not ONE*—that states, “GOD FORGIVE AMERICA.”

It seems the attitude in America is that, “We don’t *need* forgiveness, we *need blessings*. We *want* to continue in our sins—just give us blessings. God, please bless our sins! Bless our turning away from you! Bless our rebellion against you and your Word! Bless our lack of reading your Word! Bless our neglecting to pray to you, and bless our half-heartedness toward you!”

Do I sound unpatriotic because I have said America needs to ask forgiveness from God? I have not intended to sound unpatriotic. It is my *patriotism* that causes me to pray that God forgive this great United States of America. It is my *patriotism* that causes me to pray that believers all over this great nation will see their personal sinfulness and ask God to forgive them. It is my *patriotism* that causes me to pray that unbelievers will see their sinfulness and ask God to forgive them, to save their souls, and then to dedicate themselves to the service of Almighty God.

It is important that God bless this great nation. However, God must forgive us first, and in order for God to forgive us, we must first *ask* His forgiveness. America will never ask

forgiveness until its people see their guilt before a most holy God.

In an October 17, 2001 speech before the U. S. House of Representatives, Representative Roscoe Barlett (R-Maryland) explains how America has changed in the last 50 years. (The entire speech of Representative Barlett is on our church’s web site. Follow the links: www.independentcebaptist.org, “United States of America” then, “What Made America Great.” If you do not have web access and would like a copy of the speech, contact me and I will gladly give you a copy.) The change has not been good. America has departed from its Christian foundations. Our nation will not prevail if we continue to forsake the Christian principles she was founded upon. There are many sins America has allowed, even encouraged by passing laws that make sin legal. But God hasn’t changed His mind about sin. Sin is still in the eyes of Almighty God, and He is still the God of judgment.

Jerry Falwell recently apologized to the American people for stating the terrorist attacks on September 11 was the judgment of God upon America. Pat Robinson has been called a “crackpot” for saying the same thing. I do not believe all these two men believe, but I personally believe both of these men are right when they assert that God judges sin. God judges sin in individuals, and He judges sin in nations.

It is evident in the lifestyles of people today, they have forgotten that God is the final judge. Our nation has forgotten the fact that there is also a judgment of the nations.

Matthew 25:31-46 gives the record of the coming judgment of the nations. Christ will separate all nations into two groups *before* He pronounces sentence upon them. Their position on the right hand or on the left hand is the result of their treatment of a third group of people called “**my brethren**.” There will be no lawyers or anyone to plead either case. Christ himself will be judge. There will be no verdict appeals to a higher court. The righteous judgments of Christ will not be revealed, changed, or altered. ^:I firmly believe our president, George Bush, has sought, and is seeking, the leadership of the LORD in the war against terrorism. He *should* seek heavenly guidance, as no war can be won without God. Of course, our president is not perfect. We don’t expect him to be. He is a man like all men. But he is *our* leader, *our* president, and because he is *our* president, we should pray for him as he seeks heavenly guidance in the war against terrorism.

We must remember that for this nation to be truly blessed by God, the strongholds of sin must be removed. Some people are going to be offended when these strongholds are crushed, but these strongholds of wickedness and rebellion against God’s clear commands must be eliminated.

The following examples clearly show the slow progression away from Godliness and toward wickedness. It is important to understand that these laws were made starting in 1947. These laws were made by the courts (not by the legislative bodies of congress) in order to change that which was already there. From the founding of the United States of America, it was legal to do what these court created laws prohibited.

* In 1947, the Supreme Court in *Everson vs. Board of Education* deviated from every precedent for the first time and in a limited way affirmed a wall of separation between church and State in the public classroom.

* In 1962, 40 years ago, in *Engle vs. Vitale*, the Supreme Court removed prayer from public schools. We know that before 1962 it was legal to pray in public schools.

* On June 17, 1963, the Supreme Court ruled in *Abington vs. Schemp* that Bible reading was outlawed as unconstitutional in the public school system. Bible reading in public schools was legal before June 17, 1963.

* In 1965, the Courts removed the right of a student in the public school cafeteria to bow his head and pray audibly over his food. Before 1965 any student could pray audibly in any public school cafeteria.

* On January 22, 1973, in *Roe vs. Wade*, the courts decided that a woman’s right to an abortion fell under the right of privacy, protected under the 14th amendment. It is plain to see that the founding fathers had no intention of making abortion legal when they wrote the constitution.

* In 1980, in *Stone vs. Graham* the Ten Commandments were outlawed in our public school system. Before 1980, the Ten Commandments were displayed in many public schools. It is odd that the Ten Commandments are prohibited from public schools, yet to this day, above the seat of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court; the Ten Commandments are listed with the American eagle standing symbolically protecting them. Yet those justices said, “Not for our children.”

WHAT CAN I DO?

II Chronicles 7:14 states, “**If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then**

will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”

God expects His people to recognize their terrible wickedness and repent. God expects His people to read their Bibles, see their sins as He sees them, and repent before *Him*.

God gave Jonah the task of preaching against the exceeding great wickedness of Nineveh. Jonah 3:4 clearly states the preaching of Jonah, “. . . **Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown.**” Nineveh heard, repented in dust and ashes before God Almighty, and he forgave their sins and repented himself of the wickedness he would have done to them.

God is the same God he has always been. He *will* forgive America. He *will* heal our land and He *will* bless us once again.

We must repent before an Almighty God, and ask His forgiveness.

Then, and only then, can we truly pray, *God bless America.*

Then, and only then, will God truly bless America once again.

The Passover

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this, however, they would then be as one of them, as one born of the people (Ex. 12:48); and in every respect would constitute similar worshippers of the Lord as were the Israelites.

3. The one feature in all these feasts was to keep before the people the real purpose which God had toward them. If they would see what was intended by these services they would not only be blessed themselves, but others would be brought into the fold, and learn of the great saving plan of God for a lost and sinful world.

THE PASSOVER FEAST; WHEN INTRODUCED

4. The first feast and festival which the Lord instituted was the Passover (Ex. 12:1-11; I Cor. 5:7). This one was not only the first, but perhaps the most sacred of all; and was designed to teach them some of the strongest and most forcible lessons concerning the Messiah.

5. This festival was introduced before the Israelites left their slavery in Egypt (Ex. 12:1; Deut. 16:1); and it was ever to be associated with the thought of their freedom from slavery. Closely connected with this festival, and part of it, was the offering up of sacrifice (Num. 28); in fact this was the basis of all the feasts. If there were no sacrifice or offering, the entire season of its observance would be useless, as far as the real lesson which

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God intended to teach thereby. (a)

THE PASCHAL LAMB

6. While there were many offerings during the Passover feast (Num. 28:11-25), the special and most prominent of them all was the Passover, or paschal lamb (Ex. 12:3). The first instruction given is found in the twelfth chapter of Exodus; and little in addition was afterward given concerning the offering of other sacrifices (Lev. 23:8; Num. 9:2-3; Deut. 16:1-6). There were at least six prominent things to be remembered in the offering of this lamb, every one of which was to teach some truth concerning Him who is **“the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world”** (John 1:29).

1. There was to be a lamb for every household (Ex. 12:3-4).

2. This lamb must be without blemish (Ex. 12:5).

3. The lamb must be killed in the evening (Ex. 12:6) (margin, between the evenings), Hebrew, *Ba-an ha-ar-ba-yim*.

4. The blood of the lamb must be sprinkled upon the side posts and upper door-post of the house, in which the lamb must be eaten (Ex. 12:7).

5. The lamb must be eaten the night it was killed; and under no circumstances must any part of it remain till morning; if so, it must not be eaten, but must be burned (Ex. 12:10).

6. Not a single bone of the lamb must be broken (Ex. 12:46).

7. While there are other matters of interest in connection with the paschal lamb, these mentioned are the most prominent, and contain the essence of the truth to be taught.

THE LESSON OF THE PASCHAL LAMB

8. In instituting this service while the people were yet in the land of their slavery, the Lord evidently intended they should learn from this experience the real meaning of freedom from servitude. Concerning their deliverance and the manner it was to be performed, the Lord said: **“For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt”** (Ex. 12:12-13).

9. After they sacrificed the lamb, they were to take of its blood and to sprinkle it upon the two places previously mentioned (Ex. 12:7). When the Lord would pass over the land to smite the Egyptians, then the house which He would observe had the blood sprinkled, that house would be freed from death. It made no difference what the man might have thought or believed; it made no distinction with the Lord how many years the person claimed to be an Israelite; nor did it differ how long he had been in Egyptian servitude. Neither did it make any difference to what wing of the twelve tribes he belonged. The one thing necessary for the man of the house, or for the entire people of that house, or for all the people in all the houses of the Israelites, to escape having death in the house that night was to have the *blood* sprinkled in its proper place. Nothing but the blood of the lamb

could save a person from death. To do this, however, was efficacious, and brought salvation to the individuals who lived in that house.

DELIVERANCE ONLY THROUGH THE BLOOD

10. It would have been as easy for the Lord to have brought the people from Egypt without having this ordinance performed, if the deliverance were designed merely as a temporal affair, or a deliverance from physical servitude only. But the deliverance of the children of Israel was not alone intended to be a freedom from physical slavery, it was the intention of God to teach the people that Egypt was a synonym of the darkness of sin; their deliverance from Egypt was to be to them a deliverance from the slavishness of sin, since they were set apart as a spiritual people. The only means which God had or has to deliver people from slavery of sin is the blood

(Ex. 17:11; Heb. 9:22). This the people must see at the very beginning of their exode. They must recognize that the only way of deliverance from evil was through the blood of the great Lamb, who should sacrifice His life for them and for the world. They should learn their deliverance from spiritual Egypt was fully as great, if not greater, than their deliverance from the physical slavery of the literal Egypt.

SPIRITUAL EGYPT

11. That the Lord intended to use Egypt as a figure, and that there was as real a spiritual Egypt as there was a literal one, is evident from what we read in the Revelation: **“And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where our Lord also was crucified”** (Rev. 11:8).

Now it is known that the Lord Jesus was not crucified literally, either in Egypt or Sodom (Luke 23:33); but it is known that these two places were particularly noted for their cruelty and sins, which called down the wrath of God upon them (Ex. 1:13-14; 6:9; Gen. 18:20). It is also true that it was sin which crucified our Lord of glory (I Cor. 15:3); hence these two places are used as illustrations of sin. This was what the Lord wanted the Israelites to learn concerning their deliverance from Egypt.

EVERYTHING FULFILLED IN CHRIST

12. Now *every one* of the laws connected with the lamb and its offering at the Passover, was fulfilled in Christ. This was true with no exception. We will, therefore, now consider their fulfillment in the same numerical order as we considered the distinctive features of the typical lamb.

THE PASSOVER LAMB IS CHRIST

13. 1. The Prophet Isaiah, when speaking of the death of Christ, said: **“He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not His mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth”** Isa. 53:7).

Soon after the baptism of Christ, He was introduced by John the Baptist to the multitudes as follows: **“Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh [margin, beareth] away the sin of the world”** (John 1:29). **“And looking upon Jesus as He walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!”** (John 1:36).

And again, John the beloved says of Him: **“And when He had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb. . .”** (Rev. 5:8). **“And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the**

The Rantings and Ravings of Brother Ritechus N. Dignation

by Joseph Harris



PAY THE PREACHER

I'm fired up! I'm madder than a nest of hornets. I was just talkin' to a preacher brother and he told me about this church where by he preached last Sunday. They didn't give him one dime for coming. Didn't no one invite him home for dinner either. He just hung around the church all day by himself waiting for the night service. He was kinda like the demon possessed man of Gadara. He went to the cemetery and wandered among the tombs 'till church time.

Now I don't know what you think, but that ain't right. Now, this church had a pastor this fellow was fillin' in for (that's pulpit supply for you city folks). That pastor should have made sure things were taken care of for the guest preacher. Even if that church didn't have a pastor, someone should have been responsible for taking care of the man of God and his expenses. After all, he was their invited guest.

There are usually three main problems when it comes to payin' a preacher: (1) Low pay, (2) Late pay, and (3) Lack of pay.

LOW PAY – The apostle Paul said that **“the laborer is worthy of his**

hire” but most folks don't put a high dollar value on ministry work. Now sometimes a small church can't pay enough and the preacher has to work another job. Then, some churches could, but won't pay the man enough, or aren't willing to at least try. But let's get one thing straight. A man may be called of God to preach and pastor, but it's still labor. He should be paid for it.

LATE PAY – I ain't never seen the beat for payin' a man late for his work as churches sometimes do preachers, evangelists, special guests, etc. When a man is invited to preach, teach, or perform any kind of ministry work, he ought to be paid *then*. Don't mail him a check 2 or 3 weeks later. He usually needs the money *then*, especially since ministry work is usually low pay (see above). The average church member wouldn't wait on their pay check. Shame!

LACK OF PAY – Believe it or not, it happens. 'Nary a dime given. Land sakes alive, pay the preacher, and don't make jokes about him preachin' for money. If he started preachin' for money, he's a brick shy of a load to begin with. There are easier ways to starve to death.

Brother RND

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throne. . . stood a Lamb as it had been slain" (Rev. 5:6).

And that He was directly called, the Lamb, the Passover sacrifice, Paul says: "**For even Christ our Passover, is sacrificed for us**" (I Cor. 5:7).

14. 2. Nowhere in the history of the life of Christ can we find where it ever was marred by the least performance of sin. "**Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold. . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot**" (I Pet. 1:18-19; 2:22).

HE DIED BETWEEN THE EVENINGS

15. 3. The great paschal Lamb, Jesus died at the very hour the Lamb was to be offered, between the evenings; about three o'clock in the afternoon. (b) The Scripture saith He was crucified, beginning at the sixth hour; and at the ninth hour he died (Matt. 27:45-46; Mark 15:33-37; Luke 23:33, 44-46), which was three o'clock, (e) the very time they sacrificed the paschal lamb.

HIS SPRINKLED BLOOD ONLY SAVES

16. 4. Soon after the Apostles began the preaching of the crucified and risen Savior, they told the people everywhere that it was only through the blood which Jesus shed that they could have the forgiveness of sins; because the blood of Jesus only cleanses from all sins (Acts 20:28; Heb. 9:14). And Peter, in his first epistle, evidently using the figure spoken of in the sprinkling of the blood of the lamb, says: "**Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ**" (I Pet. 1:2).

Thus we see that the sprinkled blood refers to the sprinkling of the blood of the Son of God which saves and purifies the hearts of men and women (I John 1:7).

CHRIST'S BODY NOT ALLOWED TO REMAIN OVER NIGHT

17. 5. When Christ was crucified, it being on Friday, the sixth day, the preparation day for the Sabbath (Luke 23:54), the Jews came to Pilate and asked that the body of Jesus, and those of the thieves, might not be allowed to remain over the Sabbath as that was a high Sabbath [Hebrew, *Shabbath-Ha-go-dol-the great Sabbath*] day (John 19:31); (d) and it was not allowable to

have bodies hanging over night, as this would be defiling to the people, to the Sabbath, as well as to the festival (John 18:28; 19:31). Hence Pilate gave orders to have them taken down, and it was done. Thus we have the fulfillment of the prophecy concerning the lamb that it should not be kept over night. Yes, in Christ we find the Scriptures all fulfilled (Luke 24:44).

NOT A BONE IN CHRIST'S BODY BROKEN

18. 6. When the soldiers came to the bodies of the thieves, finding them still alive, they broke their legs, in order to kill them quickly before the sun should set. But when they came to the body of the Savior, supposing that He was not dead, they were ready to treat Him the same as they had done to the thieves. But to their surprise they found Him dead (John 19:33). In order to be certain that all life had departed, they took the sword and pierced His side, whence flowed blood and water (John 19:34). Hence the Scripture was truthfully and literally fulfilled that *not a bone of Him should be broken* (John 19:36). The real lesson of the paschal Lamb was Jesus Christ. Not only as a whole was it fulfilled in Him, but every specification met its completeness in Him, the Lamb of God. Yet strange as it may seem the Jews did not see this. Are there not many at the present time who act as did the ancient people?

THE ORIGINAL COMMANDMENT

19. When the command was given originally to observe the Passover with its ceremonies, it was in substance as follows:

20. In the first month, the month of Abib or Nisan, on the tenth day of the month, they were to take a lamb for every family. If the family were not large enough, more than one family would share in this (Ex. 12:3-4). This number, in the time of Christ, according to the Mishna, must not be less than ten, nor more than twenty. Hence Christ came within the required demand, there being thirteen who sat down to the last Passover supper.

21. This lamb must be kept till the fourteenth day of the month; then between the evenings it must be killed. The night following was to be a gathering of the family, when they were to eat this supper, and when the children were to learn from the father the story of the slavery, and deliverance from Egypt (Ex. 13:6-8; 14-15). In connection with the eating of the lamb, unleavened bread was to be eaten; and for seven consecutive days, beginning with the night of the fourteenth, no leaven of any



PURGING THE LEAVEN.

description must be found in any part of an Israelitish dwelling (Ex. 12:15, 18-29; 13:6-7). In addition to the eating of the unleavened bread the people were to have bitter herbs (Ex. 12:8), which were to remind them of the bitterness of the Egyptian servitude.

22. Then the first and last days of the festival were to be rest days (Ex. 12:16; Lev. 23:7-8), *Hebrew Sabbaths*, in which no labor was to be performed, save that which was absolutely necessary. These days were not to be observed quite so strictly, from all labor, as was the Sabbath of the Lord, the weekly Sabbath, the seventh day of the week.

ONLY THE CIRCUMCISED TO EAT OF IT

23. This in detail was the manner which God provided for the observance of the Passover. One thing more it might be well to mention in this connection: No person was allowed to eat of it who was not circumcised (Ex. 12:48). If a man, a stranger, lived in the family, he would either have to be absent from the Passover supper, or if he chose to partake of it, he must be circumcised; then he would be considered as one of the people (Ex. 12:43-49). Not under any consideration was a person allowed to eat the Passover if he were not circumcised. This illustrates why the children of Israel, during their sojourn in the wilderness, partook of only one Passover (Num. 9:1-5). On account of their murmurings against the Lord they were refused admission into the promised land, hence were to die in the wilderness. During the remainder of their thirty-eight years' wandering, not one of their children was circumcised. When they came into the land and were circumcised, then they kept the feast (Josh. 5:2-10).

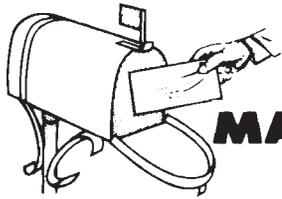
THE PERVERSION OF THE PASSOVER

24. When the Savior came to earth, instead of finding the Passover as it was originally given, He found it to quite an extent perverted, and the meaning of the service largely lost. True, they kept the Passover festival, but now it had become really Jewish (John 2:13). God gave it as *His Passover* (Ex. 12:11); but they had turned it into an institution largely according to their own liking. True, the basis of the festival, the offering of the lamb, they still observed, but so much had been added, and so many burdens at that, that it was really a heavy load to the people. As the Jews observe it at the present day, it is very nearly the same as it was kept in the days of the Savior; hence we will give a description of the Passover as it is now observed, which also will shed some light on a few passages of Scripture in this connection.

THE REMOVING OF THE LEAVEN

25. On the evening of the fourteenth of Nisan, the master of the house with one of his boys, generally the youngest, searches the house for leaven. (e) Some time earlier in the day small pieces of bread are scattered in different rooms and halls of the house, wherever leaven of any kind has been used during the year. In the evening the man of the house generally takes a lighted candle, and goes in search of the leaven. The son carries the candle, while the parent has a feather and a wooden spoon. Each place or corner is very carefully scrutinized, and every piece is gathered up with great precision, so that not a particle of leaven may be left anywhere in the house. Before this

Continued on page 349



FROM THE MAILBOX

Dear Sir:

Just wanted to say thanks for your support while I was incarcerated. The *Berea Baptist Banner* you sent me free was always a blessing. When ever I needed to hear a good sermon I just picked up your paper. God has used your paper to speak to me many a time.

I'm sending a small contribution. May God multiply it and bless all those who work on your staff.

—South Carolina

Dear Brethren in Christ,
Warmest Christian greetings to you!

I am writing to ask for information on *The Berea Baptist Banner*, to receive some copies of this publication; a Doctrinal Statement of Faith, a list of publications and tape studies on various subjects.

—Northern Ireland

Dear Pastor Milburn Cockrell, Family & Church,

A million thanks for continuation of sending me a lot of religious publications, *The Berea Baptist Banner*. It's a great help for me. The different messages I read. I use it to preach this also in our Sunday worship, and sermons from you, Pastor Tom Ross, Jimmie Davis, David O'Neal, and all our old Landmark Baptist. Praise God for the great spiritual blessings.

Brothers and sisters here are very happy when they hear a sermon that I quote from your sermons.

—Philippines

Dearest Brother in Christ,

Just a note to say thank you for all the work you and your family have done and are doing to keep the BBB in print. My eighty-six year old mother waits with great anticipation for her paper to arrive. She called me one day and I had to explain to her what the mark of the beast meant, and that her subscription was not in danger of running out.

I was reading the 25th Psalm this week and as I read vs. 19 I thought of you. Perhaps you do have many enemies, but your friends and supporters and those who love you far and away outnumber them.

—Kansas

Dear Pastor Cockrell,

The studies that you sent have been such a blessing to us who use them. The tape messages continue to be very useful to us as we listen to them often. We have learned a lot and still have much to learn from them yet. The Holy Spirit keeps teaching us from them each time we listen to them. What we are learning from your

material could only come from the Holy Spirit as it always lines up with God's Word.

I pray that the LORD's blessed mercy continue with you Pastor in good health and for all your family and Christ's bride there. And much increase of the Gospel going out to the lost, that the LORD may through your preaching of His Word gather in His elect from around you, and even to the ends of the earth; and for the equipping of the saints there for the work of ministry.

Our prayers are with you all as we here grow in the grace and the knowledge of the LORD by His sovereign will.

—Washington

Dear Bro. & Sis. Cockrell,

I'm enclosing . . . to cover my order. If there is any left over, please keep it and if I owe any more, please let me know.

Thank you so much for being there to minister to my spiritual needs and so many others needs also. In a world, where we sometimes feel like dinosaurs, the last of the dying breed, it is so comforting to know there is the BBB. My husband and I look forward to it every month and wrestle each other to get to read it first. May our good Lord bless you and your staff with good health and the finances to continue such an encouraging and needful work.

—Michigan

Dear Bro. Cockrell,

I received your letter and felt led to give this donation either for your ministry or radio broadcast. My prayers are with you that God will heal your eyes and restore your health. Thank you for the paper.

—Michigan

Sir:

I want to subscribe to your paper. Someone sent your paper to my mother and I have been reading her paper.

I really do enjoy reading it.

—Kentucky

Dear Brother Cockrell,

I pray that this letter finds you, Chris, wife and the household of faith in improved health and in the faith once delivered to the saints.

—Texas

Dear Brother,

I have enclosed a check for a subscription and donation to use as you need.

The *Banner* has been a great blessing to my Dad and myself and husband for many years. My Dad got me my first subscription some 20 years ago. We pray it can continue many years more.

—Texas

Brother Cockrell,

Enclosed are two checks. Please send the paper to the listed, the other check

please use for the work there (radio and paper).

We enjoy the paper very much and pray for the work there.

—Georgia

Dear Sir:

Please send me the following: *Death and the Hereafter* by Milburn Cockrell. Also, *Book of Jonah*. Enclosed money order.

I would appreciate very much if Bro. Cockrell would sign his name on my copy of *Death and the Hereafter*.

I have subscribed for the BBB for over 20 years.

—Colorado

Dear *Berea Baptist Banner*,

I am not interested in the *Berea Baptist Banner* paper. Please quit sending me this paper. I don't want your paper! Cancel my subscription – am not interested!

—Kentucky

Dear Pastor Milburn Cockrell,

Greeting you, your family and the whole church in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. I pray and hope that you are all in good health and doing fine in the service of the Lord by the grace of God for the sole purpose of the glory of God, salvation of sinners and edification of the saints. Amen.

At this writing, I thank and praise the Lord including your good self for sharing me and others the good news through your radio broadcast at DWSS (1494 AM), Philippines.

I come now requesting for reading materials that I need, to grow mature spiritually as He wills me to be of service to the Lord.

—Philippines

Dear Brother Cockrell,

Greetings in the name of Him who works all things according to His will. I've noticed the expiration date of your BBB expires on Jan. 2002.

Please reconsider and continue to send me BBB, because in that material I'm edified in the once delivered faith. May the Lord be pleased to provide sponsors for me to receive your paper at no charge.

—Philippines

Dear Sir:

I enjoy your paper, some very good articles. Keep up the good work. Please find enclosed \$5 for 2 year sub.

—Kentucky

Please continue my subscription to *The Berea Baptist Banner*. I love your ministry. It's the best news I get each month. Your tremendous effort is greatly appreciated.

—Washington

Brother Cockrell,

We enjoy your BBB paper very much and we pray for you and your family and

membership daily.

Your paper has meant a lot to us in our spiritual lives.

After reading them, we pass them on to others for them to read. We give them out at the nursing home too.

May the Lord continue to give you good health and lots of strength for all the labors you do.

—Louisiana

Dear Sir:

Please send me 6 copies of the tract "The Succession of Truth" by Milburn Cockrell.

The best friend a person can have on this earth is one who will tell you the truth. I believe that you are the friend, Bro. Cockrell, and the paper (BBB) that you publish.

Enjoyed the article "The Church in the Wilderness" where you made clear distinction between Israel and the church. Your messages are filled with Scripture – which I enjoy.

Looking forward to reading the books, *Death and the Hereafter; Salvation; Prophecy*.

So sad some people believe in the Doctrines of Grace but not in the return of Christ to rule (Luke 1:32-33) or the Millennium.

—Colorado

The Passover

Continued from page 348

is done all work and study must be put aside, and necessary preparations made. When this is finished the pieces of leaven are securely tied, and placed somewhere in an unused part of the house; they are removed the next morning about ten, and burned. This is known as "removing" or "purging" the leaven. It is very punctiliously observed, and great care is taken that not one particle of the leaven remains.

26. No doubt this was what Paul had in mind, when in writing to the Corinthian church upon the subject of the Passover, He said: "**Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump**" (I Cor. 5:7).

Just previous to this search the following prayer is offered: "Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who hath sanctified us with His commandments, and hath commanded us to remove the leaven." Then the following is said after the search has been made: "All manner of leaven that is in my possession which I have not seen nor removed, shall be null and accounted as the dust of the earth." After the leaven has been burned the next morning, the following is said: "All manner of leaven that is in my possession, which I have seen and which I have not seen, which I have

Continued on page 352

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit questions on any Bible topic

The Berea Baptist Banner

PO Box 39

Mantachie, Mississippi 38855

Is there a Scripture for a divorced and remarried man to remain a minister of the gospel? --- Illinois



Tom Ross
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South Point, OH
45680

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

I believe that the Scriptures are clear regarding the termination of a man's pastoral ministry if he should get divorced and then remarry. The qualifications of a pastor include being the husband of one wife and ruling his own house well (I Tim. 3). I know from my own personal conviction that if I would happen to get divorced for any reason, I don't believe I could effectively pastor or preach. I believe I would be in direct violation of these two qualifications. I also do not believe it would be right for me to remarry. I know this view is one that is not at all popular among Christians today. However, I believe that marriage is a sacred vow that must be taken very seriously. There are already too many broken homes. Preachers and pastors should strive to provide an example of marital fidelity and remain married and faithful.

TOM ROSS



David O'Neal
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Pastor
Grace Missionary
Baptist Church
2750 South 53rd
West Ave
Tulsa, OK 74107

I suppose that this question, in different forms, will continually be asked; and the answers given will in all probability never bring the two sides to an agreement. There are some that take a strong view that the man who is divorced and remarries would be disqualified as a minister of the gospel and other that do not. Each side has taken a strong view as to what is to be done. Should he continue as a minister of the Word of God? Did God make a mistake when he called him, or just used him until his divorce and then cast him aside? I must admit that I do not have all the answers. I have always taken the view that if a

man is Scripturally divorced, he does not have a wife.

In I Timothy 3:2 we are told that a bishop must be the husband of one wife. There are different opinions as to what is meant by "one wife." If the Bible teaches that there are grounds for divorce, then one who is Scripturally divorced does not have a wife. The words "put away" in Matthew 19:9 are from the Greek *apolyo* and means to set free (Thayer). God ordained marriage to be a lifetime commitment. The two are committed to each other. It is obvious that this commitment is broken when the sin of fornication is committed.

I know of no Scripture that would clearly state that a man who is divorced and remarried can still be a minister of the gospel, but I believe that if his divorce is Scriptural, he can remarry and still be used as a minister. Most churches would accept this man into the membership of their church. If he is judged as not living in sin and allowed to be a member in good standing of the church, he should be able to minister the gospel.

DAVID O'NEAL



Jimmie B. Davis
309 Carroll Road
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Pastor
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Baptist Church
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The subject of the marital status of the ministers of the gospel has long been a fertile field of debate among preachers and churches. Numerous views on the subject can be found among the Protestant groups. The Roman Catholic religion teaches that the priest is to be celibate. This view cannot be consistent with Paul's statement that a bishop should be the husband of one wife.

While there is division among Catholics and Protestants on the matter of divorce and remarriage, especially when it concerns the members of the clergy, we must confess that Baptists are not in full agreement either. Even our Sovereign Grace Baptist brethren are divided on the issue. Some brethren take the position that a divorced and

remarried minister can still preach but not pastor a church. Others contend that he can do both without violating the Scripture. Yet others say he should not do either one. These views revolve mainly around the interpretation of the phrase "the husband of one wife" found in I Timothy 3:2).

Some brethren teach that the statement is made in opposition to Polygamy. Others in our group hold to the idea that a divorced and remarried preacher has only one wife—the present wife. This view would not disqualify the preacher from pastoral work if the divorce from the first companion was granted on the scriptural ground given in Matthew 5:32.

It should be observed that the statement found in I Timothy 5:9 in reference to widows in the church who were to receive support were to have been "the wife of one man." If this implies that a woman married but once, why should we say that "husband of one wife" would not have the same meaning?

I cannot give a Scripture which specifically states that a divorced and remarried man is to remain a minister of the gospel, neither can I give one which says he cannot.

JIMMIE B. DAVIS



Garner Smith
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Pastor
Faith Baptist Church
2590 Madison Ext.
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"This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)" (I Tim. 3:1-5)

"For this cause left I thee in

Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly" (Titus 1:5-6).

I know of no Scripture that gives a divorced and remarried preacher the right to continue to pastor, but quite the contrary as shown in the above Scriptures.

I realize there are others that disagree with me on this matter, but these are my convictions and I have absolutely no fear of standing at the Judgment Seat of Christ with these convictions.

I must say I would have some reservations facing the Lord in judgment believing otherwise.

I believe a divorced and remarried person can still preach in the sense of being a witness for the Lord, but not hold the office as a pastor. I believe the Scriptures distinctly declare that divorce and remarriage disqualifies one from the pastorate. I have heard and read all the opposing objections to my belief and have found none of them sufficient to change my convictions.

I believe I Timothy 3:2 and Titus 1:6 mean one living wife for life and until that wife dies he cannot marry again and still be qualified to continue to pastor (Romans 7:1-3). No where else in the Scripture does "one" as recorded in I Timothy 3:2 and Titus 1:6 mean one at a time as some suggest. I believe we should take the Scriptures seriously as they are presented instead of trying to interpret them to make our problem seem okay.

GARNER SMITH

BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 3-31-2002 to 4-30-2002

Beginning Balance \$3,012.33
RECEIPTS
TOTAL RECEIPTS 0.00
TOTAL 3,012.33

EXPENDITURES:
Radio Time 944.00
Postage 15.30
Tape Production 170.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES 1,129.30
BALANCE \$1,883.03

CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT

Beginning Balance \$1,533.32
RECEIPTS
Total 1,533.32

EXPENDITURES:
WCTT 160.00
Total Expenditures 160.00
ENDING BALANCE \$1,373.32

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit questions on any Bible topic

The Berea Baptist Banner

PO Box 39

Mantachie, Mississippi 38855

Our church is considering a prison ministry. Would it be possible for God to save some of them and add them to our church? Could they be elders? -- Tennessee



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

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

There is no question in my mind that God can and does save prisoners through an effective prison ministry that faithfully preaches the Gospel of the grace of God. I don't know how a man who is incarcerated could be a baptized member of the church since he would not be able to attend services until he was paroled. However, each church is an independent, autonomous body. If they feel it is the Lord's will to baptize saved prisoners while they remain incarcerated and unable to attend church services, that is up to them. The Scriptures make it clear that members of the Lord's churches are not to forsake the assembling of themselves together (Heb. 10:25). With that said, I also believe it would be very difficult, if not impossible for prisoners to be elders in a church. Paul was a prisoner, a church member, and an elder all at the same time. However, the circumstances were different. He was imprisoned because of his ministry.

TOM ROSS



Jimmie B. Davis
309 Carroll Road
Fulton, MS 38843

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

A church which considers a prison ministry is to be commended. A great amount of good can be accomplished when the emphasis is upon the presentation of scriptural truth rather than some social agenda or catering to the self-serving interests of the prisoners.

Christ said, ". . . I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. . . Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and

came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matt. 25:36, 39, 40).

We may never know, in this life, just how many of God's elect were ministered unto while in prison. We do know that many of God's servants have been cast into prison because they faithfully proclaimed the truth of God's word. In fact, one of the great events of the Bible took place when Paul and Silas were blessed to present the way of salvation to the keeper of the prison at Philippi.

It is not only possible but highly probable that God has saved many sinners while they were imprisoned. God can save a sinner whenever or wherever He chooses. A saved prisoner can be received into the membership of a Baptist church and can serve as an Elder when/or after his debt to society has been paid. Of course we should understand that any man who serves as an elder must first be called of God to be a preacher of the gospel.

JIMMIE B. DAVIS



David O'Neal
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"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (I Cor. 6:9-11).

It would be difficult for those who are in our prisons to be greater sinners than the saints in the church at Corinth. Note, that in describing the

many sins of the unrighteous, Paul said, **"And such were some of you."** There are many examples in the Bible of just how great a sinner one can be and still be saved by the grace of God. King David was a child of God, but he committed the sins of adultery and murder. He had to pay for his sins for the rest of his life, but remained a child of God. Paul was guilty of murder (Acts 7:58; 8:1; 9:1), but after his conversion, he became a member of the Lord's church at Antioch.

Is there a sin that is too great for God to forgive; and if God forgives one of his sins, how can we continue to hold their sins against them? When God forgives, He removes our transgressions from us as far as the east is from the west (Ps. 103:12). Jesus said, **". . . I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance"** (Matt. 9:13). All men are sinners (Rom. 3:10-23). If some sin could keep one from being a member of the church or from being an elder, there would be no elders or church members. We are all sinners saved by the grace of God.

DAVID O'NEAL



Garner Smith
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Faith Baptist Church
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I personally know of prisoners who were saved while in prison. Some have later in life been released from prison and made good law abiding Christian citizens and witnesses for the Lord and His churches.

I also know of some prisoners saved in prison that in all probability will die in prison who have proven by their demeanor and testimony that they were indeed regenerated. They became cherished members of true churches and carried on an active ministry in prison.

I see no reason why a truly regenerated prisoner could not become a member of a local church where they could tithe and be a part of the ministry of that church, such as mission work both in prison and outside by giving to mission work,

even though they may not be able to attend the services of that church.

I know there are some that say a church is not a church unless all members are assembled together and that also a group that are members of a church but attend a mission in another locality is a divided church. If this be true, then I think all churches are divided because I know of no church where all the members attend all the services all the time.

I know of no reason why a regenerated, scripturally baptized prisoner who meets the qualifications of I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 could not be an elder.

I realize that some prisoners fake a profession of faith hoping to get favors for being a Christian, but this in no way invalidates those who truly are regenerated by the Holy Spirit.

GARNER SMITH

BEREBA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 3-31-2002 to 4-30-2002

Beginning Balance \$2,374.08

RECEIPTS:

A. D. Richardson, Cedarville, WV	100.00
B.C. of Brimfield, Brimfield, IL	34.11
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	200.00
Berea B. C., Westpoint, TN	50.00
Berea M. B.C., Mansfield, OH	50.00
Bethel M. B. C., Pasadena, TX	30.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne WV	300.00
Central Avenue B. C., Tampa, FL	25.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL	20.00
Faith B. C., Clarksville, TN	100.00
Faith B. C., Seffner, FL	50.00
Faith M. B. C., Lynn, AR	25.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
Grace B. M, Marion, IL	25.00
Hillcrest B. C., Winston-Salem, NC	50.00
John Otis, Agra, KS	100.00
Joseph Jurzec, Lake-in-the-Hills, IL	25.00
Letson Farrell, Long Beach, MS	150.00
Meadow Branch B. C., Millport, AL	200.00
Morris St. B. C., Hobbs, NM	300.00
New Testament B. C., Bristol, TN	10.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN	50.00
Ocoonita M. B. C., Keokee, VA	40.00
Philadelphia B. C., Aztec, NM	25.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL	50.00
Portland B. C., Plumerville, AR	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Burghill, OH	75.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Columbus, MS	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Fulton, MS	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Galena, OH	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Raleigh, NC	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Silsbee, TX	30.00
Tim Willett, Pflugerville, TX	25.00
Timothy Hille, Ashland, IL	20.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA	200.00
Wendell P. Furlong, Burnside, KY	10.00
Subscriptions	523.00
Anonymous	75.00
Sub Total	\$3,567.11
TOTAL	\$5,941.19

EXPENDITURES:

Wages	2,375.00
Printing	502.00
Postage	847.66
FICA taxes	181.62
Supplies	71.00
Total Expenditures	3,977.28
.....	1,963.91
Bank charge	-19.11
ENDING BALANCE	\$1,944.80

The Passover

Continued from page 349

removed and which I have not removed, shall be null and accounted as the dust of the earth."

The reason no doubt why in this latter saying these words are inserted, "which I have not seen," "and which I have not removed," is because of the possibility of a mouse having carried in during the night some piece or pieces of leaven and secreted them where the master has not observed them. Should this really be so, the house would have to be searched again. But by inserting this statement, the leaven in the house is null and void, and the man can feel he has a clear conscience. This reminds one of what the Savior said concerning the straining at gnats. After the leaven is burned, food and dishes of every description in the house used during the year must be hid from view.

PREPARATION FOR THE PASSOVER

27. On the night of the fourteenth day the Passover proper begins. It is then that the Passover supper is observed. Not now having any lamb, substitutes are used in the form of a roasted egg, boiled hard, and the shankbone of a lamb. In addition they use celery, parsley, lettuce, and horseradish for bitter herbs, and a mixture called haroseth, a sort of sauce, to represent the mortar of which the brick was made when the ancestry were in Egypt. See illustration.

28. The table is always prepared before the evening, so that when the people return from the synagogue service they are ready to sit down to supper. This no doubt is the reason why the disciples inquired where they should go and *prepare* the Passover (Matt. 26:17).

EACH PERSON MUST HAVE FOUR CUPS OF WINE

29. Soon after the family is gathered around the board the man of the house will take a glass of wine, over which a blessing is pronounced. Each person at the table also has a glass at the same time. This wine is made of raisins. It is absolutely necessary to have this wine at the Passover. In fact the importance attached to it is so great that the rabbis taught that if a person had no wine for the feast he must sell or pawn some of his goods and secure it. Or if he had nothing to dispose of, he must secure it from the poverty fund kept for the poor on just such occasions.

30. Not only must they have wine, but they must have sufficient that each member of the family shall have four cups. This is what the rabbis taught

even in the time of Christ: "On the eve of any Passover it is not lawful for a person to eat anything from the time of the afternoon prayer till after dusk. Even the meanest in Israel shall not eat until they have arranged themselves in proper order at ease around the table nor shall a person have less than *four cups of wine*, even if they must be given him from the funds devoted to the charitable support of the very poor."--*Tract "Pesachim."*

And the Talmud in elaborating upon this subject, says: "All persons, whether men or women, are obligated on this night to drink four cups of wine, and this number is not to be diminished."--*Laws of Leaven."*

And again: "Whosoever has not got



PASSOVER SUPPER-TABLE.

wine transgresses a command of the rabbis, for they have said, that there is to be no diminution from the four cups. And it is necessary to sell what he has in order to keep the command of the wise men. He is not to depend upon the bread, for if he fulfill the command concerning one cup, he has not fulfilled that respecting the three. Therefore let him sell what he has, and furnish the expense, until he procure wine or raisins."--*"Ways of Life."*

We can appreciate more what the Savior evidently meant when He said that the Pharisees and scribes laid heavy burdens upon the poor people; too heavy for many of them to bear (Matt. 23:4).

THE SAVIOR TEACHING THE DISCIPLES PRECIOUS LESSONS

31. Thus when the Savior came to sit down to the last Passover with His disciples He found many things not commanded in the Word of God, which of themselves were valueless, even though the rabbis did attach much meaning to them. Yet He could not let the opportunity slip by without teaching them some valuable lesson even from these traditions.

32. These four cups were in existence in the days of the Savior;

and during this last Passover service he instituted that beautiful, precious, and helpful reminder of His death and crucifixion.

THE ORDER OF THE SERVICE

33. When the first cup of wine is drunk a blessing is pronounced, called the "blessing of the festival." Part of this wine is left in the cup. When this is finished, all the persons at the table are obligated to wash their hands. It was no doubt at this stage of the supper that the ranklings in the hearts of the disciples were manifest, and the bitter strife arose who should be the greatest (Luke 22:24-27). The Savior then laid aside His garment, took the towel, and washed their feet (John 13:4-5).

portion is given to each of the persons around the table. This would very naturally suggest a forcible thought upon that text in Revelation: "**To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna**" (Rev. 2:17).

This hidden piece of cake is very precious to the man of the house, and he guards it with great jealousy. So the "Hidden Manna" is very precious to every one of God's dear children, and He should be regarded with great desire.

THE DIPPING OF THE SOP

36. After the cake is broken, the service proper takes place. The history of the exode is then discoursed upon, and the wonderful dealings of God with His people and with the Egyptians are all gone over. Then the supper proper takes place. During this supper the bitter herbs, in the form of horseradish, are served to every member of the family. One form of this herb is served between two pieces of unleavened bread, then dipped in the sauce previously mentioned. To this evidently Jesus referred, after he had said, "One of you shall betray Me," when he remarked: "**He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it**" (John 13:26).

THE CUP OF BLESSING, AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

37. After this part of the service came the cup of wine, known as the "cup of blessing." It was during this part of the supper that the Lord spoke of the bread and the wine, as emblems of His shed blood, and broken body (Luke 22:19-20).

He instituted that blessed and precious memorial of the Lord's Supper for the church, by which they were to keep Him in mind, till He should come again. This new memorial of the Savior, a pledge that He would come again, was to be rewarded again, was to be regarded by the church as a season of joy, blessing, and appreciation of the great gift of the Lord Jesus, who gave His life a willing sacrifice.

Judas did not stay with the Savior and disciples till the end; and after He went out, the Lord gave the disciples still further instructions (John 14-17).

38. After this cup was finished and the bread distributed the "Hallel" was sung, which also explains the expression that after they had sung a hymn (margin, psalm) they went out (Matt. 16:10, margin). The "Hallel" consisted of a number of Psalms (Ps. 115-118). (h)

39. Thus the Savior took the very traditions they had inaugurated, which were in a large degree foreign to the original Passover, and made a most beautiful and sacred institution by which to remember Him in the

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The Passover

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church, till He come.

TWO DAYS OBSERVED INSTEAD OF ONE

40. Instead of the people keeping the first and last days (Ex. 12:16) of the feast as a sabbath, they observe two days in each case. This addition was of the scribes and Pharisees. The following will explain itself: "Although the second holy day is only of the words of the scribes, everything that is forbidden on the first day is forbidden on it [the second day] also. And every one who professes the second holy day, but by some means violates it, is to receive the beating denounced against rebellion, or to be excommunicated, except he be a learned man." -- *The Laws of the Festivals*.

41. Thus we see why the Savior said that they placed heavy burdens upon the multitudes, but they themselves would not lift them with their small finger. Because these men were learned, they considered themselves

exempt.

THE TRUE PASSOVER

42. But the true Passover, and all its meaning, is to be found in Jesus Christ only. He is the Passover (I Cor. 5:7); and we are to eat Him with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth (I Cor. 5:8). This is the meaning of the unleavened bread; this is the meaning of the Passover. It was a longing desire on the part of the Savior to eat the Passover with the disciples before He suffered, for then these traditions and burdens would be removed from them, and they would know in all its fullness the meaning of the Passover.

43. If the church of Christ of today could only see that instead of the observance of many of the festivals which are being observed as memorials, whether they be Easter, or Christmas, or some other day, which is similar in effect to the traditions of the Jewish rabbis, they would be more obedient to His will, they would then enjoy much more of Jesus Christ, the great Lamb of God, and have a continuous feast in Him who is the great and blessed Passover.

implementation of basic provisions of existing international norms that protect religious freedom and promote religious tolerance. Many other basic rights depend on freedom of religion—the right of free speech, assembly, education, parenting and travel.

"Religious freedom is being violated in almost every part of the world and there is an urgent need to uphold the right to religious freedom for all people, regardless of faith, creed, language, nationality, race, color, social origin, gender, or aboriginal or other culture," the report states. "The national and local governments ought to respect the right of every person to practice, teach, propagate, change and observe his or her religion or belief. The government-sponsored gross violations of religious freedom such as genocide, murder, slavery, and torture based on religious faith or belief, as well as the destruction of holy places, should be the subject of sanctions and other exercises of foreign policy powers by nations adhering to the principles of religious freedom.

The report asserts that no country has the right to condemn Christian meetings as evil sects or agents of 'foreign' or 'hostile sources.' Such actions give countries "some sort of 'moral right' to imprison Christians and to send the pastors to prison or labor camps. Neither can the expression 'disturbing social harmony' be used as a reason to deny someone's human rights if the country has signed the UN declaration," says the Geneva Report.

"We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter" (Rom. 8:36).

ATTACKS ON JEWS, SYNAGOGUES AND PROPERTY ON RISE IN EUROPE

PARIS, France (EP)—Anti-Semitic crimes, including attacks on synagogues, are on the rise in France and Belgium.

The attacks are part of a wave of anti-Semitic violence that has plagued the two countries since October 2000. More than 400 incidents have been documented in France since then. Many of the most recent crimes have been linked to demonstrators and groups angered by the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians.

Vandals used firebombs to seriously damage several synagogues, burning a place of worship in Marseille to the ground. Other scattered attacks included shots fired at a kosher shop, a Jewish couple attacked on the street, a bus filled with schoolchildren stoned, and high school soccer players beaten by a gang wielding metal bars. Also, several Jewish cemeteries were vandalized with swastikas and anti-Semitic graffiti.

France's Foreign Minister, Hubert Vedrine, denounced the attacks, saying, "Nothing that happens in the Middle East

can justify racist and anti-Semitic acts or attacks on Jewish school buses or schools or burning synagogues. France is absolutely determined to prevent these acts. We must remain vigilant and firm and refuse to let this spread."

The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, an independent federal agency advising the Bush administration and Congress, recently denounced the spate of attacks on synagogues, other Jewish sites, and Jewish individuals in France and Belgium.

"These attacks on Jews in France and Belgium are despicable," said Michael K. Young, chairman of the commission. "We hope the French government, in particular, will follow through on its recent statements to track down the perpetrators and hold them to account; making it clear such behavior will not be tolerated in France. The U.S. government should follow this issue carefully and urge the French authorities to treat these incidents with the seriousness they deserve."

Young noted that the remarks of President Jacques Chirac, Prime Minister Lionel Jospin, and key Muslim leaders strongly condemning the anti-Semitic attacks in France were important indicators of a new concern over this issue.

Europe's largest concentration of Jews and Muslims is within France's borders.

"...the candle of the wicked shall be put out" (Prov. 24:20).

SON OF SATANIST ANTON LaVEY PREACHES GOSPEL, WARNS AGAINST OCCULT INVOLVEMENT

YUCAIPA, Calif. (EP)—The son of Anton LaVey, founder of the worldwide Church of Satan, is a born-again Christian who now preaches the gospel and warns people of the dangers of occult activity.

Jess LaVey, who changed his name from Anthony to distance himself from his father's evil legacy, said he grew up with unspeakable abuse from his father. He said that while he has gained much victory through his relationship with Christ, he still carries emotional and physical scars of the ritual abuse he suffered for years.

His father founded the church of Satan in 1966, and two years later Jess was born. Jess said that while he spent much of his childhood in boarding schools, when he came home for visits his father repeatedly raped him and forced him to participate in satanic rituals. When he was 10 years old he sent away for a Bible correspondence course. Rebellious against his father's abuse and wicked practices, Jess told *Charisma* magazine that he once used a glow pen to write "Jesus Saves" on the walls of a room used for Satanic rituals.

At 14, he was freed from demonic bondage through the ministry of a Vineyard church in Oceanside, Calif. "I

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

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EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE REPORTS TWO HUNDRED MILLION CHRISTIANS PERSECUTED WORLDWIDE

GENEVA, Switzerland (EP)—The right of religious freedom for Christians is under attack in almost every part of the world, according to a new report presented to the United Nations in April.

The Geneva Report 2002, compiled and published by the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA), reveals that an unprecedented number of Christians now face disinformation, discrimination, and outright persecution worldwide. The report details specific cases of persecution in India, Greece, Cyprus, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Turkmenistan, China and Sudan. The Religious Liberty Commission of WEA presented the findings at the United Nations Commission on Human Rights on April 8. The WEA represents 115 evangelical organizations and 160 million evangelicals worldwide.

"We estimate that there are more than 200 million Christians in the world today who do not have full human rights as

defined by the UN Declaration of Human Rights, simply because they are Christians. We believe that this is the largest group in the world without full human rights because of their beliefs," states Johan Candelin, director of the WEA Religious Liberty Commission. Candelin delivered the report to the UN Commission on Human Rights at the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland.

The report addresses several key issues and questions, including advancing religious freedom at home and mobilizing a constituency in support of international religious liberty.

The underlying reasons for widespread persecution of Christians are numerous and often depend on the political and social views Christians hold. In many cases, Christians are persecuted because they are seen as a threat to nationalistic loyalties and the culture of a particular country. In some areas, such as India and southern Asia, Christians are persecuted because they stand up for and assist marginalized groups such as the poor, the ill and social outcasts.

WEA called on UN member states to give greater attention to the practical

Mini Edition

By Joseph Harris
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CULTURALLY DIVERSE OR CULTURALLY DIVIDED?

It's amazing how some believe that in order to be truly culturally diverse and inclusive, history must be ignored or even changed. Some people in New Brunswick are up in arms over the renaming of a new school building. It is currently named after a Revolutionary war hero, William Alexander. Hispanic Americans in this New Jersey community have presented a petition to rename the new building after a Puerto Rican writer.

Meanwhile, some Black Americans have protested, requesting it be named after someone from their heritage. Then, to complicate matters, a Mexican group threw in a monkey wrench (excuse me, primate wrench. Don't want to offend the animal kingdom) and split from the Hispanics, wanting one of their own honored.

My question is, "Why change the name now?" By changing it, there is another group at risk of being offended. Since William Alexander was from the Revolutionary war period of this country, it's a safe bet he was of European descent, hence he could be called a European American. It is an offense to European Americans to remove his name, after all these years.

How about a compromising, all inclusive combination to make everybody happy. Isn't that what America is all about in today's high tolerance, pluralistic society? Call it the Eugenio William Jose Running Bear Mohammed Polaski Keyes Building. Then, everyone will be happy. . . except those groups left out. I'm sure there are other ethnic groups in New Brunswick.

Now to be fair, the Hispanic and Mexican populations in New Brunswick have grown over the last ten years and it is understandable how these groups feel they are now a part of the community and deserve some recognition and representation. But to remove the name William Alexander is to deny our Revolutionary War heritage, a heritage which symbolizes hard earned, blood bought freedom, without which no group could express their opinion today.

I understand the desire to promote

and preserve culture, and that right should exist, but no culture has the right to exist at the expense of another, especially when it is the mother culture of this country that birthed the freedoms granted by God, which we enjoy today. The majority who came to this land, founded this great republic, and wrote its documents were not Hispanic, Black or Mexican. That's not a slap in the face of these and other groups. It's just truth, nothing more or less. Since America is a melting pot, we have people from around the globe who have all made contributions that make this country what it is today. Diversity can be reflected without doing away with or ignoring history. You can do one of two things with history: (1) Accept it or (2) reject it. But you can never change it.

THE SKILLET CALLS THE KETTLE BLACK

Arafat has emerged spouting untruths and propaganda in anger. When the Palestinian terrorist leader was allowed the freedom to leave his compound May 2 by the Israelis, he appeared with the victory sign of two fingers. Now, who has really been victorious? The Palestinians or the Israelis? Considering that we have not been hearing about suicide/homicide bombings against Israelis lately, I would say the Israelis have been victorious, not Arafat and his fanatics.

Concerning the fire at the church of the nativity, Arafat said it was caused by Israelis and then called the Israelis "terrorists, Nazis and racists" which is the skillet calling the kettle black, only in this instance, the skillet (Arafat) really is a terrorist and the kettle (Israel) has yet to commit any real terrorist acts. I have yet to hear of an Israeli suicide/homicide bomber. Now, that would be terrorism.

Defense through occupation is not terrorism. The USA has been occupying in Cuba at our base for some time now. Ditto with some other countries overseas. Where the USA has fought wars and battles, we reserve the right to maintain military bases for future defense and security. That's just common sense. Israel can occupy for the same reason because of the very real daily threats to its people.

Concerning the fire at the church of the nativity in Bethlehem, Arafat is just using a political maneuver to try and anger American Christians against Israel. He calls it a crime that needs investigation, because, after all, the media keeps referring to this site as Christianity's third most holy shrine. Here's a news flash: true Christianity doesn't have any shrines. True Christianity does not worship or revere places, rocks, buildings, relics or dead saints. We do not even know with accuracy if this location is the actual site of the birth of Christ. Besides, Arafat doesn't care beans about any "Christian holy site."

Concerning the damage to buildings and property in Bethlehem, Jenin and etc., this is what happens during war (I say this at the risk of sounding callous). Palestinian buildings and houses have been destroyed just as Israeli hotels, supermarkets, cafes, and discos have been destroyed. Property loss, and more importantly, loss of life on both sides is tragic. I'm sure the Israelis are not lily white in every act, but terrorists? Get real!

The only answer to the Mideast mess is God. There is no peace without the Prince of Peace and as long as He is excluded, peace will not exist. Regardless of peace treaties and summits with both sides involved. God alone will effect the solution. He will deliver to Israel all the land He divinely deeded and promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and their descendants and all according to His divine time table. Until God's fullness of time comes, the UN, EU, Jordan, Libya, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, the US or UK can not grant that which Almighty God has ordained to one day fulfill by His power, based upon the promises of His Word.

YOUR SUPREME COURT AND CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

According to a recent Supreme Court decision concerning child pornography, most of the justices have given a stamp of approval to child porn by protecting it as free speech. The decision had to do with invalidating portions of the Child Pornography Act which was passed by Congress in 1996. The court basically said that REAL photographs of REAL children involved in REAL sexual acts are illegal and not protected as free speech, BUT computer generated images that APPEAR to be of children, which APPEAR to be involved in sex acts is okay. In other words, hand drawn or computer generated pictures that appear to be

MARK OF THE BEAST



Look at your name on the front page of this month's paper. If you see the mark 6-02, so detestable to a Baptist, wash it out by renewal of green-backs. If not your paper will stop next month. We are not able to credit. It is not a good plan.

of minors in acts of simulated sex are protected as free speech.

Well, that sounds as clear as the tax code. Only two judges dissented. Hats off to Justices Antonin Scalia and William Rehnquist. Apparently, only two of the judges on the highest court in this country are thinking with any sanity and common sense. Imagine, if it has not hit you yet: the highest court in this land believes that virtual child pornography has merit and needs protecting.

One charge by opponents was that predators can use this now legal porn to entice and lure children into the real thing, which is exactly what they do with all kinds of porn. Now the predators can show legal pictures of children engaged in sexual acts to real children to entice them and further break down barriers of inhibition. In response to this charge, Justice Anthony Kennedy who wrote for the majority said that candy and video games can also be used for immoral purposes, but are not prohibited just because they have potential for misuse. IS HE SERIOUS? This is the worst case of comparing apples with oranges I have ever seen. Child porn compared with candy? Is anyone out there with me, or am I the only one wondering what this guy is doing on the bench, with that kind of reasoning?

Let's follow through with their reasoning of the pictures not being real and the sexual acts only simulated. How would they respond to:

HATE CRIMES – Pictures of gays being beaten or lynched, simulated of course and computer imaged. No actual pictures of real people.

MINORITY BASHING – Hand drawn, naturally, featuring minorities being trashed and abused by hand drawn skin heads and "good ole boys" (with virtual tobacco spit stains).

ANIMAL ABUSE-Lab rats being mercilessly tortured and maimed, just pretend, of course with only simulated torture of computer generated images, complete with fake cries for help. I wonder if today's judges and courts

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would fight for free speech protection of the above mentioned proposals. Why not? After all, it's only simulation.

Our high court should be concerned with protecting children, but instead has sided with those who would hurt, misuse and abuse our children. Remember the words of Jesus. It would be better to have a millstone tied around your neck and drowned than to hurt innocent children. God help us.

RENDER UNTO CAESAR

Well it's over. How do you feel? Relieved? Happy? Angry? Most people are just glad it's over—until next year. April 15 is the most anticipated, unwelcome holiday in America. It's that special day we "do our share" (some more than others) by sending in or filing on that great American institution of taxation.

Most Christians glumly, though somewhat grudgingly, accept what Scripture has to say on this matter and "render unto Caesar" but at the same time, are keenly aware that Caesar needs to practice the same budget restraints they live under. Only an ostrich with its head in the sand (or a liberal Democrat congressman) will say we are not paying enough in taxes.

Consider the majority of the ways we "contribute:" there's a federal tax, state tax, sales tax, land tax, road and bridge tax, and finally, that wonderfully disguised Social Security tax, camouflaged under the label of f.i.c.a. Some say that SS is not a tax, but a contribution you eventually get back. Whether you call a dog bite a wound or a laceration, it still hurts. Call it what you want, but it's a tax, and if you do not pay it, Caesar will be knocking on your door for this "contribution" plus a little extra for his trouble of having to remind you of your forgetfulness to contribute.

I really don't mind paying my share. We enjoy benefits from taxation that would not otherwise exist. But enough is enough. Caesar is out of control with a mad, insatiable appetite for spending my money, a luxury I can't even enjoy. But nevertheless, here it is Caesar: my blood sweat and tears in the color of green. Take it. At the present, I can't think of another Caesar anywhere on the face of this earth I would rather give it to.

BIG BROTHER IS HERE

Just as archaeology verifies Biblical history, now modern technology has

validated Bible prophecy. The Verichip is here and is now being implanted under the skin of humans. News reports are calling these implanted people "cyborgs," part man, part machine, using the language of Star Trek. The purpose of being "chipped" is for the health and safety of the chippee. For instance, an Alzheimer's patient who wanders around with no identification can have their chipped area scanned and, voila, name rank and serial number is revealed. Naturally, as with cashless purchases, the reason given for use is because it is good, beneficial, and convenient for mankind. But privacy of the individual can be at stake, since the next step is worldwide tracking with GPS technology.

In Revelation 13:16-17, Scripture speaks of an individual who will have the power to force the earth's population (the word "all" is used) regardless of age, class, or financial status, into receiving some type of identifying mark which will allow or prohibit them from buying or selling products or merchandise. The reality of that verse has not even been remotely possible for over 1900 years, until the advent of the computer. The ability to track and identify gives the power to control, and control of finances means control of the person.

Proponents of the view scoff and point out that anyone can be tracked now through the internet, e-mail, credit cards and cellular phones. True, but you have to be near a cellular phone, or use a credit card or the internet in order to be tracked. In other words, you still have control whether or not you use these conveniences. A chip under the skin, however, could transmit your geographical position and other info. Your freedom of choice and control would cease to exist.

I do not believe that proper and beneficial use of modern technology is sinful or wrong. However, in the wrong hands and for the wrong purposes, it can be misused by those who will ultimately be pawns in the hand of Satan and his one world system through his antichrist and false prophet who will try to imitate the true God of the universe by controlling God's earthly and human creation during the tribulation.

The evacuation of God's people, usually known as the rapture, is at hand. This event is not the second coming of Christ. He doesn't come; we go. God will once again resume His dealings with His earthly covenant people, Israel, complete His judgment on them and wicked Gentiles, the wicked world system,

the beast and the false prophet, and will then restore and bless His covenant people by fulfilling promises made to them. As for me, I'm just sitting back and watching the hand of God as He re-gathers His earthly people, to bring to pass that which He has promised will happen.

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felt like a big mountain had been lifted off me, and I was totally drained," he told *Charisma*. "But there was peace."

The elder LaVey, who had satanic congregations in San Francisco and Hollywood, Calif. wanted his son to lead the church of Satan, which supposedly had a membership of some 50,000. Instead, after escaping his father's abuse, the younger LaVey graduated from a small Indian Bible college in California and founded his own ministry. LaVey frequently appears on Christian radio programs and in churches, warning against the dangers of dabbling in the occult.

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted. . ." (Acts 3:19).

U. S. HOUSE ACTION KEEPS CLERGY TAX BREAK SAFE

WASHINGTON, D. C. (EP)—Action by the U. S. House of Representatives may save an 80-year-old tax exemption clergy are allowed to take for housing allowances they receive from their churches as part of their compensation packages.

By a 408-0 vote April 17 the House passed the Clergy Housing Allowance Clarification Act, a bill Rep. Jim Ramstad (R-Minn.) introduced to circumvent a case now before the U. S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit in San Francisco. The case could be used to put an end to the tax exemption ordained ministers take for housing expenses. This exemption, which has been in the federal tax code since 1921, helps smaller congregations hire full-time ministers by allowing them to include housing as part of clergy pay.

The exemption allows a minister to deduct housing expenses—including rent, mortgage payments, utilities, and other housing expenses—from his taxable income, as long as the deduction amount is approved by the minister's denominational governing body.

"Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's" (Matt. 22:21).

FALWELL WINS COURT VICTORY IN BATTLE TO BUILD CHURCH

LYNCHBURG, Va. (EP)—Jerry Falwell won a court victory in his ongoing battle to build a new 12,000-seat sanctuary for his Thomas Road Baptist Church. A federal court ruled that the Virginia Constitution, which keeps churches from

incorporating, violates the U. S. Constitution.

Falwell's lawsuit challenged the ban on church incorporation and a state law which limits the amount of land and other property a church can own. The law limits churches to 15 acres of land within a city or town, and up to 250 acres in a county.

Virginia's law dates back to Thomas Jefferson's time. The second president initially supported but later opposed the law, which was part of a drive to disestablish the state church in Virginia. Only Virginia and West Virginia place such limits on churches.

Falwell hopes to overturn those limits so he can build a new worship center across the street from Liberty University, which he also owns.

Attorney Mat Staver of Liberty Counsel noted, "The decision by a federal court to strike down Virginia's constitution, which barred churches from incorporating, is historic. For over 200 years, churches in Virginia have faced unabashed discrimination by the Commonwealth. Virginia's constitution targeted churches, and placed a disability on churches not placed on any other person or group."

"The tongue of the just is as choice silver. . ." (Prov. 10:20).

GLEANINGS HERE AND THERE

PHILADELPHIA, Pa. (EP)—Pennsylvania State Court Judge Timothy Searer ruled April 29 that Evangel Baptist Church's Family Life center building is tax exempt property because it is used primarily for religious purposes. Tax authorities originally denied the church's request for tax-exempt status for the building, ruling that Sunday school, outreach activities and children's discipleship programs were not forms of religious worship.

JAKARTA, Indonesia (EP)—At least 11 Christians and an infant were massacred in the village of Soya on the outskirts of Ambon in the Maluku Islands of Indonesia on April 28. The victims were stabbed, shot or burned to death by about a dozen attackers who carried automatic rifles, grenades and daggers. Witnesses reported that the attackers set 30 homes and a Protestant church on fire, and went from house to house, shooting into those that were occupied.

While no group has declared responsibility for the attack, Christians in Ambon say evidence points to a radical Islamic group known as the Laskar Jihad. The massacre occurred just days after the militant Islamic extremist group, Laskar Jihad, publicly rejected the Malino peace agreement made in February, which was designed to end fighting between Muslims and Christians in the Malukas.

SEATTLE, Wa. (EP)—A Untied

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Growth Presupposes

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and Power of life. He is severed from the presence of the Lord of Life and the glory of His power (II Thess. 1:9). He is **“without Christ”** and **“without God”** (Eph. 2:12). The Apostle Paul says he is **“alienated from the life of God”** (Eph. 4:18). He cannot know nor understand spiritual things: **“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned”** (I Cor. 2:14). Spiritual death is a state of insensibility and helplessness. We cannot expect any action or growth from a man spiritually dead (John 15:5; Rom. 5:6).

The passage from the physical realm to the spiritual realm is sealed up on the physical side, and no man can open it. There is a great gulf between what is physical and what is spiritual. No organic change, no environmental improvement, no mental energy, no moral effort, no evolution of character, no progress of civilization can endow one with a dead spirit with the attribute of spiritual life. Jesus said: **“Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God...That which is born of flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit”** (John 3:3,6). Baptism, catechism, confirmation, holy sacraments, or other religious acts are worse than useless in imparting life to a dead sinner.

The only remedy for death is life. All life, spiritual or physical, comes from antecedent life. There is no spontaneous generation in either the natural realm or the spiritual realm. The Spirit of God must quicken the dead spirit in man. **“It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing...”** (John 6:63). **“For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death”** (Rom. 8:2). **“For the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life”** (II Cor. 3:6). **“Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickeneth us together with Christ...”** (Eph. 2:5). **“And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses”** (Col. 2:13). Apart from the regeneration work of the Holy Spirit based on the merit of Christ’s blood, the sinner must remain a spiritual corpse.

SPIRITUAL LIFE DEFINED

What constitutes this spiritual life? The answer is given in I John 5:12:

“He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” Christ is this new endowment in its nature and essence. On this point the Scriptures give no uncertain sound. **“At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you”** (John 14:20). **“Abide in me, and I in you...I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing”** (John 15:4-5). **“Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid”** (I Cor. 6:15). **“Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body”** : (I I Cor. 4:10). **“Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?”** (II Cor. 13:5). **“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me...”** (Gal. 2:20). **“For to me to live is Christ...”** (Phil. 1:21). **“...which is Christ in you, the hope of glory”** (Col. 1:27). We must live nothing but Christ, think nothing but Christ, and glory in nothing but Christ.

These statements in Holy Scriptures are not mere figures of rhetoric. They are explicit declarations of truth. This new spiritual life in not something outside of ourselves. It is a resident tenant in the soul. Christ is the Source of our spiritual life. The living Christ does not merely touch us, but he comes to make His abode in us. This endowment is from the spiritual world, and the living Spirit of Christ tabernacles in the body of each Christian.

The life of Jesus Christ is the ideal life, and the life of the Christian is to be a spiritual reproduction. The life of Christ is to be made manifest in our body (II Cor. 4:10). In order for the life of Jesus to be made manifest in our mortal flesh, we must have been born from above, born of God, made a partaker of the divine nature. We can only live the life of Jesus if we have received the life of Jesus. Christ must live in us, if His life in us is to be manifested by us.

SPIRITUAL LIFE AND GROWTH

Growth is the work of time, but life is not. Spiritual life comes suddenly and silently. This is the only way life can come to a dead soul. The Bible teaches sudden conversions. At one moment the person is dead in trespasses and sins. The next moment he is alive unto God. This

regeneration of man’s spirit is called passing from death unto life. **“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life”** (John 5:24). **“We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren”** (I John 3:14). Such a person may reckon himself **“alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord”** (Rom. 6:11), and he **“also should walk in newness of life”** (Rom. 6:4).

In regeneration there is produced in us a Christ-like spirit: **“...that which is born of the Spirit is spirit”** (John 3:6). The **“divine power”** (I Pet. 1:3) imparts to us **“the divine nature”** (II Pet. 1:4) and the seed of God remains in us (I John 3:9), for we have been born of God (John 1:11-13). Those born of the Spirit of Christ will manifest the life of Christ. They will display **“the mind of Christ”** (I Cor. 2:16). In regeneration the mind is renewed (Rom. 12:2), and this brings **“every thought to the obedience of Christ”** (II Cor. 10:5). When a man’s spirit is made alive Christ is formed in his heart (Gal. 4:19). This is why he seeks to grow in the knowledge of spiritual and heavenly things. The person who has Christ formed in his heart is to **“grow up unto him in all things”** (Eph. 4:15), even **“unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ”** (Eph. 4:13). I John 2:6 says: **“He that saith he abideth in him ought himself to walk, even as he walked.”**

ALL LIVING THINGS GROW

All living things upon this earth grow. Trees grow: **“The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon”** (Ps. 92:12). The grass grows: **“...who maketh the grass to grow upon the mountains”** (Ps. 147:8). Lilies grow in the fields: **“...he shall grow as the lily...”** (Hos. 14:5). Grape vines grow, for Hosea 14:7 speaks of Israel growing **“as the vine.”** Man grows: **“For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground...”** (Isa. 53:2). Even **“the locks of the hair of his head grow”** (Num. 6:5) and his **“bones do grow”** (Eccl. 11:5). All living things, whether plant, animal, or human, grow. Jesus taught: **“Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin”** (Matt. 6:28). From a small corn seed springs forth life, and the small stalk grows into a great corn stalk with corn upon it. As Jesus said: **“First the blade, then the ear, after that the**

full corn in the ear” (Mark 4:28).

When a child is born of woman, his birth is the beginning of a new earthly life. Even so, spiritual birth is the beginning of a new spiritual life. Just as the babe must grow up into youth and then to manhood, even so the babe in Christ must become a full-grown man. The germ of the Christ-like life must grow into a real Christian. Yet none of us will ever reach the spiritual size we should during our brief life on this earth. The end of salvation is perfection, the Christ-like mind, character, and life. This is our goal (Rom. 8:29), but it shall not be achieved until the coming of Christ (Phil. 3:20-21; I John 3:1-2).

The Christian is a new creation (II Cor. 5:17), a new man in Jesus Christ. He is rooted and built up in Christ (Col. 2:7). As a branch, he abides in the Vine, and so abiding he brings forth fruit. A Christian is not made, but born. The born-again person grows in his soul automatically and spontaneously. Leviticus 25:5 speaks of a plant which **“groweth of its own accord.”** Isaiah 37:30 say: **“Ye shall eat this year such as growth of itself.”** We read in Philippians 2:13: **“For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”** I Corinthians 3:7 says it is **“God that giveth the increase.”**

For a plant to grow it needs heat, light, air, and moisture. If a man is to grow, he is to go in search of the spiritual equivalent of these. The rest of this book will concern these things. Hence I shall say no more here.

Dead trees, animals, and men do not grow. Even so, people spiritually dead do not grow up in Christ. They cannot grow up in Christ, as they have never gotten to Christ. They cannot grow in grace, for they are strangers to God’s saving grace. They cannot grow in the knowledge of Christ, for they do not know Christ as Savior. Churches today are filled with spiritual corpses. Church members who are void of spiritual life do not grow, for the simple reason that dead people do not grow! Only the living grows!

We call a person who does not grow a dwarf. We call a person whose mind does not develop an idiot. God has no dwarfs or idiots in His family. Number-crazed churches may have such people in their membership, but they are not members of God’s family. The religious world may be content with minimum Christians, but God is not. While I live I grow, and while I grow I know that I live!

THE GROWTH OF THE SOUL

The born-again believer has two natures. He still has the fleshly nature

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Growth Presupposes

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with which he was born. It is called in the Bible **“the old man”** (Rom. 6:6; Eph. 4:22) and **“the natural man”** (I Cor. 2:14). The old Adamic nature is at enmity with God (Rom. 8:7-8), and it contains no good thing: **“For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing”** (Rom. 7:18). Only God knows the depth of its depravity (Prov. 28:26; Jer. 17:9-10). This fleshly nature cannot be changed (Jer. 13:23; John 6:63; Rom. 8:7). God has pronounced a sentence of death upon it (Gen. 3:19; 6:13; I Cor. 15:22). Its only hope is in the change at the rapture (Phil. 3:20-21; I John 3:1-3).

When a person is born of the Spirit (John 3:3,5) he receives a new spiritual nature. It is called **“the new man”** (Eph. 4:24) and **“a new creature”** (II Cor. 5:17). It is called merely **“life”** (I John 5:11-12), for the new nature possesses eternal life (John 3:16,36; 6:39-40, 47). It is created **“in righteousness and true holiness”** (Eph. 4:24), and it is like the divine nature of God (II Pet. 1:4). This new nature is not capable of sinning: **“Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God”** (I John 3:9). This new nature is perfect, and it cannot experience spiritual growth.

Then we must ask the question: What is it in the born-again man which grows? Those who believe that man is a twofold being have no answer. Those who believe that man is a threefold being would answer that it is the soul. At the regeneration of the spirit man's soul is saved from death (Jas. 5:20; I Pet. 1:9), converted (Ps. 19:7) and renewed (Rom. 12:2; II Tim. 1:7). The old nature and the new natures have a battle (Gal. 5:17). This battle is waged in the soul of man. Peter tells us that **“fleshly lusts. . . war against the soul”** (I Pet. 2:11). Peter also tells us that sin vexes a **“righteous soul”** (II Pet. 2:8), and that it can beguile **unstable souls”** (II Pet. 2:14).

The spiritual growth in the soul can be seen in Scriptures. In Psalm 138:3 it is written: **“In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul.”** In answering our prayers for help God gives us strength in our souls. John Calvin says the Hebrew means: “Thou hast multiplied, or increased, me with strength in my soul” (*Com.*, Vol. VI, p. 201). This means that the Spirit of God enables a man to do and suffer what God

would have him without fainting or backsliding. In Ephesians 3:16 Paul prayed that the member of the Ephesian church would **“be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man.”** If the soul can be enlarged and increased, it can grow spiritually.

In Luke 21:19 Christ said: **“In your patience possess ye your souls.”** This verse does not mean that by keeping one's soul in a patient state he can redeem it to God as some Arminians teach. The word **“possess”** (*ktelesthe*) means “to acquire” or “to win” (See *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, Vol. II, p. 259). Thus it means that in times of suffering we are to keep our soul in good health, even if we can't keep anything in this world. Don't let persecutions and reproaches disturb or distress your soul when the world would rob you of its peace and joy. We can keep our souls in good health by committing them to a faithful Creator (I Pet. 4:19).

The soul can be purified: **“Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently”** (I Pet. 1:22). Purification of the soul is a process that begins at conversion (Acts 15:9) and continues throughout our spiritual life on earth. By obedience to the truth of the Word of God, the soul can continue to be purified (Ps. 119:9,43; John 15:3; II Cor. 6:7). The truth purifies only when it is heard and obeyed through the Spirit. Those who are deprived of truth are deprived of the means of soul purification. If the soul can be purified, then it can experience spiritual growth.

The soul can be prosperous: **“Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth”** (III John 2). Soul health is more important than bodily health. The soul prospers when it makes advancements in faith, hope, and love. Hence the soul can grow or improve. If some did not prosper any more materially than their soul prospers, they would be in the poor house. If some did not prosper any more physically than they do spiritually, they would be in the hospital or the funeral home.

MANY CHURCH MEMBERS NEVER GROW

It is apparent to both saved and lost that many church members have no evidence of spiritual life. Many have churchianity, but not Christianity. They have religion without regeneration; they have head faith without heart faithfulness. They are more interested in this world than the world to come. They are more engrossed in worldly

affairs than in church affairs. If they were brought before a court and charged with being Christians, there would not be enough evidence to get a conviction. The plain truth is that many church members do not grow because they are spiritually dead, and dead things never grow. Unless the Spirit quickens such people they shall not escape the damnation of Hell.

Even among some of God's own elect there is too much spiritual deadness. It was to a New Testament church Paul said: **“Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light”** (Eph. 5:14). Too many fundamental churches have a dead orthodoxy. When a person is converted and presents himself for membership in our churches by baptism, we often tell him to sit down on the pew while the church votes on the matter. But in a spiritual sense, we often leave him sitting there on the pew. We give him little opportunity of service, and he experiences little spiritual growth. Baptism and church membership are only the beginning of the Christian life. When a person professes his faith in Jesus Christ and declares it by water baptism he must spend the rest of his life proving to all that he is a real Christian. This necessitates growth in grace and spiritual maturity.

Many churches have all the doctrines of the Bible in their proper place. But our conduct does not correspond to our creed. We seem to think if we have the doctrines, we have spiritual growth as well. But doctrines can be in the head without being in the heart.

If we are sons of God and members of His body, then our lives must show it. If there is no difference between us and the world, then our spiritual standing is the same as theirs.

We must not have profession without practice. We must not substitute logic for life, nor doctrine for spiritual growth. There is no substitute for real spiritual progress.

A FORM OF GODLINESS

There are in the religious world many who have only a form of godliness. Paul warned Timothy: **“Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away”** (II Tim. 3:5). A form is a shadow of something, a mere outward appearance and shape. Today thousands of Catholics, Protestants, and Baptists are nominal Christians. They make no spiritual progress, for the simple reason the dead do not grow.

The world suffers from many neat imitations of Christians. They appear righteous before men and talk like real believers, but they are void of spiritual life. They do not possess the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. A truly converted person has power to live a

godly life (Acts 1:8; II Pet. 1:3; Eph. 3:7,20).

The problem with modern-day Christianity is that it has no spiritual power. Some try to tell us that their salvation does not have enough power to cause them to confess Christ, or ask for baptism and a home in the church. Does your religion have enough power to bring you to church on Sunday morning, Sunday night, and Wednesday night? Does it have enough power to open your pocketbook and cause you to tithe your income to the church? Does it have enough power to cause you to witness to the unsaved? Does it control your tongue? Does it make you search the Scriptures daily? Does it cause you to cry day and night to God in prayer? Would it give you the strength to die for the Lord Jesus Christ, if the state called for your execution?

A form of godliness will not convert the unconverted, check the divorce rate, curb immorality, stop modernism, eradicate heresy, or terminate the rapid spread of evolution, communism, socialism, Mohammadism, or humanism. Are there any signs of spiritual life in your church? Can the life of Christ be seen in your church members? What does singing, praying, and preaching really accomplish in your church? Is serving God a burden or a blessing to you? Is your Christianity real or a sham? Do you have a form of godliness, or do you really have spiritual life? If you have only a form, you are under the curse of God: **“Cursed be he that doeth the work of the LORD deceitfully...”** (Jer. 48:10).

The substance is more important than the shadow, and the kernel than the shell. The Holy Spirit of God must give a person spiritual life. Man must have a new spiritual nature. He must have within him a **“new man”** (Eph. 4:24). This new man does not come from a development of the natural man. There must be a new creation (II Cor. 5:17), and this new man is different in character, temperament, and disposition from the old man.

A man is no more a Christian than he acts and lives like one. There is something wrong when practice contradicts profession (Matt. 15:7-8; 23:3). Does your religion exert any influence over your life? Does it impose any restraint on your passions and carnal desire? Do you have lip-confession and life-denial? A false profession is less than worthless. Make sure you have really passed from death unto life.

Unless you have had such a change in your life, you can have no Christian life or spiritual growth.

Womens Veils 2002

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

The West Milton Baptist Church, 1070 S. Miami St., West Milton, Ohio, and Pastor Mark S. Clark will have a Bible Conference June 27-29. On Friday at 1:30 p.m. the church will ordain Bro. Matt James. The church will provide coffee, juice, and donuts Friday and Saturday mornings at 8:00 a.m. Lunch and dinner will both be served on Friday, and lunch will be served at the conclusion of the services on Saturday. For more information please contact Pastor Clark at 937-698-6242, 937-698-0673, or cell phone 810-397-4155.

The New Testament Baptist Church in Pekin, Ind., and Pastor Wayne Adams has authorized a mission work in Boonville, Ind. (near Evansville). The address of the mission is 203 W. Main St., (right off the square). Services are conducted at 5:00 p.m. on Sundays. For more information contact Pastor Adams, 8365 Old Palmyra Rd., Pekin, IN 47166, or call (812) 967-4886, or email wadams@wcrtc.net.

The Faith Baptist Church, Lawtey, Fla., is in need of a pastor. Any interested elder should contact Bro. Rick Sullivan (904) 964-3331 or Bro. Wayne Massey (904) 782-3715.

The Quarterly Fellowship Meeting will be with the Philadelphia Baptist Church, Decatur, Ala., and Pastor Doyal Thomas June 29 at 10:00 a.m. Speakers are Elders Steve Martin, Todd Bryant, and Milburn Cockrell. Lunch will be served by the church. For more information contact Pastor Thomas at (256) 773-1474 or email pbc@tnweb.com.

The Friendly Baptist Church, Columbus, Miss., is in need of a pastor. Any interested elder may contact Bro. Paul Brown at peb@cableone.net.

Elder Robert Keller, former missionary to Germany, has accepted the call of the Solid Rock Baptist Church, Central City, Ky. The church is small and any wishing to help in home missions should send their offerings to Solid Rock Baptist Church, P. O. Box 67, Central City, KY 42330 with a note "For Bro. Keller."

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Methodist minister has become the first full-time chaplain for Planned Parenthood. Monica Corsaro, based in Washington State, is employed by Planned Parenthood, and her work is considered an extension ministry of the United Methodist Church. Planned Parenthood, the nation's largest abortion provider, reportedly hopes to recruit other pastors as part of its effort to show that not all religious groups oppose abortion.

Kristin Hansen of the Family Research Council said, "Here's a woman who's been terribly deceived and now she's being used by Planned Parenthood to spread the deception. It's an attempt to put a religious gloss over abortion and an

attempt to co-opt God to sell abortion."

LONDON, England (EP)—British legislator Lord Richard Scott announced that a new anti-racism law being considered by the European Union could, if enacted, ban religious texts including the Old Testament. According to a report by ANCNews.com, the new law is intended to outlaw "public incitement to violence or hatred for racist or xenophobic reasons and directing, supporting or participating in the activities of a racist or xenophobic group" through "public dissemination of racist material by any means, including the Internet." Material that might be included in such a ban included children's stories, religious material and any material deemed racist by authorities. This law would give the European Union the power to censor texts, said Scott, who is a member of the British Parliament. He also criticized the drafters of the measure, saying that the terms "racism" and "xenophobia" were not well defined.

WETZLAR, Germany (EP)—A recent survey conducted in Germany reports that every day over 100,000 guests in German hotels consult Bibles placed in their rooms by Gideons. This suggests that hotel Bibles are very effective ministry tools, said Friedhelm Loeber, executive director of the Gideon Association in Germany. Idea News Agency reports that 70 percent of all German hotels have Bibles in their rooms, and 23 percent of the guests at the hotels read the provided Bibles during their stay. Since 1899, the Gideons have distributed over one billion Bibles or portions of Scripture worldwide.

VENTURA, Calif. (EP)—Many non-profit organizations have reported that 2001 was an off-year for donations due to the downturn in the economy after the collapse of the technology sector and the Sept. 11 attack. However, the nationwide survey of people's donations in the prior year, conducted each January by the Barna Research Group, shows a different story. Although the nation's economy was not as strong as during the prior two years, there was no change in the proportion of adults who donated money in 2001 and 2000. The data, taken from *The State of the Church: 2002*, a new book by researcher George Barna, also shows that the average amount of giving by adults actually increased last year.

WASHINGTON, D. C. (EP)—Normally Barry Lynn is an advocate of free speech. The executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State has argued that the First Amendment to the U. S. Constitution offers broad protections for pornography. But Lynn is now being sued for trying to silence a small Phoenix-based apologetics ministry. Alpha and Omega Ministries

says Lynn is trying to stop them from distributing a videotape of his debate with the director of the ministry on the subject of homosexuality. Ministry leaders say Lynn agreed to production and distribution of the videotape, but changed his mind. "The irony here is palpable," said attorney Benjamin Bull of the Alliance Defense Fund, which is representing the ministry. "Lynn has argued that even child pornography is protected by the First Amendment. But now he wants to censor a videotape in which he discusses the question of homosexuality and Christianity. Does this strike anyone else as a little unusual?" Bull suggested that the ministry may not even need Lynn's permission, since he is a public figure and the debate was a newsworthy event.

CLEVELAND, Ohio (EP)—Schoolchildren in Ohio may soon be permitted to begin their classroom day with silent prayer. State lawmakers approved a bill April 23 that would allow school districts to set aside a moment of silence for "prayer, reflection or meditation." Gov. Bob Taft is expected to sign the bill, which is a compromise version of an earlier bill that made the moment of silence mandatory. State Rep. Rex Damschroder, sponsor of the bill, said, "We wanted to give students the opportunity to pray, and we have. It's silence. Very clearly, they can spend that time praying, thinking or thinking about their girlfriend." The U. S. Supreme Court outlawed organized school prayer in the 1960s, but last year refused to hear a challenge to a "moment of silence" law from Virginia.

RALEIGH, N.C. (EP)—A former Southern Baptist church in North Carolina recently named a lesbian as co-pastor. Nancy Petty, 38, a self-described lesbian, was voted co-pastor of Pullen Memorial Baptist Church in Raleigh on April 21, according to the *Raleigh News and Observer*. The church was expelled from the Southern Baptist Convention in 1992 after it agreed to hold a homosexual union ceremony. Petty has been minister of Christian education at the church since 1992. She is a graduate of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., where, according to the *News and Observer*, she "had her first relationship with a woman." The paper reported that the idea of naming Petty co-pastor was initiated by the church's senior pastor, Jack McKinney. Petty and her lesbian partner reportedly have two daughters. The 118-year-old church, located in downtown Raleigh near North Carolina State University, has 850 members.

WASHINGTON, D. C. (EP)—National studies who that for the first time in three decades, the numbers of babies being

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born in America is greater than the number of deaths. An increase in births among women in their 30s was a major factor in the three-year increase in births overall. Anne Scheidler of the Pro-Life Action League notes that many American women are viewing motherhood as an important aspect of their lives, and are not just focusing on careers and independence. Government studies also note a decline in births by teenage girls. Bill Albert of the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy says that teens are heeding the message that it is okay for them to delay sexual relationships.

AMBON, Indonesia (EP)—At least 12 Christians were murdered and another six were injured during a deadly attack on the village of Soya in the early morning of April 28.

According to one witness, black-clad Muslims “went from house to house” in the village occupied by Protestant Christians “murdering anybody they could lay hands on. . .not sparing women and children, including a nine-month-old baby.” The attackers used guns, knives and explosives during their rampage. Six of the victims were stabbed or shot, while another six were burned to death. The unidentified attackers, allegedly members of the radical Laskar Jihad Islamic group, also burned down a Protestant church and at least 30 homes before fleeing the scene.

BOSTON, Mass. (EP)—Materials from NAMBLA, a homosexual group that advocates sex between men and boys, played a role in the growing clergy sex abuse scandal in Boston, according to an alleged victim. A priest accused of raping an altar boy and an unknown number of other youths over a period of three decades reportedly used materials from NAMBLA to entice teens into sex. The accused, a homosexual man in his 40s, said he was introduced to Paul R. Shanley in 1974, at age 16, by the cofounder of the North American Man-Boy Love Association (NAMBLA). “Father Shanley routinely exploited children like me for sex,” the alleged victim told the *Boston Herald*. “It wasn’t even a secret—he would brag about it—and yet the church did nothing about it.”

BEIJING, China (EP)—Members of China Gospel Fellowship (CGF) are asking for help from China’s communist government in their search for church leaders who were kidnapped April 19. Members of CGF suspect that a cult known as Eastern Lightning has taken over 30 of the church’s senior leaders hostage. In desperation, the CGF has requested that the government help them locate the abducted members, despite the

fact that some of these leaders are themselves wanted by China’s Public Security Bureau. “If they arrest us and we are sent to prison, there we will still preach,” a member of CGF pastor told Christian Aid. “This cult needs to be destroyed regardless of the risk of more government oppression on Christians.”

PHOENIX, Ariz. (EP)—For the second time in three months the accounting firm Arthur Andersen agreed to pay a \$217 million settlement to the Baptist Foundation of Arizona (BFA) in connection with the religious non-profit organization’s collapse in November 1999. Three BFA officers, including its former treasurer, have pleaded guilty to criminal fraud charges in the case, and several others, including the charity’s top two officers, have been indicted. Andersen had agreed to settle for the same amount in March, but later backed out on the deal, claiming that its wholly owned insurance carrier refused to pay the claim. In the latest deal, announced May 6, the accounting firm made an initial \$11.3 million down payment, agreeing to follow up with \$10 million a month through October, when it will pay the balance in full. The settlement came a week into the trial of the civil suit in state court in Phoenix, and the same day as jury selection was beginning in Houston for a criminal trial in which Andersen faces an obstruction of justice charge related to the collapse of energy giant Enron Corporation. Jurors in the trial said they believed BFA’s board and officers were primarily to blame for the collapse, but that the accounting firm had a minimal responsibility. Andersen had certified the BFA’s financial statements even after former employees of the charity said a fraud was involved.

LOS ANGELES, Calif. (EP)—Appearing April 29 in an inner-city Los Angeles neighborhood to promote his faith-based initiative, President Bush used his own past as an illustration of how faith in God can turn a life around. “Faith is a powerful motivator,” said Bush. “I know first-hand what faith can mean in somebody’s life, so I remind people I am just a humble sinner who saw redemption.” Bush has been vocal about how faith in Christ helped him to give up alcohol and move his life in a positive direction. Speaking at a church-sponsored redevelopment program in Los Angeles, Bush said, “When we fund programs, we ought not to discriminate against faith-based programs or cause the faith-based program to have to change its mission in order to receive any money.”

MOSCOW, Russia (EP)—The Oxford-based Keston Institute research center announced May 3 that it is concerned about new threats to religious freedoms in Russia. Keston, which monitors

violations of religious freedom, reported it had evidence of “an organized campaign” against Catholics and other Christians, reported Stefan J. Bos of ASSIST News Service.

The apparent persecution, which Keston described as the “fiercest anti-Catholic crackdown since the collapse of the Soviet

Union,” comes amid concern about new legislation throughout the region, reported Bos. Church observers say that former Soviet republics increasingly approve legislative measures to support state-approved religious administrations and outlaw any perceived religious competitors.

The Fear of God

Part 2

By Milburn Cockrell

Mantachie, Mississippi

THE PROPERTIES OF THIS FEAR

There is in the Bible a slavish fear, or what the Bible calls a “**spirit of bondage**” to fear (Rom. 8:15; Heb. 2:15). This fear arises from the guilt of sin in the conscience without any hope of pardoning mercy. Adam experienced this fear: “**And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid. . .**” (Gen. 3:10). Slavish fear comes from a terror of having broken the law which demands punishment (Deut. 29:20; II Cor. 3:6). Such a man has “**a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries**” (Heb. 10:27). This fear grows out of a dread of Hell-fire and everlasting punishment. Day and night this fear wraps the soul in its chilling and visionless embraces. Such vicious and chronic fear leads to despair and depression. This is not the fear which comes from the Holy Spirit.

The fear of God so often mentioned in the Bible is called “**godly fear**” in Hebrews 12:28. It is the sort of fear Christ had of the Father which prompted His obedience and submission: “**Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared**” (Heb. 5:7). This filial fear issues from the Spirit of adoption (Rom. 8:17), and it is a child-like respect for God which makes us “**obedient children**” (I Pet. 1:14) and “**followers of God, as dear children**” (Eph. 5:1).

This godly fear is not incompatible with holy joy: “**Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling**” (Ps. 2:11). You will note here that fear and holy joy are mixed together. This fear is opposed to all pride and self-confidence. The man who fears God has no need to fear man, beast, or demon. “**The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? . . . Though an host should encamp against me, my**

heart shall not fear. . .” (Ps. 27:1, 3).

The man who fears God has nothing to fear but fear itself. Hebrews 11:7 declares: “**By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.**” Many laughed at Noah for building such a large ship on dry land. No matter how loud the jesting and bitter the scoffing, Noah went about his work as God commanded him. True fear of God takes a man through tongue lashing and the opposition of Satan.

THE EVIDENCES OF GODLY FEAR

First, one proof of filial fear is a hatred for sin: “**The fear of the LORD is to hate evil. . .**” (Prov. 8:13). Nothing is more abhorrent to God than evil (Rom. 12:9). It is the very nature of holy fear to hate all forms of evil. The psalmist feared God and said: “**I hate every false way**” (Ps. 119:113, 128). The fear of God is a girdle to the soul, a bridle to intemperance, a restraint to passions, and antidote to sinful habits. Psalm 97:10 says: “**Ye that love the LORD, hate evil.**”

Second, godly fear can be discovered by a departure from evil: is: “**fear the LORD, and depart from evil**” (Prov. 3:7). “**A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil**” (Prov. 14:16). “. . . **by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil**” (Prov. 16:6). It was said of Job that he “**feared God, and eschewed evil**” (Job 1:1). The fear of God is a sentinel to the soul, which repels temptation and subdues corruptions. Nehemiah refused to tax the people to death “**because of the fear of God**” (Neh. 5:15). He had an awe of God’s majesty and a dread of His judgment. Third, it may be seen by the blessings it brings to the soul: “**The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death**” (Prov. 14:27). Like the springs of Canaan (Deut. 8:7; Josh. 15:19), it is full of temporal and spiritual life. It is

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The Fear of God

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a fountain **“springing up into everlasting life”** (John 4:14). The fear of the Lord imparts every blessing which renders life happy. **“The fear of the LORD tendeth to life: and he that hath it shall abide satisfied; he shall not be visited with evil”** (Prov. 19:23).

Fourth, the dread of the Lord is manifest in a humble disposition: **“Be not highminded, but fear”** (Rom. 11:20). The man who respects the majesty of God is never too confident of his own strength and standing. He is little in his own eyes. He is never possessed by a spirit of boasting (Ps. 51:1-4; Lam. 3:28-29). He is at all times conscious of his dependence on God for all things.

Fifth, holy fear results in Christian fellowship: **“Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name”** (Mal. 3:16). Those who have this grace often meditate on God and speak of Him to others. They join in public worship of the God they all fear and serve. They seek to keep in company with one another in public and private.

Sixth, the fear of God is divulged by Divine blessings upon the churches: **“Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied”** (Acts 9:31). Nothing edifies the church any more than a reverence for God’s cause and will. If you want your church to grow, then make sure each member has a regard for God reigning over their life.

Seventh, it is noticeable in singleness of heart: **“Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh: not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God”** (Col. 3:22). We are to obey God for His sake alone, no matter if it pleases men or not. We are to do all things to the glory of God (I Cor. 10:31; III John 5). This is in sincerity, and such sincerity is opposed to all forms of hypocrisy (Matt. 6:22; I Chron. 29:17).

Eighth, godly fear is revealed by charity to the saints in need: **“Now Obadiah feared the LORD greatly: For it was so, when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the LORD, that Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in**

a cave, and fed them with bread and water” (I Kings 18:3-4). When the Lord’s people are in imminent danger the fear of God in a good man will cause him to show needy saints mercy.

Ninth, if the fear of God is in a man’s heart, he will pray without ceasing: **“There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway”** (Acts 10:1-2). The fear of God moved Jesus Christ to prayer (Heb. 5:7). He who never prays has no fear of God. A prayerless man fears not God, and he is like a brute beast.

Tenth, it is apparent from a willingness to give God your best. The Lord told Abraham when he was ready to offer Isaac: **“Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me”** (Gen. 22:12). At God’s command Abraham was ready to offer Isaac as a burnt-offering. Here we learn that acme of true fear of God consists in complete subjection to His sovereign will without any reservation. When Abraham was willing to give God his best, it was then that Abraham began to receive God’s best.

Eleventh, it can be ascertained from a delight in communion with the Lord: **“Praise ye the LORD, Blessed is the man that feareth the LORD, that delighteth greatly in his commandments”** (Ps. 112:1). The fear of God takes man’s heart and affections away from sin and causes him to greatly delight in keeping his commandments. **“For I delight in the law of God after the inward man”** (Rom. 7:22). A heart filled with respect for the greatness of God finds

“his commandments are not grievous” (I John 5:3).

Twelfth, it is disclosed from an enlarged heart: **“Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee”** (Isa. 60:5). While the primary meaning is God’s blessings on regenerated Israel, the verse also shows when revival is present God’s people have their heart enlarged Godward as they witness the salvation of others. They sense the divine favor and presence which produces awe and reverence in them. They realize that God is near and at work.

MATERIAL BLESSINGS

First, those who fear God shall not want any good thing: **“O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him. The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing”** (Ps. 34:9-10). The Lord may not grant our every wish, but He will supply our necessities (Ps. 37:25; Isa. 33:16; 41:17-18; 43:19-20).

Second, godly fear makes us content with a little portion of this world: **“Better is a little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble therewith”** (Prov. 15:16). If a Christian has little of this world, it is not because of a lack of God’s love and care, but because God knows more would be a temptation and a snare to our soul (Luke 12:15). **“Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues without right”** (Prov. 16:8; cf. Ps. 37:16).

Third, wealth and riches are promised to them who fear God: **“By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches and honour, and life”** (Prov. 22:4). Uprightness is often the road to success. A man who fears God

will not be drawn aside by the deceitfulness of riches. **“Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways. For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table. Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the LORD”** (Ps. 128:1-4).

Fourth, the God-fearer enjoys angelic protection: **“The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them”** (Ps. 34:7). The angels of Heaven encompass a saint as with army tents and many soldiers (Gen. 32:1-2; Luke 2:13). Oh, to have the armies of Heaven at our disposal. We owe many deliverances to these unseen friends (Heb. 1:14). Twelve legions of angels are ready to come to our aid.

Fifth, godly fear extends the length of a man’s days on earth: **“The fear of the LORD prolongeth days. . .”** (Prov. 10:27). Some people would give all the money in their hands to a doctor who could write a prescription to lengthen their days when at the gates of death. But here is a proven prescription from the great Physician without money for long life. An excess of sin shortens a man’s days. **“. . . bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days; but I will trust in thee”** (Ps. 55:23).

Sixth, the Bible tells us it shall be well with them that fear God: **“. . . surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him”** (Eccl. 8:12). Those who reverence God and respect His authority are under the conduct of Divine Providence. This is true even in adversity (Isa. 43:2; Rom. 8:28). The son of the Shunamite woman was at the gate of death. When asked by the Prophet Elisha about her husband and son she replied: **“It is well”** (II Kings 4:26). The God-fearer can say of Jesus Christ: **“He hath done all things well”** (Mark 7:37).

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