

The Berea Baptist Banner

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

The Eternal Sonship of Jesus Christ

By Milburn R. Cockrell
(1941 – 2002)



Expositors differ as to what is meant by Divine Wisdom in Proverbs 8:22-31. Some understand Wisdom in these verses to refer to a Divine attribute represented as the companion of the Eternal. To them Solomon designed only the praise of Wisdom as an attribute of God by which He made the world and governs it. The great things said in these verses about Wisdom are intended to recommend to men the study of Wisdom. I, for one, am unable to agree with this interpretation.

In my humble opinion I believe Wisdom personifies the Second Person in the Godhead in whom is hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col. 2:3). Wisdom is an intelligent and Divine person in this passage, for it has personal properties and actions. I believe that Proverbs 8:22-31 is the most profound description of the glories of the pre-incarnate Christ found in all the Bible. So stupendous is the

beauty of the Person of Christ in these inspired words that human language becomes a poor vehicle for the expression of these wondrous truths. Let us take off our shoes as we examine these verses because we stand upon holy ground.

VERSE 22

"The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old."

Here we are privileged to see the unnoted and measureless duration when **"the high and lofty One"** inhabited eternity (Isa. 57:15). In this un-beginning beginning the Father and the Son were co-existent. The Son had a personal existence distinct from God, but unseparable from Him and associated with Him. The Father possessed His Son in eternity past. The **"possessor of heaven and earth"** (Gen. 14:19, 22) possessed His Son before ever

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What the Bible Says about Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage

By Nathaniel Hille
of Plant City, Florida



"The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one

flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.

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The Golden Age

By Arthur W. Pink (1886 - 1952)
& Luther C. Peak (1908 - 2004)

(Continued from last issue)

PREMILLENNIAL TRUTH IN ITS PRACTICAL APPLICATION

In the preceding pages, we have set forth from the Scriptures, the glorious truth of the Golden Age, This is indeed the hope of mankind, although there be few who have entered into it. The great mass of mankind has never entered into fellowship with the Creator by faith. All men are not the children of God. God

is the Creator of all men, He is the Father only of those that believe. **"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith"** (Gal. 6:10).

It is a current and popular doctrine that God is the Father of all men, and that all men, regardless of race, color or creed are spiritual brothers. This doctrine is of the enemy. It is Satan's propaganda to prepare the way for the coming World

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

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

The Golden Age

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Church, which will become the bride of Antichrist. It violates both the letter and the spirit of the Word of God, from Genesis to Revelation.

From old, even from the beginning, only those souls who entered into fellowship with God by faith in the promised Messiah have been His children. Abel, Enoch, and others before the flood. Noah and his sons at the time of the deluge. Shem and his descendants following the flood. Then the patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The children of Jacob (spiritual Israel); Moses and the people of Israel, and that spiritual remnant through the centuries. **"For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but in Isaac (Christ - Messianic faith) shall thy seed be called"** (Rom. 9:6-7).

Read the 11th chapter of Hebrews and follow the "faith line" from righteous Abel into the New Testament period and the Apostolic Age, and it is seen at once, that only those who walk the highway of faith are the children of God. **"Therefore, we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men (if they will believe) especially of those that believe"** (I Tim. 4:10). Speaking to the religionists Nicodemus, Jesus said, **"Ye must be born again."** See John 3. This alone would enable him to enter into the household of faith. Speaking to the unbelieving Pharisees, Jesus said: **"Ye are of your father the devil"** (John 8:44).

Thus while we move forward toward the Golden Age, the mass of mankind sees nothing

but chaos, destruction, atomic wars ahead. Of course, we have a few optimists scattered about, who like the ostrich, hide their heads in the sands and refuse to see anything to be alarmed about, but realists know better. Outside of a Divine, Supernatural intervention in the affairs of this world, civilization is doomed and the planet itself may become uninhabited and uninhabitable.

What of the Faith of Those who Are the Children of God?

Alas, we would that we could answer that every one of God's children had his heart firmly fixed upon the coming Golden Age, as the Spirit would have it. Among God's people, Satan has done his work also. He has attacked the truth of our Lord's return, in every conceivable way. He has misrepresented it. He has built fanatical doctrines upon it and about it. He has abused those who preach it and teach it among the people.

Broadly speaking, among God's people there are three groups today with respect to the Second Coming of Christ and the Golden Age. These are (1) the Postmillennial, (2) the Premillennial, and (3) the Amillennial.

The Amillennial (non-millennial) view is a denial that the Scriptures teach any Millennium at all. The reader, after the preceding chapters, is well qualified to judge as to the baseless claims of those who maintain this view. It is to be classed, along with the denials of modernists who reject the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, the Atonement of Christ and the Resurrection, for it actually amounts to infidelity, although claiming to be Christian. This leaves only two views: the Premillennial and the

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Postmillennial, which we shall now compare.

Premillennialism and

Postmillennialism Contrasted

These two views of the Second Coming of Christ are poles apart, and in order to thoroughly understand the issues involved, we must clearly define each of them.

Postmillennialism teaches that the world is getting better and better, morally, materially, and spiritually in every phase of its development. Postmillennialists believe that Christianity will prevail, in this age, in overcoming and conquering the world, before Christ comes back again, hence the term, "postmillennial" which means after the millennium, Christ will come. Postmillennialists believe that the Gospel will permeate the world in this age, until we have a converted world, and that this converted state will continue for a thousand years, before Christ comes back again.

Postmillennialists believe that in addition to preaching the Gospel, it is our business to clean up the world, making it a better place in which to live. Thus they are working through pacifist organizations to eliminate war. They hope by medical science and hospitalization to eliminate disease. They hope to banish ignorance and illiteracy by education. Thus they couple up with the Gospel all social and governmental projects for the social and economic welfare of social and so-called "social gospel" is the result.

Premillennialism on the other hand, is just what its name implies. Premillennialists believe that the world is under the curse

of God. We believe that this world will continue to get worse and worse, until at last, this age is concluded in dreadful sin and apostasy. We believe that terrible wars will sweep across the world until it is wrecked and ruined. We believe that as the age draws to a close, earthquakes, famines, sea disasters and plagues that defy description will mark its ends.

Premillennialists believe that the only hope is the "blessed hope" (Titus 2:13) of our Lord's return. We believe that the only business of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, is not to regulate politics, abolish war, educate the world, clean up and reform society, but to preach the gospel of God's redeeming grace to lost sinners, to win souls, to baptize them and to indoctrinate them in the Word of God. Premillennialists believe that it is the business of the Christian to be ready to meet Jesus when He comes.

There has been much said in the last several years about postmillennial and premillennial truth contrasted. This is an absurdity. You cannot contrast postmillennial ERROR with premillennial TRUTH.

Premillennial truth emphasizes Bible teaching; postmillennial error emphasizes education.

Premillennial truth emphasizes regeneration, cleaning up the individual; postmillennial error emphasizes reformation, cleaning up society.

Premillennial truth emphasizes divine leadership; postmillennial error emphasizes human leadership.

Premillennial truth emphasizes the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, the coming King.

Postmillennial error emphasizes "bringing in the kingdom."

Premillennial truth emphasizes the freedom of the local

church; postmillennial error emphasizes denominationalism.

Premillennial truth puts the emphasis on the independence of the local church; postmillennial error emphasizes headquarters' control of the local church.

Premillennial truth puts the emphasis on a Holy Spirit led ministry; postmillennial error puts the emphasis on a machine controlled ministry.

Premillennial truth puts the emphasis on sending out evangelistic missionaries; postmillennial error emphasizes sending out enlisted men, to go out and get everybody to sign a pledge and get the money.

Premillennial truth emphasizes spiritual motivation; postmillennial error emphasizes a worldly program.

Premillennial truth emphasizes uplifting the sinner; postmillennial error puts the emphasis on law.

Premillennial truth puts the emphasis on witnessing unto Christ; (rightly dividing the Word of Truth) postmillennial error emphasizes systematizing theology.

Premillennial truth puts the emphasis on building Bible Institutes to train preachers and missionaries in rightly dividing the Word of Truth and in winning souls; postmillennial error puts the emphasis on building theological seminaries, to train a ministry to put on, support and maintain a denominational program.

Premillennial truth puts the emphasis on crowning Christ King; postmillennial error puts the emphasis on crowning human leadership.

Premillennial truth has produced the fundamentalists of today; postmillennial error has produced the modernists.

The premillennial program is

destined to a glorious success; all postmillennial programs are destined to complete and utter failure.

Premillennial Truth as Revealed in the Bible

Fundamentalists believe the Bible. To them, the Bible is the only final authority on all matters of faith and practice. Therefore, when it comes to a discussion of the Second Coming of Christ, as on all other doctrinal discussions, the all important question is, "What does the Bible say?" if the Bible teaches that the world is going to get better and ultimately reach a converted state, before Christ comes, then let us believe and preach that; but if, on the other hand, the Bible teaches that Jesus may come at any moment, that we are to witness to every soul upon the earth in our generation of the power of Christ to save, then let us be through with man made plans, programs, drives, institutions, etc., and be up and about our Master's business.

W. E. Blackstone of immortal and blessed memory has pointedly summarized the teaching of the Word of God on this very important and timely subject. We are quoting all Scripture references in order that all who so desire may go to the Word of God themselves and settle, to their own satisfaction, the question as to what the Bible teaches about the Second Coming of Christ.

1. He shall come Himself. I Thess. 4:16.

2. He shall shout. I Thess. 4:16

3. The dead will hear His voice. John 5:28.

4. Believers will be caught up to meet Him in the air. I Thess. 4:17.

5. He will receive them unto Himself. John 14:3.

6. He will minister unto His watching servants. Luke 12:37.

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7. He will come to earth again. Acts 1:11.

8. He will come to the same Mount Olivet from which He ascended. Zech. 14:4.

9. He will come in flaming fire. II Thess. 1:8.

10. He will come in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. Matt 24:30; I Peter 1:7; 4:13.

11. He will come and stand upon the earth. Job 19:25.

12. His church, the saints, will come with Him. I Thess. 3:13; Jude 14.

13. Every eye shall see Him. Rev. 1:7.

14. He shall destroy the Antichrist. II Thess. 2:8.

15. He shall then sit in His throne. Matt. 25:31; Rev. 5:13.

16. All nations will be gathered before Him and He shall judge them. Matt. 25:32.

17. He shall occupy the throne of David. Luke 1:32; Isa. 9:6,7

18. He shall have a kingdom. Daniel 7:13,14.

19. It will be upon the earth. Jer. 23:5,6.

20. He shall rule over it with His saints. Dan. 7:18-22; Rev. 5:10.

21. All kings and nations shall serve Him. Psalms. 72:11; 49:6,7; Rev. 15:4.

22. The kingdoms of this world shall become His kingdom. Zech. 9:10; Rev. 11:15.

23. The people shall be gathered to Him. Gen. 49:10.

24. Every knee shall bow before Him. Isa. 45:23.

25. They shall come and worship the King. Zech. 14:16; Psalms. 86:9.

26. He shall build up Zion. Psalms. 102:16.

27. His throne shall be in Jerusalem. Jer. 3:17; Isa. 33:20,21.

28. The Apostles shall sit upon

twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Matt. 19:28; Luke 22:28-30.

29. He shall rule all nations. Psalms. 2:8,9; Rev. 2:27.

30. He shall rule with judgment and justice. Isa. 9:7.

31. The Temple in Jerusalem will be rebuilt Ezek. 40-48.

32. The glory of the Lord shall be revealed. Isa. 40:5.

33. The wilderness shall be a fruitful field. Isa. 32:15.

34. The desert will blossom as a rose. Isa. 35:1,2.

35. His rest will be glorious. Isa. 11:10.

Here is a very simple outline of the teaching of the Word of God on the Second Coming of Christ which Fundamentalists believe, exactly as revealed in the Bible.

Postmillennialism,

A Modern Religious Fad

Premillennialism,

An Age Old Truth

Postmillennialism is comparatively of modern origin and is rightly classified as modernism, for indeed, it is a system, which if followed out to its logical conclusion, leads to the fullest endorsement of modernism in its rankest form. It was brought forward by Daniel Whitby about two hundred years ago in order to give the Roman Catholic church a doctrinal basis for its church-kingdom theory. The similarity between postmillennialism and evolution is quickly noted. Indeed, they are inseparably connected in that they both agree that the world is progressing steadily forward. It is also a matter of note that modern evolutionists are without exception postmillennialists, while you never find a premillennialist who is an evolutionist.

Some postmillennialists with an air of intellectual superiority convey the idea, to all who listen to

them, that premillennialists are to be classified with the great group of religious cultists and faddists of our day, such as Russelites, Seventh Day Adventists, etc. They exhibit amazing and colossal ignorance, to be men of education, to say the least. Not only does the Bible, as has been shown, clearly and unequivocally teach the personal, imminent and premillennial return of Jesus Christ to this world, but great and good men, in every age since the days of the apostles have so understood and taught.

The Church Fathers Were
Premillennialists

Polycarp who was a convert of the Apostle John, was born 69 A.D. He was burned at the stake in 167 A.D. after a most tremendous and blessed ministry and when he was urged to renounce his Christian faith by his persecutors he replied, "Four score and six years have I served Christ and He never did me any harm; how then can I blaspheme my King and Saviour? If we obey Christ and please Him in this present age, we shall receive the age to come. He will raise us up from the dead and we shall live and reign with Him. The saints shall judge the world."

Justin Martyr was born in 89 A.D. and converted in 132 A.D. He was put to death for his testimony in 163 A.D. but before he died in triumphant faith, he wrote, "I, and whatsoever Christians are orthodox in all things, do know that there will be a resurrection of the flesh and a thousand years in the city of Jerusalem, built, adorned and enlarged according to the prophets."

Clement was put to death in 100 A.D. He was a man of great influence, a devout Christian, a scholar who carefully spent most of his life in research, investigation and study. About 116 A.D. he

wrote "A Narrative of the Sayings of Our Lord." In this book, he says, "If I met with any that had been conversant with the elders, from him I diligently inquired what were the sayings of the elders - The elders who had seen St. John, the disciple of our Lord, taught concerning these things, (the thousand years), and said "The days come when the vine shall bring forth abundantly - and all the fruits - and all the animals shall become peaceful and harmonious, one to the other, being perfectly obedient to man. But these are credible only to those who have faith.' Then Judas, the betrayer, not believing and asking how much fertility should be brought about, our Lord said, "They shall see who comes to these times." On another occasion, Papias said, There will be a millennium after the resurrection from the dead, when the personal reign of Christ shall be established on the earth."

Irenaeus wrote about 178 A.D. He heard Polycarp preach many, many times and it will be remembered that Polycarp was a disciple of the Apostle John, who leaned upon the very breast of the Lord Jesus, Himself. Irenaeus says: "But when this Antichrist shall have devastated all things in the world, he will reign three years and six months and sit in the temple at Jerusalem, and then shall the Lord come from heaven in clouds, in the glory of the Father, sending this man and those that follow him into the Lake of Fire, but bringing for the righteous the times of the Kingdom, that is, the rest, the hallowed seventh day and restoring to Abraham the promised inheritance in which Kingdom the Lord declared that 'many shall come from the east and the west and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and

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The Noted Pastor



By Todd
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of
Northport,
Alabama



Are You Just A Church Consumer?

I hope you are sitting down. This might sting a little bit. Church is not about you. It is about Jesus. **“Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen”** (Eph. 3:21).

Whether we want to admit it or not, the American Dream has made its way into western churches. The American Dream has been defined as, “the ideal that every US citizen should have an equal opportunity to achieve success and prosperity through hard work, determination, and initiative.” As far as politics go, this is reasonable—and even preferable. However, near 250 years of such freedom and opportunity has brought similar ideas into churches and into the pews. Today, church has become a whole lot more about “What is in it for me?” and a whole lot less about “How can I serve?”

It is difficult to have many conversations today that do not turn into complaints about someone or something. Whether it is the high-paid boss or the minimum wage drive-thru employee, somebody is constantly doing me wrong. When there are family squabbles, it is them—because it certainly is not me.

When my kid is sitting on the bench in little league, he should be playing pitcher. When he strikes out, it is the umpire. When my kid did not make marching band, the band instructor just does not know talent. When my kid gets a D on his report card, the teacher does not know what she is doing. On and on and on and on—this is the society we live in.

All of this makes it difficult to grasp the Scriptural view of what it means to be a church member. I have entertained a number of questions over the years relative to what our church has to offer. The same set of questions normally rises to the top—all of which sounds like the search for a doctor or a manicurist or a clothing store. The number one question by a long shot is, “What do you have for my children?” Now, my response is generally that our church has a solid Sunday School setup for youth. In the youngest class, they are taught the basics of the Bible. When they graduate from that class, they move up to another class that teaches them the Bible with a little more meat on the bones. Oddly enough, that is not an adequate answer most of the time. With a puzzled look, the question that normally follows that answer is, “Well...that is OK I guess...but what else do you have?” It is at this point that I know things are not going to end well.

It is not always about children though; adults suffer with this as well. Churches are always trying to satisfy various cliques through separate services that are modeled the way the individual wants it. Some want suits and dresses... some want khakis and capris... some want 150 year old hymns (you know, the old ones)...some want contemporary hymns... some want the preacher in a coat

and tie...some what the preacher in a Hawaiian shirt and flip-flops. It is constant. Everybody is trying to reach some niche. We will do it one way at 8:30 and another way at 10:00. And all the while, such methods are trying to reach those who do not want to provide anything. Is it any wonder that we are just a society of Christian consumers?

“What is in it for me?” has made it into the minds of western believers. We want the equivalent of a drive-thru Christianity. We want to cruise in at 11:01, sit down during the first song, hear a motivational sermon that does not really challenge us and certainly does not unfold a Biblical text, sneak out before noon and make the restaurant before the lines get too long. That is what Christianity looks like in America. It is just an event—it is what we do on Sunday. It is like going to the grocery store—except we are more interested in our grocery list than we are our Bible. We are merely a society of Christian consumers.

Let me be clear, this consumerist approach to church is not the New Testament pattern of Christianity. As I said, church is not about you, it is about the Lord. And, if God has graciously saved your soul, He did not do so in order that you are served in church. He placed you in a church in order for you to serve Him—and so that you can serve your fellow church members.

Paul told the church at Ephesus that God **“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect**

man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love” (Eph. 4:11-16). God did not put church leadership in place to do the work of ministry for you—no, God put them in place so that you could learn how to do ministry yourself—every day and everywhere. According to this passage, the goals of such a church ministry are unity, knowledge, maturity, consistency, truthful, loving, equipped, working and growth. Such ideals are simply foreign to the common approach to church in America in 2018.

And look, you are not merely part of your church on Sunday. You are still very much a part on Tuesday or Thursday or Saturday. You are to be working at all times—for the glory of God, for the benefit of the church and for the benefit of those around you. You were not saved to be a Christian consumer—no...a thousand times no. You were graciously saved by God to provide a service—to Him and to those around you. Now, when you are gathered with the assembly, you are to serve in the church. You were gifted specifically for your place (I Corinthians 12). When you are not present, your gift is

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lacking. And when you approach church with little more than a consumerist attitude (i.e. "What is in it for me?"), you are failing at God's calling in your life. You are missing out on being a good church member.

Take a good look at your approach to your church. Are you constantly complaining about things not done your way? Are you constantly gossiping about how things could be done better? Are you consistently dissatisfied with the leadership and their goals for the church? If this sounds like you, you are probably approaching church as little more than a consumer. It is unlikely you are approaching each service in prayer that you will be able to be a blessing to those around you. It is quite improbable that you are looking for opportunities to serve and it is more likely that you want to be served. If this is you, rest assured your attitude is common in our society. However, it is in conflict with the consistent, clear message of the Bible.

Now, I am not speaking about opposing unbiblical things—that is another discussion for another time. Do not let such a thought enter your mind. We must stand for truth and there comes a time that we must part ways over truth. But that is not the subject of this article.

Take a moment and be honest with yourself. Do you approach church as a servant of God and your fellow man—specifically, your fellow church members? With great clarity, Paul told the church at Philippi, **"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not**

every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Phil. 2:3-4). Is this you? Are you more concerned about how you can help others or about what others can do for you? If you are like many today, you may be little more than a consumer in the church and a whole lot less of a provider. Take this moment to pray for God's help to overcome this sinful attitude and seek zealously an opportunity to serve. It is the purpose for which you were saved.



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Jacob."

Tertullian is another one of the church fathers who lived from about 160 A.D. to 240 A.D. He was a very prolific writer and is described as "one of the most eminent Christians of that age." Concerning the coming of Christ and His Kingdom he said, "We profess that a Kingdom is promised us on earth, before that in heaven, but in another state, namely - after the resurrection, for it will be one thousand years in a city of divine workmanship, even Jerusalem, brought down from heaven; and this city, Ezekiel knew and John saw. This is the city provided to receive the saints in the resurrection wherein to refresh them with an abundance of all spiritual good things, in recompense of those, which in the world we have either thought lightly of or lost"

Cyprian wrote from 220 A.D. to 258 A.D. and was put to death in 258 A.D. As he was led to the block to be beheaded, the people lamented and wept, crying "Let us also be beheaded with him." This faithful servant of God, who paid for his faith with his life, wrote,

"it were a self contradictory and incompatible thing for us, who pray that the Kingdom of God may quickly come, to be looking for a long life here below. Let us, in anxiety and cautiousness be waiting the second advent of the Lord, for those things which were foretold are come to pass, as also those things will follow, which are promised; the Lord Himself giving assurance and saying, When you see these things come to pass, know that the Kingdom of God is near at hand."

Lactantius was one of the most learned of the church fathers. In about the year 300 A.D. he wrote: "It is so arranged by God, that the same Christ should come to earth twice, once to announce to the nations the one God, then again to reign. Then the Heaven will be opened in a tempest and Christ shall descend with great power and there shall go before Him a fiery brightness and a countless host of angels, and all that multitude of the wicked shall be destroyed and torrents of blood shall flow. But the nations shall not be entirely extinguished, but some shall be left as victory for God. About the same time also, the Prince of the Devils shall be bound with chains and shall be imprisoned during the thousand years of heavenly rule of righteousness which shall reign in the world. They who shall be raised from the dead, shall preside over the living as judges. Throughout this time, the beasts shall not be nourished by blood, nor birds by prey. The King and Conqueror shall Himself reign with the saints on the earth and will build the Holy City and this Kingdom of the Righteous shall be for a thousand years."

Leaders of the Reformation Were
All Premillennialists

When the Roman Catholic Church arose and withheld

premillennial truth from the masses of people, the Dark Ages were the result. Premillennial truth was preserved in this period by such "sects" as the Waldenses, Paulicians, Novations, Albigenses, etc. At last, when Martin Luther, John Huss, John Wycliff, William Tyndale, John Calvin, and Zwingli broke away from Catholicism in an effort to restore New Testament Christianity, it is not all surprising to note that many of them were strong premillennialists.

John Wycliff who is called "the morning star of the Reformation" wrote a book in which he discussed the reign of Christ on earth. Among other things, he said, "The Redeemer's return is the object of hope and constant expectation of the church of God."

Martin Luther who was the most famous of all the reformers says: "Some say that before the latter days, the whole world shall become Christian. This is a falsehood forged by Satan."

John Knox who prayed in great agony of soul, "Oh God, give me Scotland, or I'll die," and who led the great Scottish reformation, answered, "It never was, nor yet shall be, till the Righteous King and Judge appears for the restoration of all things. But we know that He shall return and that with expedition."

William Tyndale, who because of his translation of the Bible, was first strangled, then burned at the stake, said: "We are commanded to look every hour for that day. Christ and His Apostles taught no other, but that we should look for His coming again every hour."

Most Outstanding Men, Pastors, Evangelists, Missionaries and Bible Teachers of Christian History Were Premillennialists

The most illustrious men in all ages of Christianity have been

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premillennialists. Likewise, the men who are doing most today to win souls, build New Testament churches and teach the Word of God are premillennialists. Here is a list of more than one hundred men, all prominent Christians, who were or are premillennialists.

Martin Luther
 Peter Lange
 John Wycliff
 Paul De Godet
 Philip Melancthon
 John F. Paton
 Savonarola
 Lorenza Dow
 Nicholas Ridley
 Cotton Mather
 Hugh Latimer
 Increase Mather
 William Tyndale
 Charles Hodge
 John A Broadus
 Archbishop Usher
 E.Y. Mullins
 Matthew Henry
 H.C. Mabie
 Charles H. Spurgeon
 J.M. Stifler
 T. Dewitt Talmadge
 H.G. Weston
 D.L. Moody
 John MacNeil
 Billy Sunday
 H.B. Hinson
 Gypsy Smith
 S.D. Gordon
 E.C. Dargan
 L.W. Munhall
 W. Marshall Craig
 Alexander Maclaren
 John Wesley
 Charles Wesley
 John Bunyan
 John Milton
 George Whitfield
 Sir Isaac Newton
 John Knox
 Augustus Toplady

Robert Hall
 John Calvin
 A.C. Dixon
 R.A. Torrey
 W.B. Riley
 Robert E. Speer
 Len. G. Broughton
 J. Wilbur Chapman
 J.C. Masse
 J. Frank Norris
 J.B. Moody
 J.N. Hall
 J.R. Graves
 Mordecai Ham
 George McCall
 J.B. Leavell
 Lincoln McConnell
 I.M. Haldeman
 Bob Jones
 A.C. Gabelein
 D.B. Clapp
 George W. Schaeffer
 William S. Dixon
 D.W. Whittle
 Charles T. Alexander
 Archbishop French
 C.L. Schofield
 Adoniram Judson
 William Carey
 A.T. Pierson
 F.B. Meyer
 A.J. Gordon
 G. Campbell Morgan
 J. Hudson Taylor
 Richard Baxter
 George Mueller
 P.S. Henson
 George C. Lorimer
 Maj. W.E. Penn
 J.B. Gambrell
 Jeff D. Ray
 James M. Gray
 Canon Fausett
 James H. Brooks
 A. N. Hall
 Dallas Billington
 W.E. Blackstone
 Albert Barnes
 Dean Alford
 Robert Murray McCheyne
 Beauchamp Vick
 Will H. Houghton
 H.H. Savage

Bishop Ryle
 H.A Ironside
 Lewis Sperry Chafer
 William Pettingill
 Norman B. Harrison
 William C. Morehead
 C.H. Macintosh
 George Henderson
 J. A. Seiss
 W. Lamb
 Clark Riley
 James H. McConkey
 Mark A. Matthews
 W.H. Griffith
 Herman Olhausen
 Bishop H.C.G. Moule
 Horatius Bonar
 Andrew Bonar

Baptists and Premillennial Truth

It is one thing to be a Christian. It is quite another thing to be a New Testament Christian. Acceptance of Christ as a personal Saviour makes a Christian, but to walk in the full light of the Truth of the New Testament makes a New Testament Christian; or a Fundamental and Premillennial Baptist. All three of these words are descriptive adjectives: Fundamental means "pertaining to the fundamentals" or "foundational principles." By this, is meant the Fundamentals of the Christian Faith, or the great theological doctrines of the Bible. Premillennial has been defined in this chapter. Baptist means "Baptizer" and is definitely not a name, but a descriptive term for those so described today, as it was for John the Baptizer of the Baptists, in the New Testament.

The order of New Testament believers, has continued from the day of John until now. In fact, the ministry of the Gospel for this Dispensation began with John, as is seen from a number of Scriptures, such as the following: **"The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God,**

As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before my face, which shall prepare the way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord: make his paths straight. John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins" (Mark 1:1-4).

Readers will note from the above Scripture, that this preaching and baptizing ministry of John the Baptist (Baptizer) was **"the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ."** It will be further noted that the baptism that John administered was a baptism **"of repentance for the remission of sins"** which is identically the same baptism as was administered by the first church at Jerusalem, for Peter, in baptizing the multitude on Pentecost said: **"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost"** (Acts 2:38).

There are not many water baptisms in the Word of God. There is only one. The baptism that John administered was identical with the baptism administered by Jesus and His disciples. Jesus Himself received it from John, and then called twelve of John's disciples as His own disciples. Through them, Jesus baptized the converts that He made (John 3:23) and after His ascension to glory, the early church elected one to take the place of Judas, who by transgression fell that he might go to his own place, and the stipulation was that whoever was elected must be one **"Beginning from the baptism of John"** (Acts 1:22).

These followers of the Way, of New Testament times met in

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visible congregations, at regular times and for specific purposes. These assemblies were called "churches" or assemblies. Since there was only one kind of assembly in existence, it was not necessary for these bodies to wear any distinguishing labels, for there was nothing to be distinguished from. Thus in the New Testament, we read simply of "**the church which was at Jerusalem;**" "**the church which was at Antioch;**" "**the church which was at Colosse**" and so on.

These were premillennial in faith, as we have shown from the quotations from the early church fathers, who were converted under the ministry of the Apostles themselves. Gradually, however, error began to creep in, and ritualism began to develop in the body of professing Christianity, as has been true in every age. By the fourth century, Catholicism as a system reared its ugly head. Persecution of those who remained true to the Word and work of our Lord soon began. Then it was, that in order to survive they went underground. The Dark Ages followed, and during this period of several hundred years, they were known by various names: Paulicans, Novations, Albigenses, Waldenses, Bogomils, etc.

When the Dark Ages passed and the Reformation took place, Martin Luther, John Calvin, Huss and Zwingli broke the power of Roman Catholicism, by swinging large segments away from Rome, and Protestantism was born. It was so called, because it was a movement of Protest against the corruption of the Roman system. When this took place, these "sects" which had survived from

the Apostolic period came out of their hiding, still holding to their faith.

Because they were uncompromising on the point of baptism, they were dubbed Anabaptists by both Catholics and Protestants. "Ana" means "re," thus they were called "rebaptizers" because of their practice of rebaptizing all who came to them, insisting that they must receive the ordinance as it had been committed to them, from the Apostles, who had received it from John and which had been commanded by Christ.

In time, the prefix was dropped and they came to be known simply as Baptists. In comparatively modern times, denominationalism has arisen among us, which is opposed to the Premillennial Coming of Christ, and which fosters a postmillennial program, but it is a matter of record that outstanding preachers and theologians and preachers among us, have been premillennial in their faith.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon, illustrious Baptist preacher of London, universally acknowledged as the greatest preacher of the Gospel since the days of the Apostle Paul, said: "I do look for His premillennial advent and expect He will come here again. Jesus, our Lord, is to be King of all the earth and rule all nations in a glorious personal reign."

John A Broadus, one of the founders of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary of Louisville, Kentucky and one of the world's greatest New Testament scholars and preachers, says in his commentary on Matthew, chapter 24, "It follows that our Lord's Coming certainly cannot be at the end of a thousand years of universal and

perfect piety, for in that case, all would know the exact time and all would be devoutly and eagerly expecting the event."

Dr. E. Y. Mullins, world famous as a theologian and philosopher, perhaps the greatest in his field in the past century, in his book, "Christianity; Its Doctrinal Expression" says on page 471, "Christians should cultivate the New Testament attitude of expectancy. We should ever be as men who look for their Lord, because He commanded it. The postmillennialist certainly has an impossible task in trying to find a place in his conception of the future, for the New Testament attitude is of expectancy for the Coming of Christ"

Dr. E. C. Dargan says concerning Revelation 20:1-10, "The passage itself seems to mean that the millennium will follow the arrival of our Lord and at the close of that period, will be the judgment day."

Dr. J. B. Gambrell said, "I don't mind telling a secret, I mildly lean to the Pre theory. That looks like it might be so, more than the other." (Baptist Standard, October 3rd, 1918).

Premillennial Truth and Present Day Baptist Programs

With the rise of German rationalism and the development of modern, present day interdenominational endeavor, postmillennialism, that most subtle and dangerous type of modernism, has increasingly wielded much influence in the official life of Baptists. Baptist people as a whole, are today, strongly premillennial, but there is a little clique who have succeeded in putting a postmillennial yoke upon the churches in the form of the "program."

Not only is the program

postmillennial, but they are injecting this modernistic poison into the very veins of Baptist life. Preachers are being trained in postmillennial colleges and seminaries and taught how to explain away and "spiritualize" the Word of God. Postmillennialism is being written into the Sunday School literature. Thus the whole stream of Baptist thought and life is being polluted, poisoned, and contaminated by this unscriptural teaching.

And what is the result of this appalling departure from the truth? The emphasis has been taken off of personal work and put on programs. So called "social service" is slowly but surely supplanting the old time Gospel, revival meetings and soul winning effort.

No preacher, evangelist, pastor, missionary, Bible teacher or individual Baptist can be a consistent premillennialist, and at the same time support postmillennial programs. There are hundreds of premillennialist who face this question. They see that it is a departure from the faith. They see that it is a departure from the Word of God. What to do? That is the question.

The Revival of the Age-End Preparing For The Golden Age
Just as God preserved His true churches through the long, dark night of the Middle Ages when "they wandered in deserts and in mountains, and in dens and in caves of the earth" (Heb. 11:38) so He has preserved them in this day of modernism.

All over the world, there is a coming out of believers; there is a coming out of those who desire to gather themselves into New Testament assemblies. Thousands are coming out from

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all denominations; Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist, Episcopalian, Denominational Baptist, Church of Christ, Christian, and many, many others. These newly organized churches have come to be known, as Fundamental Baptist Churches. They would be quite content to simply be called churches, as in the New Testament, if necessity did not demand otherwise, to distinguish themselves from the existing confusion on every hand, in the religious world.

There are now, individuals who have become Fundamental Baptists in faith, who are yet in various denominational systems. They cannot come out as yet, for there is no New Testament assembly for them to affiliate with. But they are awaiting the hour, when the Spirit of God shall raise up a testimony to which they might attach themselves. This coming-out of thousands of God's children, and the formation of New Testament churches has produced a revival, at home and abroad. Multiplied thousands of souls have been and are being saved in these Scriptural assemblies.

In the midst of the modernism, socialism, evolution, worldliness, communism and infidelity that characterizes present day Christendom, these independent congregations of New Testament believers bear their testimony to all of the Fundamentals of the historic Christian Faith. Premillennial in faith, they preach and teach the word of Prophecy (II Peter 1:19) knowing the Golden Age is nigh, even at the doors.

Eternal Sonship

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the Heaven and earth had a being.

These words remind us of the beginning of the Gospel of John which reads: **"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God"** (John 1:1-2). This is when He was **"in the bosom of the Father"** (John 1:18). This is the glory Christ had with the Father **"before the world was"** (John 17:5). The Son of God had a real and actual existence from eternity. He was **"in the form of God"** and **"equal with God"** (Phil 2:6).

Since the time of the Arian controversy in the 4th century, this verse has been one of the most discussed passages in the Old Testament. The main point of issue is the word translated **"possessed"** in our Authorized Version. The Arians made the words **"possessed me"** to mean **"created me."** This they cite from the Septuagint Version and the Targum. By this translating they reduce Christ to a created being who existed before the world. But there is no ground for the thought of creation either in the meaning of the root, or in the general usage of the Hebrew word itself. In the original it seemed to imply parenthood rather than creation (Gen. 4:1; Deut. 14:19, 22; Zech. 13:5).

Arianism taught that the Father alone was God; He alone was unbegotten, eternal, wise, good, and unchangeable. They reduced Christ to a subordinate, secondary, created divinity. But the very conception of a created creator, who existed before the world, and yet himself began to exist, is self-contradictory and untenable. There was never a time

when God was without Wisdom, for He would not have been the all-wise God. There is no middle being between Creator and creature. There is no time before the world as time itself is a part of the world and the first offspring of creation. Neither can one honestly maintain the eternity of the Fatherhood without seeing that this implies the eternity of the Sonship. If there is an eternal Father there must also be an eternal Son.

Arianism is not dead. There are some denominations which teach this Christ-dishonoring doctrine in their churches today. Most of the modern cults hold to this theory which robs Christ of His proper Deity. With deep regret I confess that Elder J. R. Graves denied the eternal Sonship of Jesus Christ (See THE WORK OF CHRIST IN THE COVENANT OF REDEMPTION; DEVELOPED IN SEVEN DISPENSATIONS, pp. 61-62). Elder Graves was one of the greatest scholars who ever lived in more modern times, but he was in great error on this one point. Let us learn from this that no man is an infallible guide.

VERSE 23

"I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was."

The **"I"** in this verse is surely a person and not a quality or a nature. This is the person of Christ as the eternal Son of God, not merely His human nature which did not exist from eternity. Some render the words **"I was set up"** as **"I was ordained"** or **"I was anointed."** THE AMPLIFIED OLD TESTAMENT has it **"inaugurated and ordained from everlasting."** I understand by these words that this is when the Son was in the eternal counsel placed in His covenant offices.

In eternity past the eternal Son was installed into the offices of prophet, priest, and king.

There are a number of verses in the New Testament which point back to this dateless past. Speaking of Christ, Paul wrote: **"Whom GOD HATH FOREORDAINED to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God"** (Rom. 3:25 margin).

"But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, WHICH GOD ORDAINED BEFORE THE WORLD unto our glory" (I Cor. 2:7).

"According to the ETERNAL PURPOSE which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Eph. 3:11).

"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).

Peter tells us we are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ **"Who verily was FOREORDAINED BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD, but was manifest in these last times for you"** (I Pet. 1:18-20).

"The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8).

The Son of God was in the eternal counsels of God before creation or redemption. All of this presupposes the eternity of the person of Christ, for had He not existed from everlasting, He could not have been set up as the Mediator of the Covenant

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of Grace. Proverbs 8:23 teaches the eternal existence of Christ's person, the great antiquity of His offices, and the early provision of grace in Him for His elect.

This accounts for Isaiah calling Christ **"...the Mighty God, the Father of eternity"** (Isa. 9:7) (improved translation). Micah not only speaks of Christ existing from eternity, but he also makes it plain He was eternally active: **"But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity"** (Micah 5:2 margin). Truly, it may be said of the Mediator of the Covenant of Grace: **"Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God"** (Ps. 90:2).

VERSE 24

"When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water."

The Septuagint renders **"I was brought forth"** as "he begot me." The Hebrew word is used in Job 15:7 and Psalm 51:5 to convey the thought of generation. Hence we are to see in this verse the eternal generation and Sonship of Christ. There is in this generation nothing temporal, carnal, or human. The doctrine of the eternal Sonship of Christ is much safer to adore than to expound. In the sense of Proverbs 8:24, **"Who shall declare his generation?"** (Acts 8:33).

Before the fountains of the great deep seas were laid the Son

of God was begotten, born, and brought forth. In Psalm 2:7 we hear the Son of God say: **"I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee."** Here is an eternal decree of God the Father related by the Son. This decree was made before the purpose was to be carried into execution, before the Messiah actually came, and even before this Psalm was written. Note the words: **"The LORD hath said unto me."** The word **"day"** is not to be taken in its normal sense in Psalm 2:7. The day in this verse is expressive of eternity (Isa. 43:13) and includes Christ's incarnation, baptism, transfiguration, and resurrection (Acts 13:33; Rom. 1:4).

Jesus Christ is the only, true, proper, natural, and eternal Son of God. The Apostle John called Him **"the only begotten of the Father"** (John 1:14) and **"the only begotten Son"** (John 1:18; 3:16). He was **"begotten,"** not **"made,"** therefore, a partaker in full of His Father's Godhead. He is the only begotten in relation to the many adopted sons of God who became such in time by being begotten of the Holy Spirit. In this sense in which Christ was **"brought forth; or "begotten"** in eternity past. He is the only one of His kind.

In Colossians 1:15 Christ is given the title of **"the firstborn of every creature."** This means He is the elder in relationship; not the first created thing, but the antecedent of all creation, being the eternal, self-existent Creator (Col. 1:16). Christ was born, the universe was created. Being the **"firstborn"** and **"the only begotten,"** He occupies a position of supremacy and priority like that of the firstborn son of an earthly father did in the Old

Testament times.

VERSE 25

"Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth."

Once more eternal Sonship is set forth as an article of faith most surely to be believed among us. Before Mount Sinai, Mount Lebanon, Mount Carmel and Mount Zion, Christ was the only begotten Son of God. Before Mount Ararat, Mount Everest, Mount McKinley, or Mount Hood had been placed upon their bases by the great strength of God (Ps. 65:6), the Son of God existed. In the language of the Bible to be before the mountains and hills is to exist from eternity (Ps. 90:2; Deut. 33:15). The eternity of Christ is the same as the Father's since He existed before **"the everlasting mountains"** (Hab. 3:6).

VERSE 26

"While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world."

The Son of God existed ahead of the land, or the fields, or the first dust of the earth had a being. He was with the Father before the green valleys, the grassy plains, the dark forest, or the towering mountains of sand. Earlier than the creation of the atom or the appearance of a blossom in Paradise, the Son of God lived and moved. Long before God made Adam out of the dust of the ground (Gen. 2:7), the Second Adam was in the eternal counsels of God. The first Adam was made of red earth, but the Second Adam had a being before the earth and was not of the earth (John 3:31).

VERSE 27

"When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth."

When Jehovah gave the heavens a form and figure uncreated, eternal Wisdom was there as a witness and a worker (Heb. 1:2, 10; Col. 1:16). When the magnitude and motion of the sun, moon and stars took place, the Son was not a mere spectator; He was there as the great Architect. Prior to the existence of the Third Heaven, the seat of God and the home of the saints, the Son of God lived, moved, and had a being.

The expression, **"when he set a compass upon the face of the depth"** is most difficult to understand. Rotherham translates it: "When he decreed a vault upon the face of the resounding deep." THE AMPLIFIED OLD TESTAMENT renders it: "When He drew a circle upon the face of the deep and stretched out the firmament over it." The Hebrew word translated **"compass"** means "to go around, to make a circle; to surround" (See OLD TESTAMENT WORD STUDIES by Wilson, pp. 89-90). The meaning seems to be the law of gravitation began to function to hold the sea in its decreed place (Job 22:14). The basic truth being taught is that Christ was active on the Second Day of creation when the firmament was made (Gen. 1:6-8).

VERSE 28

"When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep."

This verse is still showing events of the second day of creation. These words reveal the eternal Son of God was present when the clouds and the seas were made.

VERSE 29

"When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the

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foundations of the earth."

The Father gave a perpetual decree to the sea saying: **"Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed"** (Job 38:11) (cf. Jer. 5:22). Prior to the giving of a decree to the sea, God had decreed the eternal Sonship of Christ (Ps. 2:7). Earlier than the time the earth was founded **"upon the seas"** and established **"upon the floods"** (Ps. 24:1-2), the Father and the Son were together in person and power. The elect were chosen in Christ **"before the foundation of the world"** (Eph. 1:4).

VERSE 30

"Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him."

The word translated **"brought up"** can be rendered as "an artificer" or "a workman." Rotherham translates it: "Then became I beside him a firm and sure worker." The Berkeley version gives it: "Then I was beside Him, a master builder." The Son was with the Father in eternity past as a master and director of the work of creation. There was a mutual consciousness and a good understanding between them (Zech. 6:13). **"The Word was with God"** (John 1:1).

Others make **"brought up"** to refer to Christ's tender nursing of the creation by preserving all creatures after they were created. Even some make it mean "nursed up at his side." This would make it express the tender regard of His Father to Him from eternity. The Father delighted in Him, just as an earthly father delights in his firstborn son. This fits well with the next statement in the verse.

"I was daily his delight." Here we see how the Father loved the Son from eternity with a delightful love. Jesus said: **"For thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world"** (John 17:24). The Father declared of the Son: **"Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mind elect, in whom my soul delighteth. . ."** (Isa. 42:1). Christ did what He saw the Father do (John 5:19), did His will (John 4:34; 6:38), kept His commandments (John 10:18; 15:10), and glorified His name (John 17:5). Because Jesus did always those things which pleased the Father (John 8:29), the Father is always pleased with Him (Matt. 3:17).

"Rejoicing always before him" must mean the Son from eternity rejoiced before the Father being of the same nature and perfection. There was a mutual pleasure and delight between the First and Second Persons of the Godhead.

VERSE 31

"Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men."

The Son not only rejoiced in the Father, but He also rejoiced **"in the habitable part of his earth."** He rejoiced in preserving and sustaining the inhabitants of earth by providence. He ordained all things for the best according to His will and pleasure. He even took delight in the particular geography where they would live out their days (Acts 17:26).

The delight of the eternal Son was not with the angels, but with men: **"And my delights were with the sons of men."** Here is a wonder of wonders. Think of it! Jesus Christ, who was His Father's infinite delight and infinitely delighting in Him, should find His delight from eternity in **"the sons of men!"** This does not

mean all men without exception. Hebrews 2:16 tells us: **"For verily he taketh not hold of angels, but of the seed of Abraham he taketh hold"** (margin).

The eternal Son of God foresaw He would be despised and rejected of men, yet He made some of them the objects of His everlasting love (Jer. 31:3) and made satisfaction for their sins (Isa. 53:10-12). This love for His elect from everlasting caused Him to exchange the throne of glory for the cross of shame---to trade the bosom of the Father for the bosom of a woman---to give up the worship of the angels for the scorn of men. The redemption of His elect was a joy set before Him (Heb. 12:2).

(All Scripture emphasis by MRC).

*"Ere God built the mountains,
Or raised the fruitful hills;
Before He filled the fountains,
That feed the running rills;
In Thee from everlasting,
The wonderful I AM
Found pleasures never wasting,
And Wisdom in Thy name.*

*"When, like a tent to dwell in,
He spread the skies abroad,
And swathed about the swelling
Of Ocean's mighty flood,
He wrought by sight and measure;
And Thou wast with Him then:
Thyself the Father's pleasure,
And Thine, the sons of men.*

*"And couldst Thou be delighted
With creatures such as we,
Who, when we saw Thee, slighted
And nailed Thee to a tree?
Unfathomable wonder!
And mystery Divine!
The voice that speaks in thunder
Says, 'Sinner, I am thine,'"*

---Cowper

What the Bible Says

(Continued from page 1) ◊

And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery" (Matt. 19:3-9).

This subject has been perverted by men. It is high time that we return to the ancient landmark of marriage. In order to do so, we must consult the Scriptures. Feelings, personal opinions, thoughts, and ideas have no place in this subject (nor any other). Well did the Lord Jesus say unto the Sadducees: **"..Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God"** (Matt. 22:29). This is true among many people, including Sovereign Grace, Landmark, Missionary Baptist people today.

Let us examine our text of Matthew 19:3-9.

THE QUESTION OF THE PHARISEES:

The Pharisees came to **"tempt"** Jesus. They were not really interested in what He had to say. They inquired of the Lord **"Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?"** (Matt. 19:3). Our Lord replied with Scripture: **"Have ye not read...?"** (Matt. 19:4). So, too, must we read the Scriptures. The Lord did not give them the prevailing opinions of society or religion of His day, but rather referred them unto the Word of the Lord. Let our answer upon this subject, and all subjects be in accordance with Romans 4:3, **"For what saith the scripture?"**

THE REPLY OF THE LORD

The Lord goes all the way back to the beginning when the LORD

◊ (Continued on page 17)



The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. What does the Bible say about divorce and remarriage? -Illinois

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Deuteronomy 24:1-4 states: **“When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house. And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man’s wife. And if the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth it in her hand and sendeth her out of his house; or if the latter husband die, which took her to be his wife; Her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that is abomination before the LORD: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.”**

Malachi 2:14-16 states: **“Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore**

take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hatteth putting away: for one covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously.”

Matthew 5:31-32 states: **“It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.”**

Matthew 19:3-12 states: **“The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together let not man put asunder. They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you, Whosoever**

shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery. His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry. But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given. For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother’s womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.”

The exception clause for fornication is only found in the Gospel of Matthew. Some interpret this as including all sexual uncleanness or infidelity. Others see fornication as it is primarily defined, as premarital sex during the betrothal period as in the case of Joseph and Mary (Matt. 1:18-20). In Joseph’s mind he thought that Mary had committed fornication while they were betrothed which permitted him to put her away. The angel explained to him how Mary was with child without sexual intercourse through the miraculous conception performed by the Holy Spirit.

Mark 10:11-12 states: **“And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.”**

Luke 16:18 states: **“Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever**

marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery.”

Romans 7:1-4 states: **“Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law: so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.”**

I Corinthians 7:39-40 states: **“The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord. But she is happier if she so abide, after my judgment: and I think also that I have the Spirit of God.”**

These are the bulk of the verses in Scripture dealing with divorce and remarriage. When I entered into the marriage covenant with my wife Tammy in July of 1984 I did so with the understanding we were entering into a lifelong bond of holy matrimony, and she did as well. This is the counsel I give to all who are contemplating marriage. You must enter into the marriage covenant with the idea that this commitment involves a life long bond, for better or worse,

◊ (Continued on page 14)

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. Please explain the difference between the soul and spirit? - Illinois

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“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (I Thess. 5:23). The doctrine of the trinity of God and the trichotomy of man are linked by God’s primal statement on the creation of man. **“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: ...So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them”** (Gen. 1:26-27). The spirit, soul and body of man in our text, displays a depth of creation that parallels the depth of our God’s nature (3-in-1). Selah! Think about it!

When Adam fell in the garden, the creature was marred and deformed from its perfect state from Creation. **“And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die”** (Gen. 2:1-17). The spirit of man perished at that moment, devolving him into a dichotomous creature with only two natures (body and soul). A very REAL death occurred when Adam ate of the fruit. As real as the death we witness at a funeral

home, where the soul is separated from the body. Adam and Eve continued to function on physical and ‘soulish’ planes, but became totally depraved in their nature, because their spirit DIED.

The nature that perished and left them in the abominable dichotomous state cannot be altered or remedied, except by the work of the Holy Spirit in the regenerating new birth! Again, from the outside, it is not clearly seen, what occurs when the elect child of God is “born again.” **“Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit”** (John 3:7-8). A walking “dead man,” that we surely are, shows as little physical evidence of the birth as the dying man shows in his eventual coffin. But as surely as Adam was struck with death in the garden, so, too, are we struck with life at the moment of salvation. The transformation that makes the difference is either the subtraction or the addition of an essential element of our creation, either spirit or soul. They are CRUCIAL fundamentals of our elemental make-up. Selah! Think about it!

On their respective creative days, God made the water and air creatures from the molecules of water and the land creatures from molecules of earth and clay. **“And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl ...And God said, Let the earth**

bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so” (Gen. 1:20, 24). What we have are sentient beings with a body and soul. This soul is not eternal (as far as I know), but fulfills the temporal purposes of God in this marvelous creation as evidences of intelligent design. **“Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth”** (Eccl. 3:21)? But God goes a step further, with the extraordinary pinnacle of His creation. THIS ONE, He says, will be in MY IMAGE! This one began with the same clay as the cattle, but God took it one step further in making it a trichotomous creature! **“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul”** (Gen. 2:7). This first birth of man is as unique as the second birth of man. And it does the same thing. It turns a dichotomous creature into a trichotomous marvel, in the image of God. Glory to our Creator! Selah! Think about it!

To differentiate between the soul and spirit according to Scripture, we state that our spirit of life enables us to communicate with God. The soul has no “spiritual life” inherent, and eventually all of the mutated dichotomous (soul/body creatures) will be cast into the garbage heap of an eternal Hell. The soul is just as eternal as the spirit, but is referred to as “the carnal mind,” without the Spirit’s genuinely uplifting nature. The eternity of Hell’s everlasting death is evidence of a soul that will be tormented, but never die, or cease to be. **“And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them”**

(Rev. 9:6).

The symbiology of the trichotomous man to the trinity (in the image of God) is: 1) God the Father = soul or seat of the will and being. 2) God the Son = body of flesh, blood and bones. 3) God the Holy Spirit = spirit of man that can communicate with God and other spiritual beings/creations. The departments of our lives are in relation to these intrinsic attributes of our persona. The soul is the mind; the spirit our heart. Not the beating muscle of our circulatory system, any more than the soul is limited to the brain function of the nervous system. I used to ask my children where they were, and as they pointed to themselves, I would incorrigibly answer, “No, that is your arm, or belly, etc... where are YOU?” Eventually, it would dawn upon them, that they were MORE than just a physical being, and that within the shell of their “tabernacle” (II Peter 1:13-14) was an eternal worth (Matt. 16:25-26) that I was able to teach them called a “soul.” From there, I could further teach them that God had made them a “spirit” of even more tangible worth, if they would repent and believe the gospel of the Creator and Saviour, in the Person of Jesus Christ! Selah! Now that is worth thinking about!

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I believe man was originally created as a trichotomous being consisting of body (material), soul (immaterial), and spirit (spiritual). When Adam sinned
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Forum #1

(Continued from page 12) ♦

until death do you part.

No matter how you look at divorce and remarriage, I think all will agree that it is the cause of much heartache, trouble, and disruption between parents and children. I do not see divorce and remarriage as the unpardonable sin, as some do. I do believe the weakening of the original intent and ideal of the marriage covenant has done much damage to society and contributed in large part to the casting off of the traditional view of marriage and the home.

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Before I answer the question allow me to make a statement. According to my convictions there are three Scriptural reasons for divorce: First, death of either of the spouses is an automatic termination of the marriage. Secondly, adultery is a scriptural basis for divorce. And thirdly, malicious desertion by one spouse of the other is ground for divorce. However, be it understood, because a spouse has scriptural grounds for divorce, a divorce does not have to be sued for. If reconciliation can be realized, and the marriage salvaged thereby, this is the far better choice.

Instances of malicious desertion would be where one spouse forsook the other who was critically ill, or for a spouse to leave the other destitute of the means of livelihood. Of course, adultery is a horrible violation of the marriage

vows, and is agreed by all to be scriptural grounds for divorce. In any of the two cases stated in this paragraph, the innocent party is free to sue out a divorce, and has the right to remarry **“only in the Lord”** (only another Christian) (I Cor. 7:15, 39).

GOD HATES DIVORCE:

“For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away: for one covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously” (Mal. 2:16).

God takes our oaths/vows very seriously, **“If a man vow a vow unto the LORD, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond; he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth”** (Num. 30:2). When you marry and say vows to each other it is a serious matter.

BUT THE BIBLE DOES NOT CONDEMN DIVORCE FOR EVERYONE:

“And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also” (Jer. 3:8).

God will not be joined to an adulterous people! He does, however, have a remnant that will be saved in the end. **“And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth”** (Rev. 14:3).

BELIEVERS NOT TO BE DIVORCED, UNLESS, THERE CAN BE NO RECONCILIATION:

“And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife” (I Cor. 7:10-11).

All effort should be made by the Christian to do everything possible to stay with their spouse, unless they have done everything possible to salvage their marriage.

BECAUSE OF DEFILEMENT:
“When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house. And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man’s wife. And if the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth it in her hand, and sendeth her out of his house; or if the latter husband die, which took her to be his wife; Her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that is abomination before the LORD: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance” (Deut. 24:1-14).

Once there is a remarriage to another person after a divorce there can never be reconciliation between that couple because of defilement.

A BELIEVER AND NON-BELIEVER:

“But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband

that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy. But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace. For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?” (I Cor. 7:12-16).

The fact is, if you can stay in the marriage, there is always that opportunity that because the one is a Christian and stays faithful to God, the other spouse may be saved. It is very difficult in our society today but I believe it can be done.

I believe the question is “What does the Bible say about divorce and remarriage.” I believe it would be too lengthy to break down each of the Scriptures I have given and be able to give a reasonable answer to each. In my opinion the Forum may not appreciate a long and lengthy answer on such a highly disagreed upon subject. So I leave it as I have stated it! But I would encourage you, dear reader, to dig into the Bible if you desire a more full answer than I have given.

Years ago, all would have been in agreement about divorce and remarriage (as earlier stated), but not anymore, I am sad to say. One reason is that people do not care what God has to say about it anymore, just look around, it is a common thing. And I hope and pray that the questioner is very sincere to know the answer and not just looking for a debate. God Bless!

ROGER REED

♦ (Continued on page 15)

Forum #1

(Continued from page 14) ♦

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“And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce...” (Jer. 3:8). When was the first divorce? We have the first marriage documented clearly for us in Genesis 2, but do you know when the word divorce is first mentioned in Scripture? In the English, it comes in Leviticus 21:14, **“A widow, or a divorced woman, or profane, or an harlot, these shall he not take: but he shall take a virgin of his own people to wife.”** The context is speaking about restrictions on the high priest’s choice of a wife. But that is not the first divorce, or even the first mention of divorce in the Hebrew. You can go back seven verses and read: **“They shall not take a wife that is a whore, or profane; neither shall they take a woman put away from her husband: for he is holy unto his God.”** This time in the restrictions on *any* priest (of the sons of Aaron), the English uses a different phrase to translate the same Hebrew word “garash” into: **“put away.”** That, too, is a familiar term to Bible readers. More often than not, it is the terminology used when speaking of a man divorcing his wife, or vice versa. Remember Malachi 2:15-16, **“..Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith**

that he hateth putting away...” hateth divorcing. This is yet another Hebrew word, “shalach,” usually translated ‘send’ or ‘put away.’

It is easily understood that God hates divorce. Just to bring the word up in a marriage relationship will cause shivers to run up my back. Jesus, Himself, makes it clear that divorce is against God’s order and only happens because of the hardness of man’s heart. **“He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so”** (Matt. 19:8). And so we all know that divorce is caused by sin. Sometimes by both spouses being unfaithful to each other, but many times just the one. And that leaves an innocent party that is affected greatly for the rest of their life. Selah! Think about it!

That leads me to the point of this “Selah!” When was the first divorce? It was already common in Moses’ time, so we have to go back earlier. It is actually found in Genesis 3:23-24, **“Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way...”** The two Hebrew words for divorce are found here. This is the first divorce! God **“sent...forth”** (shalach) or “put away/divorced” Adam and Eve. He **“drove out”** (garash) or separated/gave a Bill of Divorcement to the unfaithful couple.

Reading these passages as they come across in the Hebrew has really opened my eyes! I never could relate to our text and also Isaiah 50:1, where it portrays God, Himself, as a ‘Divorcee.’

But this study has allowed me to see that the modern divorce is NOTHING at all like Scriptural, Biblical divorce. Scriptural divorce is just the sending away or driving out of an unfaithful spouse, until the sin that caused the divorce can be rectified. God still considers Himself married, even though Israel is toting around a Bill of Divorce. Read the fourteenth verse of our text: **“Turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; for I am (divorced, but still-tms) married unto you...”** Separated! Selah! Think about it!

If your marriage ends up in divorce, God’s Word defines your choices in I Corinthians 7:11, **“But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband...”** Clearly, the TWO options for one that is divorced are to 1) remain “unmarried” (single) or 2) be reconciled to her husband. There is no 3rd option of liberty to remarry someone else. The Apostle never even considers that this divorce might destroy the marriage and he (or she) would be free to go off and marry someone else. That is not the Biblical purpose of divorce. God’s perception of divorce is more like our modern understanding of “being separated,” which is actually an EXCELLENT understanding of Biblical divorce. Sure, there is a problem here and an interruption of the marriage vows, but it can be repaired with reconciliation, and that is what the Apostle spends the next few verses on. **“But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace (reconciliation-tms). For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save**

thy wife?” (I Cor. 7:15-16).

Divorce, like death, in Scripture is never annihilation- both are merely separations waiting for reconciliation. Can you keep praying for your lost loved ones, that God might give them Spiritual life and call them out of darkness into His marvelous light? Then pray for those broken families that God might work a miracle for them, as well. I understand that sometimes they go off and remarry. There is no reconciliation from that (see Deut. 24:4 below), but there is still service to our God. The Apostle Paul closes chapter 7 of I Corinthians with praise of this “single”ness of opportunity. Selah! Think about it!

Closing thoughts on the subject of remarriage. It is not sanctioned by Scripture. It is sin. But it is regulated, as sin often is in the practical Bible for depraved mankind. If you have a divorce in your past; and you have remarried, then that second marriage vow did something that no divorce could ever do. It destroyed the first marriage vow, as clearly shown in Deuteronomy 24:3-4, **“And if the latter husband... write her a bill of divorcement, ...or if the latter husband die, which took her to be his wife; Her former husband...may not take her again to be his wife...”** God recognizes the second marriage to be the reason that they can no longer reconcile, unlike divorce or adultery. The miracles of marriage and grace are still unstoppable! Your second marriage vows, are still just that, marriage vows. Reverence your new husband. Cherish your new wife. Serve God from this day forth in oneness and threeness of body and spirit! **“Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become**

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Forum #1

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dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God" (Rom. 7:4). Hey, we can not get puffed up. We are ALL in our second marriage out of our former sins. No longer "married" to the flesh, but "married" to Christ. Selah! Think about it!

MATTHEW STEPP



Forum #2

(Continued from page 13) ♦

against God, his spirit and spiritual connection with God died just as God had warned. Adam's body and soul did not die when he sinned, only his spirit died which, in effect, separated him from God and His fellowship. Adam was immediately separated from God spiritually. The death of his body would come many years later. Due to inherent human depravity all men are now spiritually dead to God (Rom. 5:12; Eph. 2:1-3). They are said to be in the flesh as opposed to the spirit. As such they can produce no spiritual affections or exercise any spiritual discernment (I Cor. 2:14). In this spiritually dead and fleshly condition they are entirely incapable of pleasing God in any way. Romans 8:8 states: **"So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."** Unless God intervenes in the new birth, the spiritually dead man will experience physical death followed by the second death which is eternal separation from God in the Lake of Fire. The unsaved man's body and soul will be punished in the Lake of Fire throughout the infinity of

eternity. The unsaved, natural, unbelieving lost man has never and will never have a spiritual connection with God.

The soul is the immaterial part of man housed in his body, which in effect is his personal identity consisting of his intellect, will, affections and emotions. The soul of man is that part of him, that once conceived in the womb of his mother, lives on throughout eternity either with the Lord Jesus Christ or in the Lake of Fire. Jesus made it clear that the soul of man is worth more than all the world in Matthew 16:26: **"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"**

Only those who are born of the Spirit in the work of regeneration have a spiritual nature that corresponds with God's holy nature (II Pet. 1:3-4). The spiritual nature or the new man is a direct creation of the Holy Spirit in God's elect that enables them to love and worship God. Ephesians 2:10 declares: **"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."** Ephesians 4:22-24 states: **"That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."** It is in this spiritual nature that God the Holy Spirit dwells and produces fruit that honors God: **"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified**

the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:22-25). All men have a body and soul. Only God's elect have a newly created spiritual nature that enables them to fellowship and communicate with God. One day all three parts of man will be glorified to dwell with God throughout eternity: **"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it"** (I Thess. 5:23-24).

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There are some that believe the soul and the spirit are the same thing; I do not hold such a belief. Those that believe the soul and the spirit are the same is called The Dichotomous View. I believe in The Trichotomous View that man having three parts to his human nature is body, soul, and spirit. As the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three in one, I believe this of man as well.

But the question is "Please explain the difference between the soul and spirit?" So that is what we will attempt to answer.

"And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit" (I Cor. 15:45).

I believe the soul is where our affections, desires, and all emotions come from. When Adam sinned his soul did not die

but the spiritual man died. We know after he sinned he still had his emotional state, because he was afraid and knew he was naked and went and hid himself from God. So the spiritual man died that day, and he lost all fellowship with God.

Every human being is now born into the world spiritually dead, but yet they have all their human faculties. They hurt, they have desires, and they have all sorts of emotional responses, but yet they are dead spiritually.

That is why Jesus said we must be born again. **"Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit"** (John 3:5-6).

The spirit is that which gives God-consciousness, and gives him capacity of communion with God. A man can love, but he will never know true love, or what love really is until he is quickened (made alive) spiritually.

"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others" (Eph. 2:1-3).

When the spirit is quickened (made alive) he can again enjoy sweet fellowship with God as Adam did when God would walk with him in the cool of the day. **"And they heard the voice**

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of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden” (Gen. 3:8).

A lost man lusts, steals, and does all manner of sins without remorse, because his spirit is dead. That is what Paul told the Ephesians when he said, **“who were dead in trespasses and sins,”** but God quickened us and now we see we are sinners and we have remorse and sorrow over our sins.

The lost man will never understand the things of God, but the saved man can because his spirit is made alive to receive the things of God. And now our spirit can have oneness with God.

When we die the soul dies, but the spirit lives on. As a Christian with God, **“We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord”** (II Cor. 5:8). But for a lost man **“and in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments”** (Luke 16:23).

I believe the soul is the breath of God, and without that breath man and every living thing dies, because their soul dies. **“In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind”** (Job 12:10).

Many believe their pets will be in heaven! That is not possible, because they do not have a spirit, but they do have a soul, and when their body dies, they (their soul) dies as well. So if the soul dies, but the spirit lives on into eternity, how can the soul and the spirit be one and the same? God Bless!

ROGER REED

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God (Jehovah-Elohim) made man and woman and instituted marriage. This is the key to marriage! We must recognize that it is not our own institution. It is God's! He originated marriage! He made man and woman! He set the rules for marriage! We are not allowed to change the rules of marriage.

What did the Lord say in reply to the question? He stated: **“Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder”** (Matt. 19:4-6).

It is worth noting that this is His reply. When asked **“Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?”** The Lord made no mention of divorce, putting away, etc. Rather, He stated that man is to cleave to his wife; two individuals (man and woman) have become one in marriage. They are no more two, but now one flesh. AND, what God hath joined together, man is not to separate! That is His reply! Let us examine the reply of the Lord!

MARRIAGE IS BETWEEN A MAN AND A WOMAN

We must hold to the Biblical position of marriage. Marriage is between a man and a woman. Marriage cannot be comprised of a man and a man; a woman and a woman. Regardless of what any government may say, marriage is between a man and a woman. Furthermore, because of the ungodly time in which we are living, let us also state that

Jesus dealt with the transgender (gender dysphoria) issue as well! For the Lord stated, **“Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female...”** (Matt. 19:4). He made them either male or female. And what the Lord made them is exactly what they are and ever shall be with respect to their gender.

It is a depraved society that would allow men to marry men or even for a man to lie with a man; or women with women. Scripture tells us that **“...God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet”** (Rom. 1:26-27).

THE WORDS OF THE CREATOR

The Lord Jesus Christ refers to the book of beginnings, Genesis. The reference is to Genesis 2:24. Let us note that verse in its context. **“And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took**

one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed” (Gen. 2:18-25).

The whole scene begins with the LORD God and ends with the LORD God. In Genesis 2:18, it is the LORD God who said, **“..It is not good that the man should be alone: I will make him an help meet for him”** and it is the LORD who stated **“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh”** in Genesis 2:24.

The LORD God brought before Adam every thing created. Adam was given charge over them and he named them; but among all of creation was not found a **“help meet for him”** (Gen. 2:20). The phrase “help-meet” comes from this verse. According to Strong's Concordance, “an help meet” is one word in the Hebrew language. It literally means, “aid, succor, help;” In the English the word “help” means “to aid, to assist, to lend strength or means towards effecting a purpose” (Webster's 1828 Dictionary). The word “help” means “fitted for, or suitable.” When we look at these together, the LORD God said He would make one who was fitted for or suitable to help, aid, assist, lend strength to Adam. Yet among all of creation, there was

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not found one who was suitable to assist Adam.

The LORD God then caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, took one of Adam's ribs, and He (the LORD God) made a woman. Adam named her woman, stating, **"And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man"** (Gen. 2:23). These are the first recorded words of man!

In the next verse we find the law of marriage. Now, many have thought that Adam is continuing to speak in Genesis 2:24. Yet, when we compare Scripture with Scripture, we find that it is the LORD God, for Jesus states in our text of Matthew 19:4-5, **"... Have ye not read that HE which made them at the beginning made them male and female, AND SAID, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?"** It was not Adam who stated Genesis 2:24, but **"He which made them at the beginning..."** It is the LORD God who stated those words. It is the LORD God who established marriage and the laws of it.

In another passage of Scripture we read that God is immutable: **"For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed"** (Mal. 3:6). The LORD does not change! Yet many (saved and lost; Baptists and non-baptists; preachers and church members) would have you and me believe that the law of marriage has been changed by God. If it has been changed, when did God change it? Where in His word did He revise the law

of marriage? And if He did revise those laws of marriage, how then can we preach an unchanging God? How can some men preach an unchanging God who has changing ways? Oh that we might be Biblically consistent in our beliefs and preachings.

THE UNCHANGING LAW OF MARRIAGE

Having established that it is the LORD God who stated **"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh"** (Gen. 2:24), let us now expound that Scripture with Scripture.

Leave his father and mother: Vv. 24—A man is to "leave" his father and mother. A man is born unto a father and mother. Yet he is to "leave" them. The word leave may be rendered: "forsake, relinquish, permit." Before he is married his allegiance is to his father and mother. The son has been divinely given to his father and mother for instruction (Prov. 1:8), training (Prov. 22:6), bringing up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4). Yet, the Lord willing, the day will come when that man shall be married. He is to "relinquish" or "leave" his father and his mother.

This does NOT mean that he should "drop his affections to his parents, or be remiss in his obedience to them, honor of them, and esteem for them, or to neglect the care of them, if they stand in need of his assistance; but that he should depart from his father's house, and no more dwell with him, or bed and board in his house" (Gill, John; Exposition of Old and New Testaments; Genesis 2:24).

Shall Cleave Unto His Wife: Vv. 24—Here we find the duties of a man to his wife. He is to "cling" to her; to "adhere" to her; to "be

joined together."

And they shall be one flesh: Vv. 24—This is the extent of his cleaving to her: "And they SHALL be one flesh." When a man and a woman are married, they become one. The union between the two is so close that they are one person, one soul, one body. They are inseparable. No longer he and her, but one flesh.

The Lord Jesus expounds this Himself saying, **"Wherefore they are no more twain (two), but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder"** (Matt. 19:6). God, having established the laws of marriage, is said to have joined folks together in marriage. Regardless of what a society, government, the individual presiding over the marriage ceremony, a false church, ministers, people in general may say, marriage is God's institution. When folks enter into marriage they have been joined together by God. Jesus stated, that man is not permitted to **"put asunder"** that which He has **"joined together."** Man cannot separate the marriage. This notion, that going to a court house, filing some papers, and then a judge or family advocate is able to declare that the marriage is dissolved, or that a world's religious system can some how absolve the marriage and say that it never took place is beyond absurd. Read those words again, **"..let not man put asunder."** Man in any form, whether it be government, religious organizations, preachers, etc is not to put asunder a marriage. For God hath joined them together!

HOW THEN DOES A MARRIAGE END

The Scriptures are plain and clear on this matter as well. Once again, we reiterate, just as God established the law of marriage,

what marriage is, how it is to be conducted by both the husband and the wife; we find the Lord has also established what dissolves the union. There is but one thing that dissolves the union of marriage: DEATH! Let us once again turn to the authority of the Scriptures: **"Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter"** (Rom. 7:1-6).

The Apostle Paul is writing unto the saints at Rome (Rom. 1:7) concerning the subject of salvation. He comes now to the seventh chapter. In this seventh chapter Paul is showing that we as believers are dead to the letter of the old Mosaic law, for he previously stated that we are under grace (Rom. 6:14-15). To

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illustrate this point, Paul, being led of the Holy Spirit refers unto the law of marriage. We were once married to the law (the law of Moses) when we were the bondage of sin. But now, we are free from that law because we died in Christ Jesus and are now free to marry another. This is the teaching that Paul is bringing out. Yet, he uses the law of marriage to make known the truth of salvation. In doing so, the Holy Spirit, through Paul, plainly shows that marriage ends solely and wholly in death.

We find that the Lord Jesus Christ taught the very same thing during His earthly ministry. Observe: **“Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery”** (Luke 16:18). **“It hath been said, whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery”** (Matt. 5:31-32). **And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same matter. And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery”** (Mark 10:10-12).

If divorce dissolves a marriage, this was the opportunity for Christ to make it plain and clear to us all. Yet, the Lord clearly

affirms the law of marriage as laid down by God in the beginning: **“..He that made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?”** (Matt. 19:4-5). The Lord Jesus affirms that divorce does not dissolve a union; it does not end the marriage. Only death dissolves the union of marriage.

The Scriptures are clear! It is man who has sought for loopholes, and ways around the Word of God. It was not always this way. Man is only concerned about what he/she wants. Yet the Word of God is quite clear: **“So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress..”** (Rom. 7:3). Why? Because she is still bound to him because he is not dead! **“For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth....”** The word “bound” means to bind, to knit, to tie. It is from this we get our phrase “the bonds of matrimony” or “tie the knot” with reference to marriage. I Corinthians 7:39 states the very same thing: **“The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord”** (I Cor. 7:39).

And so it is death alone that can and does dissolve the union, the cleaving, the marriage. Divorce does NOT dissolve the marriage union.

ABANDONMENT

There is a notion from one verse in all of Scripture that if a husband abandons the wife, she is then free to marry; or if the wife abandons the husband, he is free to marry. I suppose one would say that if

one abandons the other, then they are both free to re-marry. For us to take this position, we would have to go against all of which the Scripture says. We would have to deny those words of the Lord in Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:3-12; Matthew 5:32; Romans 7:1-6; I Corinthians 7:39. Let us examine the Scripture that allegedly states that “abandonment” ends a marriage: **“And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife. But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: if any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy. But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace”** (I Cor. 7:10-15).

Some take I Corinthians 7:15, **“But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace”** to mean that if your partner abandons you, then you are free to re-marry. Yet, this is not at all what the Scripture states. We must remember, that Scripture must be interpreted with Scripture. The same Holy Spirit who breathed out I Corinthians 7:15 ALSO breathed out I Corinthians 7:39, **“The**

wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.” Does the Holy Spirit contradict Himself? Does he say in one verse that abandonment ends a marriage and then in another that it is death? Does God say in Genesis 2:24 that two have become one flesh; reiterates it in the person of His Son in Matthew 19:4-6; but then the Holy Spirit contradicts the Father and the Son in I Corinthians 7:15? Is God divided? Logic and reason alone tell us that this cannot be! **“Let God be true, but every man a liar”** (Rom. 3:4).

So what then does I Corinthians 7:15, **“But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace”** pertain to?

First of all, observe the context. This passage of Scripture is only applicable to a married couple where one of them is saved and the other is lost: **“But if the unbelieving depart”** (I Cor. 7:15). This whole section of verses (I Corinthians 7:12-24) pertains to a man or woman who is married and is then saved, but their husband or wife is an unbeliever. This is NOT applicable to two saved individuals. Remember, we must leave the Scriptures in their context or setting. Paul writes that the believer is to let the unbeliever **“depart.”** The word **“depart”** means to “go away” to “separate” and comes from the idea of an empty room or a large open space as the country, or a region, or a coast.

Next, Paul writes, **“A brother or sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath**

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called us to peace" (I Cor. 7:15). Many "wrest" (II Peter 3:16) the Scriptures into saying that the saved person who is deserted is now free from the bonds of marriage because he or she was deserted. It is hard to believe that some will claim that the "powers that be" which "are ordained of God" (Rom. 13:1) are not to put asunder what God hath joined together, but somehow an unbelieving husband or wife can do it! How strange, to say the least! Again, we must reiterate the law of marriage: **"...Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder"** (Matt. 19:4-6); **"For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man"** (Rom. 7:2-3). For anyone to conclude that a person simply leaving a marriage constitutes a death is absurd. To say that because they have abandoned the marriage that it is like a death is equally outlandish. Death means death! If the unbeliever departs, but is not dead and the believer who has been deserted remarries,

then he or she is an adulterer/adulteress. Why? Because **"...if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress..."** (Rom. 7:3).

I Corinthians 7:15, **"...A brother or sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace"** rather speaks to us that the saved person is not held hostage by the unbeliever. They are not to chase after them, but let them depart. The word **"bondage"** (I Cor. 7:15) means "enslavement" and is not the same as **"bound"** (Rom. 7:2-3), which means "to bind, to knit, to tie." A brother or sister is not under enslavement to make a person stay with them. You cannot control another person. You cannot make another person do anything. If the other party to the marriage is going to leave, you cannot hold them hostage, nor are you required to be a hostage.

Furthermore, never does it say in this passage of Scripture that if the unbeliever departs you may marry as you will! Previously, Paul wrote, **"And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife"** (I Cor. 7:10-11). If one departs, abandons their spouse, they are NOT free to marry another. Rather, the one who departs has two options: 1) they are to remain unmarried, that is not to marry another or 2) they are to be reconciled back to their spouse. Furthermore, the Bible states, that the spouse who is deserted is not to put away the other, or give a bill of divorcement.

Lastly, we note that Paul records the words of the Holy Spirit: **"but**

God hath called us to peace" (I Cor. 7:15). The word **"peace"** here may be rendered "quietness, rest." Christ has called us to **"live peaceably with all men"** (Rom. 12:18). God hath not called us to fight, argue, dispute. Thus, the believing party who is being deserted is to strive for peace, quietness, rest in the marriage. Thus, if the unbeliever depart, **"let him depart"** (I Cor. 7:15). But neither are free to marry again, they are to remain unmarried (that is, not marrying another) or they are to be reconciled to one another. However, since neither has died, they are bound to one another, for marriage ends in death.

THE "FORNICATION CLAUSE"

Let us return to our original text: Matthew 19. Remember, the Pharisees came asking Him a question to **"tempt"** (Matt. 19:3) the Lord. After He answered their first question, they had a follow up question. Again, they were not interested in truth, only in tempting the Lord. Let us note:

"They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you, whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery" (Matt. 19:7-9). **"It hath been said, whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the**

cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery" (Matt. 5:31-32).

There has been much needless consternation by many over this "fornication clause." Folks would do well to simply believe what is written instead of trying to **"wrest"** (II Peter 3:16) the Scriptures; stop trying to cram their own theology into the Word of God; while they ought to have God's Word dictate their theology. It should be noted, that the "fornication clause" governs divorce, but says nothing towards remarrying. Observe that the Lord states after **"except it be for fornication"** He then states, **"and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery"** (Matt. 19:9) and again **"...and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery"** (Matt. 5:32). Both of those statements came after the "fornication clause." We reiterate, that in this passage of Scripture, Christ makes it clear that fornication pertains to divorce and not remarriage.

Let us note the text of Matthew 19:7-9. The Pharisees ask the Lord a follow up question of temptation: **"Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?"** This is a reference to Deuteronomy 24:1-4. These verses contain the "Mosaic Law of Divorce." The Lord Jesus gave a reply: **"He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so."** Observe the answer that Christ Jesus gives to the Pharisees:

"MOSES BECAUSE OF THE HARDNESS OF YOUR

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HEARTS SUFFERED YOU TO PUT AWAY YOUR WIVES:

You will take note that the Lord Jesus stated that Moses **“suffered”** the Jews of old to put away (divorce) their wives **“because of the hardness of your hearts.”** The word **“hardness”** is also defined by Strong’s as “hard-heartedness, especially destitution of spiritual perception.” It was not at the leadership of the Holy Spirit that **“Moses...suffered Israel to put away their wives,”** but rather the hardness of their hearts. There has never been, nor will there ever be a time when “hard-heartedness” brought about anything good. A “hardness of heart” is one that has no forgiveness in it. A “hardness of heart” is not a broken and contrite heart.

Divorce was not commanded by Moses, but **“suffered”** or “permitted.” One preacher recorded concerning Deuteronomy 24:1-4: “The question of divorce and remarriage is an age-old question upon which men are never satisfied because they will not believe and submit to the Word of God. The law of Moses concerning divorce was instituted because divorce existed. Yet, divorce was the creation of man, and not of God. Marriage is the creation and appointment of God for the benefit of man, Mark 10:2-12; Matt. 5:31-32; Gen. 2:22-24. The original institution of marriage by God was for a man and a woman to be joined as one flesh until death. There was never a divorce until sin was in the world, I Cor. 7:1-3, 10-17, 27, 39. Many excuses are made as to why people want to divorce. Divorce is never necessary. Remarriage after divorce is never sanctioned. If separation occurs, then the

separated spouses are to remain unmarried or be reconciled one to another. If a person is saved after having been married, and his or her spouse is unsaved, then the saved person is a witness in his or her own house to the unsaved spouse and to the children” (Hille, Timothy John. *The Book of Deuteronomy*, Deut. 24:1-4 (page 124)).

God did not invent divorce! But He did regulate it! Yes, God can and does regulate inventions of sinful man!

“BUT FROM THE BEGINNING IT WAS NOT SO:”

“..but from the beginning it was not so” (Matt. 19:8). The Lord reiterates what He had first answered the Pharisees with: Genesis 2:24. The Lord goes back yet again to God’s law of marriage. Man has perverted many things. Man has perverted worship, church, ordinances of the church, offices of the church, etc. And we who hold God’s Word to be the sole rule of faith and practice point to the Scriptures. We must do the same thing with our present subject: Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage. Christ Jesus goes back to God’s Word, not the traditions of man. So ought we. Did not God say to Israel of old through the prophet Jeremiah **“Thus saith the LORD, Stand in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein”** (Jer. 6:16). Unlike Israel, let us walk in those **“old paths, where is the good way.”**

From the beginning, there was not divorce; there was no putting away. Divorce was introduced through the hard-heartedness of men and women. It did not exist until sin entered the world

through the disobedience of one man (Rom. 5:12, 19). When the Lord instituted marriage, gave the law of marriage, not one thing was said concerning divorce. Rather, the exact opposite. For the Lord stated: **“...and they shall be one flesh”** (Gen. 2:24). You cannot dissolve one.

“WHOSOEVER SHALL PUT AWAY HIS WIFE, EXCEPT IT BE FOR FORNICATION:”

We now come to the “fornication clause.” Again, let us reiterate, this does not apply to remarriage, but governs divorce. Fornication is the only reason given in all of Scripture for divorce. It is not given as an exception for remarriage, but divorce.

First, let us state that fornication and adultery are not the same thing. They are not the same in English. They are not the same in Greek. The word **“fornication”** is *porneia* in Greek. From it comes our English word pornography and pornographic. The word **“adultery”** is *moichao*. The Lord Jesus Christ used two completely different words in Matthew 19:9. We also find that the Lord used *porneia* and *moichao* in Matthew 5:32, **“But I say unto you that whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery; and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery”** and in Matthew 15:19, **“For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.”** The Lord used *porneia* (fornication) and *moichao* (adultery) separately from one another. Why? Because they are not the same thing; they mean two different things. The Lord Jesus understood that they mean two different things. If **“fornication”** and **“adultery”** are

the same thing, then why did the Lord use two different words? It seems to this preacher that Christ used them because He meant two different things by them. Paul follows the Lord’s usage in Galatians 5:19, **“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness.”** If these are the same thing, then why did Paul list them separately in his epistle to the Galatians, one right after the other?

The Biblical usage of **“fornication”** shows that it pertains to sexual intercourse before one is married. This is evident from Matthew 19:9; Galatians 5:19; I Corinthians 7:2: **“Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband”;** John 8:41: **“Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.”** In John 8:41—the Lord Jesus is holding a discourse with the Pharisees. Jesus was accused of being the product of fornication between Joseph and Mary as they denied the miraculous, Divine, virgin-birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. They believed that Joseph and Mary had committed fornication. Joseph believed that Mary had committed fornication. Observe: **“Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise; When, as his mother, Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost, Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily [privately]. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared**

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What the Bible Says

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unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS" (Matt. 1:18-25).

Observe here that **"Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together"** (Matt. 1:18). The word "espouse" literally means "to betroth" (*Strong's Concordance*), or "to woo her in marriage, to ask in marriage, to be promised in marriage." So, they had not yet married, yet Joseph was **"minded to put her away privily"** (Matt. 1:19). How was Joseph minded to put her away? Had she committed adultery? NO! The Scriptures clearly teach us that Joseph thought Mary had committed an act of **"fornication"** not **"adultery."** John 8:41 confirms that it was widely held that Mary had committed fornication with someone. Furthermore, we see here that what Christ Jesus taught was practiced. That "putting away" was done for **"fornication"** not **"adultery."**

This is not what is practiced in our society today! In fact,

folks do NOT even divorce for **"adultery"** but for the fact that they no longer wish to be married to another person. Yet, and we reiterate this yet again; marriage ends in death.

"AND SHALL MARRY ANOTHER, COMMITTETH ADULTERY, AND WHOSOEVER MARRIETH HER WHO IS PUT AWAY DOTH COMMIT ADULTERY:"

The Lord continues His teaching on marriage, divorce and remarriage. He states that if one marries another, they are in fact committing adultery. And if one marries one who has been put away, then they are committing adultery. The Lord remains consistent in His teaching. His exposition of marriage, divorce, and remarriage maintains the original teaching of that which was laid down **"in the beginning"** (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:4-6, 8).

MARRIAGE, DIVORCE, AND REMARRIAGE AND THE OFFICE OF BISHOP

We want to look at what the Bible says pertaining to the office of a Bishop and marriage. We have two passages of Scripture that give us the qualifications of a Bishop: **"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?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into**

the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them who are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil" (I Tim. 3:1-7). **"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, For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers"** (Titus 1:5-9).

In these two passages of Scripture are the qualifications of a Bishop, Pastor, Elder for the Lord's Church. If a man does not meet these qualifications, then he is not fit, suited, for the office of Bishop, Pastor, Elder of the church. In both passages, we are told that the individual who holds the office of the bishop **"must be... the husband of one wife"** (I Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:6). Now, many people want to read this Scripture as if it said, the wife of one husband. But, that is not what is written. Nor does it say, the husband of one wife at a time (meaning a man can divorce, and remarry; and divorce and remarry all he wants and still hold the office of a bishop because he is only married to one at a time). It clearly states that the bishop **"must be...the husband of one wife"** (I Tim. 3:2). We must interpret Scripture with Scripture. Since marriage ends in death, can a man hold the office

of a bishop if he is divorced? Can a man hold the office of a bishop if he is divorced and remarried? Can a man hold the office of a bishop when he is married to a woman who is divorced? Based on the authority of God's Word, he cannot! He has been disqualified from holding that office. If he is called to preach, his calling is now limited. He may preach the gospel to every creature, but he cannot hold the office of a bishop. If a man is married to a woman, then divorces her, is his house in order? Is he ruling his house well? What if he is divorced and then marries another woman? Since marriage does not end in divorce, but in death, how then does he meet this qualification of **"the husband of one wife,"** now that he is married to another woman while his "1st wife" is still alive. However, if his "1st wife" has died, he is free to marry **"only in the Lord"** (I Cor. 7:39).

CLOSING REMARKS

I do NOT know when this **"ancient landmark"** was departed from. It was before I was born. But as we said, the **"ancient landmark"** of marriage must be re-set, restored, and returned to. This is true for everyone, including that of the office of the bishop. We must begin to preach what Jesus preached concerning marriage: **"...Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder"** (Matt. 19:4-6).

We must not only "re-set" the **"ancient landmark"** of marriage,

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What the Bible Says

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we must also equip through the preaching and teaching of God's word, the present and future generations for Biblical marriage. We must train our boys and men to **"love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it"** (Eph. 5:25), and we must train our girls and women to **"submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord"** (Eph. 5:22). When we get back to those godly principles and precepts as outlined in the Scriptures, when we return to walking in the **"old paths"** (Jer. 6:16), we will find rest for our souls. As Moses said at Sinai, so say I now unto the brethren and saints, **"..Who is on the LORD'S side? let him come unto me.."** (Ex. 32:26). Maranatha. Amen. (All emphasis in Scripture by NH).



The Short Pews



Brief Articles
by Curtis Pugh
(1944 - 2018)

THE KIND OF PREACHERS WE NEED TODAY

Worldly people think themselves qualified to judge God's men. But God, in His infinite wisdom, continues to call and equip His preachers: not that all who claim the office are actually God-called and God-equipped. But every faithful God-called preacher accomplishes exactly what God wants whether he is successful in the worldly wise individual's eyes or not.

My proof for that last statement is what God said to His man Ezekiel: **"And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, (for they are a rebellious house,) yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them"** (Ezek. 2:5). The worldly wise individual judges God's preachers on the basis of numbers: how big his church is or how much money comes in or how popular the preacher is. God looks at things differently: numbers are not His concern. Since, as Jesus said, **".. God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham"** He is able to raise up as many spiritual sons of Abraham as He pleases (see Matthew 3:9).

God was not concerned with giving all those Jews a chance to be saved. In fact, God told Ezekiel, **"But the house of Israel will not hearken unto thee; for they will not hearken unto me: for all the house of Israel are impudent and hardhearted"** (Ezek. 3:7). Humanly speaking Ezekiel could not expect to be a success in the eyes of the worldly. The Jews would refuse to hear him even though **"The word of the LORD came expressly unto Ezekiel.. and the hand of the LORD was there upon him"** (Ezek. 1:3). They were not rejecting Ezekiel: in reality they were rejecting Jehovah!

Ezekiel was called of God to prophesy judgment upon Israel. God said, **"Say thou thus unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; As I live, surely they that are in the wastes shall fall by the sword, and him that is in the open field will I give to the beasts to be devoured, and they that be in the forts and in the caves shall die of the pestilence. For I will lay the land most desolate, and the pomp of her strength**

shall cease; and the mountains of Israel shall be desolate, that none shall pass through. Then shall they know that I am the LORD, when I have laid the land most desolate because of all their abominations which they have committed" (Ezek. 33:27-29). And God said to Ezekiel: **"And when this cometh to pass, (lo, it will come,) then shall they know that a prophet hath been among them"** (Ezek. 33:33).

Those Jews were without excuse! They had been warned. And so it is today: God has His faithful preachers. It may be this side of death or it may be the other side, but to paraphrase God's statement, **"whether you hear, or whether you refuse to hear yet you shall know that there hath been a prophet among you."** Hear and believe God's Word before judgment comes!

DECISIONS, DECISIONS, DECISIONS

We make a great many decisions every day: good ones and bad ones. We change our minds about our decisions. That is the nature of decisions: they are often reversed. The word "decision" appears only twice in your Bible: twice in the same verse. This is amazing since so many religious people talk about "making a decision for Christ" and the importance of such a "decision." You would think that if making a decision was so very important the word would appear frequently in the Bible, but it does not.

The one place "decision" appears in the Bible is in the Old Testament. It has nothing to do with becoming a Christian. The King James translators themselves wanted us to know that the word "decision" did not mean individuals deciding something because they added two other words in their marginal note

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BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 4-1-2018 to 4-30-2018

Beginning Balance	\$347.10
RECEIPTS:	
Ann McSwain, Grapevine, TX	15.00
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	300.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL	60.00
Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX	50.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV	200.00
Carol Willett, Edgewater, FL	50.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL	25.00
Emmanuel B. C., Oldtown, KY	100.00
Eve Knowles, Scarborough, ME	100.00
Faith B. C., Lynn, AR	12.50
Gail Knowles, Scarborough, ME	20.00
Grace B. C., Rural Hall, NC	50.00
Grace B. C., Tulsa, OK	70.00
Grace M. B. C., Marion, IL	50.00
Indore B. C., Indore, WV	100.00
The Lord's Church, Goose Creek, SC	50.00
Michael Sherman, Ashland, KY	35.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH	100.00
Parkway Landmark B. C., Springfield, OR	200.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL	100.00
Portland B. C., Plumerville, AR	50.00
Southside B. C., Fulton, MS	25.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Silsbee, TX	30.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA	25.00
Subscriptions	46.00
Anonymous	2,710.00
Dividing checks	0.00
Sub Total	\$4,573.50
TOTAL	\$4,920.60

EXPENDITURES:	
Printing	490.00
Postage	574.37
Wages	2,300.00
FICA	175.90
Supplies	0.00
Dividing checks	0.00
Bank Charge	13.00
Total Expenditures	\$3,553.27
ENDING BALANCE	\$1,367.33



BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 4-1-2018 to 4-30-2018

Beginning Balance	\$987.07
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	225.00
Calvary Ind. B. C., Sumas, WA	100.00
.....	325.00
TOTAL	1,312.07
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio Time	363.98
Bank charge	10.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	373.98
Interest	+0.01
ENDING BALANCE	\$938.10

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Northport, AL and Pastor Todd Bryant will be having their 2018 Summer Bible Conference, July 27th thru 29th.

This year's theme is "Applying His Attributes."

The scheduled speakers are Elders Tom Horn, Chad Beck, Brian Farley and Jacob West.

Service times are Friday 7:00 p.m., Saturday 10:00 a.m., and Sunday 10:00 a.m.

All are invited to attend.

The Philadelphia Baptist Church of Decatur, AL and Pastor Doyal Thomas will be having their Annual Fellowship Meeting September 14th thru 16th.

Scheduled speakers are Elders John Pruitt and Eldon Joslin.

Service times are Friday 7:00 p.m., Saturday 10:00 a.m. with lunch provided, and Sunday 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

All are invited to attend.

The Harmony Baptist Church of Godfrey, IL is seeking God's man to lead us forward. We are not a large congregation, but we have unity and a love for God and His truth. We are seeking a full time Pastor to lead us. You can learn more about us on our website: hbcgodfrey.com.

Interested candidates can contact Brother Dave Gaworski: davemaryb1@yahoo.com.

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Wake Forest, NC is in need of a pastor. For more information, please contact Titus Dickerson at (919) 570-6178 or email info@sgbc-wakeforest.org.

The Grace Bible Baptist Church of Denham Springs, LA is in search of a pastor.

For a statement of faith you can visit the church website at <http://GraceBibleBaptist.webhop.org> or <http://gracebbc.dyndns.org:81/>.

You may contact any of the following for more information: Keith Laurence (225) 664-3557, Lucien LeSage (225) 803-9710, Charlie Andrews (225) 200-1171, or Joey Newell (225) 772-9158.

The Grace Missionary Baptist Church of Marion, IL is seeking a pastor. Please contact Gary Ratley at (618) 841-0228 for more information.

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

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

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

The Short Pews

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giving alternate meanings. The word appears is Joel 3:14. It says, "**Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision** {decision: or, concision, or, threshing}," (Complete with KJV marginal note). So the idea is not that people should make a decision, but that God was going to bring His determined judgment upon certain people. They were to be cut off ("concision") or beaten as in "threshing."

So where did all this talk about making a decision for Christ come from? It did not come from the Bible. Since it did not come from God's revelation, it must be an invention of man or the devil.

Jesus said, "**..I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance,**" (Matt. 9:13). Repentance is caused by godly sorrow: "**For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of...**" (II Cor. 7:10). Repentance (turning from sin to God) pleases God because Jesus came to call men to repent. It is logical that godly sorrow pleases God for it is the cause of God-pleasing repentance. But the only people that can do anything to please God are those who have been born again by the Holy Spirit and in whom the Spirit dwells.

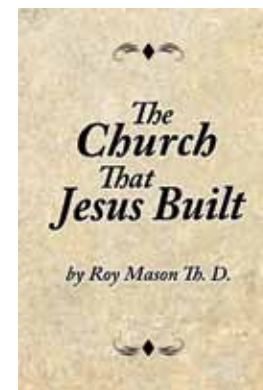
Romans 8:8-9 proves this last statement: "**So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.**"

Remember Jesus said, "**Ye must be born again**" (John 3:7) and God told us that this new birth is "**not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God**" (John 1:13). The Spirit in bringing about the new birth is as uncontrollable as the wind that "**bloweth where it listeth** (wants), **and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit**" (John 3:8). Being "born of God" is not the result of any action of man.



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