

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

Peace

By John Harvey

*'With aspect mild and elevated eye,
The Christian seated on a mount serene,
Above the joys of sense, and passions' storm:
All the black cares and tumults of this life,
Like harmless thunder breaking at his feet,
Excite his pity, not impair his peace.'*

In whatever relation we contemplate the subject of peace, whether it be in relation to God, to nations, to families, or to individuals, it always affords great pleasure and peculiar interest to a pious mind. It is one of the greatest national blessings that can be enjoyed. War is a system of barbarity, wretchedness, devastation, and death. "Every battle of the warrior is with confused noise and garments rolled in blood." It is a violation of the laws of Heaven for nation to lift up sword against nation. Such adventures are at variance with the principles of the New Testament, in which such iron-hearted encounters and bloody contests are sternly prohibited.

War is not of recent origin; it is not the offspring of yesterday: it is coeval with the infancy of the world. We see the system in miniature in the murder of righteous Abel; but the principle which influenced that tragic deed was not confined with the ashes of that early martyr, but it has been strengthened and cherished in every subsequent age. This life-destroying system has been established on a broader basis, and carried out on a more extended scale; and even yet the hands of some nations are crimsoned with the blood of the slain. The long train of evils which are the effects of such contentions cannot be fully enumerated or depicted. It has snapped the ink which united nations, and they have tumbled into confusion; it has depopulated cities, dethroned monarchs, dissolved dynasties, robbed man of his rights, embarrassed governments, overthrown empires, shed a withering blast over kingdoms, retarded the progress of commerce, and sent millions hurried and unprepared to the tribunal of God. But we hope the day is not far distant when the thirst

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The Dangers of Sin - The Judgement of God

By Paul Stepp
of Indore, West Virginia

"But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die. Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel; Is not my way equal? are not your ways unequal? When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die. Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die. Yet saith the house of Israel, The way of the Lord is not equal. O house of Israel, are not my ways equal? are not your ways unequal? Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and

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Spiritual Gymnastics

By Milburn R. Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)

"But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness. For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come" (I Tim. 4:7-8).

The modern world puts much stress on bodily exercise. Much is being said about the need of working all of the muscles of the body on a daily basis. People are greatly concerned about getting the entire body in good general condition. We witness people bicycling, swimming, running, jumping, and lifting weights to engage in all kinds of physical exercise. Nothing in the Bible condemns this, seeing God made us for action. Unless the bodily powers are exercised they are injured. But the main stress of the Bible is on spiritual exercise. That is what I shall mostly be concerned about in this message.

THE PROFIT OF PHYSICAL EXERCISE

Two views have been taken as to the meaning of "bodily exercise" in my text. Some take these words as a reference to ascertain, the modification of the body for religious purposes, as in the abstinence from marriage and meats. This view is said to fit the context where asceticism has been dealt with by the apostle. But I think it is wrong to suppose that Paul would have put his approval on what he had just condemned as a departure from the faith (I Tim. 4:1-3) and as "old wives' fables" (I Tim. 4:7).

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Have You Any Repentance Toward God?

By Nathaniel Hille
of Caldwell, Kansas

We find that in many pulpits today there are many things that are being taught. We hear sermons on "giving," "love," "being a good person," and these are well and good; but there is the essential element to eternal salvation that is being left-off: Repentance. Repentance toward God is the missing note in many pulpits, churches, and seminaries today.

Repentance toward God is taught throughout the Scriptures. It was the message of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus Christ: "In those



days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 3:1, 2). Christ preached repentance first when He began His earthly ministry: "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 4:17). It is what Christ commissioned His Church to preach, "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47). It is what God hath commanded all men everywhere to do: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts.17:30).

What if I do NOT have repentance towards God? The Scriptures are quite

clear to the end of those who do not repent of their sins. Christ Jesus taught: "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3, 5). The rich man in hell who lifted up his eyes being in torments acknowledges that repentance toward God is needed in order to escape the wrath of God (Luke 16:30). Without repentance toward God, your sins will never be blotted out, forgiven, and you will never be converted or born-again by the Spirit of God (Acts 3:19).

You may have your baptisms, your communions, your feelings, your good works, you may even consider yourself a good person, but unless you have repentance toward God, you too shall perish in everlasting fire. AMEN.



*Hearts may agree though heads differ.
But it is a sounder agreement when heads and hearts go together,
so that we are one in belief as well as in feeling.
"Can two walk together, except they be agreed" (Amos 3:33)?*

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

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Cockrell's Corner



By the Editor

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

It has been alleged by some that the present editor has teetered and tottered on his doctrinal position from what his father, the former editor of this paper, believed. Many are the accusers, but where is the evidence? Some have regarded the article by Bro. Bryant published in the November 2010 issue, to be proof of this. While reading through some older issues of the *Banner*, I came across an article that my father wrote in regards to a new Baptist confession that had been printed. One of the things he disagreed with was its position on the Authorized Version (KJV) of the Bible. It is interesting how soon people are to tell you that you have changed when you haven't. Below is a reprint from the June 1997 issue of the *Banner*. It is enlightening to say the least.

THE INNERRANT KJV By Milburn Cockrell

I briefly quote a part of Article 4: "The Holy Bible": ". . .that it has been supernaturally preserved inerrant in the Authorized Version (KJV) for all generations. . ." This confession is significant in that it claims a translation of the Bible is inerrant, and not merely for the English speaking world (a far more defensible position) but "for all generations." To put it plainly there never has been and never will be but one preserved and verbally inspired Bible and that is the King James Version, according to this confession. This leaves all churches and believers without an inspired Bible who lived before 1611. The Hebrew text of Isaiah and Ezekiel were pretty good, but they were not the supernaturally preserved inerrant Word of God. Paul and Peter had some pretty good Greek manuscripts, but they were not the supernaturally preserved inerrant Word of God. This is a very sneaky and subtle denial of the preservation of God's Word. It also implies errors in the original manuscripts. Isaiah and Ezekiel were not inspired; Paul and Peter were not inspired, but the English Catholics who translated the KJV were! In fact they are saying that there was no Bible until 1611. Since God uses His Word in the conversion of sinners, were all reprobated to Hell who lived prior to 1611? Or, were they saved without a supernaturally preserved inerrant King James Version? Let them give the answer.

These men love to confuse the issue to

make it appear they love the Bible and all who do not agree with them are liberal and heretics. So let us set the record straight for the benefit of all concerned. This issue is not, is the KJV the most faithful translation in English, for most conservative Baptists believe it is. I have never used anything but this translation in my 40 years in the ministry. I do not know of a single Sovereign Grace, Landmark Baptist preacher who does not use the 1769 KJV. But there is a vast difference in saying the KJV is a faithful translation and is the Word of God than saying it is the only supernaturally preserved inerrant Word of God for all generations.

Baptists have generally ascribed inerrancy only to the original manuscripts of the Bible. The English Baptist Confession of 1677, Chapter I, Section 8, says: "The Old Testament in Hebrew, (which was the Native language of the people of God of old) and the New Testament in Greek, (which at the time of the writing of it was most generally known to the Nations being immediately inspired by God, and by his singular care and Providence kept pure in all Ages, are therefore authentic; so as in all controversies of Religion, the Church is finally to appear to them."

Please note the contrast between the 21st century Baptists and the Baptists of the 17th century. The old Baptists believed the Hebrew and Greek originals were inspired and pure. The 21st century Baptists believe that a translation made from the original languages is inerrant, namely only the KJV. The 17th century Baptists would compare translations with the inspired and pure original languages. The 21st century Baptists would compare the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts to the English translation! To put it plainly, the 21st century Baptists have completely reversed the position of the 17th century Baptists! These modern-day Baptists have made a 180 degree turn from the old Baptists. Now they want their neo-orthodoxy to pass for orthodoxy!

The Ruckmanites then always jump up and down and say, "Then you cannot lay your hands upon the inspired Word of God." To which I reply the Masoretic Hebrew Text and the Textus Receptus Greek text are the inspired, preserved, and inerrant Word of God. When the King James Version, or any other version, faithfully follows these and gives the correct sense they are the Word of God in English or any other language. When they do not they are not the inspired, preserved, inerrant Word of God. Like the 17th century Baptists, I will always appeal to the languages in which the Bible was originally written. The King James Version, being largely the work of William Tyndale and Myles Coverdale, is a faithful translation. Wherein the translators made slight errors, these

have been pointed out for centuries by commentators and Bible scholars. Modern-day translations have not been subjected to such investigations and are therefore suspect.

I will cite just one case of mistranslation to demonstrate that the King James translators did err in a few places. Take the word "cockatrice" which occurs in some Old Testament passages (Isa. 11:8; 14:29; 59:5; Jer. 8:17). In these verses the Hebrew word is either *tsepha* or *tsiphoni* which means "adder" or "viper." But for some reason unknown to me, our translators use the word "cockatrice." To get the meaning of the word "cockatrice" we must consult an English dictionary. The 21st century Baptists care nothing for the Hebrew and Greek, for only the KJV is the "supernaturally preserved inerrant" Bible for all generations. So what does the English word "cockatrice" mean? *Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language* (1959 edition) says: "A fabulous serpent supposedly hatched from a cock's egg and having power to kill by a look." Since the KJV is "inerrant" the writers of the 21st century believe that a chicken laid an egg which hatched into a snake which has the power to kill by a look. If these brethren can swallow this foolishness, then they must also believe in elves, the Great Pumpkin, and Santa Claus.

Isaiah and Jeremiah never wrote anything about a "cockatrice" in the Hebrew Bible. They wrote about an adder, a snake found in Palestine. It was the English translators who came up with the word "cockatrice." To point out this error is not to be a "Bible corrector," but it is to give the common people the true sense of the Hebrew text (the inspired, preserved, inerrant Bible). Those who deny "adder" is the proper translation are the real "Bible correctors," for they reject the inspired Word which was given by the Holy Spirit to Isaiah and Jeremiah.

The writers of the 21st Century Baptist Confession says "the Authorized Version (KJV) is "for all generations." Do they mean the original King James Version of 1611 which contained the Apocrypha? If so is the Apocrypha "inerrant" as well as the Old and New Testaments? Or, do they mean the 4th revision of the KJV which came out in 1769? The Bible which most of us have and preach from is in fact the 1769 4th revision of the 1611 King James Version. I know of no Baptist preacher who preaches from an original 1611 King James Bible, for many of them could not read the Old English in it. What we all now have is the 1769 revision.

I just checked my original 1611 King James Bible. In the margin note in all four places where "cockatrice" occurs they have "adder." This might cause one to ask the question, "Is it the actual

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text in the KJV that is "inerrant" or the marginal notes? Let the writers of the 21st Century Baptist Confession give the answer.

Question: Did the article on the Holy Bible in 1935 put out by W. Lee Rector, R. Nelson, and L. S. Ballard of the Orthodox Baptist Confession of Faith say that the King James Version was preserved inerrant for all generations, or was this added by the 21st Century revisionists? An honest confession is good for the soul.

I say this 21st Century Confession is significant in that it does not claim inspiration for the Masoretic Hebrew Text or the Textus Receptus Greek Text, but for the King James translation of these texts. The King James Bible is the only "inerrant" Bible. No Hebrew or Greek texts are such; no translation made prior to 1611 is such. This leaves all Bible writers and God without an inspired, inerrant Bible until 1611. Remember the confession said the King James Version is for "all generations."

Editor's addendum- Let's have a closer look at one of the above mentioned verses in different versions/ translations. Please see the chart to the right of this article.

I have but one question for those who feel that the King James Version of the Bible is the one and only Bible. Have you not elevated the name of King James above that of GOD? All too often you refer to the Bible as the King James Bible. Should you not refer to it as The Bible or God's Word? Some say King James was an honorable man, if so; would he want his name elevated above God? My Bible has on the cover "Holy Bible" some have "The Holy Bible." It seems that Bible publishers are more respectful than the proponents of KJV only.

Much time has already been spent dealing with this topic. I will ask these questions for all of us to ponder. Have we spent as much time telling the lost about their need of salvation as we have spent on this? Have we spent as much time in prayer as we have spent on this? Have we spent as much time searching the Scriptures (regardless of version or translation) as we have spent on this? Is GOD's Holy Word bound in one single version or translation by the hands of man?



Peace

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for war shall be slaked, and when the last spark of military ambition shall be extinguished in the bosom of every fierce and fiendlike warrior; and when, as Dr.

ISAIAH 11:8

Hebrew Text

הַדָּהּ וּדְי לִזְמַן יִנְעַפֵּץ תְּרוֹאֵת לְעוֹ וְנָתַף רֶחֶל־לֵעַ קְנִי עֲשֵׂנְשׁוּ
 shall put | his hand | a weaned child | the viper | the den of | and on | the snake | over the hole of | a suck-ling | and shall play
 (Hebrew text-Westminster Leningrad Codex with vowels) (The Interlinear Bible by J. P. Green, Sr. translation)

Wycliffe Translation 1395

And a yonge soukyng childe fro the tete schal delite on the hole of a snake, and he that is wenyd schal putte his hond in the caue of a cocatrice.

Miles Coverdale Translation 1535

The childe whyle he sucketh, shal haue a desyre to the serpent's nest, and whe he is weened, he shal put his hande in to the Cockatryce denne.

Geneva Translation 1560

their yong ones shal lie together: and the
 lyon shal eat strawe like the bullocke.
 And the sucking childe shal play vpon y
 hole of the aspe, & the weaned childe shal
 put his hand vpon the cockatrice hole.
 Then shal none hurt nor destroy in all the
 mountaine of mine holines: for the earth

(Actual copy of the Geneva 1560 Edition)

King James Translation 1611

like the oxe.
 And the sucking childe shall play
 on the hole of the aspe, and the weaned
 childe shall put his hand on the cocka-
 trice denne.
 They shall not hurt nor destroy in

(Actual copy of the King James 1611 Edition)

And the sucking child shall play upon the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand upon the cockatrice hole.

And the sucking childe shall play on the hole of the aspe, and the weaned childe shall put his hand on the || cockatrice denne. (|| Or, Adders. [right hand margin])

King James Translation 1769 Revision

"And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice den."

New International Translation 1978

The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest.

New King James Translation 1982

The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, And the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den.

Cumming observes, "across the calm brows of men shall be flung the shadows of deep tranquility. Names that are now memorials of glory shall be expunged from our recollection--battle-fields and victories and slaughtered battalions shall be forgotten--the red eye of battle shall shut, and the lightnings of war that have blazed across the world, and made cities volcanoes and nations ashes, shall be quenched for ever;" and when the religion of Christ shall unite all people in the bond of universal brotherhood. We can easily trace the evils of war to their source--namely, to the heart. "From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?" (James 4:1). The cause must be removed, then the effects will cease. Regenerate the human race--let the message of the heralds of truth be universally accepted, wars will cease to the ends of the earth. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!" (Isa. 52:7). The Gospel enjoins peace. "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. 12:14). We have to consider

spiritual peace as a fruit of the Spirit, and which is the foundation of all personal, relative, and national tranquility. Let us contemplate---

I. THE CHRISTIAN'S PEACE.

That the Christian possesses spiritual peace, history, observation, and experience fully demonstrate. Notice---

1. *His peace with God.* We read that "the Lord will bless His people with peace." This implies reconciliation to God.

This is not the state of man by nature; "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. 8:7-8). Man in his unrenewed state is a rebel against God, he refuses to render allegiance to the divine government. ". . . know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4:4). This is the state the Colossians were originally in; they were aliens and enemies in their minds by wicked works.

God has given to man laws by which his conduct and temper must be regulated, but these laws have been repeatedly broken, and the attached penalties have been justly merited. The solemn mandates of the eternal God have been fearfully

disregarded, and, therefore, alienation and rebellion have been prominent traits in the moral history of mankind. For nations to be involved in savage war, regiments of athletic men to be mown down like grass, is truly awful; or for two persons to be engaged in a duel indicates not only an impious position against God, but also the absence of self-respect. But to rebel against God is without cause; such hostility is unprovoked. "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil" (Eccl. 8:11).

Jehovah hath, in His infinite wisdom and disinterested benevolence, devised a scheme of mercy in which man's reconciliation to his Maker is possible. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1). "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto

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God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh" (Eph. 2:13-17). **"And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. . . ."** (II Cor. 5:18-19). **"And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled. In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight"** (Col. 1:20-22).

The grand object of the Saviour in His mission to our world was to reconcile man to God, which could only be effected through the blood of His cross; hence arises the necessity of the atonement, for without the shedding of blood there could be no remission. But **"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. . . ."** (Gal. 3:13). At His incarnation the angels sung, **"Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men"** (Luke 2:14). This is the object contemplated by the Gospel ministry; it is the **"ministry of reconciliation"** (II Cor. 5:18), **"the word of reconciliation"** (II Cor. 5:19). God is solicitous for man's reconciliation, as is evident from the means He employs to effect it. He has not come in person, nor delegated angels to beseech men to be reconciled; but He has entrusted the embassy with His servants, who, in Christ's stead, are endeavouring to carry out the divine purposes in reconciling the world to God. **"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God"** (II Cor. 5:20). The conditions of our reconciliation are taught in His Word, explained, and pressed upon our acceptance by the ministers of the Gospel, and applied to our hearts by the power of the Holy Ghost. The Christian not only enjoys peace with God, but also---

2. *Peace within.* This is the result of having obtained peace with God. The works of the flesh, such as hatred, variance, pride, prejudice, wrath, envy, strife, and all uncharitableness, must be destroyed before peace of conscience can be realized. The peace of God is a purchased boon, a choice blessing, a valuable treasure; the full estimate cannot be fixed, nor can the

acutest discrimination fully discover its significance.

Obstacles may lie in the way of its attainment, and lengthy struggles and deep sorrow of mind may precede its enjoyment; but when the requisitions of the Saviour are complied with, and the offers of the Divine forgiveness are accepted, **"The peace...which passeth all understanding"** (Phil. 4:7), is imparted, and the turbulent spirit becomes tranquillized. It is a peace which the world can neither give nor take away; it allays the alarms of conscience, composes the mind, supplies the wants of the soul in all times of need, and sheds an admirable serenity over all the transactions of life. There is frequently much external discord and public agitation raging around us; controversies, clashing of sentiment, riots and jarrings, and communities convulsed in hurricanes of strife; but the soul of the Christian delights to live in the circle of tranquility, calm and collected, amidst the upheavings and commotions around it. The peace of God sweetens experience, smooths the rugged path to the house appointed for all living, softens the dying pillow, extracts the sting of death, and inspires a blooming hope of a blissful immortality.

3. *Peace with men.* This is recommended in Scripture. **"If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men"** (Rom. 12:18). There are some persons whose object is to tease, annoy, and destroy the repose of others. They study and devise mischief; they forge and circulate falsehoods, and appear to glory in the sower art of creating quarrels amongst their neighbours. Such conduct is peevish and sinful; and clearly proves that they are of their **"father the devil"** (John 8:44), for his works they do. The Christian, however, is wishful to be at peace with all men; he feels no disposition to sacrifice his religion on the altar of agitation, or relinquish his principles at the shrine of contention. He enjoys, recommends, and promotes peace. **"Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them"** (Ps. 119:165).

*"How great the peace, how blest the joy,
Each true believer inly feels!
Satan can ne'er the bliss destroy
Which faith in Jesus sweetly yields."*

Where genuine religion exists there will be peace in the family. Peace shall dwell in the tabernacle of the righteous; and what can contribute more to order and personal comfort than peace in the family circle? Nothing can be more desirable than spiritual peace, inasmuch as it not only assuages the perturbation of the mind, but also promotes harmony and conjugal affection towards each other.

There is harmony in the revolutions of the planets, whether kindred or remote to each other be the orbits in which they revolve; the law of order

prevents collision, and controls them in their respective spheres. So are the members of a family regulated by **"the law of the Lord,"** and influenced by the principles of religion, preserved from contention, discord, and janglings, which often sever the ties of friendship, and alienate the social affections. Isaiah, when describing the sins of the Jews, says, **"The way of peace they know not; and there is no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace"** (Isa. 59:8); a declaration applicable to thousands in this kingdom and throughout the world. **"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace"** (Rom. 6:6).

Peace in the Church is important and desirable. **"Behold,"** says the Psalmist, **"how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"** (Ps. 133:1). If there is not uniformity, there ought to be unity in the Church: this is indispensable to her progress and triumphs. If the seeds of strife exist, they must be immediately uprooted, and the elements of contention destroyed: fervent charity should characterize every inhabitant of Zion. We are instructed to **"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem"** (Ps. 122:6). Our language should be, **"Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee"** (Ps. 122:7-8). A spirit of holy peace must be cherished, that we may **". . . keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"** (Eph. 4:3). The Apostle Paul was awake to the importance of Christian unity when he exhorted the Corinthians to **"Be perfect, (to) be of good comfort, (to) be of one mind, (to) live in peace;"** then said he, **"the God of love and peace shall be with you"** (II Cor. 13:11). This fruit of the Spirit was---

1. *A legacy the Saviour bequeathed to His sorrowing disciples.* Their sorrow arose from what He had said about leaving them: **"But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart"** (John 16:6). Either by their looks or their expressions, the Saviour discovered indications of grief, but which He endeavoured to remove by informing them that "he was going to prepare a place for them, and would come again and receive them unto Himself; that where He was there they might be also" (John 14:3). How soothing His language on the eve of His departure! How dignified and amiable His conduct! and how affectionately He addresses them, that He might recompose their minds and alleviate their distress! **"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid"** (John 14:27). **"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you**

another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever" (John 14:16). But this invaluable blessing, this incomparable legacy, was not designed exclusively for the disciples of Christ, but was intended for His followers in every age and in every nation. That peace which is the fruit of the Spirit is also---

2. *The Christian's solace amidst toil and sufferings.* **"These things I have spoken unto you,"** saith the Saviour, **"that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world"** (John 16:33). Many in former times were unwavering in their adherence to religion, with prospects the most gloomy, and in the face of sufferings the most appalling. Supported by Divine peace, they have patiently endured the severest privations, and met death in divers forms, with remarkable composure of mind. It has sustained and cheered them when wandering in deserts, when climbing mountains, reclining in dens, cowering in caves, arrayed in sheepskins, afflicted, destitute, and homeless. When the stream of persecution has risen high and overflowed its ordinary channels, and swept with mighty force over the country, many devoted saints have stood like rocks in the rushing torrent.

What was the testimony of Job when deprived of his possessions, and while enduring heavy bodily afflictions? It appears to be this: ---Although the Sabaeans may drive away my five hundred yoke of oxen, and slay my servants with the sword; fire may fall from Heaven and consume my seven thousand sheep: the Chaldeans may take possession of my three thousand camels; the winds of the wilderness may smite the house and bury my children in the ruins thereof; the hand of God may afflict my frail body, and death shake his quiver in my face; my possessions taken from me, my children dead, my health gone, and my friends have deserted me; yet, supported by the peace of God, my language shall be, **". . . the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD"** (Job 1:21). Peace, like an anchor, holds the spirit in delightful tranquility while the vessel in which it is enshrined is rocked on the bosom of the storm. **"And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus"** (Phil. 4:7).

*"The troubled conscience knows Thy voice,
Thy cheerful words awake our joys;
Thy words allay the stormy wind,
And calm the surges of the mind."*

3. *It is the Christian's antepast of future happiness.* **"Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace"** (Psa. 37:37). He does not build his hopes of Heaven on airy speculations, imaginary dreamings, or poetic fancies; but on firm and solid rock--

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-on Scriptural principles---on peace with God through faith in Jesus Christ; this is his consolation in death, and his passport to the skies. There is **"A time to be born, and a time to die"** (Eccl. 3:2). None are exempt from death, none can evade his stroke. There is something awful in the death of the wicked; their remorse and reprehensions of conscience are often indescribable and overwhelming; they die in the armour of rebellion, and expire at enmity with God.

But the Christian's death is tranquil and happy; his title is clear, his evidence satisfactory, his hope of eternal life sure and certain. Like Simeon, when he embraced the Saviour in his arms in the temple, he can say, **"Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation"** (Luke 2:29-30).

Its perfection is in Heaven; there the inhabitants enjoy perfect and eternal peace. How bright the hope and inspiring the thought of a participation in the effulgent glories of the kingdom of Heaven, and the assurance the Christian feels of being divinely aided in his transition **"from glory to glory"** (II Cor. 3:18).

II. THE EFFECT WHICH THIS PEACE PRODUCES.

They are great and glorious even in a temporal point of view.

1. *It lays the foundation of national prosperity and concord.* Peace and prosperity are two of the brightest gems that can sparkle on the brow of a nation, and reflect honour on the men who turn the helm of her destinies. It is said that **"Righteousness exalteth a nation"** (Prov. 14:34); a truth which we readily acknowledge. Let the principles of righteousness be universally adopted and peace wave her mild banner over all nations, and lift her ensign in every wind of the sky, then how sublime and glorious would be the consummation!

How impressive and elegant are the figures, and how appropriate the representations given in the Word of God, **"In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth"** (Psa. 72:7). Let the pure light of the Gospel shine and its transforming influence be felt, then **"The wolf also shall dwell with lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den. They**

shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. 11:6-9).

2. *It invests character with surpassing excellence.* We have a stereotyped encomium passed upon the Christian: **"The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour"** (Prov. 12:26). He may not exceed his neighbour in external grandeur or worldly superiority; neither may he be regarded by men of the world as the man of surpassing worth; but many are blind to the excellency of his character, and therefore their views and judgment are exceedingly defective. True dignity of character does not depend on outward splendour, nor consist in name, rank, or office. There may be mitred heads, powdered wigs, sacerdotal garments, chaplets, strings of beads, and diamond-set crowns worn by persons who are destitute of moral principle, and strangers to the dignity of the children of God. The circumstances of the ungodly, temporally considered, are, in many instances, more highly advantageous than these of the Christian; but there is a spiritual view of the subject to be taken. In this respect, the latter assumes a position, privileges, and prospects to which the former can have no claim. They have passed from death unto life---are received into the favour and family of God---and made heirs to an incorruptible inheritance. These are considerations which render the character of the Christian attracting, and invest it with dignity and importance. Hence states the apostle John, **"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is"** (I John 3:2).

3. *It gives a commanding influence to example.* **"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven"** (Matt. 5:16). Religious example is influential, and often associated with, or productive of, results the most beneficial. Christians are not dead letters, but "living epistles, read and known of all men" (II Cor. 3:2). Their conduct is not inexplicable and

dark, but legible and luminous. They are known by the name they bear, by the principles they imbibe, by the obligations they acknowledge, by the characters they imitate, by the uniform they wear, by the laws and precepts they observe, by the evils they avoid, by the zeal, humility, love, and temper they manifest.

Religion in the heart will unfold its excellency in the conduct of its possessor. A Christian carries an influence calculated to make favourable impressions on the minds of those with whom he associates, with respect to the divinity and advantages of religion. What is greatly needed at the present day is the exhibition of Christian principles in the lives of professors of religion. If parents are wishful to make serious impressions on the minds of their children they must furnish them with a corresponding model. Does the teacher desire the spiritual welfare of his pupils? He must remember that much depends on the conduct he manifests before them. Is the master concerned for the salvation of his servants. Let him wield a moral influence, and convince them by indisputable evidence that he enjoys the same great and glorious blessing. Does the minister of the Gospel feel deeply solicitous for the conversion of his hearers? Let him "take heed unto himself and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this he shall save himself and them that hear him." "Be not like rowers in a barge," says an old divine, "that look one way and row another; do not look heavenward by your profession, and row hell-ward by your conversation: do not pretend to love God and yet love sin."

4. *An additional force and sublimity to active efforts.* **"Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord"** (I Cor. 15:58). No arguments are necessary to convince you that active and united efforts are greatly needed. This is obvious to all who believe the doctrine of universal depravity. The state of the world, viewed geographically, statistically, and morally, supplies motives and furnishes reasons for gigantic efforts to ameliorate its condition. Our efforts to promote the

divine glory must be vigorous, sincere, and constant. **"He that winneth souls is wise"** (Prov. 11:30). None are so successful in improving the physical, intellectual, and moral condition of mankind, and none are so efficient in advancing the interests of religion and extending the kingdom of the Redeemer as those who can speak experimentally of the peace, joy, and happiness of religion.

The deeds of the warrior may be applauded and chronicled, his martial fame may spread through the nations of the earth, and his achievements may be the favorite theme of the poet's song; the historian may string together battles fought and victories won, and in refined and elegant terms of speech depict the glory of such contests; but it is ideal, it is false glory; for when he has wreathed the conqueror's brow with the withering garland of worldly honor he cannot expunge the crimson stains that are upon it, nor offer an equivalent for the lives that he has destroyed---

"For only the actions of the just

Shall sweat and blossom in the dust."

We admire the disposition, wisdom, and eloquence of the statesman, who advocates measures calculated to benefit the masses of society temporally; and not less worthy of our admiration and praise and the exertions made by the servants of God to effectuate the spiritual and eternal welfare of the human race. There is a force and sublimity in such efforts that cannot be found in any other pursuit or enterprise on the face of the earth; and we cannot too highly estimate such performances and perseverance in doing good. Piety gives practical force, throws an alluring charm and vital influence over such operations. Purity and peace indicate our interest in Christ, are pledges of our obedience to Him, a standing proof of our spiritual attainments, and are characteristic of efforts evangelical in their nature, and operative and efficacious in their tendency.

We are bound by the duties of religion, by the principles and obligations of Christianity, and by the example of Christ, to put forth our physical and moral energies, in a spirit of meekness and Christian charity, to extend the kingdom of the Prince of Peace. Our prayer should be: **"Establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it"** (Psa. 90:17). Spiritual peace tends---

5. *To moderate attachment to earthly things.* **"While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal"** (II Cor. 4:18). Earthly things are perishable in their nature and fleeting in their continuance. Vanity is stamped on every object under the sun. All things are crumbling into desolation. Men of the world have their

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portion in this life. They are as much wedded, and as strongly attached, to earthly objects and pursuits as if this world comprehended the whole of their existence. But the Christian's treasure is in Heaven; his affections are set on things above. He estimates this world according to its value; draws a line between things temporal and things eternal. Here he is has no continuing city; his stay on earth is uncertain; he is liable to an ejection any day, and hour: he is only a tenant-at-will, as are others, and may quit this scene of probation without the formality of a discharge. Impressed with these considerations, he sits loose from the world; his affections are detached from earthly things, and transferred to spiritual and more durable realities. He is aspiring to a higher mode of existence, advancing to piety, allured by divine promises, attracted by celestial objects, absorbed in heavenly contemplations. With his lions girded, and his lamp burning, he looks **"for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ"** (Titus 2:13).

"Thrice blessed, bliss-inspiring hope!

It lifts the fainting spirit up;

It brings to life the dead:

Our conflicts here will soon be past,

And you and I ascend at last

Triumphant with our head!"

Notice---

III. THE DUTY OF THOSE WHO ENJOY SPIRITUAL PEACE.

It must be retained---

1. By firmly resisting everything that would invade it. **"For it is not a vain thing for you; because it is your life. . ."** (Deut. 32:47). Peace commenced, must be maintained and matured. There are enemies to guard against, who assail our internal quiet, and would rejoice at the destruction of our spiritual comfort. The world would fain infuse its spirit into our minds, and Satan frequently attempts an ingress into our hearts; but there must be no yielding, no surrender to the foe. We must neither be decoyed by the world's dazzling pleasures, not taken captive by the enemy. We must guard every avenue to the heart, strengthen and defend the citadel of the soul with walls of faith and prayer. David said, **"Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice. Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips"** (Psa. 141:2-3).

A spirit of anger and revenge must be avoided. **"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord"** (Rom. 12:19).

This signifies that we are "to avoid a spirit and purpose of revenge; that

we must not attempt to avenge ourselves, but to leave it with God."

That we are not to cherish a vindictive disposition is evident from the doctrine taught by Christ. **"But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you"** (Matt. 5:44). He did not teach one thing and do another; or urge the observance of a doctrine upon others He did not exemplify in His own conduct. There was no discrepancy in His teaching and tenor of His life: the one harmonized with the other. His enemies tried to provoke Him to anger; they smote Him on the cheek; they wounded and bruised Him, spit upon Him, impugned His character, and wreathed His brow with thorns; yet He reviled not again.

Being partakers of Divine grace, we must invariably manifest a forgiving disposition towards our bitterest enemies; not merely because it is our duty, but because it will conduce to our peace and comfort. **"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee"** (Isa. 26:3).

2. By abiding in Christ. **"Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me"** (John 15:4) **"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him"** (Col. 2:6). It is necessary to our spiritual safety; Christ is our refuge in the storm, our shelter, hiding-place, and munition of rocks.

"Here is firm footing; here is solid rock;

This can support us; all is sea besides;

Sinks under us; bestorms, and then devours.

His hand the good man fastens on the skies,

And bids earth roll, nor feels her idle whirl."

It is necessary to preserve us from error and delusion. **"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the son."** It is indispensable to our access to the Father. **"For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father"** (Eph. 2:18). **"No man cometh to the Father, but by me"** (John 14:6). **"Wherefore,"** states the apostle Paul, when writing to the Hebrews, **"he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them"**



(Heb. 7:25). It is essential to produce the fruits of holiness. The branch cannot bear fruit except it abide in the vine, neither can we have our "fruits unto holiness," unless we are united to Christ. The union which subsists betwixt Christ and His people, described under the similitude of the vine and branches, is manifest by the fruits they produce. **"That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God"** (Col. 1:10).

"And let me through Thy Spirit know

To glorify my God below,

And find my way to Heaven."

In closing this address I will add a warning and an exhortation.

1. A warning to you who are destitute of the love, joy, and peace of true religion. Are you crying, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace?" If so, your cry is a false one! Your assertions are not true, but sheer delusion. There is authentic evidence against you; for **"There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked"** (Isa. 57:21). Yours is a peace associated with the stillness of death and the corruption of the grave. It is like the silence that precedes the rumble of the earthquake, the tranquility that precedes the crash of a falling forest, the calm that precedes the pestilential and suffocating simoom, or terrible tornado of the desert, the mild ripple of the ocean before the storm, shipwreck, and the death-wail of a sinking crew. You may try to lull your consciences to sleep, and dream of security; but while that is no evidence of your safety, it renders your condition more perilous.

"A Sicilian might as well build his mansion on Mount Etna, and found his edifice on one of its flaming craters; or a Neapolitan select one of the burning

summits of Vesuvius as a site for a secure dwelling-place," as you fancy that you are safe while quietly reposing in sin. You are on the very apex of utter and irretrievable ruin. Another day, another hour, and the icy hand of death may grasp you, and your souls may writhe under the withering frowns of the Almighty, deafened by the thunders of Divine justice, where the fire is kindled, but cannot burn out your immortality. Are you crying, "Peace, peace," when perhaps this may be the last offer of mercy to which you may listen? "Peace, peace," when death may have marked you as his victim? "Peace, peace," whist peradventure the Judge is at the door, the judgment-seat in sight, and eternity at hand? If such be your peace, and if under such circumstances you can be tranquil, I envy not your composure. If you repent not, your false peace will soon be disturbed and broken by the noise of eternity, the tumult, the sufferings of perdition, and the shrieks of the damned. **"The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved"** (Jer. 8:20), will echo through the dungeon of the lost.

2. You who are anxiously inquiring the way of peace, suffer the word of exhortation. Convinced of your danger, and desirous to make your escape, haste like Lot from the conflagration of Sodom; flee to the mountain---to Christ, for safety. "Today, if ye will hear his voice, **'harden not your hearts'** (Heb. 2:8)." I urge you with vehemence, I press the matter with all seriousness, and entreat you with affection, to make a total surrender of yourselves to Christ, by repentance and faith in Him who died for you. **"Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee"** (Job 22:21). Harken unto His commandments, and keep them, then your peace shall flow as a river, and your righteousness abound as the waves of the sea. "Hear what God the Lord will speak, for He will speak peace to His people, and to His saints." Hear His language: **"Fury is not in me: who would set the briers and thorns against me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together. Or let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me"** (Isa. 27:4-5). Do not say, like Felix, **"Go thy way for this time"** (Acts 24:25); but be willing to consecrate your service this day, this moment, unto the Lord, for you know not what may be on the morrow.

"In death's uncertainty thy danger lies.

Is death uncertain? therefore be thou fixed:

Fix'd as a sentinel, all eye, all ear,

All expectation of the coming foe.

Rouse, stand in arms, nor lean against thy spear,

Lest slumber steal one moment o'er thy soul,

And death surprise thee nodding."



Spiritual Gymnastics

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In my humble opinion it is best to take **"bodily exercise"** to mean physical exercise, gymnastics, athletic training. **"Exercise"** in verse 7 is a form of the Greek word (*gummazo*) which means "to exercise naked." The Greek word (*gummasia*) in verse 8 means "gymnastic exercise" (See *Young's Com.*). We get our English word "gymnasium" from this Greek word. Paul often referred to the gymnastic exercise of athletes in his writings.

The Apostle Paul heartily approved of such exercise as would develop and maintain physical vigor. Games and sports which call for physical exercise, or for physical restraint, are **"profitable."** They promote good health in the body which is essential to the doing of both physical and spiritual work. Physical power is God-given and sacred, and therefore must be developed. It is profitable for a little extent and for a short duration. Bodily exercise affects chiefly the body of man, and it lasts only a little while when compared to the far-reaching effects of godliness. Physical exercise is temporal and temporary, but godliness is eternal.

GODLY EXERCISE

What is godliness? It is piety, a life characterized by a Godward attitude, a person who does what is well pleasing to God (Ps. 4:3). Godliness in the Bible is more far-reaching in its meaning than this. I want to be more specific in answering this question.

First, godliness has to do with the affections of the heart. Both reason and revelation teach that consecration to God cannot exist without a proper state of the heart. The ungodly are those whose hearts are so under the dominion of sin that they hate God. Thus godliness is to be looked for in a heart that loves God supremely. Love of God is the fruit of regeneration (I John 4:7; II Cor. 5:17). God gives a new heart in regeneration which has the capacity to love God (Rom. 5:5).

Second, it has to do with the words that come out of a man's mouth. The mouth reveals the spiritual health of the heart. Jesus said: **"For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh"** (Matt. 12:34). The mouth is not to be desecrated. Ephesians 4:29 says: **"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers"** (cf. Col. 3:8; I Pet. 2:1; 3:10). If a person would live godly in Christ Jesus there must be a consecration of the power of speech. Without this piety is sadly incomplete: **"If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain"** (Jas.

1:26; cf. Matt. 12:36-37).

Third, godliness has to do with the actions of the life. It starts in the heart, but it does not stay there hidden. It manifests itself in all the actions of life, for out of the heart is the issues of life (Prov. 4:23). A godly person's life will conform to the will of God. He will live **"soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world"** (Tit. 2:12). Such a life may be opposed by a God-hating world. **"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution"** (II Tim. 3:12).

Fourth, it has to do with revealed truth. Right living and right doctrine go hand in hand. That is why Paul in this same epistle spoke of **"the doctrine which is according to godliness"** (I Tim. 6:3). To Titus he mentioned **"the truth which is after godliness"** (Titus 1:1). An understanding of the truth of the Bible will issue into a godly life. Those who get involved in wrong doctrine will succumb to wrong living. You cannot believe the truth and live a lie. Those who profess to know the truth and deny it by the way they live are hypocrites and reprobates.

EXERCISE TO GODLINESS IS NECESSARY

Verse 7 contains an apostolic command: **"Exercise thyself rather unto godliness."** As an athlete trains his body, even so the Christian must make strenuous efforts to train himself to true play in heart and life. He must go all out to seek personal holiness and the virtue of a life of practical godliness. The Greek word means to keep on the path of godly living. If half of the effort that goes into bodily exercise were put into spiritual exercise, the Lord's people would be much healthier and stronger spiritually, and much better off.

The extent of the exercise and discipline of the Greek gymnasiums was so great as to be nearly incredible. With this thought in his mind, Paul writes to young Timothy **"Exercise thyself rather unto godliness."** This command is weighty and worth considering. It is only as it is obeyed that Christian growth takes place. Job 17:9 says: **"The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger."** Proverbs 4:18 declares: **"But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."** II Corinthians 3:18 tells us: **"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."**

First, spiritual exercise requires diligent cultivation of the Christian graces---faith, love, hope, fear, reverence, humility, kindness, long-suffering, etc. (II Pet. 1:1-10). In proportion to our spiritual growth, godliness increases. We are commanded in Jude 21: **"Keep yourselves in the love of God."** If you would live godly cry

out: **"Lord, Increase our faith"** (Luke 17:5). Daily seek to **"increase the fruits of your righteousness"** (II Cor. 9:10). Stimulate your zeal by reflecting on how it will glorify God in the increase of your personal spirituality, in the edification of the church, and in the salvation of lost sinners. Animate hope by contemplating the bright prospect of the heavenly home. Deepen humility by considering your unworthiness and unfaithfulness. Let patience have her perfect work. This cultivation of the Christian graces will require strenuous exercise.

Second, there must be an uncompromising war against sin. Sin and godliness are poles apart. You cannot exercise yourself unto godliness without waging a war of extermination against sin. Beware of the subtle sins of the heart, for these must be conquered (II Cor. 7:1). These cannot be seen by the eyes of others, and therefore, they are all the more dangerous. Heart sins consist of envy, hatred, jealousy, covetousness, wrath, hypocrisy, love of the world, dissatisfaction with Divine Providence, and impure motives in Christian service. These must be regarded as enemies of the godly man. He or they must die in the battle. Hatred must give way to love---hypocrisy to sincerity---covetousness to liberality---dissatisfaction with Divine Providence to submission to it. Oh, what heart searching is needed (Ps. 139:23-24)! Sins must be sought out and slain before the Lord. We must, if need be, resist unto blood, striving against sin (Heb. 12:4).

The sins of the life must be conquered. Avoid the wrong and pursue the right. Isaiah said: **"Cease to do evil; Learn to do well"** (Isa. 1:16-17). Remember you are not only subjected to the scrutiny of men and angels (I Cor. 4:9), but to the judgment of God (Eccl. 12:14). Let your conduct be as becomes the gospel of Christ (Phil. 1:27). If you fail a thousand times, try again and again. Exercise, EXERCISE, yourself unto godliness, and remember that in doing so you wage an uncompromising war against sin. **"Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him"** (I John 3:6).

Many church members are spiritual dwarfs (Heb. 5:12-14), mere babes in Christ who have not grown **"unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ"** (Eph. 4:13). Why is this so? It is due to their failure to obey my text: **"Exercise thyself unto godliness."** This simple Christian law is the secret of spiritual growth. Oh, how we need to perseveringly exercise ourselves unto godliness. Otherwise we shall be like the Hebrew Christians in the New Testament: **"For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one**

that useth milk is unskilful in the world of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Heb. 5:12-14).

GODLINESS PROFITS IN THIS PRESENT LIFE

One of the problems of the Middle Ages was that professed Christians lost sight of the Christianization of this present life. Knowledge was imprisoned and science was neglected, provided the people became true sons of the church and possessed the priestly passport to Paradise. Men became the subjects of those who, in the name of God, darkened moral sense and degraded human nature under the pretense of saving it. This was the Devil's millennium, and it was in direct opposition to the Word of God. The gospel has always had the promise of the life that now is. The Bible is concerned with **"all things that pertain unto life and godliness"** (II Pet. 1:3). The good news about Christ saves men from selfishness and sin as well as from Hell-fire.

There are some advantages to living a godly life on this present earth. Christianity is not the opiate of the people; it is not a religion for losers. Holy Scripture says: **"But godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is. . ."** Just what are some of the advantages of godliness to life on earth?

First, there is the promise of length of days: **"My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments: For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee"** (Prov. 3:1-2). Psalm 55:23 declares: **"Bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days."** Temperance and moderation directly tends to the preservation of life and health. Sin cuts off many years from the thread of life. All unnatural excesses and inordinate gratifications dampen man's faculties, dull his senses, and deaden his enjoyments.

The Bible assures us: **"But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked"** (Isa. 57:20-21). The ungodly

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Spiritual Gymnastics

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have no real peace or pleasure. The least gust of passion, or gale of uncertainty could sweep them away in an instant. There is no steadiness and stability in a vicious desolate mind, which, like a ship without rudder or anchor, is continually tossed and driven about, floating at the mercy of every wave that swells and every wind that blows. On the other hand, godliness produces a calm, serene, and composed state, unshaken by turbulent appetites and inordinate affections. The love of God governs instead of mad lusts and brutal passions. This is the foundation of all enjoyment.

Second, there is the profit of a good name: **“A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favor rather than silver and gold”** (Prov. 22:1). Godly living will give a person a good name among his fellow creatures.

Third, in some cases godliness leads to earthly riches: **“If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles. Then shalt thou lay up gold as dust, and the gold of Ophir as the stones of the brooks. Yea, the Almighty shall be thy defense, and thou shalt have plenty of silver”** (Job 22:23-25). Jesus Christ said: **“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you”** (Matt. 6:33). True godliness makes a man **“not slothful in business”** (Rom. 12:11). To the godly man labor is an honor, and we know that hard work often results in worldly riches.

GODLINESS IS PROFITABLE IN THE LIFE TO COME

Consecration to God is profitable here and hereafter. Verse 8 concludes with the words: **“. . . and of that which is to come.”** The Bible teaches the doctrine of the immortality of the soul of man. Materialism denies this, and agnosticism says it does not know about it. Religious liberals make immortality the permanent influence of a man's life on earth after he is gone. More than anything, the gospel of Jesus Christ brings immortality to light (II Tim. 1:10). Immortality was taught by Christ (Matt. 20:28) and attested by His resurrection from the dead. We must not allow modern secular humanism in the fashion of the ancient Sudducism to darken this truth.

Physical death does not end all. Life continues after death and there is no break in conscious existence. Death is a dark tunnel through which immortality passes. If the life has been godly it will be godly still, and if filthy then it will be filthy still (Rev. 22:11). An insect does not die when it changes its garment from the grub to the winged being, when it exchanges earth for air. At death the immortal soul is unclothed that it may be clothed upon

with its house from Heaven (II Cor. 5:1-4). The life of the Christian may be shady and stained with evil on earth, but it will be perfected in Heaven. Thank God there is a sky of immortality above us, and a rest that remains for the people of God.

Oh, how glorious the thought of the incorruptible, undefiled, never-fading inheritance in Heaven! Oh, to see the King in His beauty and to better understand the multiplicity and majesty of God's works! The dispensations of His providence and the wonders of His saving grace! There awaits me a harp, a robe, and a crown. It is Heaven on earth to think of my eternal weight of glory. Oh, to go to the heavenly land and to hear the songs of angels and the hallelujahs of the departed saints in glory. Joys and glory unspeakable, inconceivable! Never interrupted, never fading or failing, but growing through the boundless ages of eternity!

CONCLUSION

1. As the athlete trains his body to develop physical strength and alertness, so the Christian should exercise all his mental and moral powers with a view of invigorating his own personal piety. Godliness is a moral and spiritual state and demands the most strenuous employment of moral energies and the constant use of spiritual agencies. We must daily labor to increase personal godliness.

2. Godliness enables a man to judge things in their true nature, and it enables him to act in his own best interest in this present world. Godly living tends to promote a man's earthly life in that it makes him industrious, temperate, and prudent. It even fits a man for all conditions of this life by making him humble in prosperity and trustful in adversity. It is the godly who stand in a right relation to this life. They put the right value upon it, knowing that true happiness and prosperity are secured by promoting both body and soul.

3. Piety is not a yoke of bondage as most non-Christians suppose. Godliness gives true freedom of the mind which is the foundation of all enjoyment. Virtue strikes off a man's fetters and delivers him from a cruel and shameful servitude. To be guided by God is to be governed by Him whose service is perfect freedom and whose laws are nothing but wise rules for procuring our true happiness.

4. True religion is best for both worlds; it is both good for the body as well as the soul. It leads to health and longevity here by teaching us the proper use of the body. It ensures an eternity of blessedness in the life to come. The degree of moral excellency attained in this life will be the basis of development and enjoyment in the life to come. Oh, the need of engaging in spiritual gymnastics. Remember Paul's command: **“Exercise thyself unto godliness.”**



Dangers of Sin

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make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye” (Ezek. 18:24-32).

If we are going to talk about the dangers of sin, I suppose that we ought to begin by considering the impending and ongoing judgment of God against sin. Sin is a dangerous thing. Sometimes we become too familiar with it. Other times we gradually come to ignore it. And sometimes we just flat-out accept sin in our lives, and in the lives of others.

As you can see from the passage that we have just read, sin must be judged, and God will not allow sin to go unpunished. In verse 30, we find that **“iniquity”** can be the **“ruin”** of man. Well, when we examine the Bible, and when we consider the history of mankind, it becomes evident that sin has ruined mankind. God is a God of justice. Man might question God's fairness or equality; but, in reality, it is mankind whose fairness and equality is flawed. And, all of these iniquities, inequities, and unfair deeds and words, will be called into account one day.

We read in Jeremiah 32:16-25, **“Now when I had delivered the evidence of the purchase unto Baruch the son of Neriah, I prayed unto the LORD, saying, Ah Lord GOD! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee: Thou shewest lovingkindness unto thousands, and recompensest the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them: the Great, the Mighty God, the LORD of hosts, is his name, Great in counsel, and mighty in work: for thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men: to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings: Which hast set signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, even unto this day, and in Israel, and among other men; and hast made thee a name, as at this day; And hast brought forth thy people Israel out of the land of Egypt with signs, and with wonders, and with a strong hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with great terror; And hast given them this land, which thou didst swear to their fathers to give them, a land flowing with milk and honey; And they came in, and possessed it; but they obeyed not thy voice, neither walked in thy law; they have done nothing of all that thou commandedst them to do: therefore thou hast caused all this evil to come upon them: Behold the mounts, they are come unto the city to take it; and the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans, that fight**

against it, because of the sword, and of the famine, and of the pestilence: and what thou hast spoken is come to pass; and, behold, thou seest it. And thou hast said unto me, O Lord GOD, Buy thee the field for money, and take witnesses; for the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans.” In this passage that we have just read, I want you to notice how certain God (and Jeremiah) is, that every one will be rewarded **“according to his ways.”** And, we learn that God's **“eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men.”** Judgment is coming for all men – whether judgment for good or judgment for evil. Therefore, those that sin should fear God and His justice; and we must warn ourselves and others about the dangers of sin.

So, it becomes apparent that God is both a God of justice and a God of mercy. However, nowhere in the Bible are we given the impression that God's justice will be set aside in favor of God's mercy – without judgment for sin. In **Numbers 32:23** Moses warned the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and ½ Manasseh this way: **“But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out.”** There is not one single sin against God that will go unpunished. Every sin will either be paid for by an eternity in Hell by the guilty human being; or those sins will be paid for by the blood, suffering, and death of Jesus Christ. But we cannot ever imagine that we can hide a sin from God. Nor can we hope that God will ever overlook some minor (or major) transgression against Him.

Now let's go on to consider just how dangerous sin is; and let's look at some examples of God's judgment towards sin.

THE FALL OF MAN

In reality, sin is to blame for the fall of Adam and all humanity. Of course, we could go even further back, and we can blame Lucifer, and his pride for even the beginning of sin in mankind. But, Adam freely chose to sin, and this is, in essence, the fall of mankind.

We read in Genesis 3:6-7, **“And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed figleaves together, and made themselves aprons.”** The three words **“he did eat,”** comprise, in a nutshell, the fall of Adam and the fall of mankind. Adam disobeyed God, and purposely sinned against Him. He actually rebelled against his Creator and his God. One time when King Saul rebelled against the Word of God, Samuel told him this: **“And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as**

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Dangers of Sin

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in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king" (I Sam. 15:22-23). Sin is a terrible thing. Sin is sneaky and powerful. Sin just creeps up on us and destroys us. Sin destroyed the witness of King Saul, and God rejected him from being king. Sin destroyed Adam and cost him his relationship with God.

Here in the Garden of Eden we have two perfect human beings. They are not sinners; nor is there any flaw or wickedness or shadow of sin in them. And yet, in the garden, without any of the depraved nature that we have inherited, they were still destroyed by sin. How much more dangerous is sin today? In our naturally depraved conditions, how can we ever hope to resist and overcome sin on our own?

Later on in Genesis 3, we read about the results of that terrible sin against God. **"And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return"** (Gen. 3:17-19). The effects of Adam's sin were even felt on the rest of mortal creation. And, even now, sin reigns in the flesh and over the earthly creation, until such time as God will see fit to free us all.

The New Testament teaches us about the awfulness of Adam's sin. We read in I Corinthians 15:21-22, **"For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."** Adam would not have known death – if it had not been for sin. Mankind would not have known death – if it had not been for sin. The Psalmist tells us in Psalms 36:12, **"There are the workers of iniquity fallen: they are cast down, and shall not be able to rise."** Adam fell, and he could not get back up. Adam (and mankind) was cast down by sin, and destroyed. Adam was not **"able to rise"** and undo or correct his sin. Therefore, he was judged by God.

EXPULSION FROM THE GARDEN OF EDEN

Sin is dangerous. It will separate

man from God. In fact, sin is the reason that God drove Adam and Eve out of the garden of Eden, and away from the tree of life. **"And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: 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, to keep the way of the tree of life"** (Gen. 3:22-24).

We tend to look at this instance where God thrust man out of the garden of Eden, and we might focus on the fact that God must drive man out of the garden, so that Adam wouldn't take to eat of the tree of life, and live forever in his depraved body. But, isn't it just simpler to take note of the fact that God and Adam could not any longer inhabit the same garden, with the same communion, and with the same fellowship – because now Adam was tainted with sin? Though the Lord would save him, still, in the flesh, he bore sin in his body. We read in Isaiah 59:2-3, **"But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness."** Sin is dangerous. Sin will, and has already, separated man from God. God did not change – it was Adam who had changed. Sin had no effect on God, but it had a terrible and lasting effect on Adam and on the flesh. Our Holy God cannot abide sin in His presence. Nor will He tolerate the flesh of the sinners in His holy abode.

THE TOTAL DEPRAVITY OF MAN

Sin is dangerous. It can be said, in fact, that sin has depraved man – in his natural condition – for ever more. Sin didn't only slay Adam and cause him to be cast from the garden. But, sin is so dangerous and so powerful, that it even contaminated all of the seed of Adam. Now, all that are born of the seed of Adam will be defiled and depraved by the sin that has been made a part of mankind.

I believe that Adam sinned willfully and purposefully in the garden of Eden. He knew that Eve had been deceived, and that she had taken of the forbidden fruit. In fact, the New Testament tells us that Adam was not deceived. We read in I Timothy 2:13-14, **"For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression."** Adam's sin was a purposeful rebellion against God and against His commands. I believe that Adam contemplated the effects of his sin, and supposed that somehow God

could redeem both him and Eve from the dangers and effects of sin. But, I think that Adam did not consider the fact that his sin would cost him his place in the garden of Eden. Further, I imagine that when Adam sinned, he might not have considered the effect that his rebellion would have on his descendants. But, as a matter of fact, when Adam partook of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he immediately died spiritually and was separated from God. And, not only this, but when he died spiritually, he condemned all of his children and all of his descendants, to be also born into this world spiritually dead.

King David tells us about the wicked and vile condition of all mankind, as a result of sin: **"The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies"** (Ps. 58:3). It is the habit and the inevitable condition of every natural born man, that we are born into this world as sinners – depraved, wicked, evil, and vile sinners.

The Apostle Paul tells the Roman Christians, **"What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one"** (Rom. 3:9-12). It is beyond consideration that any human being born of the seed of Adam could be anything but a sinner. **"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"** (Rom. 3:23).

Do you think that sin is something that can be lightly considered? Do you think that sin is something that we ought to trifle with? Sin is very dangerous. Sin has, in fact, depraved mankind utterly and fully, so that now there is no hope for man – except for Jesus Christ.

THE FINAL DAMNATION OF MAN

Sin is very dangerous in our lives, and in the lives of all men. We can see the effects and the power of sin by just a casual observation of mankind and his depravity. But, when we begin to examine individual instances of sin and individual sinners, we find that sometimes sin will lead to judgment in this life – and by this, men will see the justice of God. And, we see that God often times hands out some recompense for sin in this life. But, other times it seems that the wicked will prosper, and that judgment is withheld. However, if we examine the Scriptures we find that all sin must eventually be punished or paid for or atoned. Whether in this life, or in the life to come, sin must be paid for. We read in Romans 6:23, **"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."** In the Scriptures we see Hell and the Lake of Fire as proof of the

judgment of God. Sinners and sin must be punished. This is the **"death"** that is referred to in Romans 6:23. However, in the case of those that are saved, we see Jesus Christ, and His suffering, bleeding, and death on the cross, as proof of the salvation of those that are saved. This is **"the gift of God"** and the **"eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord"** that is referred to in Romans 6:23.

We read about the final damnation of wicked men and angels in Revelation 20:10-15, **"And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."**

It seems to me that sin is very dangerous. How willing are you now to indulge in sin? Do you see the ultimate fate of all them that sin against God, and do not repent and turn to Jesus Christ? If you are listening to the sound of my voice today, or if you are reading these words that are written today, then I want you to know that sin has damned you to Hell already. Both the sin that you were born with which you inherited from Adam; and also the sin that you have committed since you were born into this world. These sins have twice-damned you to Hell. And, unless you are redeemed and bought back by the blood of Jesus Christ, you cannot hope to escape the damnation of Hell and the Lake of Fire. **"But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation:"** (Mk. 3:29). Certainly sin is dangerous and **"eternal damnation"** is the price of sin.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion let's turn to the book of Hebrews and consider a couple of passages. First, we read in Hebrews 10:27-31, **"But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of**

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. Acts 11:22 reads, "Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch." Has missionary work become a stand alone office, separate from a Pastor/Bishop, or Elder of an assembly? - LA

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Acts 11:22 reads, "Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch." Has missionary work become a stand alone office, separate from a Pastor/Bishop, or Elder of an assembly? - LA

There are only two ordained offices in a Baptist church- that of the Pastor/Bishop and that of the Deacon. Both offices have stipulations for office holders (as found in I Timothy 3:1-13). But the primary requirement is that they be ordained Elders. By that we mean, a man of God that has been ordained by a New Testament Baptist church to the Gospel Ministry (in the case of pastors) or to service (in the case of deacons).

To fully understand this question, perhaps we should start at the beginning. When God is going to use a particular man, He puts a burden upon his heart to the "Call". In various ways for different men, He makes known to them that He has set them apart for a particular purpose. "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations" (Jer. 1:5). "And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I" (Ex. 3:4). "And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, ...And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him" (Matt. 4:18-20).

After God has called a man, a church can then ordain him and authorize him to particular works under the authority of the Lord's church. The Spirit is at work during the whole process and will put a burden upon his heart to a particular work. This may be to pastor one of the Lord's flocks. If this is the case, the preacher should begin to offer his services to local churches as a 'supply

preacher' to fill the pulpits in the pastors' absences and/or special meetings. Over time then, if led by the Holy Spirit, one of the Lord's churches will call him as pastor.

Another burden that might be laid upon this 'young in the spirit' (age makes no difference!) preacher might be to a mission work or area, either home or foreign. As God leads and directs, he should join himself to a church that is willing and able to further this call. (Most of the time this should be the ordaining church.) As the LORD supplies the open door and the finances to make this call feasible, the man of God (and his family, if applicable) will depart for his mission field under the authority of the sending church. Every field is different, some may only take months before a mission work can become a church, while other fields may take years or a lifetime before God's fruit becomes evident. (Adoniram Judson comes to mind as he labored six years for his first convert and five more for a viable congregation of ten members there in Burma.)

So, to summate before we run out of room, a pastor or deacon must be a called and ordained man of God, but a man of God doesn't necessarily have to fill the office of a pastor or deacon. He would then fall under the third category mentioned by the petitioner. He would properly be called an Elder in the church. These men may be used in many ways like unto Pastors and Deacons in the church services and the lives of the members. They may teach classes, preach revival meetings, supply in pulpits and help out on mission fields. Or they may be sent like Barnabus to Antioch to be an emissary of the church on a fact-finding mission with the authority of the Jerusalem Baptist Church to preach, baptize and organize churches. (Much like Elder Dan Stepp has been used in the Philippines!)

If you read the context in chapter 11 of Acts, you'll see that Barnabus "exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord." He taught them from the Word and exhorted them to join the Lord's church "and much people was added unto the Lord." This phrase (just like Acts 2:41) means he baptized them into the Jerusalem Baptist Church with that authority! ("Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.")

The rest of the passage indicates that he was lettered along with the Apostle

Paul into the newly formed church "they assembled themselves with the church" ("assembled" means in the Greek: "gathered" or "taken in") and continued as an Elder in the First Baptist Church of Antioch "and taught much people". If he served as the first pastor of the Antioch church, it was a temporary calling until chapter 13 where he is commissioned unto a missionary journey out of this now veteran church that desires motherhood and daughter churches!

One last thought on the subject. Mission work is NOT an office. A Pastor/Bishop is a missionary of the Good News in his daily walk and labors. A Deacon is a missionary of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the same way. Any Elders in the church are walking Evangelists with perhaps even more opportunities to be missionary-minded, as they are not tied to duties within the church as the officers of the church are. But every member of the church is to be a vital missionary outreach of the body as they live their lives for their Master in front of this lost and dying world. The "office" of mission work belongs to the whole church! "Go YE therefore, and disciple all nations" is the Great Commission, not to the apostles, but to the Lord's Church! Selah! Think about it!

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I am sorry but I will have to apologize to the questioner and reader concerning this question, but I am afraid I do not understand this question. And I don't like to assume what is being asked here, so I will give a brief answer on how I feel about missions and maybe in doing so we might hit the nail on the head.

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matt. 28:18-20).

I believe all Baptists know the above Scripture as the "Great Commission" and that commission was given to the church by Christ Himself. I have now been on both sides of the fence if you will, being a missionary at present and having the privilege of pastoring two of the Lord's churches in the space of 20 years.

I do not know what is meant by a stand alone office when the only two offices of the church are Pastor/Bishop

and Deacons which both are classified as Elders as far as I am concerned and they must be ordained by the church to carry such an honorable title. Only a Sovereign Grace, Missionary, Landmark, Independent Baptist Church has the authority to do so.

Paul, Barnabas, Silas, and others were sent out by the first church there in Jerusalem, "Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren" (Acts 15:22).

As far as missionary work being done, I am the Big Creek Baptist Church's missionary, sent out with authority from them to start a mission work in West Jefferson, Ohio. At this mission there are 11 of God's saints including myself that are members of the mission and the church at Big Creek, and we have many visitors who are regulars. It has always been my stand that all those that are members are responsible to do mission work; it should never be left up to the missionary alone; they are the mission, are they not? They have the same commission that I have as shown in Matthew 28:18-20. This goes for the Lord's churches as well, it's not just the pastor and deacons responsibility, but the whole church should be involved with the spreading of the Gospel. With that said, I would have to say that mission work is not standing alone, every one is responsible.

Again, please excuse my ignorance concerning the question, but we do hope this might be of some help to the questioner. God Bless!

ROGER RED

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The office of a missionary has never, and will never stand alone as we see from the Scripture used in the question. Barnabas, being from the area that he was sent to, could go no further per the sending church.

Barnabas was a missionary sent to aid in the spread of the gospel and the establishment of missions and eventually churches.

A Pastor/Bishop is no different from an Elder; it is the same office with a different title. Search out the Greek words and the conclusion will be clear. Do not take my word for it, search the truth for the truth.

MIKE DEWITT

◊ (Continued on page 52)

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. Is Sunday now the Christian Sabbath? If so, when did it change and what are we restricted from doing on the Sabbath? Are there any penalties today of breaking the Sabbath?" – Alabama

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Is Sunday now the Christian Sabbath? Sunday is now the Sabbath that New Testament Christians observe. Sunday is the New Testament day of rest.

When did it change? The day of rest was instituted by God for all the inhabitants of the earth when God finished the creation. **"And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made"** (Gen. 2:3). A close observation of this fact will reveal that the Sabbath was observed before the Ten Commandments was drafted upon Sinai.

"For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it" (Ex. 20:11). Notice in the passage quoted that God never gave a specific day to start or end the work week, but says only that after six days of work the seventh day is for rest and that He made it Holy.

We know crucifixion day was Wednesday. Three days and three nights, according to the Jewish 24 hour day from 6 am to 6 pm would bring us to Saturday 6 pm. resurrection day occurred on Sunday **"Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils"** (Mark 16:9). Christ then shows Himself later that Sunday evening to the assembled Church. **"Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you"** (John 20:19). We next see once again the assembly in worship one week later on a Sunday. **"And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you"** (John 20:26). We begin to see a pattern forming of the Lord's Church meeting on resurrection day. Using God's Word to continue on this path we will find that the churches in the first century observed Sunday,

resurrection day, as **"...the Lord's day"** (Rev. 1:10). This is the model that New Testament churches have followed ever since, and will till His pre-tribulation return.

Are there any penalties today of breaking the Sabbath? I seek the guidance of the Scriptures and return to the beginning in Genesis chapter 2. This day of rest is just that, a day of rest from the six days of work. Our bodies need rest, our minds also need it. Remember the Sabbath has been made holy by God, so observe His day of rest that He created for man, with reverence. Don't revere the day of rest God has created the way God intended it to be observed, and you will not receive His approval.

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Believe it or not, but I have had Christians laugh when I quote this verse of Scripture, **"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching"** (Heb. 10:25). One reason, I guess, is they don't take it serious or maybe they think it doesn't apply to them, either way they find it funny and I do mean in the Ha! Ha! sense, sad but true!

I will answer the first question by quoting the Big Creek Baptist Church Declaration of Faith concerning the Lord's Day: "We believe that the first day of the week, the Lord's Day, is not the Old testament Sabbath nor the New Testament Sabbath, but a day in which the apostles and members of the early church were actively engaged in the work of the Lord and a day in which they assembled to worship Him. (John 20:19; I Cor. 16:1-2; Acts 20:7-8)."

To answer the first part of the second question, it changed when our Lord changed it. When Christ arose from the grave on the first day of the week things changed concerning the law. We no longer are underneath that old **"schoolmaster."** **"Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster"**

(Gal. 3:24-25) [good study]! We are no longer under the penalty and do not have to observe the ceremonial parts of the law, Christ freed us from that. The following Scriptures should leave no doubt when the church should meet:

"Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils" (Mark 16:9).

"Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you" (John 20:19).

"And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you" (John 20:26). Both times on the first day of the week, the Head and Founder met with His Bride, His Church, His Ekklesia.

"And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight" (Acts 20:7).

"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (I Cor. 16:2).

"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet" (Rev. 1:10).

I will try answering the second part of the second question along with the last question asked. "What are we restricted from doing on the Sabbath and are there any penalties of breaking the Sabbath?"

Many seem to have a problem here! Do we not follow the Ten Commandments as outlined in Exodus 20:1-17 today? I would say yes! Just because we are not under the law doesn't mean we don't have to obey the law of God. Is committing adultery sin? Yes! Is stealing a sin? Yes! Is worshipping other gods a sin? Yes! Then why would **"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy"** be any different? Except now it's the Lord's Day! So are there restrictions? Not to be a smart-aleck, but isn't it obvious? Rest, go to church, and worship God in spirit and in truth. Don't go to work, play golf, go fishing or hunting, all this is elementary...IT'S THE LORD'S DAY people, you know what to do, if you're truly saved **"Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit"** (I John 4:13). We become so foolish in our thinking sometimes, just another example how great our God really is **"When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou**

visitest him" (Ps. 8:3-4)?

Are there penalties? ALWAYS! There is always a penalty for sin. You would not believe the countless Christians I have encountered that scratch their heads and say, "I don't know why I am having such a hard time," and complain about being sick and having this happen and that happen, and to me it is obvious, if you don't come to church you're not worshipping, serving, nor are you tithing. Are these sin? Do I really need to answer that? **"For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons"** (Heb. 12:6). May God continue to help us all in our struggles and service to Him. God Bless!

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The sabbath set forth in the moral law and incorporated into the civil laws governing the nation of Israel is distinguished from the Lord's Day as observed by New Testament believers. Jews observe Saturday as the sabbath day, whereas Christians recognize Sunday as the Lord's Day in commemoration of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The phrase "Christian Sabbath" is not found in New Testament Scripture. I believe that each and every day is a sabbath of rest for those who have entered into the rest secured by the finished work of Jesus Christ. True believers have ceased from trusting in their own efforts to fully rely upon the Lord Jesus Christ for their eternal salvation. This truth is alluded to in Hebrews 4:9-11 which states: **"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief."** So there is a real sense in which believers celebrate the sabbath rest in Christ each and every day of their new life in Him. The command of the moral law to remember the sabbath day and keep it holy is to be observed every day by believers. I Peter 1:14-15 declares: **"As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former**

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Forum #1

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All of the moral, doctrinal, and familial qualifications of an Elder, Pastor, or Bishop equally apply to that of a man who has been set apart to do missionary work. A man must be divinely called to preach by the Lord and he must meet the qualifications as set forth in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. This individual must also be ordained and sent forth by the authority of the Lord's church as a validation of said qualifications. These simple criteria must be met whether a man is an Elder/Pastor/Bishop of a church, or whether he is an ordained Elder/Evangelist sent forth to do missionary work. In each and every case, regardless of the terms used to identify the position of the man doing the work of the ministry, he must be saved, called of God, ordained and sent forth by the Lord's church.

With that said, I do not believe that missionary work is a stand alone office separate from a Pastor/Bishop, or Elder of an assembly. Every Pastor is to do the work of an evangelist (Eph. 4:11-12 cf. II Tim. 4:5) which was the term used in Scripture to identify a missionary or one sent forth to declare the good news of the Gospel. Many missionaries, especially those who do what we call "home mission work" often become the Pastor once the mission has been organized as an independent, autonomous church. Furthermore there is no such thing as a "stand alone missionary". Each and every man who is called, separated, and sent forth to do mission work must be connected to the local church. All missionary activity, both at home and abroad, is to be done by the authority of the Lord's church. The Lord did not commission individuals as such, but the institution of the Lord's church as the responsible agency for fulfilling the terms of the Great Commission. Barnabus was no free lance or stand alone missionary. He was a preacher called of God and sent forth by the church of Jerusalem to Antioch where a church was organized. It was the church at Jerusalem which set Barnabus apart and instructed him where to go. Once the church at Antioch was organized they followed the same pattern established by the Jerusalem church as set forth in Acts 13:1-3. TOM ROSS



Forum #2

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lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation."

New Testament Christians are to worship God every day of the week. Our devotion and profession of loyalty to the Lord Jesus Christ is not limited to Sunday. However, the early Christians met together on the first day of the week (Sunday) for the purpose of publically worshipping the Lord in His church. Scripture records that they assembled for prayer, worship, observance of the Lord's Supper, collection of tithes and offerings, and preaching on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7; I Cor. 16:1-2). Many of the principles of the Old Testament sabbath such as setting apart a day for physical rest, spiritual worship, meditation, devotion, and prayer should be implemented by believers on the Lord's day. Every believer who faithfully attends one of the Lord's churches on Sunday and spends that day fellowshiping with God and those who love Him will grow spiritually. Those who forsake the assembly on the Lord's Day for the pursuit of personal pleasure will suffer the consequences of being backslidden, out of fellowship with God, and a friend of the world (James 4:4).

A violation of the Old Testament sabbath as set forth in the civil laws of Israel could result in death by stoning. There were a wide variety of restrictions on the sabbath regarding working, kindling a fire for cooking, and travel. I know of no such penalties listed in the New Testament for profaning the Lord's Day other than incurring the chastening hand of the Lord which is a solemn punishment. I wish our beloved America would go back to the practice when nothing was open for business on Sunday. People would be free to spend Sunday worshipping the Lord and assembling with the saints. There would be less hustle, bustle, and worldliness. There would be more time to spend with family and friends around the things of the Lord without worrying about working, shopping, eating out, etc. I believe it would be in our best interest as believers to set apart Sunday as the Lord's Day with a special emphasis on worship and devotion as opposed to treating it like just another day of the week. **"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching"** (Heb.

10:23-25).

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The Sabbath is the second institution recorded in the Bible for man (only after marriage) in God's order and is found in **"And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made"** (Gen 2:3). Incidentally it was originally observed by all of the men of the earth as evidenced by earliest civilizations that based their week upon a seventh (or Sabbath) day.

But what was the Sabbath for? Clearly it was **"sanctified"** by God, and to be sanctified means it was **"set aside"** for a particular purpose(s). Two things: 1) It was declared by God to be a day of rest (Lev. 23:3; Heb. 4:4). 2) It was commanded to be a day of worship (Lev. 19:30; Luke 4:31). Many more proof verses can be found that establish this institution of God's order in both the Old and New Testaments. But obviously the most important place in Scripture for the Sabbath is found in the heart of the Ten Commandments coming in at number four. The final Commandment on the man toward God tablet: **"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work... wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it"** (Ex. 20:8-11).

So how come we don't still observe the Saturday Sabbath (the Seventh Day Sabbath)? Because the Lord Himself changed it! As you read the Gospels, you will see that our Saviour kept the Saturday Sabbath. But, after His death, He clearly instructed the disciples that the Christian church (unlike the Jews) would meet on the first day of the week, in commemoration of His resurrection on that day. **"Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. ...And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you"** (John 20:19, 26). Not on any other day, but on two consecutive Sundays (by Jewish reckoning), Jesus Christ, the Head of the church, met with His ekklesia! By example for us, and no doubt by direct

commandment to the apostles, Jesus ordained that His churches meet on what has become known as the Lord's Day-Sunday. This movement of the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday is further upheld by the empirical evidences of the churches in the remainder of the New Testament. (Please reference: Acts 20:7; I Cor. 16:2; Rev. 1:10).

So to answer the question, it changed on **"the same day"** that the Lord exited the grave. Everything changes with a risen Saviour! Praise God!

So what are we restricted from doing on the Christian Sabbath? Really, the Christian Sabbath has the SAME rules as the Jewish Sabbath did! Remember? 1) It is to be a day of rest and 2) It is to be a day of worship! A crucial text to understanding the transition from the OT to NT is Matthew 12:1-12: **"At that time Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn; and his disciples were an hungred, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat. But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day. ...And, behold, there was a man which had his hand withered. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? that they might accuse him. And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days."** Like the question at hand, the Pharisees were more concerned about what you COULDN'T do on the Sabbath, instead of what you were SUPPOSED to do on the Sabbath! The commandment is to **"Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy"**! If we do what we're SUPPOSED to do on the Sabbath, never mind the restrictions! They'll go away of themselves... 1) Rest on the Sabbath. Yes, that means don't work! REST! 2) Worship God on the Sabbath. Yes, that means go to church, don't go fishing! WORSHIP HIM as much as you can, ALL day long!

Are there any penalties for breaking the Sunday Sabbath? Yes, the same penalties apply to the fourth Commandment that apply to the first Commandment and the second Commandment and the ninth Commandment and the tenth Commandment! Not stoning, anymore. Not the penalties of the heavy law that our fathers couldn't bear (Acts 15:10). The penalties today for breaking the Sabbath would be a loss of rewards. Being an hindrance and a stumbling-block to other Christians and to your own service to your Master. What happens to you if you steal or commit adultery today? If you are a child of God, He'll chastise you. And that's what He'll do if you break the

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Forum #2

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Sabbath.

“O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin. ...There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death” (Rom. 7:24; 8:2). We're not “under” the law anymore, beloved reader, we're “in” the law! We obey it even better through love, than any ever could obey it in fear! Selah! Think about it!

MATTHEW STEPP



This 115 page book covers each of the Ten Commandments and explains each as they are all still applicable today as when God first give them.

For the month of March these can be purchased for \$3 each or five or more for \$2 each.

Please see shipping chart on page 59 for postage and handling.

Available on DVD

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Contained on this dvd is the original six lectures on the history of the Baptists, also known and published as *Footsteps of the Flock*. The video quality is not the best, nor is the sound perfect, but we wanted to make them available.

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We now have all fifty-eight sermons that Elder Cockrell preached on the television programs *Gleanings from the Scriptures* and *The Sovereign Grace Telecast* available on DVD.

This is a fourteen disc set collection that contains fifty-eight sermons.

Please see postage chart on page 59.

THE BIBLE AND THE NEWSPAPER

Readers of the BBB are urged to submit religious news items which they may read in their local paper or some other publication. In sending these please give the name of the publication as well as the date it was printed. We will not be able to print all which are submitted, but we welcome any item you may feel we should read.

Send them to The Berea Baptist Banner, PO Box 39, Mantachie, MS 38855-0039.

TENNESSEE LEGISLATURE TAKES ACTION TO SHIELD BUSINESSES FROM GAY AGENDA

(WNS)--As local governments across the country continue to be encouraged by homosexual activists to adopt discriminatory “non-discrimination” policies, Tennessee legislators and pro-family leaders are stepping in to protect businesses. State Rep. Glen Casada introduced legislation that will prevent local governments from forcing businesses to adopt restrictive policies based on sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. So far, gay activists have successfully convinced local governments to pass their legislative priorities. When implemented, city contractors must sign an affidavit agreeing that they will not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

STATE-LEVEL MARRIAGE BATTLES HEAT UP

(WNS)--Five states allow same-sex marriage. By year's end, that number could grow. However, several states are working to protect the definition of marriage. Massachusetts, Connecticut, Iowa, New Hampshire and Vermont have legalized gay marriage. Democratic leaders in the Maryland and Rhode Island Legislatures appear sympathetic to gay marriage, which means it could be legalized soon in those states. At least four other states may consider legislation this year to allow same-sex marriage: Delaware, New Jersey, New York and Washington.

“LIFE LIST” RANKS STATES BASED ON PRO-LIFE LAWS

(WNS)--When it comes to protecting life in the law, Oklahoma is at the top of the list. Rounding out the top 5 are Louisiana, Pennsylvania, Arkansas and Texas. That's according to the sixth annual “Life List” from Americans United for Life (AUL), which ranks states based on the way each deals with a comprehensive list of life issues, from physician-assisted suicide to abortion. AUL CEO and President Dr. Charmaine Yoest said the model legislation that AUL specializes in and the state-based approach to protecting life in the law is “changing the momentum toward life at the state level. We are seeing a cultural shift toward protecting life and rolling back the tide of unrestricted abortions that Roe v. Wade produced.” At the bottom of the list are New Jersey, Vermont, Hawaii, California and Washington state.

U.S. SUPREME COURT REFUSES TO HEAR D.C. MARRIAGE CASE

(WNS)--The U.S. Supreme Court rejected an appeal Jan. 18 from marriage advocates to allow voters in Washington, D.C., to vote on the definition of marriage. Marriage supporters had been trying to put a measure on the ballot after the district legalized same-sex marriage in 2010. Bishop Harry Jackson, chairman of the High Impact Leadership Coalition, led a lawsuit against the Board of Elections and Ethics after it refused to put the initiative on the ballot. “This redefinition of marriage will permanently impact D.C. businesses, schools, social activities and the family unit without the voice of the residents being heard,” Jackson said in filing the ballot initiative. “(This) would allow the people of the District to decide this important issue, not a 13-person panel.”

KENTUCKY APPEALS COURT WILL ALLOW ABORTIONS ON OUT-OF-STATE GIRLS

(WNS)--The Kentucky Court of Appeals has reversed a district court ruling and will allow girls to travel to the state to receive an abortion without their parents' knowledge. Under state law, minors can petition a judge to grant an abortion. Judge Joy Moore, the dissenter in the 2-1 ruling, said Kentucky judges have no “business making any decisions regarding a minor from another state seeking an abortion without parental consent.” Margie Montgomery, executive director of Kentucky Right to Life Association, told The Courier-Journal that she fears the ruling could result in Kentucky becoming a haven for girls seeking abortions without their parents' permission.

LOS ANGELES BILLBOARDS SPOTLIGHT ABORTION RATE IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY

(WNS)--California is the nation's abortion capital, aborting an estimated 200,000 preborn babies a year at its 424 abortion clinics. According to national estimates, 38 percent of those abortions kill African-American babies. Two pro-life groups are hoping to cut those numbers, by placing 70 billboards across the Los Angeles area. The signs feature the message: “Black Children Are An Endangered Species.” The Georgia-based Radiance Foundation has partnered with the California-based Issues4Life Foundation to expose the racist agenda of the abortion industry. The Radiance Foundation recently partnered with pro-life groups in Georgia and Wisconsin to erect similar billboards.

WYOMING LEGISLATURE REJECTS PRO-LIFE BILL, CONSIDERS MARRIAGE MEASURES

(WNS)--The Wyoming House on Jan. 25 defeated a bill that would have required abortionists to tell women they could view an ultrasound of their preborn babies before aborting them. Research suggests that among at-risk women, the combined provision of counseling and ultrasound results in nearly 60 percent more stated decisions for life than with counseling alone. Becky Vandenberghe, chairwoman of the pro-family WyWatch Family Action, said life advocates will keep trying. “We're disappointed that the Legislature won't take a look at this bill and try to protect women from misinformation from those who profit from abortions,” she told The Associated Press.

JUSTICE SCALIA CHALLENGES CONGRESS TO FOLLOW THE CONSTITUTION

(WNS)--About 50 U.S. representatives, including at least three Democrats, gathered at the Capitol on Jan. 24 to hear U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia discuss the U.S. Constitution. It was the first Conservative Constitutional Seminar put on by Rep. Michele Bachmann, R-Minn., the chairwoman of the Tea Party Caucus. According to news reports, Scalia challenged the lawmakers to read the Federalist Papers and to follow the Constitution as it was written. “We were delighted with his remarks,” Bachmann said. Rep. Jan Schakowsky, D-Ill., called the event “useful” and “pretty dry, actually.” The seminar comes a couple of weeks after the U.S. House of Representatives made history by reading aloud the Constitution on the House floor.

LIFE ADVOCATES REMEMBER MILLIONS LOST TO ABORTION

(WNS)--In the 38 years since the U.S. Supreme Court legalized abortion in Roe v. Wade, an estimated 48 million preborn babies have lost their lives. Over the weekend of Jan. 21-24, hundreds of thousands of life advocates took part in events across the nation to mark the anniversary. The national March for Life, which first took place in January 1974, is scheduled for Monday on the National Mall. March for Life founder Nellie Gray said the goal is simple: “To overturn Roe versus Wade, no exception, no compromise.” President Ronald Reagan and both George H.W. and George W. Bush addressed the attendees by phone. President Barack Obama was invited to do the same. Instead, he issued a statement celebrating a woman's right to have an abortion. The weekend events culminated with the 29th annual Rose Dinner on Jan. 24. Rep. Michele Bachmann, R-Minn., was the keynote speaker.

HOUSE REPUBLICANS VOTE TO REPEAL OBAMACARE

(WNS)-- Fulfilling a key campaign pledge made by most of the more than 80

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Bible & the Newspaper

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new Republican lawmakers, the House of Representatives on Jan. 19 voted 245 to 189 to repeal the year-old federal healthcare law. Some of those freshmen lawmakers, making one of their first and likely one of the biggest votes in their two-year terms, scoffed at Democrats' notion that the repeal legislation, passed strictly along party lines, was largely symbolic. "Shame on us if we come here and don't do what we said we would do," said freshman Rep. Bill Huizenga, R-Mich., moments before he headed into the House chamber to vote in favor of repeal. "It would underscore people's cynicism of Washington." Huizenga was part of 242 Republicans and three Democrats who voted for repealing the nearly 3,000-page law that recasts the nation's healthcare landscape. The odds of the Democratic-led Senate casting a similar vote are small. Even in the unlikely event of the Senate passing a similar measure, President Barack Obama would veto it.

26 STATES SUE OVER HEALTH CARE LAW AS HOUSE REPEALS IT

(WNS)--Six additional states — Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Ohio, Wisconsin and Wyoming — are suing the Obama administration over the health care law. Their decisions came just one day before the U.S. House of Representatives voted 245-189 to repeal the massive overhaul package. Twenty-six states are now part of the suit that originated in Florida. Oklahoma and Virginia have sued separately. The cases likely will reach the U.S. Supreme Court.

FEDERAL JUDGE AGREES WITH 26 STATES, VOIDS HEALTH CARE LAW

(WNS)--Federal Judge Roger Vinson threw out President Obama's health care law Jan. 31, calling the mandate requiring everyone to buy health insurance unconstitutional, and declaring the entire law void. Vinson, who serves on the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Florida, agreed with the 26 governors and state attorneys general who had sued over the law. He did not, however, halt the implementation of the law. David Rivkin, the plaintiffs' lead attorney, called the health care law "the most unconstitutional law in history," citing the Commerce Clause of the Constitution, which gives Congress the power to regulate interstate commerce. Rivkin said this is the first time Congress has ever tried to force citizens to enter interstate commerce. In mid-December, U.S. District Judge Henry E. Hudson ruled in favor of Virginia Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli, stating that Congress cannot order Americans to buy health insurance. Oklahoma has sued separately.

U.S. HOUSE LEGISLATION WOULD HALT ABORTION FUNDING

(WNS)--Two bills that were introduced Jan. 20 in the U.S. House of Representatives would keep abortion from being funded by

taxpayers or under the health care law. Reps. Chris Smith, R-N.J., and Dan Lipinski, D-Ill., introduced the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act, which would convert several pro-life policies — also known as riders — into law. Under current law, funding for abortion is prohibited through a patchwork of policies that must be approved annually. Rep. Joe Pitts, R-Pa., introduced the Protect Life Act, which would resurrect the Stupak amendment and remove abortion funding from the Obama health care law. Both bills would codify conscience protections for health care workers who object to abortion. "A ban on taxpayer funding of abortions is the will of the people, and it ought to be the will of the land," House Speaker John Boehner said. "This commonsense legislation reflects the will of the people and deserves the support of the House."

JUSTICE DEPARTMENT TAKES STEP TO DEFEND MARRIAGE

(WNS)--Gay activists filed two cases in July 2009 — Gill v. Office of Personnel Management and Massachusetts v. United States — to challenge the union between one man and one woman as unconstitutional. The Obama administration — which ardently opposes DOMA, but is forced by law to defend it — chose not to defend marriage on the basis of procreation and societal stability. Rather, it argued that there "has been a growing recognition that the prevailing regime is harmful to gay and lesbian members of our society" and that an "ongoing dialogue" was still occurring in the states. Furthermore, the DOJ argued that DOMA "reflects a cautiously limited response to society's still-evolving understanding of the institution of marriage" — thus, public debate over marriage should be allowed to develop in the states while the federal government preserves the status quo at the federal level.

ATHEISTS COMPLAIN ABOUT LEGISLATIVE PRAYERS

(WNS)--All five members of the El Paso County (Colo.) Board of Commissioners have agreed to start their twice-a-week meetings with prayer. But the Wisconsin-based Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) is having none of it. Just two days after new Commissioner Peggy Littleton brought the idea up for discussion, the group of atheists filed an official complaint against the commission. FFRF Co-President Dan Barker called the prayers "unnecessary, inappropriate and divisive," and said they could be "coercive and embarrassing." The Alliance Defense Fund has offered legal help to the commission. FFRF also is trying to halt prayers in the Iowa Legislature and the Tulsa, Okla., City Council. The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that legislative bodies can start sessions with prayer.

CALIFORNIA SUPREME COURT SIDES WITH SAN DIEGO FIREFIGHTERS

(WNS)--San Diego firefighters who were required to take part in a gay pride parade

were vindicated Jan. 31 when the California Supreme Court chose not to hear an appeal in the case. Capt. John Ghiotto and three other men had sued the city in 2007 after a battalion chief ordered them to ride in the parade. In October, the California Fourth District Court of Appeal ruled unanimously in favor of the firefighters. Charles LiMandri, the general counsel for the California branch of the National Organization for Marriage who represented the firefighters, told LifeSiteNews.com that his clients were delighted with the outcome. "It's an important case because it shows that if Christian or people of faith generally are willing to stand up for their religious beliefs, and refuse to be bullied by secular agendas, that they do have rights that can and should be enforced in court," LiMandri said. "In this case, those rights were upheld."

GEORGIA, NORTH DAKOTA PUSH PRO-LIFE BILLS

(WNS)--A Georgia lawmaker has introduced legislation that would protect preborn babies starting at 20 weeks gestation. State Rep. Allen Peake of Macon said the bill is patterned after a new law in Nebraska that is serving as a model for several states. "I think we'll see this be one of the most important pieces of legislation this session," he told The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. Life advocates are at odds over the bill because it allows a late-term abortion if the mother's "health" is at risk. Nebraska's law allows abortion only if the life of the mother is in jeopardy.

In North Dakota, legislators discussed two pro-life bills on Jan. 31. One would define a preborn baby at any stage of development as a member of the human species; the other would place stricter requirements on abortionists.

FOR MORE THAN 15 YEARS, PENNSYLVANIA FAILED TO INSPECT ABORTION CLINICS

(WNS)--Only after a drug raid in February 2010 revealed horrific conditions at a Philadelphia abortion clinic did the Pennsylvania State Health Department decide to inspect all of the state's 22 clinics — for the first time in more than 15 years. Fourteen of the clinics were ordered to fix problems, The Associated Press reported. The most common deficiencies were failures to properly report medical conditions that qualify as "serious events" and not keeping resuscitation equipment readily available, according to records obtained by The AP. Also cited were issues related to checking on patients after their abortions and practices that raised patient confidentiality concerns. The grand jury report, which was released in late January, revealed that inspections of abortion clinics ended around 1995, which allowed Kermit Gosnell to operate his "house of horrors" — the Women's Medical Society in Philadelphia.

CIVIL UNIONS ADVANCE IN ILLINOIS, HAWAII; FAIL IN WYOMING

(WNS)--For four years, family advocates have been successful in protecting the definition of marriage in Illinois. On Jan. 31, however, Democratic Gov. Pat Quinn signed into law a bill that gives all of the benefits of marriage to same-sex couples. The law takes effect June 1. The American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois, which wrote the bill, said the next step is same-sex marriage — something marriage advocates have been saying all along. In Hawaii, the Senate has sent legislation to the House that would sanction same-sex unions by providing marriage-like rights. Democratic Gov. Neil Abercrombie has promised to sign the bill. Meanwhile, in Wyoming, the House Judiciary Committee defeated a civil union bill Jan. 28, with a 5-4 vote. The Senate is considering two pro-family measures, including an amendment that would protect marriage within the state's Constitution.

LOUISVILLE SENDS SEXUALLY ORIENTED BUSINESSES PACKING

(WNS)--Several years ago, Louisville, Ky., was home to 175 sexually oriented businesses — one of the highest concentrations in the country. Last year, the number had fallen to 63. And starting in February, it could drop even lower. A no-nudity ordinance will finally go into effect Feb. 8 following a seven-year legal battle. About 25 of the sex shops have sued and are hoping the U.S. Supreme Court will come to their rescue. Otherwise, "They're going to run all of these businesses out of town," one strip-club owner told The (Louisville) Courier-Journal. The ordinance will eliminate alcohol sales and all-nude dancing, and force strip club owners and employees to pay licensing fees, according to The Courier-Journal.

LAWMAKERS ASK SEBELIUS ABOUT TAXPAYER-FUNDED 'TELEMED' ABORTIONS

(WNS)--Rep. Steve King, R-Iowa, and 70 other members of Congress are calling on Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius to investigate whether tax dollars are being used to fund "telemed" abortions. Planned Parenthood clinics in Iowa are the first in the country to offer the procedure, in which an abortionist consults with a woman over a webcam and then uses a remote control to open a drawer containing the abortion pill RU-486. The letter reads: "We are concerned that this practice of 'telemed abortions' may have received taxpayer funding, and we are concerned that similar programs may receive taxpayer funding in the future, despite federal laws that prohibit taxpayer funding for abortion. If federal dollars are used for telemed abortions, it would make American taxpayers complicit in underwriting the destruction of innocent unborn children and supporting organizations that endanger women's lives and health by intentionally circumventing FDA guidelines for dispensing RU-486."

CORRECTED NUMBERS SHOW

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Bible & the Newspaper

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DELAWARE HAS HIGHEST ABORTION RATE IN U.S.

(WNS)--According to the Guttmacher Institute, the research arm of Planned Parenthood, Delaware failed to report one-third of the abortions it performed in 2008. The statistics also reveal that Delaware has the highest abortion rate in the nation, at 40 abortions annually per 1,000 women ages 15 to 44. Guttmacher reports that 7,070 abortions were performed in the state in 2008, the last year for which figures are available. However, the state Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) received reports from abortion clinics totaling just 4,603 abortions for the year. Ellen Barrosse, president of A Rose and a Prayer, discovered the discrepancy through research. She is calling on Attorney General Beau Biden (the vice president's son) to find out why DHSS was given inaccurate numbers.

AMERICA'S DEBTS: EVEN MORE CALAMITOUS THAN WE THOUGHT

By Dr. Mark W. Hendrickson

(WNS)--Brace yourself. This isn't going to be pleasant. If you're in a bad mood or get easily upset, you may wish to pass on reading this article.

The country is in even worse shape economically than we thought. We awoke on Feb. 14 to find that this year's federal budget deficit is going to be larger than previously projected—a record \$1.65 trillion.

Recently, the official accumulated debt of the federal government passed the \$14 trillion threshold. A trillion is a gigantic number. If you stacked \$100 bills flat on top of each other, then turned that stack on its side, a trillion dollars would stretch from where I live in western Pennsylvania to somewhere past St. Louis. That's just ONE trillion. Multiply that by 14, and it would stretch from here to Honolulu and back with plenty to spare.

The really bad news is that Uncle Sam's debt is significantly greater than \$14 trillion, and I am not referring to the tens of trillions of dollars of unfunded liabilities representing undeliverable government promises. According to data released by the U.S. Treasury on January 21, the public debt is \$20.7 trillion, an increase of \$3.3 trillion in just the last year.

The larger sum—actual existing debt of \$20.7 trillion—includes such off-budget items as bailouts, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, student loans, and who knows what else? I have to say “who knows what else,” because the leviathan federal government long ago became too large to keep track of. For example, 25 years ago the Grace Commission, instituted by Ronald Reagan in the hope of identifying ways to streamline the federal government, was unable to tabulate how many people worked for the federal government, although they did manage to identify 963 federal programs that

redistributed wealth.

Not only is our current national indebtedness more than 40 percent greater than the already horrendous commonly cited figure, the Social Security program is in worse shape than expected, too. As recently as a month or two ago, it was widely accepted that payouts from Social Security would start to exceed revenues in 2016. In a stunning development, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office released a report on January 26 which projected that revenue shortfalls will begin this year and continue uninterrupted until all unfunded IOU's are exhausted by 2037 (if not much sooner). The CBO projects what would have been a \$45 billion shortfall this year, but thanks to the terrible deal that President Obama and congressional Republicans forged in December—the one that included a 2-percent reduction in Social Security withholding from workers' paychecks—this year's Social Security red ink is expected to hit \$130 billion.

At the state level, finances are deteriorating at a sickening speed. Governors are starting to ask the Obama administration for permission to drop people from Medicaid (280,000 people in Arizona alone). Moody's, the debt-rating agency that seems to wait until after a collapse has happened to lower its rating of an entity's finances, is making noises about downgrading the credit rating of several states.

At the municipal level, many bonds continue to tank as municipalities careen toward bankruptcy. Of the three largest bond insurers, two are already bankrupt while the survival of the third is in doubt.

Meanwhile, Obamacare is ripping us apart. The administration itself has already granted over 200 waivers to well-connected businesses and labor unions from having to comply with its unaffordable costs (meaning that wealth is being redistributed from those who don't receive the exemptions to those that do).

Two federal judges have upheld Obamacare while two others have ruled it unconstitutional. The result is that some state governors and attorneys general are voiding it within their jurisdictions while others are not. Obama is proceeding with costly implementation despite the bill's uncertain status. Besides the confusion and uncertainty that this is sowing, valuable time will be consumed in waging this titanic constitutional struggle—time that could and should be spent addressing the ballooning spending/debt crisis.

Given the magnitude of governmental fiscal woes, the struggle in Washington between Democrats who talk about (but don't propose) a possible spending freeze in one small corner of the federal budget, and Republicans who claim to want to cut \$100 billion of annual spending, is a cruel joke. Talk about fiddling while Rome burns!

The financial condition of governments at all levels is worse than it ever has been. Neither political party seems ready to address the crisis in any meaningful way. As a result, our financial predicament is even worse than

most of us had thought.

INTERNATIONAL BRIEFS CANADIAN COURT ELEVATES GAY RIGHTS

(WNS)--The Saskatchewan Appeal Court ruled Jan. 10 that marriage commissioners must perform same-sex marriage ceremonies even if they conflict with their deeply held religious beliefs. The case stems from 2005, when commissioner Orville Nichols, a Baptist, refused to marry a same-sex couple because it ran counter

to his religious beliefs. Two alternative new laws protecting conscience rights of marriage commissioners went before the Canadian court for a preliminary opinion as to their constitutionality. The court said either law would “violate the equality rights of gay and lesbian individuals, saying they “overlook, or inappropriately discount, the importance of the impact on gay or lesbian couples of being told by a marriage commissioner that he or she will not solemnize a same-sex union.”



From the Pen of a Country Preacher

Milburn R. Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)



The Indispensable Blood

“Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood. For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission” (Heb. 9:18-22).

At the last supper our Savior said: **“For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins”** (Matt. 26:28). Then the Hebrew writer echoes the same: **“Without shedding of blood is no remission”** (Heb. 9:22). The blood atonement of Jesus Christ is the basis of the Christian religion. Without this doctrine, the light of truth is clouded, the hope of acceptance doubtful, and the remedy for man's sin and misery questionable.

THE TEACHING OF THE OLD TESTAMENT EARLY REFERENCES

From the beginning it was pressed upon man that his life was forfeited to Divine Justice by sin: **“But 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. 2:17). Sin is an attack on God's holy throne and His very existence. God repels sin by crushing the sinner's life. For this reason God choose the blood to be the symbol of life substituted for the life of the guilty in atoning sacrifice: **“For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement**

for the soul” (Lev. 17:11). The relation of blood to forgiveness was constantly kept before the mind of man from the earliest days of his existence.

Shortly after the fall God slew the blood of two innocent animals before the eyes of Adam and Eve to make them coats of skins: **“Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them”** (Gen. 3:21). Skins could not have been gotten from animals without the shedding of their blood by God. The word “coats” in the Hebrew (*cathnoth*, from *cathan*) means “to cover.” Here we learn that an atonement is a covering for sin provided by God shedding blood.

Atonement by blood was also seen in the promise of a Redeemer in Genesis 3:15: **“And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”** The bruising of the Redeemer's heel is a reference to the sufferings and death of Christ. The heel of Christ was bruised when His feet were pierced and nailed to the cross.

Both Abel (Gen. 4:4) and Noah (Gen. 8:20) offered acceptable sacrifices because they contained blood. Cain offered the fruit of the ground, but God rejected his bloodless offering.

Circumcision was a bloody rite. God told Abraham: **“Every male child among you shall be circumcised”** (Gen. 17:10). When Zipporah was compelled to circumcise her son she told Moses: **“A bloody husband thou art, because of the circumcision”** (Ex. 4:26). This bloody rite of circumcision spoke of the blood of the covenant (Heb. 13:10).

THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM OF JUDAISM

A common saying with the Jews was:
◊ (Continued on page 56)

Indispensable Blood

(Continued from page 55) ◊

"There is no atonement but by blood." This rule was not universal. Hebrews 9:22 says: **"And ALMOST all things are by the law purged with blood. . ."** (emph. MRC). But the exceptions were few. Some impurities could be removed by fire and water (Num. 31:22-24; Lev. 16:26, 28), but the stain of sin could only be removed by blood.

A lamb had its blood shed during the Passover: **"Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it"** (Ex. 12:5-7). The Paschal lamb had to have its blood shed, and then this atoning blood had to be applied to the household. This was the emblem of the blood of sprinkling (Heb. 12:24; I Peter 1:2).

On the great Day of Atonement, when all of the people were to appear before God, an atonement was made by the high priest for them by blood. The high priest killed the goat, and took his blood within the veil, and **"sprinkle(d) it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat"** (Lev. 16:15-16). By this act the high priest made an atonement **"for all the congregation of Israel"** (Lev. 16:17). This pointed to the time when Christ would offer His atoning blood for His people.

THE PROPHETS PREACHED IT

The prophets under the old dispensation preached that there was no remission of sins except by the blood of the Messiah. Isaiah declared: **"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed"** (Isa. 53:5). He went on to say: **"Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin. . . He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. . . he hath poured out his soul unto death. . . and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors"** (Isa. 53:10-12).

The Prophet Daniel foretold that the Messiah would be **"cut off"** or crucified (Dan. 9:26). Zechariah prophesied of the smiting of the Shepherd (13:7) and of a fountain opened **"for sin and the uncleanness"** (13:1).

The Old Testament taught that remission of sins was absolutely necessary,

and that there was no way to expiate sin but by blood. My text well summarized the old dispensation by saying: **"And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission."** Note the double negatives in Hebrews 9:22: **"without"** and **"no."** This implies that there was no other way for obtaining forgiveness. The shedding of blood was indispensable to the remission of sins.

THE TEACHING OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

"Without shedding of blood is no remission" is as true of Christianity as Judaism. Sin has never been, and never will be, forgiven except in connection with and in virtue of the shedding of blood. There is a scarlet line which runs through both testaments. The testimony of the whole Bible is that the blood of Jesus Christ is the foundation of all our hopes for the remission of sins. For the last 4,000 years this message has been declared in Holy Writ.

The shedding of blood is the principle on which the plan of salvation is based. This is the only way that God will pardon sin. This truth was declared by Jesus Christ Himself: **"And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins"** (Matt. 26:27-28). In John 10:15 Christ said: **"I lay down my life ("life" to the Jews meant "blood") for the sheep."**

The inspired apostles of Christ taught that sins were remitted only by the blood of Jesus. Simon Peter said: **"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot"** (I Pet. 1:18-19). The stress in Peter's words is not merely on Christ's death, but on His blood. The universe had nothing more valuable to offer than the blood of God's Son. It abides forever and does not perish as silver and gold.

The Apostle John wrote: **"Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood"** (Rev. 1:5). According to John, Christ washed us from our sins because He loved us. The loved are washed (Rev. 3:19). Christ removed the pollution of sin from our souls by His blood. His atonement has cleansed us from all our sin (I John 1:7). Before Christ could wash us in His blood He had to shed His blood.

FORGIVENESS RESTS ON A BLOODY SACRIFICE

The doctrine of the blood atonement of Christ is difficult for the carnal mind to understand. Why did Christ have to suffer and shed His blood in order to procure human redemption? This is an important question which deserves and demands a simple and scriptural answer.

In the beginning of our race God gave Adam a holy and righteous law. Adam was a free and responsible agent. That law offered reward for obedience and threatened punishment for disobedience. Man violated the law of God, and the penalty of death was justly inflicted by God. From Eden until now man has been a law breaker, for sin is the transgression of the law (I John 3:4). Men are now enemies of God (Col. 1:21) and are **"guilty before God"** (Rom. 3:19). Sin has made this terrible breach of fellowship between God and man (Isa. 59:1-2).

Sin is of such a hideous nature that it deserves and demands punishment. If a holy God did not punish sin He would cease to be God (Num. 14:18). His truth would be violated, the rights of justice would be infringed upon, the interests of holiness would suffer, and disorder would be introduced into His moral administration in the universe.

The penalty for violating God's holy law is death: **"The soul that sinneth, it shall die"** (Ezek. 18:4). **"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned"** (Rom. 5:12). Colossians 3:25 says: **"But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons."** We are further told in Hebrews 2:2: **"Every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward."** James adds: **". . . and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death"** (Jas. 1:15). It is contrary to the nature of God to let sin go unpunished. The sinner must die for his own sins, or some one must die in the sinner's stead. Someone's blood must be shed.

Man must be made to see this, or pardon to him would be a license to sin. A forgiveness which does not respect and honor the law of God would sap the foundations of His moral government in the world, blight the universe, alarm the elect angels, and prove an injury to man himself. Hence the infliction

of punishment is inevitable, for God's majesty is supreme and His power infinite.

How can the law be honored and man forgiven? How can God be just in justifying the believing sinner? God gave His Son to shed His blood and give His life for sinners, as a grand declaration that the law is holy and must be maintained. Romans 3:23-26 tells us: **"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth 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. To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus"** (Rom. 3:23-26). Christ shed His blood to proclaim the wickedness of sin, the goodness and majesty of the law, and the righteousness and love of God.

The good news in the gospel is that God the Father is the Lawgiver and Fountain of an everlasting covenant. As such He insisted on the full performance of the law, and yet in His mercy and love provided the Surety. Christ was made under the law and had to answer all its demands. As man's blood or life was forfeited, Christ **"gave his life a ransom for many"** (Matt. 20:28). Christ took the sinner's law-place, suffered the penalty due to his sins, and satisfied the justice of His Father. The gospel proclaims the forgiveness of sins through the blood of Jesus Christ.

THE REMISSION OF SINS

The same Greek word is translated "remission" 9 times, "forgiveness" 6 times, and "deliverance" and "liberty" one time. An English dictionary gives the word "remission" a variety of meanings all of which are significant.

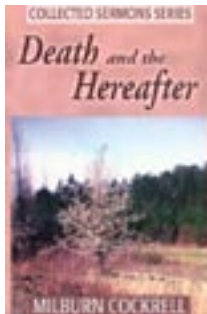
A businessman uses the word "remittance" to mean "a payment for goods." If a man orders from a mail order house he usually sends a remittance in the form of a money order or a check. The price of the remission of sins is the shed blood of Christ. When He poured out His blood on the cross He made remission of sins certain for a particular people.

In a court of law "remission" means "a discharge from a penalty or fine." This is the result of the shedding of the blood of God's Lamb. Our sins are forgiven, and we are free from the condemnation of the law (Rom. 8:1).

In Luke 4:18 the word for "remission" is translated "deliverance." The blood of Christ delivered us from the guilt and punishment of sin. But it does more than that. It brings deliverance to the captives and sets at liberty them that are bound (bruised) (Luke 4:18). The precious blood of Christ liberates from the prison

◊ (Continued on page 57)

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(Continued from page 56) ◊
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GENERAL TRUTHS

1. The law is a beam of the holiness of God Himself. It speaks in the name and authority of God. It knows nothing of mercy and forgiveness. It says: **"Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them"** (Deut. 27:26). The law says sin is worthy of death. It says there is no forgiveness in God to them that are under its curse.

2. Man is a sinner; he is a law-breaker. He is by nature under the curse of the law for His disobedience. Sin is more than a defilement or a minor mistake. It arouses the wrath of a holy God: **"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. . ."** (Rom. 1:18). It is God's very nature to punish law-breakers.

3. Man is a responsible individual. He has broken a holy law and deserves punishment. Proverbs 11:21 says: **"Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished."** Man is accountable to God for his conduct. At the judgment sinners will be judged **"according to their works"** (Rev. 20:12-13). God will render to every man according to his deeds: **"Who will render to every man according to his deeds"** (Rom. 2:6).

4. The gospel proclaims there is no forgiveness of sin except through the blood of Christ. No soul can be pardoned, but with respect to the precious blood of Christ as the procuring cause of that pardon. Christ **"by himself purged our sins"** (Heb. 1:3). By offering His blood as a propitiation He made **"an end of sins"** (Dan. 9:24) and made **"reconciliation for the sins of the people"** (Heb. 2:17). Christ ratified the covenant so that remission of sins is absolutely certain to all the covenant people.

5. In the covenant God the Father has committed to Christ the whole management of the business of forgiveness. Christ now **"give(s) repentance"** and **"forgiveness of sins"** (Acts 5:31). It is Christ who must forgive us (Col. 3:13). Pardon, mercy, and forgiveness now issue forth from the heart's blood of the Son and streams to the heart of the sinner. Christ forgives the penitent believer by the blood of His cross. Those who despise remission of sins by the blood of Jesus shall die in their sins with their blood upon their own heads! May God pity those who teach the unbloody sacrifices of the mass are a propitiatory sacrifice for the remission of sins!

6. All men are on the same level in regard to the remission of their sins, seeing all must be saved by the blood of Christ. The heathen is no exception to this rule. There is pardon for sin to every sinner who believes in Jesus

Christ. Acts 10:43 says: **"To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins."** God the Father has foreordained Christ to be **"a propitiation through faith in his blood"** (Rom. 3:25).

I can say with William Cowper:

E'er since by faith, I saw the stream

Thy flowing wounds supply,

Redeeming love has been my theme,

And shall be till I die.

When this poor lisping, stammering tongue

Lies silent in the grave,

Then in a nobler, sweeter song,

I'll sing thy power to save.

7. Sinner, you have only one hope of spiritual life and eternal salvation--the blood of Jesus Christ. Apart from the shedding of that precious blood there is no hope, no blessing, and no remission of sin. Don't busy yourself with understanding all about the blood atonement. Would a man that is perishing for hunger insist upon having a chemical analysis of bread? A perishing sinner does not need to be a great theologian. He needs only to repent of his sins and believe that remission of sins is only by the blood of Jesus.



There Shall Arise False Christs

By Philip C. Parks
of Flint, Texas

Matthew 24:23-27

BACKGROUND: The following is a brief and general outline of the sequence of events that will occur in the timeframe of verses four through twenty-four:

i. (vv. 4-8) These verses describe the occurrences involved in the phrase **"beginning of sorrows"** to include:

(a) Global deception in the Name of Christ (vv. 4, 5).

(b) Global political unrest and welfare (vv. 6, 7a).

(c) Global calamities (vv. 7b, 8).

ii. (vv. 9-14) These verses describe the occurrences involved in the rebellion of the end time:

(a) Global persecution of God's people (v. 9).

(b) Global unrest between individuals (v. 10).

(c) Global apostasy (vv. 11, 12).

(d) Global rejection of the gospel (vv. 13, 14).

iii. (vv. 15-22) These verses describe the occurrences involved in the woes of the **"great tribulation"**:

(a) The **"abomination of desolation"** will be revealed (v. 15).

(b) Perils and persecution will disperse the Jews (vv. 16-20).

(c) **"Great tribulation"** will affect the entire world (v. 21).

(d) Most life on earth will be destroyed (v. 22).

READ MATTHEW 24: 15-27.

INTRODUCTION: The word **"then"** (v. 23) serves as a transition for what follows.

i. That which follows is the multiplicity of false christs as our Lord stated (v. 24): **"there shall arise false Christs."**

ii. The two English words, **"false Christs"** are translated from one Greek root word transliterated **"pseudochristos."**

(a) This word has two definitions and usages:

First, a false christ is one who opposes Christ. Secondly, a false christ is one who falsely lays claim to the Name and Office of the Messiah. In actuality, he is an imposter claiming to be the Christ. (See *Strong's Greek Dictionary*, Online Bible 7.0 Windows CD, © 1997.)

(b) The word is plural. Compare the plurality of the word with our Lord's words in verse five: **"many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ."**

iii. Christ forewarned us of the plurality of these vicious propagators of damnable heresies (v. 25): **"Behold, I have told you before."** These false christs will prominently appear with much fanfare and publicity. They, through their deception, will garner a great following.

iv. The exhibition used by these false christs to promote their arrival will pale in comparison to that exhibited during the "true" Christ's coming. Our Lord emphatically proclaimed the glory of His coming by comparing it to the unmistakable brightness and quickness of lightning (v. 27): **"For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."** The high visibility and quickness of a single stroke of lightning cannot be ignored. At His coming, the Lord Jesus Christ will not need promoters, as the false christs require.

False christs will need their promoter to announce their arrival (v. 26): **". . . if they (the promoters) shall say unto you. . ."** Our Lord seemingly suggested that the reason false christs will need to be promoted is because they will go into relative seclusion by abiding in the **"desert"** or in **"secret chambers."** This seclusion will deceptively demonstrate their religious piety. Thus, their "coming" will need to be proclaimed. Historically, this has been the method of past false christs.

TRANSITION: Scriptures are replete with warnings of the dangers of false christs. A few examples are:

i. The true Christ was willfully, readily, and summarily rejected. Our Lord expressed this: **"I am come in my**

Father's name, and ye receive me not" (John 5:43a).

ii. Other false christs will be received. Again, Jesus said, **"ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive"** (John 5:43b).

iii. Even in his day, Apostle John lamented the reception of false christs and warned that the sinister trend would increase: **"Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time"** (I John 2:18).

I. MANY PSEUDO-CHRISTS WILL PRECEDE CHRIST'S COMING (v. 24).

Our Lord's warning certainly applies to our current day: **"there shall arise false Christs."** The word **"arise"** means the false christs will prominently come upon the scene of human activities and events. The context suggests they will appear "to occupy a place in the midst of the people" (as defined by *Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, n.d., page 75). The same Greek root word is used to describe how God **"raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus"** (Acts 13:23). The rising of false christs more than suggests the counterfeit methods they will use to promote their agenda of taking the true Christ's name and position. They are described as **"false"** because their deception is disguised as the truth, when in fact, they and their claims are forged, spurious, and pretended imitations.

Our Lord's first coming occurred through a lengthy process and culminated in Christ's birth and earthly ministry as indicated by Apostle Paul in Galatians 4:4: **"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law."** False prophets will somewhat imitate the process in their own methods of being received as the Christ. But it must be pointed out that the true Christ's second coming will not be a process for it will occur suddenly.

(1) FALSE CHRISTS WILL BE SENSATIONALIZED.

Our Lord voiced two announcements to describe their sensational promotions: **"Lo, here is Christ, or there"** (v. 23); and (v. 26). **"Behold, he is in the desert."**

The words **"Lo"** and **"Behold"** are derived from the same Greek root word, *idou*. English synonyms are "look" and "see." The implication attached to the visual task is that a conscious decision and effort must be made if one desires to visualize the object of curiosity. This is an interesting contrast to Christ's **"lightning"** coming (v. 27). The one true Christ **"shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels"** (II Thess. 1:7), and **"coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory"** (Matt. 24:30). He will not need another to

◊ (Continued on page 58)

There Shall Arise

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prompt the earth's on-lookers to direct their attention skyward. Christ's coming will be so glorious it will not be ignored.

(2) JOHN REINFORCED CHRIST'S WARNING (I John 2:18):

"Ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time."

The presence of antichrists is a symptom of the end times. The "last time" began during the days of the apostles. Apostle John confirmed that his own generation was included in the phrase "the last time" for these antichrists were present when he wrote his epistle approximately two millennia ago. How much closer is our generation to the scheduled return of our Lord Jesus Christ?

II. FALSE CHRIST'S WILL BE GREATLY PROMOTED.

(1) THEIR "FOREFUNNERS" WILL PROMOTE THEM (V. 24).

Our Lord expressed this fact by stating, **"there shall arise. . . false prophets."**

These "false prophets" will counterfeit John the Baptist, the true Christ's "forerunner." While John the Baptist was very prominent in his own right as the true Christ's forerunner, he righteously promoted the true Christ while diminishing his own celebrity. John the Baptist emphatically declared, **"I am not the Christ"** (John 1:20), and then identified the true Christ Jesus: **"John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world"** (John 1:29). John the Baptist remained true to his "forerunner" mission by humiliating himself and promoting the true Christ. He did so by expressing, **"He (the Lord Jesus Christ) must increase, but I must decrease"** (John 3:30). In forged imitation, these false prophets will promote their own false christ.

(A) Each false prophet forerunner will promote his antichrist "singularly." As Jesus had His singular forerunner in John the Baptist, our Lord implied each counterfeit christ will have his own forerunner as well (v. 23). This is pointed out in the Lord's phrase: **"if any man (singular) shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there. . ."**

(B) False prophets will also competitively promote "en-masse" (v. 26). Our Lord emphasized the plurality of many forerunners and promoters of false christs: **"they (plural) shall say unto you. . ."** This statement is in perfect agreement with Apostle John's description of **"many antichrists"** (I John 2:18).

(2) THE ANTICHRISTS WILL ALSO INDULGE IN THEIR OWN SHAMELESS SELFPROMOTION (v. 24):

"there shall arise false christs, . . . and shall shew great signs and wonders."

Our Lord is more than merely suggesting that these false christs will be able to perform supernatural miracles. He is literally stating their supernatural abilities as fact.

Pharaoh's magicians prove that mortal man may be given supernatural abilities to perform miracles. They were literally able to mimic Moses' miracles. When Moses turned his rod into a serpent, Pharaoh's magicians did likewise with their rods (Ex. 7:10-12). When Moses turned the river's waters into blood, likewise so did Egypt's pagan magicians (Ex. 7:22). Pharaoh's magicians also supernaturally increased the frogs upon the land (Ex. 8:7).

The false christ's miracles are described as **"great signs and wonders."** The word "great" describes the highest form, type, and intensity of the miracle. The word "signs" prove the works to be miraculous. Finally, the word "wonders" are actions in which one must have supernatural abilities to perform.

Their "sign and wonders" will be more than just slight of hand tricks. They will literally be able to perform miracles as stated in Deuteronomy, chapter thirteen. Moses warned of prophets and dreamers (v. 1) whose signs and wonders will **"come to pass"** (v. 2). John beheld the apocalyptic false prophet the great wonder of calling fire to **"come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men"** (Rev. 13:13). He is also described as being able to "deceive them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do" (Rev. 13:14). Paul insisted that the apocalyptic antichrist will be able to perform supernatural miracles as well (II Thess. 2:9). All these miracles are supposed to be proof of the validity of a false religion as stated in Deuteronomy 13:2. In fact, God permits these false christs to perform miracles to test His peoples' love and loyalty. This is stated in Deuteronomy 13:3.

III. FALSE CHRIST'S ARE TO BE AVOIDED (v. 26).

(1) DO NOT INVESTIGATE FALSE CHRIST'S. Our Lord was, and is, very clear with this prohibition when He said, **"go not forth."** In other words, do not seek out false christs for the purpose of hearing and watching them to determine the validity of their claim to be the Christ. Those who go forth with such intentions subject themselves to deception and God's vindictive wrath.

An example of being deceived through investigation is recorded in the Book of Revelation, chapter thirteen. The apocalyptic antichrist, referred to as **"the beast"** (vv. 1-2), will falsely proclaim himself to be the Christ. After witnessing his miraculous healing from a deadly wound, the world's populace will **"wonder after"** this apocalyptic antichrist, meaning they will mix their

amazement with reverential admiration. This deceptive emotion will lead to their worshipping not only Satan but also his puppet, the antichrist (v. 3b).

(2) DO NOT BELIEVE FALSE CHRIST'S. Twice our Lord demands we **"believe it not"** (vv. 23, 26).

The word "believe" is translated from the Greek root word *pisteuo*, which contextually means to be confidently persuaded to the point of committing one's trust. The believer's purpose for believing is to obtain salvation. It is the same word translated in the record of Acts 16:31, when Apostle Paul and Silas exhorted the Philippian jailor to **"Believe (Greek root *pisteuo*) on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."** But the pitiful result of believing in the apocalyptic antichrist will lead to their eternal damnation.

(3) THROUGH THEIR AVOIDANCE, THE ELECT WILL REJECT FALSE CHRIST'S (v. 24).

Our Lord said, **"if it were possible, they (false christs and prophets) shall deceive the very elect."** Our Lord effectively stated that it is, and will be, impossible for false christs to deceive the elect. The safety of the elect lie foremost in the security they have in their Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. Our Lord guaranteed this when He declared the security of those who believe in Him (John 10:28): **"I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."** It should also be stated that due to their spirituality and persevering obedience, the elect will be able to see through the deception of the false christs and prophets. The elect have heard their Lord's prior warnings regarding the false christs and will be on their guard. They, and we, are reminded of our Lord's warnings through His words, **"Behold, I have told you before"** (v. 25).

CLOSE: The rise of false christs is prophetically inevitable. The church and the saints do not have to wait for some future date to realize their appearance. They are here already as previously pointed out. All of them are inherently dangerous to the soul as stated by Apostle John: **"many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist"** (II John 1:7). The current proliferation of antichrists will finally culminate in the apocalyptic antichrist's appearance. He will succeed in deceiving the whole world.



A Dose of Reality

"Common Sense Comments"

by Joseph Harris

Chairman of Biblical Studies
Southeastern Baptist
College, Laurel, Mississippi
www.miniedition.net



Which God Hath Before Ordained

"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10).

The truth in this scripture is a sustaining truth that empowers the true believer in Christ. It is a reminder that God does not make mistakes, is never caught short and prepares His children ahead of time for whatever may come their way. To grasp the truth that God is at work in your life, molding, opening doors, shutting doors and forming His creation to fit His plan, is to be prepared to accept His will and calling and endure throughout each passing day. Each trial and blessing has a teaching and a lesson and we will do well to recognize and embrace each event, in anticipation of being more fully formed into the image of Christ. Having a full awareness of the implications of each event in life is not necessary for the believer. God requires our faith and acceptance, believing that He will work all things together for His Good. As examples, notice some of the following great individuals who were prepared for great service ahead of time by God.

Abraham

Obviously Abraham was wealthy before leaving his homeland. God had blessed him with the material prosperity of many flocks and herds and servants. These resources, provided by God ahead of time, made possible their survival in the long journey to Canaan.

Before God ever called Abram to leave his homeland, he had already issued the call to Terah, his father. When the call came to Abram, he was already in the process of going to a new land. This "jump start" was an early preparation designed by the sovereignty of God.

Likewise the failures of Abram also prepared him in leadership. Though he was supposed to leave his family behind, he took Lot with him. This failure was later a reminder of the importance of aligning with God and His will and purpose.

Other failures also taught Abraham to not rely upon his own strength and wisdom, but to trust and follow God. The failure of not consulting with God before going into Egypt had disastrous

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Dose of Reality

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results. Likewise, listening to his wife Sarah and using Hagar to produce an heir was a lesson to trust God completely and resist the temptation to “help” Him out.

Moses

Of the events leading up to the preparation of the leadership of Moses, the first event was the influence by a Godly mother. Since the Hebrews nursed their children to age 2 and sometimes three, his mother, as the hired nurse, surely had some Godly influence on him. Also, when challenging Pharaoh, his education in the royal household of Egypt would have benefited him as well as his thorough knowledge of Egyptian culture. The burning bush was probably his most defining experience, since his life was never the same after this encounter with God. He learned about the character and eternal nature of God as he began to gain understanding about the great I AM.

Concerning some of his methods, in leading Israel to freedom, Moses challenged the people to take responsibility and prepare to leave Egypt, not just talk about it, and in doing so, he challenged the status quo. He also endured by persevering in patience through the judgment of the plagues, waiting on God to do that which only He could do; move upon Pharaoh to release the people. He also reinforced God’s deliverance of freedom from bondage by establishing the Passover as a memorial and educational means of future instruction to remind Israel to keep their focus on God as the one who delivers.

Joshua

Joshua had vision. Probably the main event that gave Joshua vision for leading the people in the conquest of the land was the initial spy mission he and the other 11 were sent on years earlier. This vision of the land remained fresh in his mind for over 40 years and helped energize Joshua for his re-entry of the land after the death of Moses.

The outcome of this spy mission taught Joshua to stand for right, even if in the minority. Joshua took an unpopular position with only one other standing with him. Forty years later, he was vindicated when finally entering the promised land by the power of God.

Joshua was a success in following an established leader because of the equipping he received under that leader. Few have been more prepared with as thorough a mentoring program as Joshua. Joshua became a great leader because he had learned how to be a great follower. He was equipped to trust in God for Israel’s defense in the new land because he had seen God’s commitment to protecting and providing for His

people in the wilderness under Moses’ leadership.

Joshua was prepared for his leadership challenges when he saw the importance of being with God as he accompanied Moses up on the mountain. Though he did not go into the presence of God with Moses, Joshua saw the immediate results of one who experienced God intimately when Moses descended.

David

The one event that was responsible for his rise to prominence more than anything else was the slaying of Goliath. In the story of the battle with Goliath, several traits of David’s character are exhibited such as his responsibility, integrity, obedience, etc. All of these traits played a part in his development as a future leader.

David’s heart for God was one of the first distinguishing characteristics displayed, even before facing Goliath. David was anointed by Samuel to be king, but if left to Samuel he would not have chosen David because of outward appearance. God had to remind Samuel that He, God, looks on the inside (heart) while man judges by the outward (physical appearance).

Another part of his pre-training on the way to becoming a great leader was his early training under Saul as he served in his palace. It was one of many steps. The early life of David probably specifies more individual steps of growth to leadership than any other character in the Bible. Even when serving under Saul, he still went to his father’s house, but after the defeat of Goliath, he stayed in the palace of Saul permanently. As he continued to develop under Saul, the king put more and more men under his command.

David even learned and grew in leadership from the adversity and conflict with Saul. In being forced to run and live under cover in different areas, he learned how to relate to and get along with various kinds of people in different cultures.

Daniel

Daniel was an example of what some might call a middle management leader, since he never held a number one leadership position. Concerning his leadership preparation for Babylon, as a prince of Judah, he would have been trained to be a leader. As a faithful Hebrew trained in the ceremonial and religious customs of Judaism, he was prepared to refuse the meat of the king’s table, which earned him respect.

Daniel understood authority and chain of command. He learned how to appeal to those in authority over him. The divine factor in his preparation is also important. The Bible states that God gave him wisdom, understanding and the ability to interpret dreams. His preparation was so thorough, he was able

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Dangers of Sin

(Continued from page 49) ◊

God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Sin is contrary to God. And God is holy and opposed unto sin. As we have seen, participation in sin puts us at odds with a thrice holy and omnipotent God. You know, sometimes we regret opposing some man in the flesh. Perhaps, as a child, we might regret opposing or disobeying our parents. And, indeed, sometimes the cost can be heavy when we oppose some human being. But, how much more costly, and how much more dangerous is it when we oppose God? What hope or help is there for us when we disobey God, and go contrary to His Word? Now, I am not suggesting that saved folks can lose their salvation – because salvation is of the Lord, and He will certainly preserve those that are His. But, unsaved folks, if they only knew the holiness and power of God, ought to be literally petrified when they consider the danger that they are in when they continue to sin against God!

We read also in **Hebrews 12:25-29, “See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire.”** These two passages that we have read in Hebrews – if we will consider them and believe them – should cause the unsaved to tremble and cry out for salvation; and should also cause the saved to tremble and cry out for grace and forgiveness and the strength to obey and serve God. Sin is dangerous. The judgment of God awaits. Are you ready?



Shipping Chart

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

BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 1-1-2011 to 1-31-2011

| | |
|-------------------------------------|------------|
| Beginning Balance | \$6,870.22 |
| RECEIPTS: | |
| Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS | 225.00 |
| Berea B. C., Westpoint, TN | 50.00 |
| Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY | 100.00 |
| Grace B. C., Corbin, KY | 100.00 |
| | 475.00 |
| TOTAL | 7,345.22 |
| EXPENDITURES: | |
| Radio Time | 680.00 |
| Tape Production | 195.00 |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURES | 875.00 |
| | \$6,470.22 |
| Interest | + 0.25 |
| | 6,470.47 |
| Less Corbin, KY des. | -523.72 |
| ENDING BALANCE | \$5,946.75 |

CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT

| | |
|----------------------|----------|
| Beginning Balance | \$683.72 |
| RECEIPTS: | |
| TOTAL | 683.72 |
| EXPENDITURES: | |
| WCTT | 160.00 |
| ENDING BALANCE | \$523.72 |



BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 1-1-2011 to 1-31-2011

| | |
|--------------------------------------|------------|
| Beginning Balance | \$2449.65 |
| RECEIPTS: | |
| Amazing Grace B. C., Stockdale, TX | 25.00 |
| B. C. of Brimfield, Brimfield, IL | 45.30 |
| Berea B. C., Mansfield, OH | 600.00 |
| Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS | 309.26 |
| Berea B. C., Stonington, IL | 60.00 |
| Berea M. B. C., West Point, TN | 150.00 |
| Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX | 100.00 |
| Bible Believer’s B. C., Naples, ID | 50.00 |
| Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV | 313.45 |
| Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY | 150.00 |
| Buffalo Valley B. C., Clay, WV | 50.00 |
| Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL | 25.00 |
| Faith M. B. C., Lynn, AR | 25.00 |
| Grace B. C., Corbin, KY | 100.00 |
| Grace B. C., Winston-Salem, NC | 50.00 |
| Grace M. B. C., Marion, OH | 50.00 |
| Grace M. B. C., Tulsa, OK | 35.00 |
| Ian Robinson, Canada | 100.00 |
| Indore B. C., Indore, WV | 100.00 |
| Joann Mills, Barboursville, KY | 10.00 |
| L. H. Farrell, Des Allemands, LA | 100.00 |
| Leroy Bullard, Albuquerque, NM | 100.00 |
| The Lord’s Church, Goose Creek, SC | 50.00 |
| Min Ja Kimm, Mesa, AZ | 48.00 |
| Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH | 100.00 |
| New Testament B. C., Bristol, TN | 10.00 |
| New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN | 50.00 |
| Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL | 100.00 |
| Portland B. C., Plumersville, AR | 50.00 |
| Southside B. C., Fulton, MS | 25.00 |
| South Park M. B. C., Seattle, WA | 50.00 |
| Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL | 100.00 |
| Sovereign Grace B. C. Burghill, OH | 75.00 |
| Thurman Phillips, Beavercreek, OH | 10.00 |
| Tim Willett, Edgewater, FL | 50.00 |
| Victory B. C., Courtland, VA | 25.00 |
| Subscriptions | 130.00 |
| Dividing checks | 150.00 |
| Anonymous | 240.00 |
| Sub Total | \$3,811.01 |
| TOTAL | \$6,260.66 |
| EXPENDITURES: | |
| Printing | 581.00 |
| Postage | 731.91 |
| Wages | 2,300.00 |
| FICA | 183.68 |
| Dividing checks | 150.00 |
| Total Expenditures | \$3,946.59 |
| ENDING BALANCE | \$2,314.07 |

The Prince of This World

By E. D. Strickland
(1915 - 2003)

“...the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me” (John 14:30).



At least two other times Jesus referred to the Devil as the world's prince.

“Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the prince of this world be cast out” (John 12:31).

“...the prince of this world is judged” (John 16:11).

Satan is an evil prince. Judgment or condemnation has already been passed on him. Though he has been sentenced, yet his execution has not yet been enacted. He is as sure of the abyss and the lake of fire as the promise of God Almighty.

In the meantime, between his judgment and the executive of his sentence, he is very real and active as the god of this world.

“But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not” (II Cor. 4:3-4).

The Word of God reveals Satan as both the prince and god of this world (system) or age.

Satan is a prince or ruler in the realm of evil and iniquity. Whatever God is and desires, Satan is the opposite. Jesus Christ is the prince of life; Satan is the prince that wills murder and death.

Jesus is Truth personified. Satan is the wicked liar.

Jesus Christ is light. Satan is the god of darkness.

Sometimes we might be led to believe that Satan is the most powerful person in the world. Remember John 14:30 where Jesus refers to the prince of this world (Who) “hath nothing in me.”

Jesus Christ recognized the power and dominion of Satan in the world. Yet he said the Devil “hath nothing in me.” Other renderings of this passage are: “he hath no hold on me,” “he hath no rights over me,” “he hath no claims on me,” “he hath no power over me.”

We can see here who is the ultimate Sovereign of the world. Though Satan has usurped certain world powers in governmental and religious circles, yet this is seasonal. It will not last forever.

Jesus Christ is destined to be the final world ruler of the universe. The kingdoms of the world both political and religious will become the kingdoms of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Satan and his powers are to be sure losers. Jesus Christ and righteous forces

shall be sure winners and He shall reign over all forces.

Jesus said, as I repeat, “he (Satan) hath no power over me.” Here Jesus Christ affirms His sovereignty over the second most powerful being in the universe.

If Christ is Sovereign over the second most powerful being, how much more is He sovereign over the less powerful forces.

The sovereignty of Jesus Christ gives God's people extreme optimism and hope!

(Scripture Notes, October 1984).



GLEANINGS

Getting Out of the Habit of Church Attendance

If the Devil can get you to believe that you are not well on Sunday morning, or that it is threatening weather, or that company has come, or is likely to come, or some member of the family is not well and needs your assistance, he will insist on your staying away just this once. The next Sunday you may really be sick or have a good reason for not going to church. Then the next Sunday the Devil will begin to find you an excuse, and he is not long at it. So you have missed three services. By this time you have lost interest. Soon a year passes, and

you have attended church only a few times. Before another year passes you are criticizing the church and its workers. You see the faults of other people more than your own needs. If the devil can get a church member to look at the faults of some other member it won't be long until he is really out of the church. Be punctual to attend all services possible. Come praying; you may be benefited and strengthened in spirit. “Forget not the assembling of yourselves together as the manner of some is” (Heb. 10:25). (The Baptist Examiner, Sept. 10, 1955).



Dose of Reality

(Continued from page 59) ◊

to lead and influence higher leaders in two kingdoms during his lifetime.

God's ways are not always our ways, nor His thoughts our thoughts (Isaiah 55:8,9). If the Lord grants you another tomorrow, purpose in your heart to see the hand of God moving in the day's events, then whether triumph or tragedy, give Him the glory and submit to the all powerful hand of the all knowing God, believing that in His perfect ways, he is preparing you to glorify Him, His way.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bible Believers Baptist Church of Naples, Idaho will be holding Special Meetings March 29th - April 3rd. Bro. Troy Sheppard of Inverness, Florida will be speaking. All are invited to attend. For more information contact Pastor Paul Sandelin (208) 290-4625 or (208) 267-3255

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Galena, OH is in need of a pastor. Any interested candidates possessing the qualifications and traits concerning the office as found in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 are asked to contact either of the following: Bro. Randy Coffey at (614) 871-2406 or Email recoffeypot@aol.com or Bro. Joe Vass at (614) 846-8699 or Email jamiioe@wowway.com.

The Bethel Bible Baptist Church, PO Box 85, Mansfield, LA is in need of a pastor.

Any interested Elder should call Connie McMellon at 318-872-1647.

The Landmark Baptist Church of Collinsville, IL is in need of a pastor.

Any interested Elders may call (618) 288-4236 for more information.

Any church that is without a pastor, please feel free to send your information in regards to the pastoral position for publication in these announcements.

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