

# The Berea Baptist Banner

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Whole Number 266

## Who Are the Baptists?

By David Batchelder Cheney

(1820 - ????)

Our first inquiry then, in regard to the Baptists, is: *Who are they?* From whence had they their origin?

We are not of those who would accept what is old, simply because it is old; or reject what is new, simply because it is new. But, as a son cherishes a laudable interest in tracing his genealogy through successive generations of worthy ancestors, so the Baptists of today may refer to their ancestors with honest gratification. Not to make such reference, while speaking of them and of their religious belief, in view of the wide-spread opinions entertained in regard to them, would be in effect to conceal the truth.

There are multitudes of people, and among them men of large intelligence in other respects, who think and speak of the Baptists, as if they were a people

almost without a history. As examples of this style of thinking, note the following. A few years ago, Albert Barnes, in an elaborate article which he published in more than one form, in speaking of the Baptists, said: "As a denomination they are but of yesterday; \* \* \* for there were times, and those not remote in the history of the world, when the Baptist denomination was not." And he adds: "For more than three-fourths of the history of the church on earth, Christianity has made its way somehow among the nations, \* \* \* without the Baptist idea that men must be immersed." In 1852, Dr. Nevin published an article in the *Mercersburg Review*, in which, after speaking of the faith of the Baptists as "a new faith," and of their system as

*Continued on page 93*

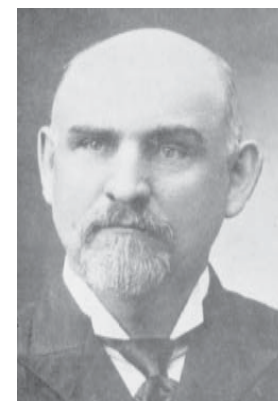
## The Invisible Church Idea

By John Newton Hall

(1849 - 1905)

The foregoing pages of this book have no doubt impressed the reader as being expressive of very hard Baptist doctrine. But in my judgment the positions taken by Brothers Pendleton, Graves and Taylor, are Scriptural, logical and charitable. Consistency and truth are closely allied; and when either is made to suffer by compromises, or in the interests of a maudlin sentiment, it is ruinous to the real good of Christ's cause, and to the best standing of his truth.

These brethren have been contending against a fraternizing fellowship between preachers, in exchanging pulpits; and also a liberalizing tendency that counts all churches on a par. Every careful and impartial reader will no doubt agree with Dr. Pendleton that Baptists cannot consistently co-



J. N. Hall

operate with other denominations in their church work without a surrender of their own distinctive faith. Every careful reader will also agree with Brother Taylor that the spirit of modern lib-

eration would be the spirit of death to Baptists. For my part I see no consistently logical course other than to **"Mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and**

*Continued on page 84*

## CRUCIFIXION DAY

By Henry A. Griesemer

(1857 - 1926)

It is almost the universal belief of the Christian church that Christ was crucified on Friday. In the spring of each year a whole week is given to commemorate our Saviour's passing and resurrection. It is spoken of as Holy or Passion Week. All of the ritualistic churches, and not a few of the evangelistic churches observe the week with great solemnity. Friday of this week is called "Good Friday" and amid tears and sorrows and worship it is commemorated as "Crucifixion Day."

Yet, strange to say, there is not a verse, or a line, or a word anywhere in the New Testament that so much as intimates that Christ was crucified on Friday; indeed, there is the strongest evidence to show that He was not crucified on Friday at all, but earlier in the week.

Whence then has come the almost universal belief that Christ was cruci-

fied on Friday? From the same source that many other errors has come, namely, the Church of Rome, which is never to be regarded as a sure au-

*Continued on page 88*

## The First Commandment

By Milburn Cockrell

Mantachie, Mississippi

**"And God spake all these words, saying, I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other**

**gods before me"** (Ex. 20:1-3).

**"And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all of thy mind, and with all of thy strength: this is the first commandment"** (Mark 12:29-30).

In Exodus 20 God gave the Ten Commandments. That they were ten in number is clear from Deuteronomy 10:4. Jesus Christ reduced these Ten Commandments to two basic ones: love of God and love of man (Matt. 22:36-40). The Ten Commandments naturally divide into two parts. The first, commonly called the First Table, concerns our duty to God. The last six, commonly called the Second Table, concerns our duty to ourselves and others. The love of God is the

*Continued on page 86*

## The Righteous and the Wicked

By Milburn Cockrell

Mantachie, Mississippi

**"In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother"** (I John 3:10).

The Lord told Jeremiah to **"take forth the precious from the vile"** (Jer. 15:19). The priests in Ezekiel's day were admonished to make a **"difference between the holy and profane"** and to **"discern between the**

**unclean and the clean"** (Ezek. 44:23; cf. 22:26). It is the duty of a gospel preacher to frequently and boldly set forth the difference between the righteous and the wicked. He must apply with confidence and wisdom the promises and threatenings of the Bible to his hearers. This is to be done with a prayer that God may use his message for the consolation of the saved and the conviction of sinners.

*Continued on page 82*

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



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## Righteous and the

*Continued from page 81*

### THE TWO FAMILIES

According to John, you can divide the whole world in which there are so many differences into two families: one bearing the image of God and the other the image of the Devil. There is no third family of the "pretty good but not too bad." John says nothing about the "carnal Christian," nor the person who knows Jesus Christ as Savior but not as Lord. No person is in a state of neutrality. Every person on earth is a child of God or a child of the Devil.

This twofold division overlooks race and rank, color and creed. One's position in the world is nothing when compared to character. How soon will the difference between the literate and illiterate, the prince and the pauper, be abolished by death, the great leveler. Death sends a soul out of this world to the spiritland, not as great or small, but as a disembodied spirit. This man lived in a mansion, and this woman in a shack by the side of the road, but both departed this world empty-handed. The worshipper of God goes to the heavenly temple above, and the worshippers of the

Prince of Darkness goes to outer darkness beneath.

It would seem that "children" in my text is used in the sense of moral parentage. The children of God and the children of the Devil are good and bad persons. It is common in Scripture to call persons distinguished by certain qualities the children of those from whom these characteristics were originally derived, or by whom they were pre-eminently possessed. **"And Adah bare Jabal: he was the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle. And his brother's name was Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ"** (Gen. 4:20-21). Those who have faith and do the works of Abraham are called the children of Abraham (John 8:39; Rom. 4:13-16; Gal. 3:7-9).

The Devil is the introducer of evil into the world. The wicked proceed from him, and they partake of his depravity. They are proud like him, and liars like him. **"He that committeth sin is of the devil"** (I John 3:8). Cain **"was of that wicked one, and slew his brother"** (I John 3:12). Christ said of the Jews who sought to kill Him; **"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it"** (John 8:44). Again our Lord said in the Parable of the Sower: **". . . but the tares are the sons of the Evil One"** (Matt. 13:38 improved translation). The word "sons" conveys the thought of likeness to parentage.

God is the Author of all goodness in the world. Christians are said to be born of God (John 1:13) and to partake of His nature (II Pet. 1:4). Ephesians 5:1 says: **"Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children."** God's children imitate His perfections. He is a God of truth, and His children walk in the truth (II John 4), and speak the truth (Eph. 4:15). He is a God of mercy, and His children are merciful: **"Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful"** (Luke 6:36). He is a God who loves the unlovable, and so do His offspring: **"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; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust"** (Matt. 5:44-45).

FAMILY BLESSINGS AND

### BURDENS

It is a high privilege to be reckoned among the children of light. All the other privileges of this world vanish into smoke in comparison. Proverbs 12:26 says: **"The righteous is more excellent than his neighbor."** **"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God"** (I John 3:1).

But what a difference between the children of light and the children of darkness! A child of darkness has for his father the devil, a traitor, a rebel, a murderer—the most accursed being in the universe. Every time he sins, he calls the Devil father. Every time he lies or swears, he calls the Devil father. By continual transgressions he says, "Behold, my pedigree and look upon my example!" How terrible to be a son of Belial who knows not the Lord (I Sam. 2:12)!

Based upon the family to which you belong, innumerable privileges or evils depend. Heaven is the home of the sons of God. They have reserved in Heaven an inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. They shall not want any good thing (Ps. 84:11). Jesus said that **"your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him"** (Matt. 6:8). though we have afflictions, **"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him"** (Ps. 103:13). Though we have infirmities, He will spare us **"as a man spareth his own son that serveth him"** (Mal. 3:17). When we need care and attention the angels will be our guardians, for they are **"all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation"** (Heb. 1:14).

Oh, how awful it is with the sons of perdition! Their home is in Hell with **"the devil and his angels"** (Matt. 25:41). They **"plow iniquity, and sow wickedness"** and **"reap the same"** (Job 4:8). Job 11:20 says: **"The eyes of the wicked shall fail, and they shall not escape, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost"** (Job 11:20). Bildad described the latter end of the wicked so very well: **"The snare is laid for him in the ground, and a trap for him in the way. Terrors shall make him afraid on every side, and shall drive him to his feet. His strength shall be hunger bitten, and destruction shall be ready at his side. It shall devour the strength of his skin: even the firstborn of death shall devour his strength. His confidence shall be rooted out of his tabernacle, and it shall bring him to the king of terrors. It shall dwell in his tabernacle, because it is none of his; brimstone shall be**

scattered upon his habitation. His roots shall be dried up beneath, and above shall his branch be cut off. His remembrance shall perish from the earth, and he shall have no name in the street. He shall be driven from light into darkness, and chased out of the world" (Job 18:10-18; cf. Prov. 2:22; 5:22-23; 10:24; Rom. 6:21).

### HOW TO IDENTIFY THE CHILDREN

The Apostle John says the children of God and the children of the Devil **"are manifest."** Although they are mixed up together in this world, they can be distinguished. Doing righteousness likens us to Christ. **"If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one (there are no exceptions here) that doeth righteousness is born of him"** (I John 2:29). The person who does not habitually practice righteousness cannot be a Christian. **"He that committeth sin is of the devil"** (I John 3:8).

First, the children of God are manifest to God: **"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty"** (II Cor. 6:17-18). **"I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine"** (John 10:14; cf. John 10:27; Nah. 1:7). **"The Lord knoweth them that are his"** (II Tim. 2:19). The Lord foreknew His elect with the intent to do them good before the foundation of the world.


The Lord has correct knowledge of all the wicked, and He **"will not at all acquit the wicked"** (Nah. 1:3). **"There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves"** (Job 34:22).

Second, they are manifest to people who live upon this earth (Luke 12:35). The partakers of saving grace are distinguished from those who live and die in disgrace. The righteous **"shine as lights in the world"** and hold **"forth the word of life"** (Phil. 2:15-16). When those born of God live as they should they **"declare plainly that they seek a country"** (Heb. 11:14), and that they **"are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ,"** known and read of all men (II Cor. 3:2-3).

Third, they are manifest to themselves. No person can live wickedly without knowing it. He cannot make a practice of sinning and of neglecting his duty to God and man and be ignorant of his actions. Even so it is of a good man. He cannot daily follow

*Continued on page 83*

**Cockrell's**



**Corner**

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

## AMILLENNIALISM AND CATHOLICISM

I have just purchased for study a large book called *Eccelesia*. This book is a theological encyclopedia of the Roman Catholic Church, published in 1996. While confessing a few of the early Catholics (they claim all the early church fathers were Catholics—a thing I deny—MRC) believed in the millenarianism, they state: “Although millenarianism was not to be found in Catholic theology after Augustine, it would continually reappear in the sects and non-orthodox circles (the groups I consider to be Baptists in principle and practice—MRC) and is still to be found in some present-day sects and fundamentalists” (p. 299).

Speaking of the “Anabaptists,” the book says that Melchior Hoffman (1543) “held some millennial views too. His influential views continued in the ‘Melchiorite’ wing of the Anabaptists which survived him” 9p. 6).

There is a simple fact to be gleaned from these quotes. With a very few exceptions, the Roman Catholic Church has always been amillennialist. This is further confirmed by “A Catholic Catechism for Adults.” On page 351 this book condemns “a ‘thousand-year reign’ with a false appeal to Revelation 20:4-6” (The Church’s Confession of Faith). Thus any person (Baptist or otherwise) who holds the amillennial position holds the same historic position on eschatology as the Roman Catholic Church.

Some today say that premillennialism began with the Jesuit Francisco Ribera (1537-1591). Such a statement ignores the church fathers, the Montanists, the Waldenses, and the Anabaptists. Ribera probably learned what he believed from the Anabaptists who ex-

isted before this time and were premillennialists. If you do not like the Ribera origin, then you can, according to our opponents, trace it to S. R. Maitland, or Margaret MacDonald, or John Nelson Darby, or C. I. Scofield—they can’t seem to agree on just who really started it. This is about like trying to trace the Baptists as to their origin. Our Baptist’s critics say we started with Thomas Muntzer, or John Smith, or Roger Williams. The reason the amillennialists and the critics of the Baptists can’t agree is because they are both wrong in these things.

## NEWS FROM THE MIDDLE EAST

America has a new President, George W. Bush, and Israel has a new Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon. There is now an end of the eight years of pressuring Israel to give up land for peace which was true of the Clinton Administration. The former administration seemed to think that Israel posed a great threat to its numerous Arab neighbors, but the reverse was true.

The Bush Administration has told the Palestinian Leader, Yasser Arafat, that state-sanctioned terrorism must stop before peace can be achieved.

The whole situation in the Middle East has eroded. Iran supports terrorism and receives weapons and nuclear technology from Russia and China. Saddam has made public comments about using Jordan as a staging point for an attack on Israel. The Mubarak government in Egypt remains unstable, and it could pose a threat to Israel at any time. Israel faces attacks from within and without.

## Righteous and the

*Continued from page 82*

Christ and bear his cross without knowing what he is doing. He cannot engage in a spiritual warfare without knowing he is a Christian soldier. He cannot run the race set before him without knowing he is a contestant in the Christian race.

### THE SURE MARK OF DISTINCTION

John said: **“In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil.”**

First, one’s family connection cannot be ascertained by temporal success. **“All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked”** (Eccl. 9:2). The fates and fortunes of the children of God and the children of the Devil seem to all appearance to be entirely

alike. God does not mark the good out by giving him millions of blessings, nor the wicked by directing instant judgment against him.

Second, one’s pedigree cannot be assumed by a public profession of faith. Judas and Demas were both church members. There have always been some who **“profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate”** (Tit. 1:16). Some professed Christians have only **“a form of godliness”** while they deny **“the power thereof”** (II Tim. 3:5). Religious profession is too cheap and too shallow to aid us in making this vital distinction.

Third, there is something held forth by John in a negative sense: **“Who-soever doth not righteousness is not of God.”** Omissions decide the character, even where there is no positive wickedness. The children of the Devil have **“left off to be wise, and to do good”** (Ps. 36:3). They **“are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge”** (Jer. 4:22). They may engage in some religious exercises, but they omit **“judgment, mercy, and faith”** (Matt. 23:23). The **“wicked and slothful servant”** in the Parable of the Talents (Matt. 25:26) is called **“the unprofitable servant”** (Matt. 25:30).

On the other hand, the reverse is true of a child of God. **“A good man showeth favor, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion. Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. . . . He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honor”** (Ps. 112:5-6, 9). His pure religion causes him to **“visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world”** (Jas. 1:27). Corrupt communication does not proceed out of his mouth, **“but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearer”** (Eph. 4:29). He esteems others better than himself (Phil. 2:3) and lives to serve others (Mark 10:43-44).

A child of God does righteousness naturally. He has by faith laid hold on Christ as his righteousness for his justification (Rom. 5:1), and he does works of righteousness in faith from a principles of love (Gal. 5:6). **“Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous”** (I John 3:7). A true child of God will reflect his Father by being a doer of righteousness. It is clear that John places the emphasis on doing, as con-

trasted with professing, or with talking (I John 3:18). The original word translated **“doeth”** means a person who habitually does righteousness.

Some Christians make a sad mistake. They twist the doctrine of election so as to justify a wicked life on earth. Some would justify the sins of God’s children and condemn the sins of the Devil’s children. These Antinomian heretics would tell us feeling is more important than righteousness. They would say that knowledge is more important than righteousness. But John explodes all these ideas by declaring that righteousness is rightness, and that those who do not practice righteousness as did Christ are children of the Devil.

The aged apostle feared that Christianity might evaporate into mere sentiment. Therefore, he constantly stressed doing righteousness. The doing of righteousness is an expression of a heart **“created in righteousness and true holiness”** (Eph. 4:24). A righteous heart cannot exist without wanting to get expression.

Righteousness toward God and man is doing. Does then Divine acceptance rest upon the doing? Never let us make that mistake. It rests on the righteousness which finds expression in the doing. Righteousness is the objective of faith; it is the operative of the new life. Everything that lives does something. A Christian lives; therefore he does righteousness. He that does righteousness is righteous, even as God is righteous, even as Christ is righteous.

The teachings of Jesus Christ were distinctly ethical. Christ’s righteousness was not in cherishing good sentiments. The Bible says that Christ **“went about doing good”** (Acts 10:38). He who is a follower of Christ goes about doing righteousness (Eph. 6:14). This righteousness can be seen in his home relations, his business relations, his social relations, and his church relations.

What about a person who claims to be a child of God; and lives like a child of the Devil? Such a person’s spiritual condition is the same as that of Elymas. Paul said to him: **“O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?”** (Acts 13:10).

### LOVE TO THE BRETHREN

The positive proof of Divine relationship is the manifestation of love for the brotherhood. **“Neither he that loveth not his brother.”** One born of God will love those whom God loves (I John 5:1). Love of the brethren is an evidence which can lead you to a certain and safe conclu-

*Continued on page 84*

## Righteous and the

*Continued from page 83*

sion as to your being a member of God's family. Brotherly love is an attestation of Divine sonship: **"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death"** (I John 3:14). It is the witness of real discipleship: **"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another"** (John 13:35). To be without this brotherly love discloses you are in the Devil's family. Jesus told some religious hypocrites: **"If God were your Father, ye would love me"** (John 8:42).

### BEWARE OF DECEPTION

There are some who not only reject good works, like others, as the cause of salvation, but they reject them even as the evidence too. They are not satisfied, like others, to exclude them from their justification; they also exclude them from their sanctification. By such they turn **"the grace of God into lasciviousness"** (Jude 4). Such persons imagine themselves to be regenerated believers when in truth they are reprobated unbelievers. Nothing is worse than final deception by the Devil.

There is no condemnation to those born of the Spirit who **"walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit"** (Rom. 8:1). John tells us: **"He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him"** (I John 2:3-4). **"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world"** (John 5:4). It does not say that he is overcome by the world. Jesus Christ is **"the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him"** (Heb. 5:9). Jesus Christ said: **"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven"** (Matt. 7:21). These are the true sayings of God. Do not be deceived by those who preach "cheap grace."

### CONCLUSION

1. Are you doing righteousness? Are you doing it reluctantly or with pleasure? Occasionally or constantly? Partially or without reserve? Do you have respect unto all the Lord's commandments (Ps. 119:6) as being right (Ps. 119:172)? Do you **"hate every false way"** (Ps. 119:104)? If you can answer a "yes" to these questions, you may safely conclude you have a heavenly Father.

2. Are you living according to the course of this world, according to the leadings of the Devil? Is your life given over to the lusts of the flesh and

the pride of life? If so, then you are a child **"of wrath, even as others"** (Eph. 2:2-3).

3. "Dear, preacher, do you not have some words of hope for a child of the Devil?" I heard one ask. I can only give you the words of the Prophet Isaiah: **"Wash ye, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool"** (Isa. 1:16-18). The grace of God in Christ can deliver you from **"the powers of darkness"** and translate you into the kingdom of God's dear Son (Col. 1:13). May it please the Lord to open your eyes, and to turn you **"from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God"** (Acts 26:18).

## Invisible Church Idea

*Continued from page 81*

**AVOID THEM"** (Rom. 16:17). Inspiration speaks expressly to this effect: **"If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, (Christ's doctrine) receive him not into your house, neither bid him Godspeed: for he that biddeth him God-speed is partaker of his evil deeds"** (II John 10:11). In these Scriptures a distinct line is drawn between truth and error, between false and true teachers, and an emphatic prohibition against all affiliation is plainly expressed.

Baptists may be wrong in the distinctive doctrines they hold, but they cannot be wrong in standing consistently to them while they believe them to be truth. If they are wrong, they should be abandoned; but until discovered to be wrong they should be unflinchingly maintained. At the present time it seems to be conceded by everybody that in the main, the doctrines of the Baptists are Scriptural, and the world is willing to grant us reasonable toleration if we will be liberal and allow a mutual fraternity in church and pulpit with all others. But we cannot do this, without a contradiction of our own essential and fundamental doctrines, and, hence, cannot do it at all.

"Our fathers were bitterly opposed in the consistent stand they took for strict Baptist practices, by those who believed in what was known as the "church-branch theory." It was contended that the "real church" was the "universal church," composed of "all

the saved," and that all visible churches were mere human conveniences, and that, all taken together, the Christians amongst them made the "true church," while the denominations were "branches of the church," and all on a par. On this plea it was argued that pulpit affiliation, union meetings, alien immersions, open communion, open baptism, open ordinations, and all else, should be regarded as perfectly proper. It was a hard fight our fathers had, to meet this seemingly large, brotherly, liberal spirit, and refuse to concede that all the different denominational churches were merely "branches of the one true church." But they fought the battle, and gained the victory, until now it is a rare thing we hear any one speak of he "branches of the church."

But we have fallen on a more deceptive and plausible religious strategy, if possible. The enemy, though defeated, has not been destroyed. Baptists have always had to contend for the faith, and this contention will not end until the Lord shall destroy the last enemy with the brightness of his coming. Nor is this contention confined to Pedobaptists and anti-Baptists. In our own ranks false teachers have arisen who are perverting the faith, and leading away some disciples after them. They join hands with the enemy on the outside, and seek to aid in breaking down the walls of the Baptist citadel, while they pose as the best of Baptists. The specious theory we now confront is closely akin to the "branch-church theory," and is an outgrowth from that theory. It runs as follows: The conversion of a sinner introduces him into the spiritual, invisible, universal church of Christ. This invisible church is the only church that has a succession through past ages. All visible churches are necessarily human, and subject in the changing conditions of their environments, and are therefore sister churches, and should affiliate with each other on terms of perfect equality. This invisible church embraces all Christian people, of all classes and names.

Now, the reader can see how easy

it is for one who believes such a theory to also believe that Baptists are chargeable with bigotry when we refuse to have perfect fraternity with other sects. In fact, if it be true that the "real church" is the "invisible, universal church," and all "Christians are in it," it is clearly an inexcusable presumption on the part of the Baptists that they do not heartily co-operate with their "sister churches" in all Christian effort. If Methodists, Presbyterians, Campbellites, Catholics, and all others who are Christians, are in this big church, they are evidently as much in it as the Baptists are, and are entitled to its special privileges as truly as the Baptists can be. Why then should the Baptists assume to control the ordinances of this "true church," when others have membership in it as well, and on the same terms? If we accept the "big church" idea, let us also accept the open communion, open baptism, and open ordination ideas. If we have nothing distinctive for a plea, we should not assume to lord it over others who are just as much in the things as we are. The charge is unhesitatingly made that those Baptists who accept the big, universal church idea, are inconsistent in contending for close communion, Baptists immersion only, and Baptist ordination. If all others are in this big church, then they have as much right to these ordinances as Baptists have.

For our part we deny this whole "invisible, universal church" idea. There is but one sort of a church in the New Testament and that is a local and visible church. A few passages are here cited to show the existence of local, visible churches: Acts 9:31, Then had the churches rest. Acts 15:41, Comforting the churches. Acts 16:5, Churches established. Acts 19:37, Neither robbers of churches. Rom. 16:4, Churches give thanks; vs. 16, Churches of Christ salute you. I Cor. 7:17, In all the churches. I Cor. 11:16, No such custom, neither the churches of God. I Cor. 14:22, As in all the churches; vs. 34, Keep silence in the churches. I Cor. 16:1, Given to all the churches; vs. 19, The churches

*Continued on page 85*

## Berea Baptist Broadcast

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

## Invisible Church Idea

*Continued from page 84*

of Asia. II Cor. 8:1, The churches of Macedonia; vs. 19, Chosen of the churches; vs. 23, Messengers of the churches; II Cor. 11:8, I robbed other churches; vs. 28, Care of all the churches. II Cor. 12:13, Inferior to other churches. Gal. 1:22, Unknown by face to the churches. I Thess. 2:14, Churches of God. II Thess. 1:4, In the churches. Rev. 1:4, Seven churches; vs. 20, Angels of the churches; the candlesticks are the seven churches. Rev. 2:7, What the Spirit saith to the churches. Etc., etc. Any reader can see that the references above are to visible assemblies of people, and that these assemblies had a local meeting place as a visible multitude to make the congregation.

The word "church" means an assembly; most generally a small assembly that can conveniently meet together. But always an assembly considered as in convention. In a few passages in the Scriptures, like Hebrews 12:23—"The general assembly and church of the firstborn"—the aggregate of the saved is considered as being collected in one meeting, and they thus constitute a church. But there is not a passage in the Bible where the word "church" is so used as to embrace all the saved, in their divided, scattered, uncollected dispersion. When all the saved are included they are considered as assembled together. When they are scattered they are never spoken of as a church. There is, therefore, no such a thing known in the bible as an "invisible, universal church." This fiction is of modern creation, and is designed to include all those who are supposed to be saved, so as to allow them to have some sort of ecclesiastical fraternity in church matters. But Jesus Christ, the founder of New Testament churches, never gave us such an imaginary body, and no inspired writer ever makes mention of such a church. All the churches we read of in the Scriptures were local bodies, with local meeting places, for visible assemblies of men and women.

When we look at the New Testament churches as visible assemblies we can see the meaning of several potent points:

1. It could be said to them, "**Let your light so shine before men**" (Matt. 5:16). Visible church members can do this. Invisible church members cannot.

2. It can be said ye are as "**a city that is set on an hill that cannot be hid**" (Matt. 5:14). An "invisible church" must always be "hid," else it would not be "invisible;" but a visible

church can be thus manifest, like a city.

3. A visible church can receive and execute the commission of Matthew 28:19-20. But an invisible church cannot. Because—

(1) If there are any preachers in the "invisible church" they could not deliver the gospel message to visible audiences for the reason that visible audiences would not quietly listen to the "invisible preacher" while he would talk.

(2) If there is any baptism in the "invisible church" it could not be administered by "invisible administrators" to visible subjects, for the reason that no sensible man or woman would allow the ghostly fingers of the "invisible preachers" to be fumbling around their necks or waists.

(3) They would have no ability to administer the Lord's Supper, because it is a memorial service to be seen by men, and an "invisible church" could not thus observe it.

(4) It could not formulate or propagate the doctrines of the commission for the reason that this must be done in the use of visible means and for the good of visible people, which could not be done by an "invisible church."

(5) It could never have the fellowship that is contemplated in the commission because this fellowship is of the disciples who may be converted under the preaching of the gospel, and they are an visible people, and would not know how to be in fellowship with an "invisible church."

But all this could be true of visible churches, with visible preachers and visible ordinances, this must be done in the use of visible means, and hence Christ gave the commission to His visible churches.

4. There is no need for this "invisible church." (1) Christians don't need it because it can do them no good. (2) God doesn't need it because it cannot manifest His glory. (3) The world doesn't need it because it neither preaches the gospel by precept or example, and could be of no service.

5. This "invisible church" cannot perform any of the functions of a church. It cannot have a church meeting, nor a pastor, nor deacons, nor a church record, nor exercise discipline, nor receive members, nor exclude members, nor sing, nor pray, nor preach, nor do anything else a church is expected to do.

6. The members of the "invisible church" are entirely ignorant of their surroundings. There is no one who can prove he is in such a church. If he is in it, he doesn't know it, and no one else knows it. If any one else is in it his neighbors, his brethren, nor any one else can ever know it. If it had an enemy no hurt could be done by him,

because he could never find the thing he hates. Nobody could ever hate it, because it has neither form nor fashion, and is composed of nothing—so far as anybody can tell. If it had a friend he could never do it a kindness because he could not know where, on what, or on whom to bestow his attentions, for the reason the thing is without form and void. No one knows who else is in it. No one knows that he is himself in it. Men get into it unconsciously, if at all. It seems to be accidental and by birth. A man is no more responsible for being in the "invisible church" than for being in the world, for he was not consulted about it any more than about being born. He gets no good out of it to himself, and does no good in it for anybody else. It really has no fellowship, for no one knows to whom fellowship should be extended. Such a "church" never had Christ for its founder and head.

7. The "invisible church" is a medley of contradictions, if it is anything. It is said to have in it the saved of all denominations. These "saved" people at the same time that they are in the "invisible church" are also in their different denominational churches, and hold to all the peculiar doctrines of their several denominations. They have Mormons with their polygamy, Catholics with their wafer god, Episcopalians with their sacramental ritualism, Universalists with their no-hell doctrine, Presbyterians with their unconditional decrees, Methodists with their apostasy, Campbellites with their baptismal salvation, Baptists with their close communion, all mixed together in one "invisible body," cemented together by the conflicting doctrines of infant baptism vs. believer's baptism; salvation by grace vs. salvation by works; final perseverance vs. apostasy; open communion vs. close communion; episcopacy vs. congregationalism; affusion vs. immersion, and a hundred other conflicting doctrines! All these people, with all these doctrines, are supposed to be peacefully and unconsciously pillowing their heads upon the bosom of this "invisible church!" Is it possible that such an outrage on common sense, to say nothing of the outrage on the Bible, can have serious advocates amongst men?

8. It would be hard to draw a picture of an "invisible church," but it must have semblance to a monstrous beast whose head is a lamb, whose neck is a lion, whose legs are a tiger, a hyena, a bear and a panther; whose body is made up of babies, fawns, birds, and bugs, whose tail is a stinging, vicious scorpion, and whose very part is feeding upon every other part, to its inevitable destruction. Such a

beast would be no more monstrous than the modern fiction of an "invisible church" made up of devouring, conflicting, contradictory, absurd, irreconcilable doctrines and peoples of the religious world, so-called. There is no conception of Christ's church that is not outraged by this monstrous thing.

9. I most emphatically deny that I have any membership in such a thing as this "invisible church." If I am a member I don't know it, and it is against my will. I have been kidnapped into it as clearly as any infant was ever kidnapped by a Romish priest into the Romish hierarchy; and if that is its plan of receiving members it is no better than the Romish superstition of infant baptism. If I am in it, I am determined to get out of it if possible. It is a Babel of confusion, and God is not its author. As it has no law of ingress, no stimulus to progress, and is only an occasion of distress, I must respectfully decline its duress, being disgusted with its process, and with the thing itself.

10. There are not two sorts of churches of Christ—one big, invisible church, and the other little, visible churches. If so, then a man would belong to two churches at once. He would get into the big church unconsciously, and unavoidably, and into the little church on purpose. In the big church he would do nothing but look wise, feel good, and be nobody; while in the little church he could suit his fancy in faith and practice, since all the little churches are human institutions! It is not possible for me to believe such absurd stuff.

11. Separate particles cannot form organizations except by being collected together. There are many Masons in the world. Any number of them can be organized into local lodges, but all of them taken together would not make a lodge out of which there are no Masons. Amid the governments of the world there are many Republicans, and these could be formed into a Republican party, or parties; but all the Republicans in the world do not make a great big Republican party out of which there are no Republicans. Stones can be built together and thus make houses; but all the houses do not make one great big, universal house, out of which there are no stones, or houses. So God has a family of children, and these can be organized into churches; but all the children of God do not make one great, big, universal church, out of which there are no children of God. The very idea of such a big church is absurd from every standpoint.

12. The believers in the universal church are not agreed as to how one

*Continued on page 86*

## Invisible Church Idea

*Continued from page 85*

gets into it. Baptists are supposed to be put in by conversion: Methodists are supposed to be born members of it; Presbyterians baptize their babies into it; Campbellites baptize sinners into it; Episcopalians enter by confirmation; the Hardshells have been in from the foundation of the world. Mormons are immersed into it; Catholics are sprinkled into it, and the Universalists get into it without doing anything! If here is such a church it should have some uniformity about it, and it would have. But the dreamy fiction has neither form nor fashion, in either its membership, its laws, its terms, or anything else. It is all a dream.

13. How different from all this is the New Testament idea of a church. A visible company of disciples, with a pastor, deacons, a place of worship, gospel, ordinances, songs, prayer, worship and a visible influence and existence in the world. Such a church can honor God, bless the world, have fellowship one with another, stand for the truth, be persecuted, be loved, be hated, and be known in the world. That is a New Testament church—a Baptist church. It has no conflict of doctrines, no antagonism of faiths, no self-destroying inconsistencies. Such churches were in existence in the Apostolic day. They were Baptist churches. They were on the Baptist model, had the Baptist mould, preached the Baptist faith, observed the Baptist ordinances, and had the Baptist promises of perpetuity to the end of the ages. There has not been an hour of time since the Son of Man walked on the earth in His ascent to the mountain summit to preach His inaugural sermon to His kingdom, that there have not been Baptist churches, after their scriptural model, witnessing to men the gospel of Jesus Christ, and administering to believers the ordinances of His house. Here on this solid rock Baptists stand. They refuse to affiliate with man-made churches because they are man-made. We don't have to affiliate because we are not man-made. The Baptists keep open their doors for the reception of all believers who desire their fellowship. All believers can get in on the same terms Baptists had to comply with, and all who are in have one common fellowship. But they form no entangling alliances. Our principles are scriptural, consistent, reasonable.

1. No "invisible church."
2. Visible churches administer the ordinances.
3. Visible churches were entrusted with the entire work of the commis-

sion.

5. Visible churches are New Testament churches.

6. Visible churches are Baptist churches.

7. Therefore Baptist churches are authorized to do all the work committed to New Testament churches.

How, then, can we affiliate with other churches without a surrender of these patent truths?

Baptists very cheerfully consent to the doctrine that there are Christians outside of Baptist churches; but they are outside of New Testament churches whenever that is the case. It is their duty to come into New Testament churches, and not the duty of New Testament churches to go out to them. Everybody admits Baptist churches to be as true churches as any others can be. Hence, if everybody should become Baptists they would be as truly in a New Testament church as it would be possible for them to be in any other, even allowing others to judge the case. That shows that Baptists have the essentials of a New Testament church, others being judge. If that be true, then all others must fall short of these essentials, since they differ from the Baptists; and that leaves the Baptists occupying the ground. It is plainly the duty of the Baptists to stand consistently on their safe ground, to decline all compromising affiliations with other churches, to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to them, to preach "all the words of this life," to reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long suffering and doctrine, and to walk by the "Landmarks" of the faith as our fathers did. Then wise men will respect us for our consistency, and admire our logic, and be convinced by our gospel; God will be honored, the churches of Christ will prove faithful to their trust, and man-made institutions and false churches will receive their well-deserved rebukes. Thus Baptists will be able to do what no other people under Heaven can do, that is, do the work of the New Testament churches.

Most sincerely do I trust the plain truths of this book will cause all who love Christ to duly consider the absurd things they are now, possibly, accepting; and also enable all to see how consistent, and reasonable, and scriptural are the positions occupied by the Baptists.

## The First Commandment

*Continued from page 81*

foundation of all love to our fellowman. We cannot be true to our neighbor unless we are true to God. Those who neglect piety will soon neglect their duties to their neighbor.

## THEIR PREFACE

"And God spake all these words. . ." The Divine Being Himself spoke these words in tones so loud and so distinct as to be heard by the whole multitude of Israelites standing in the valley by Mount Sinai (Deut. 5:1-33). As God spoke these words in a loud trumpet-like voice there was fire and a great cloud upon the mount (Deut. 5:22-23). There was also thunderings and lightnings (Ex. 19:16) and the Mount of God quaked greatly (Ex. 19:18). This natural phenomenon attested that the God of creation was speaking to fallen and sinful men in order to give to them the best and shortest compendium of morality ever delivered.

First, consider the Divine name: "**I am the LORD thy God. . .**" This could be translated from the Hebrew: "**I am Jehovah your Elohim.**" "Jehovah" or *Yahweh* means in the Hebrew "the eternal, self-existent, everlasting, ever-acting one." Or, we might say it refers to the God "**which was, and is, and is to come**" (Rev. 4:8). *Elohim* is a uni-plural noun which means "the infinite ones." *Elohim* was the general name of God, Jehovah was the specific name. Jehovah-*Elohim* or Jehovah your *Elohim* is the covenant name of the God of Israel.

Second, notice the Divine deliverance: ". . . **which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.**" God by great signs and wonders had brought these Hebrews out of the slavery in Egypt into a glorious liberty. He that had redeemed them by blood demanded the right to rule them. They owed their service to Him to Whom they owed their freedom. Jehovah-*Elohim* had the sole claim on their undivided worship, and He would tolerate to rival (Josh. 24:14, 23).

These laws were not merely for Israel as some have assumed. They were rules for all mankind. They were for Christians, for they are all quoted in the New Testament. They are as much for those Christ has rescued out of the bondage of sin and Satan by His blood as they were for Israel of old. Christ, our Deliverer from the bondage of corruption, is entitled to our best service (Luke 1:74). He loosed our bonds that we might obey Him (Ps. 116:6; Rom. 6:16-22). Jehovah was the covenant God of Israel, He is our God by the Covenant of Grace. Our covenant God has as much right to command us as He did the nation of Israel. Our obligation is greater to our covenant God than was Israel's (I Cor. 6:20; Tit. 2:14). They had typical redemption; we have actual redemption.

**THE DIVINE PROHIBITION**  
**"Thou shalt have no other gods**

**before me,**" or as some translate it, "**Thou shalt have no other gods beside me.**" This prohibition not only forbade Israel's departure from Jehovah and substituting the worship of other gods in His place, but it also forbade Israel's worship of other gods in addition to their worship of Jehovah. The Israelites could not worship Baal, Chemosh, Moleck, or Ashtoreth. This was a very important command to a people of polytheistic origin (Josh. 24:1-28), that had just come up out of polytheistic Egypt, and were on their way to polytheistic Canaan.

"This first command is the source of all other commands, not merely the Decalogue, but of all the precepts of Scripture. They all have their source in this first command. It is the root, the source, the basis of every command of God. . . The first command is also the heart of all other commands. You can go back to this core in every command and precept of God. So in this sense the first command is all-pervasive in character and is exceedingly broad in scope" (*My Sermon Notes on the Ten Commandments* by William P. Van Wyk, p. 16).

## THE POSITIVE DUTY ENJOINED

There is a positive duty enjoined by this First Commandment. We must have but one God. We must make the Lord only the solitary God, and we must have only Him as our God. This command places us before the face of God the only One Whom we should serve as God. It requires that we have a love for Him stronger than all affections for others, that we take Him for our everlasting portion, that we serve and obey Him supremely. The Lord said by the pen of Hosea: "**Yet I am the LORD thy God from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt know no god but me: for there is no saviour beside me**" (Hos. 13:4).

In the light of the First Commandment it is our solemn and sacred duty to believe in God: ". . . **for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him**" (Heb. 11:6). To believe in God is to trust Him, to exercise faith in Him, and to hope in Him. The sweet singer of Israel said: "**O LORD my God in thee do I put my trust**" (Ps. 7:1). There is none we can trust but God, for all else is "**lying vanities**" (Ps. 31:6). God is to be trusted at all times and under every circumstance: "**Trust in Him at all times**" (Ps. 62:8).

No man can come to know the true God except it be given to him by revelation from Heaven. We must be given "**the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him**" (Eph. 1:17). Jesus said: ". . . **and**

*Continued on page 87*

## The First Commandment

*Continued from page 86*

**no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him**" (Matt. 11:27). John so well said: **"And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life"** (I John 5:20).

Those who have been taught to know God as their true God (John 6:45) need to **"follow on to know the LORD"** (Hos. 6:3). We must seek a fuller knowledge of God as He is revealed in His Word and works, for we cannot worship an unknown God. We must know something about God before we can choose Him as our God (Josh. 24:14). We must know His person, promises, purposes, and power. I Chron. 28:9 says: **"Know thou the God of thy father."** **"Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD"** (Jer. 9:23-24).

To know God is to love Him supremely, and he who does not love God above all else does not know God. Jesus Christ said: **"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind"** (Matt. 22:37). Those who love God will worship Him and adorn Him. Divine worship belongs to the supreme Being, and He will allow no creature to share it: **"My glory will I not give to another"** (Isa. 42:8). It is the duty of those who love God to worship Him according to His appointments. This can be done by church attendance, meditation upon His Word, sincere prayers, and other things.

**"And to this infinite Jehovah each of us owes the perfect worship of spirit and soul and body. We must love Him supremely, revere Him humbly, study Him homagefully, believe Him entirely, trust Him absolutely, obey Him perfectly, plan for Him exclusively, bow to Him cheerfully, pray to Him constantly, praise Him ceaselessly, live to Him wholly, adore Him everywhere now and forever more. Our whole life is to be an unceasing exhalation of incense"** (*University Lectures*

*on the Ten Commandments* by George Dana Boardman, pp. 49-50, 1889 edition).

### THE THING CONDEMNED: A FICTITIOUS GOD

The First Commandment not only enjoins the worship of the true God, but it also condemns idolatry, or the setting up of false gods. Man was made to lean on God and to be dependent on Him. When a man severs his spiritual relation to God, he of necessity tries to find something else on which to lean or trust. Every thing in which he trusts outside of God is an idol, no matter what it may be. Any thing which enters into competition with God, or that is put before God, becomes a god to a man.

There is really no other God, and we should have no other God. **"Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the LORD he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else"** (Deut. 4:39). There is but One omnipotent God Who rules over all: **"Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God"** (Isa. 44:6). He alone is Deity—the One self-existent, eternal, unchangeable, spiritual, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, holy, just, true, gracious, perfect, infinite, only Jehovah!

Idols are inanimate things, **"The work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell"** (Deut. 4:28). The psalmist wrote: **"Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them"** (Ps. 115:4-8). An idol is **"a god that cannot save"** (Isa. 46:20) and which cannot **"move"** (Isa. 40:20). Such a god is a fictitious god—no god at all.

### THE SIN OF IDOLATRY

Idolatry is one of the most common sins of mankind. It is committed when one transfers the trust which must be in God to some creature or thing. It is the exaltation of the creation above the Creator (Rom. 1:21-23). It brings God down in the estimation of man. This sin makes man guilty of gross falsehood, or committing great injustice, of being unthankful, of being unholly, of deceiving himself. It is the height of folly to go after a **"dumb idol"** (I Cor. 12:2). **"When ye knew**

**not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods"** (Ga. 4:8).

This sin in its extreme form is the actual denial of God and His existence. **"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God"** (Ps. 14:1). A man is an atheist who even denies any of the perfections essential to Deity or His right to govern the world. Humanism is a form of atheism. Without controversy there are many professed atheists in the world. These people in most cases wish there was no God so they could lead a wicked life without fear of future retribution. In the practical sense, all living as though there is no God are atheists, church members or not!

Polytheism, or the worship of many gods, is forbidden in Exodus 20:3. Some worship the sun, the moon, and the stars (Deut. 4:19; II Kings 17:16; 21:3-5; II Chron. 33:3,5; Job 31:26-28; Jer. 7:17-20; 8:2; Ezek. 8:15-16; Zeph. 1:4-5; Acts 7:42). Others worshipped a golden calf (Ex. 32:4), a brazen serpent (II Kings 18:4), pictures (Num. 33:52; Isa. 2:16; Ezek. 8:10), nets and drags (Hab. 1:16), images (Col. 2:18; Rom. 1:23) and other things (Ex. 12:12). Communists and socialists worship the state as god. Everything is sacrificed for the state, and the communists are willing to sacrifice millions of lives to establish their goals, for as they see it the end justifies the means.

Another form of idolatry is the identification of God with His creation. This is pantheism. In this conception man is a part of God. Thus man's responsibility is denied just as in atheism. His trust in a god is trusting merely in himself. This is the sin of new agers and secular humanists.

Still another form of idolatry is the hellish doctrine of evolution which preaches the false god of science. The teaching of evolution is an attempt to explain the creation without the existence of the Creator. It denies the person, nature and office work of God. Evolution is the very basis of the modern educational system. No wonder the Bible declares that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God (I Cor. 1:20).

The Bible considers various forms of sin to be idolatry. **"Stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry"** (I Sam. 15:23). **". . . covetousness, which is idolatry"** (Col. 3:5). Sensuality makes a god out of the belly: **". . . whose god is their belly. . ."** (Phil. 3:19). This god makes one ask: "What shall we eat? What shall we wear?"

Earthly objects can become an idol. Military might can become a god: **"Some trust in chariots, and some in horses. . ."** (Ps. 20:7). Earthly riches can become a god (Eccl. 5:13;

Matt. 6:24). **"If I have made gold my hope, or have said to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence"** (Job 31:24). Even angels can become false gods: **"Let no man beguile of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels. . ."** (Col. 2:18). One's ancestors can be made into an idol: **"They joined themselves also unto Baalpeor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead"** (Ps. 106:28).

I believe that sorcery, witchcraft, spiritism, and fortune telling are forms of idolatry and are forbidden by the First Commandment (Deut. 18:1-22). This would forbid palm reading and horoscopes. These things are consulted to look into the future and to direct a persons life with that information. Those who consult such are no longer looking to the Word of God, and they are no longer trusting their future to a sovereign God.

Some professed Christians have made a god out of "chance." When it comes to salvation of the soul they say every man has a "chance." Without knowing what they have done, they have made chance a rule alongside of God. Chance means there are some things even God does not have under control. Those holding these views do not really intend to worship chance alongside of God, but their theology has put limits on God's absolute sovereignty. Thus they are in conflict with the First Commandment.

### MODERN IDOLATER

Although Christendom, theoretically speaking, is monotheistic, yet modern Christendom, practically speaking, is largely polytheistic. Modern churchgoers seem to have their Christian pantheon. There is the god of the materialist, the god of the deist, the god of the fatalist, the god of the sentimentalist, the god of the churchman, the god of the Romanist, the god of the Unitarian, and the god of the Arminian. God help us to see idolatry is not merely trusting in wood and stone idols, but also beauty, wealth, power, fame, pleasure, and every minor thing in which we trust outside of God. Truly we of this Christian age and land need the First Commandment no less than did the Israelites.

In this materialistic age no small number of professed Christians make a god out of earthly wealth. Psalm 115:4 says: **"Their idols are silver and gold."** Multitudes have sold their soul to the Devil in order to get wealth. They are no engrossed in the pursuit of wealth that they have no time for their church, their family, or their God. Money has become the creator of some, for they believe money has made them what they are.

*Continued on page 88*

## CONCLUSION

## The First Commandment

*Continued from page 87*

Money is their redeemer, for if they get into trouble they trust money to redeem them. God made man out of the dust of the ground, and man makes a god out of the gold dust of the earth! How corrupt man has become through sin!

Truly some have made a god out of the religious denomination to which they belong. Others have made a savior out of the ceremonies of their religious organizations. Some condition the salvation of the soul upon membership in some religious order, or by the observation of certain ordinances like water baptism and the Lord's Supper. This is to equate God with human institutions and human deeds. It makes man his own savior and god. There is no need to these work-mongers for the regeneration of the Holy Spirit and the atoning death of Jesus Christ. They give man all the glory for his own salvation. Verily this is one of the most subtle forms of the sin of idolatry!

## MANY GODS

**"For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him"** (I Cor. 8:5-6).

To love anything more than God is to make a god of it. If we trust in our learning, we make a god of it. If we love pleasures more than God (II Tim. 3:4), we make a god of it. If we love our job more than God, we make a god of it. If we love our wife and children more than God, we make a god of them. I fear that it may be truly said of modern Christendom what was said of Judah of old: **"For according to the number of thy cities are thy gods"** (Jer. 2:28). May God deliver us from the Christian pantheon!

Professed Christians who own God for their God and live as if there were no God are vile idolaters—violators of the first and greatest commandment. Woe to those who do not really believe in God nor love God. Woe to those people who do not worship God as the God of the Bible. What dead-heads they are! If they are not dead in sin, they are dead to duty and devotion to God! Many heathen worship idols with greater zeal and devotion than some Christians do the true God! **"Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee idolatry"** (I Cor. 10:4). **"Little children, keep yourselves from idols"** (I John 5:21).

Jehovah alone is to be worshipped. Allah is not the god of the Bible. No rivals are permitted. **"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon"** (Matt. 6:24). It is the Savior or Satan, Christ or Antichrist, the Sovereign or self. Loyalty to one is disloyalty to the other. It is impossible to be loyal to both as it is to go east and west at the same time. Let us cease to worship Jehovah with a divided heart (I Kings 9:4). Let us worship and serve our Lord Jesus Christ alone. None have ever repented of cleaving to God and true worship. The thoughts of faithful service to Him gives comfort to a man upon his dying bed.

Man by nature has no desire to love God or to worship Him. This is why millions never pray to God, never read the Book of God, never go to church on the Lord's Day, never engage in any religious exercise. True religion must be planted in the heart by the regeneration of the Holy Spirit of God. A reborn man is united with God through Christ; he trusts his God again. He relies on the Lord as his God and submits to Him even in trials and tribulations. Love for God is born of faith. Only he who trusts God will worship and serve Him. **"Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again"** (John 3:7).

I sometimes think that there is really no such thing as an atheist, for such a person worships himself and the material world. Every man has a shrine in his heart where there is a god whom he worships. The question is, Who is your god? In the experience of every believer there was a time when he got off the throne and kneeled to enthrone the Lord Jesus Christ as the true God. And from that day forward He is the Lord your God, the source of your life and the center of your faith.

What is your god? What is it that you trust in? What is it which makes the greatest demands upon your time, talents, and treasures? To what is your life devoted? **"How long halt ye between two opinions? If the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, follow him"** (I Kings 18:21). **"And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD"** (Josh. 24:15).

## Crucifixion Day

*Continued from page 81*

thority in translating or interpreting the Bible.

Let us turn to the evidence.

Look at the words of Jesus: **"For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth"** (Matt. 12:40).

Note two things about this Scripture.

First: That every Greek text I have been able to consult (ten in number) gives every one of the above words.

Second: That every English translation I have examined (about ten in all) use the identical phraseology which we have here in Matthew in relation to the element of time.

This shows that the most critical and accurate translators of the passage are perfectly satisfied that these were the words of Jesus. If this be so and you give a literal meaning to our Saviour's words that He was in the heart of the earth three days and three nights, then He must have been in the grave seventy-two hours, one night and one day, the second night and the second day, the third night and the third day, so that He must have been crucified on Wednesday and not on Friday.

This I shall now seek to prove.

I know that I have to contend against tradition, the teaching and practice of centuries and the prejudices of the churchmen, but tradition, human teaching and practice and ecclesiastical prejudices count for little when they are out of harmony with the words and teachings of Jesus.

The almost universal interpretation of these words of Jesus is that He lay in the grave a part of three days; that He died on Friday afternoon at 3 o'clock, that He was in the grave all Friday night, all day Saturday and rose early on Sunday morning; that He was in the grave about thirty-six hours, and that this is in perfect accord with Jewish reckoning which accounted a part of a year as a whole year and a part of a day as a whole day in the statement of time.

Every commentary that I have consulted, and I will mention some of them—Meyer, Godet, Stier, Ellicott, Plumtree, Matthew Henry, Butler, Lange, Lyman Abbott and others—all of these accept this as the interpretation of Christ's words and give the same reason for it in almost identical language, showing that they have copied one from the other from time immemorial and have been satisfied with it as the most plausible interpretation of Christ's words in keeping

with the teaching and practice of the Church for ages.

Alford says: "If it be necessary to make good the three days and three nights during which our Lord was in the heart of the earth. It must be done by having recourse to the Jewish method of computing time."

Now against this interpretation I place first of all our Saviour's words: **"For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."** I believe that Christ meant what He said: that He was in the grave three days and three nights, and that His day and night was twenty-four hours in duration. This means that He was in the grave seventy-two hours.

Secondly: It is impossible to put seventy-two hours, or three days and three nights into thirty-six hours, or from Friday at 3 o'clock in the afternoon to early on Sunday morning when they saw He arose from the grave to crowd seventy-two hours. Accepting the current theory Christ was in the grave whole day and two whole nights, while two whole days and a third night are not accounted for at all.

Thirdly: That however inaccurate the Jews may have been in their statements relating to time, counting a part of a year as a whole year and a part of a day as a whole day, I am not willing to admit that Christ was given to making loose statements. I have always looked upon Him as the incomparable teacher, the man who spake as never man spake, our perfect exemplar. Neither am I willing to believe that the Holy Spirit would have allowed Matthew to misrepresent our Saviour's teaching when He inspired him to record these words of the Christ.

If Christ were crucified on Friday then there is a discrepancy between Mark's and Luke's gospels, which is inexplicable. Indeed Mark flatly and positively contradicts Luke. Let me read Mark 16:1.

**"And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James, and Salome had bought sweet spices that they might come and anoint Him."** Notice carefully the language here. **"When the Sabbath was past they bought sweet spices, etc."** Now read Luke 23:56.

**"And they returned and prepared spices and ointments and rested on the Sabbath Day according to the Commandment."**

Mark says the Sabbath was past when they bought the spices; Luke says they prepared the spices and oint-

*Continued on page 89*



## Crucifixion Day

*Continued from page 88*

ments and rested on the Sabbath Day, referring of course to the Sixth Commandment: **“Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy.”**

The one says the Sabbath was gone, the other says it was yet to come.

You can never harmonize these statements of Mark and Luke if you hold to the common belief that Christ was crucified on Friday.

If, however, you accept our Saviour's words as true, then there is an easy, natural and satisfying interpretation. The contradiction fades away and there is concord and harmony between the two evangelists.

The fact is that Mark refers to one Sabbath and Luke to another. There were two Sabbaths between the Crucifixion Day and the Resurrection, and a preparation day in between them, so that the spices were bought after the first Sabbath and prepared before the second on weekly Sabbath.

In the twenty-third chapter of Leviticus we find that the children of Israel were commended to observe seven Sabbaths in connection with their yearly feasts. These were not weekly Sabbaths, but additional ones.

There were to be days of rest and holy convocations in which the people were to do no servile work, but offer an offering unto the Lord.

The Passover had its Sabbath and that Sabbath had its preparation day just the same as the weekly Sabbath. On the preparation day everything was gotten ready, the lamb was slain, the unleavened bread was baked, the bitter herbs were made ready. This was the fourteenth day of the month.

Jesus was crucified on the fourteenth day of the month, the fifteenth was a Sabbath and the first day of the great feast. In proof of this listen to what John says in the nineteenth chapter of his gospel and the fourteenth verse: **“And it was the preparation of the Passover and about the sixth hour.”** There is no mistaking the meaning of these words. Christ was crucified on the preparation day for the Passover Sabbath, and not on the preparation day for the weekly Sabbath.

Matthew Henry says: “It was the preparation of the Passover, that is, for the Passover Sabbath, and the solemnities of that and the rest of the days of the feast of unleavened bread.” The day of preparation was peculiar to the Passover originally.

In further proof of this let me read to you from John 19:31: **“The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation day, that the body should not remain upon the cross**

**on the Sabbath Day (for that day was an high day) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken and that they might be taken away.”**

Notice that this Sabbath was to be a high day, differentiating it from the weekly Sabbath.

Yes, the Passover was a high day with the Jews. “Every Sabbath is a holy day and a good day, but this was a high day—‘megale amera’—a great day.” That day which God had commanded them to keep forever in remembrance of that night when the avenging angel passed over them in Egypt.

Now let us hear how the foregoing harmonizes with the facts in Christ's life.

There is a perfect correspondence of time, dates, circumstances and facts between the Passover and the Crucifixion. In the Passover you have the outline of the picture. In the Crucifixion you have the picture completed and filled out by the Master hand. In the Passover you have the seed of which the Crucifixion is the full-blown flower. The Crucifixion is the consummation of the if the Passover, and for that reason we are not merely to look for similarity but perfect likeness between them. Let us look at the perfect and beautiful likeness.

In John's gospel, twelfth chapter, first to the fifteenth verses, we have an account of Christ's return to Bethany and His triumphal ride, sitting on an ass colt into the city of Jerusalem.

Let me read you the first line of the first verse: **“Then Jesus, six days before the Passover, came to Bethany.”** Note very carefully the expression—**“six days before the Passover.”** Lyman Abbott says that “the commonly accepted hypothesis makes Christ arrive at Bethany on Friday night, spending there the Sabbath Day and going on to Jerusalem on the following day, the first day of the week.” But Mr. Abbott here falls into the popular error of trying to uphold Palm Sunday and is undoubtedly influenced by the teachings and interpretations of the writers who have preceded him.

I accept the first part of his statement that Christ did arrive at Bethany on Friday evening, but I am obliged to reject the latter part of the statement that he made his triumphal entry into Jerusalem on the first day of the week. Admitting that He reached Bethany on Friday evening, the twelfth chapter of John makes it as plain as the English language can make anything that He entered into Jerusalem on Saturday.

He reached Bethany in time for Martha to make Him a supper and

Mary was afforded an opportunity to perform that beautiful and gracious service which has memorialized her name forever. Jesus spent the night at Bethany, and then the twelfth verse says **“on the next day”** (Saturday or the Jewish Sabbath) **“much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees and went forth to meet Him, and cried Hosanna—Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.”** During the triumphal ride, Christ offered Himself to them as their King, but they rejected Him as a King and chose Him as the true paschal Lamb for death on that tenth day of Nisan.

God said unto Moses: **“Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, in the tenth day of this month they shall take unto them very man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for a house. And ye shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening”** (Ex. 12:3-6).

This is a picture of which Christ is the true. Having been chosen as the paschal Lamb, they kept Him four days until the fourteenth day of the month, just like the paschal lamb of Egypt.

This, according to Biblical chronology, not Roman or English reckoning, would be Wednesday, the fourteenth day of the month, which was a preparation day for the Passover Sabbath. The Passover Sabbath would answer to our Thursday.

Christ was nailed to the cross at 9 A.M., this being the third hour; at 12 Noon the darkness of night shrouded the earth, and at 3 o'clock He yielded up His spirit.

Between the hours of 3 and 6, Joseph and Nicodemus went to Pilate and secured permission to take the body from the cross and give it burial. They took the body and laid it in Joseph's tomb just about sunset, which was the dividing line between the Jewish days.

Christ was put into the grave just as Wednesday was closing and Thursday was beginning.

So that taking the words of Christ as literally true that He would be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights, I believe that He was in the grave seventy-two hours, three days of twenty-four hours each, or all day of Thursday, Friday and Saturday, and that He did arise as the Scriptures say on the first day of the week.

But I think I hear some one say: “If your interpretation is correct, then Christ was in the grave not only three days and three nights, but also a fourth

night, for He arose from the grave on the first day of the week.”

It is the popular and almost universal belief that Christ rose from the grave some time after midnight on Saturday. Such a belief is not at all in accord with the Scriptures, and yet it very naturally arises from the way in which we divide our days. Our days end and begin with midnight, but the Jewish day ended and began with sunset. Christ did indeed rise on the first day of the week, but it was at the very beginning of it and not after the day was several hours old. Christ is our model for punctuality as well as everything else.

He arose immediately after the sun had set and not just before the sunrise of Sunday morning. Now in order to confirm this, I will read Matthew 28:1: **“In the end of the Sabbath as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulcher.”**

Note the words **“at the end of the Sabbath,”** just as the Sabbath was over they came to see the sepulcher. In the revised version it is translated in this way: “but late in the Sabbath Day they came.” So that the moment the sun had set and they could move without breaking the Sabbatic law, they were on the way to the sepulcher.

But some one is saying: “Yes, but how about the remaining part of the verse which says as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week?” Your Greek testament and dictionary will afford a very easy and satisfactory answer.

The word “dawn” is very misleading. We speak of the dawn as the opening of the day, the light that comes with the rising of the sun. We always associate the dawn with the sunlight.

But the Greek word here is “Epiphoske,” which means the shining of the sun or the moon. You will observe that the Passover feast always occurred at the time of the full moon. Just as the sun was setting, the moon would be rising. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to the sepulcher after the sun had set and the moon was beginning to shed its silvery sheen over the earth. The full-orbed splendor of the paschal moon had already introduced the first day of the week when they arrived and the grave to their astonishment was empty. But some one says: “What are you going to do with these words of Mark 16:2, ‘And very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulcher at the rising of the sun.’”

This verse gives no trouble. I do not hesitate to say that this was another coming. Otherwise Mark flatly

*Continued on page 92*

# The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit questions on any Bible topic

The Berea Baptist Banner

PO Box 39

Mantachie, Mississippi 38855

*I am surrounded by "oneness" Pentecostals, and they are multiplying rapidly. I never get anywhere with them. Is there a verse like that in Acts 2:38 they love that would work to help them know the truth? --- Louisiana*



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In the first verse in the Bible, the name used of God is *elohim* which is plural and represents more than one. Each of the divine persons created the heavens and the earth (Gen. 1:1-2; John 1:1-3). When God chose to create man He stated: ". . . **Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. . .**" (Gen. 1:26). When man fell into sin, God again referred to the Godhead in the plural (Gen. 3:22). The pronouns "us" and "our" are both plural and express a plurality of persons. You will find the plural used in Genesis 11:7 which reads: "**Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language. . .**"; and also in Isaiah 6:8: "**Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?**"

You will find plural expressions used in the New Testament (John 14:23). That there is a Trinity of persons in the Godhead is clearly stated in I John 5:7; "**For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.**" Also in Matthew 28:19; John 15:26; and II Corinthians 13:14. They are said to be one in that they are in perfect unity and equal in every Divine attribute (Phil. 2:5-6).

DAVID O'NEAL



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It would seem as though all of us who live in the South are being surrounded by "oneness" Pentecostals. The "oneness" view is only one of many where we are in disagreement with the Pentecostals. In my opinion

the "oneness" view is no more than a form of teaching produced by one by the name of Sabellim in the third century. Dr. A. H. Strong says that this view would make the persons of the Trinity mere names for the ever-shifting phases of the divine activity.

It appears to be an impossibility to get very far with Pentecostals and Campbellites when considering the way of salvation or when discussing Acts 2:38. However, we must remember that it is not our arguments or presentations that bring men to truth as to the way of salvation. God does use the preaching of the gospel in opening our understanding in spiritual matters, but He alone can open blinded eyes and give the proper conception of truth.

There are numerous scriptures which refute the view of the Trinity held by those who are involved with the heresy of Sabellianism, but the one I find to be most useful is Matthew 3:13-17 where we see the Son (Jesus Christ) receiving baptism from John the Baptist. On this occasion the Holy Spirit descended like a dove, and came to rest upon Him. Then the Father speaking from Heaven said, "**This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.**" It would be quite foolish to believe that these were mere names used to describe the activity of one person acting in the role of three persons. Rather it shows the activity of three persons (the Trinity) acting as one God.

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I'm not too familiar with the Oneness religion so I cannot say a lot about them. I do understand that they believe that salvation is in believing in Christ as part of their salvation and then baptism and good works make up the rest of their salvation.

The Bible teaches that you have to believe in God as sovereign ruler of the world and Jesus Christ as His Son

and Lord and Saviour of those who repent of their sins and trust only in God and Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

John 5:24 says one must hear the words of Christ and believe, in God, that sent Him, to be saved.

Titus 3:5, John 3:18 and Mark 16:16B, says that salvation is solely by faith and not by works such as baptism.

If I understand at all what they believe the Oneness faith says that baptizing in the name of Jesus only is baptizing in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19-20). They are wresting the scriptures because when Jesus was baptized all three accompanied the event. Matthew 3:13-17 tells us that Jesus was baptized, the Father spoke from Heaven and the Holy Spirit descended in the form of a dove. This is the kind of baptism God is pleased with today.

Personally, I believe anyone that denies the trinity denies the Word of God and is not a true believer. I John 5:9-10 says one that does not believe the record of His Son, including the eternity of Christ's record, makes God a liar.

The Holy Spirit that the Pentecostals speak about so much never glorifies Himself or people but always glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ who is the Son of God and Jesus submitted to the authority of God the Father in all He did on earth (John 16:13-14; John 8:29; Mark 14:36).

GARNER SMITH



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The oneness Pentecostals believe that you must be baptized in the name of Jesus only in order to be saved. They also believe that you can lose the Lord's salvation. Therefore, they obviously attribute salvation in part to their own works, obedience, and merit. Only the Holy Spirit can convince a works Salvationist of the truth

of salvation by free and sovereign grace through the Word of God. I would use verses that stress salvation by grace apart from human merit (John 3:16; Acts 13:38-39; Romans 3:23-28; 4:4-7; 5:1-2; 9:11; 11:5-6; Eph. 2:8-10; Titus 3:5-6).

The oneness Pentecostals also insist on being baptized in the name of Jesus only. However, Jesus Himself commanded: "**Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost**" (Matt. 28:19). To insist on baptizing only in Jesus' name would be a violation of Christ's command and would henceforth contradict that plain declaration of inspired Scripture. Paul obviously did not believe that baptism had anything to do with the salvation of one's soul when he wrote: "**And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. . . For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel**" (I Cor. 1:16-18; 4:15). These are some verses that may be helpful in dealing with your Pentecostal friends. However, I must warn you that most of those involved in the oneness movement are very stubborn in their false system of doctrine. It will take the power of God to convince them of the truth as it is in Jesus.

TOM ROSS

**BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST  
Financial Report  
2-28-2001 to 3-31-2001**

Beginning Balance ..... \$2,372.59

RECEIPTS	
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY .....	100.00
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS .....	100.00
Livingstone B. C., Barboursville, V .....	288.09
Berea B. C., Westpoint, TN .....	132.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY .....	75.00
Parkway Landmark B. C., Springfield, OR .....	50.00
Dividing checks .....	425.00
.....	1,170.09
TOTAL RECEIPTS .....	3,542.68

EXPENDITURES:	
Radio Time .....	1,069.55
Tapes .....	87.88
Postage .....	18.50
Dividing checks .....	425.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES .....	1,600.93
BALANCE .....	\$1,941.75

**CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT**

Beginning Balance ..... \$1,573.32  
RECEIPTS  
Total .....

EXPENDITURES:	
WCTT (Mar) .....	160.00
Total Expenditures .....	160.00
ENDING BALANCE .....	\$1,413.32

# The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit questions on any Bible topic

The Berea Baptist Banner

PO Box 39

Mantachie, Mississippi 38855


What is one to do where there are no true churches within driving distance that are sound? -- Louisiana



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for one to move. If this is the case, unite with one of the Lord's churches and support it as best you can.  
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45619

**MOVE!** If it is at all possible, even though it may not be convenient or pleasing to the flesh, move to an area where there is a sound church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Spiritual truth and edification should be a priority in a believer's life. Pray for God's leadership and direction in this matter. If you get into a good church where you can serve and learn, you will never regret it.

If it is not possible to move to an area where there is a sound church you will have to survive on video and audio tapes, sound literature, and independent Bible study. However good these helps may be, they can never replace the joy and privilege of being a serving, faithful member of one of the Lord's churches.

**TOM ROSS**



**Garner Smith**  
113 Keith Drive  
Clarksville, TN 37043

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

If one is in a place where no sound church exists I cannot but wonder how this came about. It could be that a person could be saved in a place where no sound church is, maybe by visiting somewhere else or by someone individually witnessing to them and they find themselves in such a situation. If that be the case, they should consider moving to a place where they could attend a good sound Baptist church whatever the cost might be.

If one is living in such a place as the result of moving from a place

where a sound church was, because of a better job etc., then they should repent and move back where they moved from.


To be able to attend and be taught and have church fellowship in a good church is worth more than anything else in the world.

If the case is such that it is impossible to move where you could attend a sound church, then I believe there are only two alternatives, one is to try and get a mission started even if it has to be in your home. The other alternative would be to unite with a sound church that would furnish you materials, tapes etc., until a mission could be started.

I would urge anyone in such a state to immediately contact a good church and let them counsel you on what to do.

We are indeed concerned about anyone in such a situation and are willing to help. We will sincerely pray for your situation.

**GARNER SMITH**



**Jimmie B. Davis**  
309 Carroll Road  
Fulton, MS 38843

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

When living in a location where it is not possible to drive to all of the services of a sound church there are two things a person can do. First, one can seek a location where a sound church exists, seek employment in driving distance of the church and move to this location. One may be required to sacrifice certain things in order to do this, but remember that truth is priceless. Second, if it is not possible to locate near a sound church I would suggest placing your membership in a sound church nearest to where you live and asking the church to send tapes of their services and other items which could be helpful in your spiritual development. I would emphasize however that you would need to attend every service your schedule would allow, no matter how few. Living at a location which would make it impossible to be present at all the scheduled services of a church

is not an excuse for forsaking all the services.

I give the second suggestion even though I am not favorable to what is called non-resident membership. However, I realize that there are a few situations where non-resident membership can be justified. Having temporary employment in a distant location or serving in the service of your country, and the like.

**JIMMIE B. DAVIS**

**BEREA BAPTIST BANNER**  
**Financial Report**  
2-28-2001 to 3-31-2001

Beginning Balance .....	\$2,165.35
<b>RECEIPTS:</b>	
BC of Brimfield, Brimfield, IL .....	22.86
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS .....	200.00
Berea B. C., Stoning, IL .....	60.00
Berea B. C., Westpoint, TN .....	50.00
Berea M. B.C., Mansfield, OH .....	50.00
Bethel B. C. Pasadena, TX .....	20.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne WV .....	300.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY .....	125.00
Central Avenue B. C., Tampa, FL .....	25.00
Charity B. C., Midland, TX .....	47.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL .....	20.00
Faith B. C., Seffner, FL .....	50.00
Faith M. B. C., Clarksville, TN .....	100.00
Gerald Price, Johnson City, TN .....	25.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY .....	60.00
Grace B. C., Georgetown, KY .....	35.00
Grace M. B. C., Mission, Marion, IL .....	25.00
Grace M. B. C., Tulsa, OK .....	90.00
Grace M. B. C., Springfield, OR .....	20.00
Hillcrest B. C., Winston-Salem, NC .....	75.00
Indore B. C., Indore, WV .....	100.00
Jack Farmer, Mobile, AL .....	20.00
Larry D. Thorne, Ozark, MO .....	40.00
Leroy Bullard, Albuquerque, NM .....	150.00
Letson Farrell, Long Beach, MS .....	155.00
Lily Ashcraft Todd, Sulligent, AL .....	7.00
Meadow Branch B. C., Millport, AL .....	100.00
Morris St. B. C., Hobbs, NM .....	300.00
Mt Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH .....	100.00
New Testament B. C., Bristol, TN .....	10.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN .....	50.00
New Testament B. C., Leivasy, WV .....	125.00
Ocoonita M. B. C., Keokee, VA .....	40.00
Philadelphia B. C., Aztec, NM .....	25.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL .....	50.00
Portland B. C., Plumerville, AR .....	50.00
Ray Wells, Somerset, KY .....	2.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Columbus, MS .....	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Fulton, MS .....	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Raleigh, NC .....	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL .....	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Silsbee, TX .....	30.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Galena, OH .....	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Alma, AR .....	50.00
South Park M. B. C., Seattle, WA .....	25.00
The Lord's Church, Sumerville, SC .....	50.00
Victory B. C., Courtlund, VA .....	100.00
Mrs. T. Jean Ruley, Sebring, FL .....	17.03
Wayne E. Mowris, Ft. Smith, NT, Canada .....	13.00
Subscriptions .....	573.00
Anonymous .....	220.00
Sub Total .....	\$4,236.37
TOTAL .....	\$6,401.72

<b>EXPENDITURES:</b>	
Wages .....	2,370.00
Printing .....	521.00
Postage .....	847.64
FICA taxes .....	196.61
Supplies .....	228.98
Total Expenditures .....	4,164.23
.....	2,237.49
Bank charge .....	-13.97
ENDING BALANCE .....	\$2,223.52

## MARK OF THE BEAST

Look at your name on the front page of this month's paper. If you see the mark 5-01, so detestable to a Baptist, wash it out by renewal of greenbacks. If not your paper will stop next month. We are not able to credit. It is not a good plan.

## Crucifixion Day

*Continued from page 89*

contradicts Matthew and the story is discordant and inexplicable. Accept this interpretation and you have an easy, natural, intelligent and satisfactory explanation that unifies and harmonizes the whole story of the Resurrection.

Moreover, this interpretation furnishes us with a beautiful parable of the Gentile and Jewish churches. Mary of Magdala went to the sepulcher when the Jewish Sabbath was past and found the Christ had risen. With great joy she went and found her companions, and together with the Jewish Marys and others returned at the rising of the sun only to find an empty tomb.

Mary Magdalene beautifully represents the Gentile church in this age of gospel light, life and love. She discovered an empty grave and resurrection joy at the beginning of the first Lord's day of the Christian era, while the Jewish Marys representing the Jewish church, came to the sepulcher when the hour was late and learned the same joyous news. Filled with wonder and delight by what they had seen and heard the Jewish women hastened away to spread the glorious intelligence that Christ has arisen.

But Mary Magdalene, lingering about the sacred spot, as honored to be the first one to gaze upon her risen Lord. The Jews rejected the Christ and He turned to the Gentiles. The Gentiles accepted Christ early and have spread the principles of His kingdom very nearly in all parts of the world.

But prophecy declares and the story of the resurrection promises what history is beginning to confirm, that God's ancient people will come, even though it be late, to accept Jesus Christ as their Messiah. When that blessed day comes there will be no more Jew or Gentile, but we will all be one in Christ Jesus.

And now, finally, it may be that the views promulgated in this paper are not all in accord with your views or teachings. If so, all I ask is that you search the Scriptures to see if these things are so. And if after diligent and prayerful study, you find the Scriptures testifying of these things, stand by the Bible, even though you have to throw away the teaching of a lifetime and the traditions of the ages.

As for myself, this is the only interpretation that will bring all the Scriptures on this subject into one beautiful unity and harmony. Let me close by reading a few verses that are made luminous by the foregoing teaching.

John 2:19: **"Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this**

**temple and in three days I will raise it up."**

Matt. 27:62-63: **"The Chief Priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said while He was yet alive, After three days I will rise again."**

Mark 9:31: **"For He taught His disciples and said unto them, the Son of Man is delivered up into the hands of men and they shall kill Him, and when He is killed after three days He shall rise again."**

Mark 10:34 (R. V.): **"And they shall mock Him and shall spit upon Him, and shall scourge Him, and shall kill Him: and after three days He shall rise again."**

All of these Scriptures, as well as others to be found in Matthew, Luke, John, Acts and the First Corinthians which allude to the time element in our Saviour's death and burial can only be fully understood and harmonized by accepting Christ's words as literally true when He says:

**"For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."**

(*Religious Herald*, April 13, 1922, This paper was read to a group of Baptist ministers meeting in Baltimore. Griesemer was pastor of the Franklin Square Baptist Church in Baltimore).

## God Voted Out of Kansas Class Room

By Philip C. Parks

Lexington, North Carolina

A newspaper article<sup>1</sup> this past week seemingly reports another setback for God and His faithful. It looks as if God just can't win these days. That is probably the assumption of today's liberals who hate all references to deity as well as those who lack faith in God's omnipotence. After eighteen months of arguing over the merits of creation versus evolution, Kansas' state Board of Education approved by a vote of 7-3 to resume teaching evolution in its public school classrooms.

This vote is not only considered a great achievement but is hailed to be a huge step in favor of quality education and the anti-God agendas of the politically correct. One of the board members bragged about the victory by stating "I believe now that we have science standards that the rest of the world could look up to." Another board member voted against teaching evolution but was sure to point out that his vote was not influenced by personal religious beliefs.

This latest victory is celebrated by those who believe that man's most recent ancestry is the monkey. They also believe that the monkey is the evolutionary product of organisms from prehistoric sludge or any number of other vile places that the reprobate darkness of unregenerate minds of God haters can dream up. According to these Darwinians, this so-called evolution process took billions of years for man to "evolve" into the sophisticated degenerate that he is today.

In a former vote which took place during 1999, the members of Kansas' Board of Education "voted 6-4 in favor of science standards that removed evolution from its central place in the teaching of biology." After this 1999



Philip Parks

vote, Bill Graves, who was the governor of Kansas at that time, is quoted as saying that the board's action was "terrible, tragic, embarrassing." He was not the only one to react in this manner. This action caused a widespread uproar, not only in our nation, but also generated "international ridicule over how Kansas teaches the origin of man." The voters in Kansas just could not stand up to this ridicule. So they buckled to the pressure of the natural man. Even Mister Graves can rejoice now that his opinion seems to have been vindicated by this latest vote.

It can be argued that the education board members of Kansas really had no other choice but to restore the teaching of evolution in its classrooms. Surely they would not be able to purchase secular text books void of this teaching. Their only alternative would be to use subject materials written by non-Darwinians. Finding such secular textbooks would prove to be next to impossible. One could make this suggestion to a public school that wants to teach the origin of man without teaching Darwinianism: Obtain the text materials from the same places that Christian schools obtain theirs. Of course, its just a suggestion.

Those who voted against teaching evolution in the 1999 Kansas school board vote smarted for it. The article

states: "Last fall, voters removed two of the members who led the change (to cease teaching evolution) including the chairwoman." In effect they voted God out of Kansas classrooms.

Now, lets see what the holy Word of the Creator has to say about this matter. In Acts chapter thirteen, Paul is in Antioch teaching to the Jews in their synagogue how God performs His pleasure in setting up kingdoms and bringing kingdoms down. Paul uses Israel and the kingdoms of Canaan as examples. Paul then points out that God is also omnipotent in setting up kings and removing kings. Again, Paul uses King Saul and King David as examples. Paul then relates how Jesus exploded on the scene and was rejected by His chosen nation. He warns the Jews and citizens of Antioch of the dangers of rejecting Christ themselves by saying, **"Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets; Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you"** (Acts 13:40-41). The Jews became envious of Paul's influence in the city and fueled by their hatred of Christ they **"spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming."** Paul responds very boldly by rebuking those who wanted God removed by retorting, **"It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles"** (Acts 13:46). By doing so they suffered the fate as prophesied by their own prophets. Unworthy of everlasting life! What an intriguing phrase! I'm sure Paul's words are still ringing in the ears of these rejecters even now as they are **"tormented in this flame."**

What a great opportunity the citizens of Kansas missed by not standing for the truth and falling for a lie: Namely Darwin's evolution. They demonstrated their base and rebellious characteristic in this matter. Unless God intervenes, the unregenerate God rejecters of Kansas will also suffer a fate worthy and shared by all those who judge themselves **"unworthy of everlasting life."**

<sup>1</sup> "Kansas education board restores evolution theory"; *Winston-Salem Journal*; Winston-Salem, NC; Thursday, February 15, 2001; Page A3, Column 5



## Who Are the Baptists?

*Continued from page 81*

“a modern system,” a “thing comparatively of yesterday,” he proceeds to apostrophize the new scheme as follows: “Who art thou, upstart system! that thou shouldst set thyself in such proud style above the universal church of antiquity?”

There are others, who suppose that the Baptists trace their origin to Roger Williams, the founder of Rhode Island; that he sustains a relation to the great Baptist family similar to that of Luther and Calvin, Robinson and Wesley, to the denominations with which their names are respectively associated. Roger Williams was an able expounder of some of the principles ever dear to the Baptists; as “soul liberty,” the entire severance of church and state, and the immersion of believers as the only valid baptism. And he was the first man in this country who expounded these principles; but beyond this, Roger Williams was not the father even of American Baptists. He baptized a little company of persons at “Providence Plantation,” the name he gave his new settlement, after he was banished from Massachusetts for his religious belief; but it is by no means certain that those persons perpetuated a ministry through whom a single person was ever introduced into a Baptist church. The late Dr. Duncan, in his history of the Baptists, has shown quite conclusively that they did not.

The early Baptists of the United States came hither from the old world—for the most part from Wales. The first Baptist churches in New England, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania—the first in the order of time in the country—were largely of Cambrian or Welch extraction, embracing alike their ministers and private members.

The Welch Baptists claim their origin direct from the Apostles, and their claim has never been successfully controverted. They maintain that the light of a pure Christianity has been preserved among their people during all “the dark ages.” True, there is no written history covering all this period, and probably there never will be. The circumstances under which they lived were altogether unfavorable to the gathering of materials for such a history. They were a pastoral people, dwelling in their mountain homes. They were subjected to almost constant persecution, and therefore sought to conceal themselves in their mountain recesses, that have been so appropriately styled the “Piedmont of Britain.” And yet the fact of their early existence is placed beyond peradventure or doubt. They attracted

the attention of the Romish church, and as early as the year 597 a monk visited them, by the name of Austin, who sought to win them to his views. They met him in a great convocation of twelve hundred pastors and delegates, when he laid before them three distinct propositions, all of which they rejected. The first related to the observance of Easter; the second required their submission to Austin, as a prelate of the church while he represented; and the third demanded that they should give “Christendom,” that is, infant baptism, to their children. These conditions very clearly defined the position of those to whom they were addressed and by whom they were rejected. They would not administer infant baptism, they would not yield to the demands of the English or Romish church; they would not observe a festal day appointed by that church. And you observe the date of this occurrence. It was in the year 597, or nearly twelve hundred and seventy years ago.

The English Baptists are able to trace their principles and practices with great distinctness through a period of more than five hundred years. They are now, and have long been, a power in that land. The late Dr. Chalmers pronounced them, “for their number, the most intellectual body in England.” Their annals are not only adorned by such names as Hall, Ryland, and Fuller, Carey, Marshman, and Ward; but in earlier times, by the names of Wickliffe, Bunyan, and Milton.

The Baptists acted a very important part in the days of Cromwell. At first, they were his earnest supporters, because he fostered their hopes of civil and religious liberty; but when he had attained power, and proclaimed himself “Lord Protector,” they saw that he had encouraged their hopes only to disappoint them. They became satisfied that it was his determination to oppress them and drive them out of the land. Under this state of affairs, the Baptists in his army addressed to Cromwell a most earnest and pungent protest. They reminded him that at the beginning he “spake as pure independency” as any of themselves, and “made this an argument why they should fight stoutly, because they had the prayers of the Independent and Baptist churches.” They continued: “So highly did you love the Anabaptists then (about the year 1650) “that you did not only invite them into your army, but entertained them in your family; but it seems the case is altered. But I pray, do not deceive yourself, nor let the priests deceive you; for the Anabaptists are men that will not be shuffled out of

their birthright as free-born people of England. And have they not filled your towns, your cities, your provinces, your islands, your castles, your navies, your tents, your armies, \* \* \* your court? Your very council is not free; only we have left your temples for yourself to worship in. So that, I believe, that it will be a hard thing to root them out.” This protest was published and extensively circulated, it was said, for “the information of all such as prize the liberty of their consciences, for which so much blood has been spilt.” It shows, incidentally, but most conclusively, that the Baptists, or the Anabaptists, as they were sometimes called by way of reproach, (because they would rebaptize those who had received the ordinance in their infancy) were very numerous and powerful in that day. Notice the enumeration just given. They were filling the towns and cities, the provinces and islands, the castles and navies, the tents, the armies and the court; and the very council of the Protector was not free of them. At a later period, whether influenced by this protest or not we cannot say, Cromwell and his council agreed to admit the Baptists into church livings; but to their great honor, they declined the overture. They asked not religious *patronage*, but religious *liberty*.

Going back on the line of history, find the principles and practices of Baptists maintained and observed by bold reformer, who first translated the Bible into the English language—John Wickliffe—and his numerous followers. They were generally called “Wickliffites,” but by principle and practice they were Baptists. Antedating them were the “Lollards” holding the same general views, some two hundred years before the reformation under Luther.

The declarations of their faith made by themselves, and the accusations of their foes, alike define their principles and practices. Note a few examples. Wickliffe openly taught that “persons are to be first baptized with insensible baptism, viz. in the blood of Christ, before they are baptized in water; without which their baptism in water profits not.” He was called by an enemy, “one of the seven heads that came out of the bottomless pit, for denying infant baptism, that heresy of the Lollards, of whom he was so great a ringleader.” In a council held at Blackfriars, Wickliffe and his followers were accused of holding that children could be saved without baptism, as if a strange and dangerous doctrine. Again, he was charged with holding that baptism doth not confer, but only signifies grace which was given before; also, that he denied that all sins are abolished in baptism, and asserted the

baptism of water profiteth not without the baptism of the Spirit.”

These confessions and accusations set forth what *we*, as Baptists, now accept as sound doctrine; and yet it was doctrine proclaimed in England a full century and a half before the dawning light of the reformation in Germany.

But, leaving the Baptists of England we pass over to Continental Europe. And here we first meet the Dutch Baptist of Holland. That they are a very ancient people, we have the highest proofs of history. Mosheim says: “The true origin of that sect, which acquired the name Anabaptists, is hid in the remote depths of antiquity, and is consequently extremely difficult to be ascertained.” Zwingle the Swiss reformer, who was no lover of the Baptists, says: “The institution of Anabaptism is no novelty, but for *thirteen hundred years* has caused great disturbance in the church.” As Zwingle died in 1531, his accusation would show that the Baptist date as far back, at least, as two hundred years after the death of Christ. But we have better testimony than this. A few years ago, the king of Holland directed Dr. Dermont, his chaplain, and Dr. Ypeij, a theological professor, to prepare a history of the Reformed Dutch Church. In that history they bear the following manly and generous testimony concerning the Dutch Baptists. They say: “We have now seen, that the Baptists, who were formerly called Anabaptists, and in later times, Menonites, were the original Waldenses, and have long in the history of the church received the honor of that origin. On this account *the Baptists may be considered*,” they add, “*the only Christian community which has stood since the apostles, and as a Christian society, which has preserved pure the doctrines of the gospel through all ages.*” This, you will observe, is not Baptist testimony, but Reformed Dutch. It is as true as it is manly and generous. Put this testimony with the accusation of Zwingle, that the Baptists had been the disturbers of the church for thirteen hundred years before his day, and add to the two the record of Mosheim, that their origin “is hid in the remote depths of antiquity, you have established as thoroughly as any fact of history can be established from any style of testimony, that the Baptists can successfully trace their genealogy far back towards the apostolic age.

Of the German Baptists we have little need to speak. Every reader of history knows that they were numerous not only in the times of Luther, but long before him. Of the part they bore in the reformation, Bancroft, the great American historian, himself not

*Continued on page 94*

## Who Are the Baptists?

*Continued from page 93*

a Baptist, has made this noble record. He says: "With a greater consistency than Luther, they applied the doctrines of the reformation to the social positions of life, and threatened an end to priestcraft and kingcraft, spiritual domination, titles, and vassalage. They were trodden under foot with foul reproaches and most arrogant scorn, and their history is written in the blood of thousands of the German peasantry; but their principles, secure in their immortality, escaped with Roger Williams to Providence, and his colony is witness that naturally the paths of the Baptists are paths of freedom, pleasantness, and peace."

Following the line of Baptist history, we must pass over the Alps into the vales and among the rocky fastnesses of Piedmont; for, as already shown from the testimony of Drs. Dermont and Ypeij, the Baptists were "the original Waldenses, and have long, in the history of the church, received the honor of that origin." That people have been known under different names, as Waldenses, Albigenses, Cathari, Poor Men of Lyons and Vaudois; but, during the long dark ages of the church, they held fast the faith, and preserved the ordinances as they were delivered to the saints. They have been appropriately styled "the burning bush" of the Christian dispensation. The fires of persecution have raged around them, heated to the intensity of Nebuchadnezzar's furnace; but they have not been consumed.

Beyond this people we find the Paulicians, of whom the Empress Theodora caused not less than on hundred thousand to be put to death, and whom Robinson, the historian, calls "Trinitarian Baptists." They first began to attract attention in the seventh century. In the fourth century the Donatists arose holding the same general views; and in the third the Novatians.

But I need proceed no farther in this direction. These statements sufficiently indicate the line of inquiry by which we undertake to show that gospel churches, such as were planted by the Savior and His apostles, have been preserved through all the succeeding ages.

This glance at Baptist history is sufficient to establish several important propositions: as for example, that the Baptist did not come out of the church of Rome, either at the time of the Reformation, or at any other time; and for the best of all reasons: *they were never in that church.* This view accords with the testimony of Sir Isaac New-

ton, who said: "The Baptists are the only body of Christians that has not symbolized with the church of Rome."

These statements also show that the Baptists have a history. In the light of such facts as have been given, it will hardly do to speak of them as "a people of yesterday," or of their system of faith and practice, as an "up-start system."

Again, this glance at the history of the Baptists shows, that they have always been the firm and consistent advocates of religious liberty. This has ever been a cardinal feature in their faith and polity, and by their maintenance of it they have made the Christian world greatly their debtors. Upon this point, were it needed, they could be given an array of testimony which the following is a sample. Said the late Judge Story, when speaking of the Baptists: "In the code of laws established by them in Rhode Island, we read for the first time since Christianity ascended the throne of the Caesars,

the declaration that conscience should be free, and men should not be punished for worshiping God in the way they were persuaded he requires."

Nor is this all. The Baptists, in holding fast to this principle of religious liberty, have always yielded to others what they have claimed for themselves. While they have suffered untold persecutions for the truth's sake, they have never persecuted in return; while they have freely given their blood as martyrs for the truth, the blood of martyrs is not found upon their garments.

But here we rest the answer to our first inquiry. Do any ask, who are the Baptists? Our reply is: Look upon them and receive an answer. Their history, as they have been scattered abroad among the nations and along the whole pathway of Christianity, speaks for itself.

*(The Baptists: Their History, Faith, and Polity, pp. 7-25, 1866 edition).*



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

CC

### ATHEIST GROUP AND SON BATTLE OVER RIGHT TO BURY MADALYN MURRAY O'HAIR

AUSTIN, Tex. (EP)—Atheist leader Madalyn Murray O'Hair spent her life battling against the Christian faith. Now in death, her battle continues.

American Atheists, the organization founded by O'Hair, has voted to fight her Christian activist son, William Murray, over the right to bury the atheist leader's remains.

Federal investigators confirmed March 15 that bones found on a Texas ranch two months ago are those of O'Hair and two family members. The finding settles the mystery of their 1995 disappearance. Authorities say O'Hair and two family members were kidnapped, robbed of \$500,000, killed and then dismembered. Four men are suspected in the killings; one is dead and three others have been sentenced on various charges, but not for kidnapping or murder.

Forensic scientists used dental and medical records to identify the remains of O'Hair, 76, her son Jon Garth Murray, 40, and her granddaughter Robin Murray O'Hair, 30, who was William Murray's daughter.

Murray, 54, who heads the Religious

Freedom Coalition in Washington, D.C., is O'Hair's closest surviving relative. He was also the plaintiff in O'Hair's landmark lawsuit in the 1960s that led to a ban on government-sponsored prayer in public schools. He became a Christian in the 1970s and was estranged from his mother at the time of her death.

Ellen Johnson, president of American Atheists, claimed that O'Hair left burial instructions with American Atheists, and said her group fears Murray will bury O'Hair in a religious ceremony. "This was a man who lived his life publicly despising her and making money off her," she said.

But Murray insisted that any ceremony he conducted would be private, and that Johnson needn't worry about his praying over his lost family members. "You cannot pray them out of hell," Murray said. He insisted, "Ellen wants to use their dead bodies to raise money. There is nothing ethical about American Atheists involvement in this."

American Atheists claims a membership of about 2,000 in 25 state chapters.

**"The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts"** (Ps. 10:4).

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### GROUP TAKES PLIGHT OF WORLD'S PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS TO THE UNITED NATIONS

GENEVA, Switzerland (EP)—"Over 200 million Christians lack their full human rights. . . simply because of their beliefs," states the Geneva Report 2001, a document on global religious liberty produced by World Evangelical Fellowship (WEF). Members of WEF's Religious Liberty Commission presented the Geneva Report to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in March. WEF represents more than 150 million Protestant Christians in 114 countries.

"Although the primary purpose of this report is to analyze current trends affecting religious liberty for Christians, it also suggests viable and constructive ways forward for all countries and all religions," states WEF. "Christians are the focus of this report because at present they form by far the largest group of people worldwide who suffer directly because of their religious convictions."

Drawing on the U.N.'s own Universal Declaration on Human Rights, WEF reiterated the importance of the Geneva Report. "Religious liberty is not an optional addition to basic human rights. A person's reason for existing and what he or she believes concerning time and eternity form the very core of all other human rights. It is inseparable from freedom of opinion and expression, freedom to travel and relocate, and freedom of association. . . Religious freedom is the 'lynchpin' or litmus test for all other human rights because where there is no freedom of religion other fundamental rights are always missing."

Religion plays a prominent role in the lives of the majority of the world's population; 97 percent profess some kind of religious belief, says WEF. "With varying degrees of commitment, two billion Christians, 1.2 billion Muslims, 786 million Hindus, and 362 million Buddhists, not to mention adherents of hundreds of smaller religions, affirm the relevance and importance of a spiritual dimension in life and society. In fact, the trend over the past few decades has been an increase in religious commitment and activity in the face of growing secularization."

According to the report, religious persecution most often is a pattern of six steps with governments taking either active or passive roles. The process begins with passive and active disinformation against religious groups, most often those in the minority.

An example of active disinformation is found in France, reports WEF, where a proposed law would imprison religious "proselytizers, sects and cults: for up to two years for "mental manipulation" of the public. The bill aims to limit the spread of what French officials have called 173 "dangerous sects" in France. These

*Continued on page 95*

## The Bible & Newspaper

*Continued from page 94*

include Jehovah's Witnesses and Scientologists, in addition to some Baptist-affiliated churches and ministries. Power would be given to the state to dissolve religious groups and impose sentences of up to five years and fines of up to 500,000 Francs (about \$68,000 U.S.). Representatives of many religious groups in France have expressed concern that if this bill is passed it will encourage discrimination on the basis of religious faith.

The third and fourth steps are passive and active discrimination which occur when members of religions are refused equal treatment for employment, education, or access to public accommodations because of their religious beliefs.

For example, the government of Greece exercises a policy of passive discrimination through their I.D. program. For over 60 years, Greece has required that religion be indicated on national identity cards. As a result, evangelical Protestants and other religious minorities commonly face discrimination in employment and elsewhere in the private sector. In recent months, however, the prime minister of Greece has taken steps to remove the religion entry from the state identity cards. "This would help greatly in alleviating this type of discrimination," states the WEF.

The fifth and sixth steps are passive and active persecution, which occur when private groups and governments are involved in destroying or confiscating property, arresting or incarcerating religious minorities, and torturing or executing believers because of their faith tradition.

Afghanistan, which is governed by the militant Muslim Taliban party, employs active persecution against Christians by outlawing all religions except Islam. Authorities do not investigate cases of rape and murder against those suspected of belonging to religious minorities, and Muslims who convert to other religions face the death penalty if caught.

"When it comes to religious freedom, there is no country in the world today that is free from problems," states the report. "It is unrealistic to expect any country to change overnight from a situation where abuse of human rights has been the rule to one where religious freedom is fully embraced and nurtured. Our hope in publishing this report is to encourage countries to begin to take steps to move "up the slope" towards tolerance and religious freedom and away from disinformation, discrimination and persecution."

WEF suggests that religious groups make efforts to communicate with one another, particularly between minority and majority groups. Nations should also attempt to pass legislation to safeguard religious liberties, repeal laws or statutes

that restrict freedom, train their police forces about the free exercise of religion, and work with the international community to support global religious freedom.

"It is incumbent upon every state to affirmatively guarantee respect for religious freedom and all human rights within its borders," the report states, "and also to remain vigilant in holding other states accountable to the broader international community of nations."

**"And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake"** (Luke 21:17).

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### APPEALS COURT SAYS CITY CAN CHARGE CHRISTIANS FOR SERVICES OTHER GROUPS GET AT NO CHARGE

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. (EP)—Overturning an earlier order requiring an Arizona city to reimburse a Christian group for park rental fees, a federal appeals court ruled that the city was right to charge the Christian group a fee.

An 11-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit reversed an earlier decision by a three-judge panel of the same court. That smaller panel ordered Tucson to refund the \$340 it charged a Christian group for expenses related to a National Day of Prayer event.

The original ruling said the group had the right to use city facilities free of charge, just like Tucson's non-religious groups. The three-judge panel ruled that because Tucson allowed non-religious groups to use parks without paying fees for city equipment and services, refusing to provide the same treatment to religious organizations violated the First Amendment.

But the March 30 ruling by the larger panel said the city was justified in charging the Christian group because of concerns over the constitutional principle of separation of church and state. "The federal Constitution provides all the defense Tucson needed in this lawsuit," Judge Marsha S. Berzon wrote in an 8-3 opinion.

The ruling may be at odds with previous U.S. Supreme Court "equal access" rulings, such as a 1995 ruling which required tax-funded universities to give both religious and non-religious publications equal access to student fees.

**"I know that the LORD will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and the right of the poor"** (Ps. 140:12).

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### PAKISTANI COURT SENTENCES CHRISTIANS TO LIFE IN PRISON FOR BLASPHEMY

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (EP)—An appeal to the Lahore High court of Pakistan could be the last hope for two Pakistani Christians who were found guilty of violating Pakistan's anti-blasphemy law.

Jhang Amjad and Asif Masih were

convicted of blasphemy for allegedly burning a copy of the Koran and sentenced to life terms on March 20, reports Voice of the Martyrs (VOM). Radical Muslims were behind the harsh sentence, say Amjad and Masih, who must file an appeal by April 10.

"This is just another example of the corrupt and unjust legal system in Pakistan," said Gary Lane, spokesman for VOM. "The lives of two innocent men and their families have been forever altered simply because they are Christians."

VOM and other religious rights groups claim that Pakistan's harsh anti-blasphemy law is often misused to persecute innocent people. However, not all cases end in tragedy.

In January, high court justices acquitted three Christians of blasphemy charges due to a lack of evidence. The three men, Hussain Masih, his son Isaac Masih and Iqbal Sahar Ghouri were accused of blasphemy by a Muslim neighbor who became disgruntled with the religious activities in the Masih home, reports Compass Direct. The neighbor, Ijaz Ahmed, reported to police and Muslim religious leaders that the men had criticized Mohammed both verbally and in writing, and burned pages of the Koran. Both activities are capital offenses under Pakistan's harsh anti-blasphemy law.

After two years of legal challenges, the court finally decided to dismiss the charges and start an investigation into Ahmed's claims to determine if they were fabricated.

**"My harp also is turned to mourning. . ."** (Job 30:31).

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### GLEANINGS HERE AND THERE

FORT WORTH, Tex. (EP)—A Texas district court judge ordered a Fort Worth seminary to pay fines of \$170,000 for issuing theological degrees without first receiving approval from a state education agency. Attorney Kelly Shackelford, who represented Tyndale Theological Seminary, called the ruling an "outrage" and promised to appeal. "The state couldn't even teach these subjects" because of church-state separation. Shackelford noted, but nevertheless "they think they have the right to tell these groups, these denominations, how to organize their curriculum." He added, "The state is violating our clients' constitutional rights because the government is saying what is permissible and not permissible in teaching religion."

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WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP)—In a letter to President Bush March 28, the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom asked him to bring up issues of religious persecution at his April 2 meeting with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. Religious persecution against Egypt's Coptic Christian population continues, most visibly in the Al-Kosheh riots of 2000 when Muslim mobs allegedly murdered 23 Christians. Of the 96 people

arrested during those riots, the majority were acquitted by an Egyptian judge in February—a decision that has been denounced by human rights groups. A delegation from the commission recently visited Egypt and other nations in the Middle East for a fact-finding mission on religious freedom issues. According to the commission, Egyptian Christians have to get government permission in order to repair their church buildings or build new ones, and that permission is rarely granted. Christians are "rarely promoted to high levels in the government or military and are frequently discriminated against by private employers in hiring and promotion." The government also keeps tight restrictions on Egyptian Muslims through control of Muslim clergy and belief. "We are writing respectfully to urge you to raise the issue of religious freedom prominently in your upcoming meeting with President Mubarak," wrote Elliott Abrams, chairman of the commission, to President Bush. "[We] urge you to express the concern of the United States that progress on religious freedom for all Egyptians accelerates."

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MOSCOW, Russia (EP)—The recent reorganization of the council that supervises religious affairs and groups in Russia has raised concern. President Vladimir Putin signed a March 17 decree to reorganize the membership and powers of Russia's Council for Cooperation with Religious Organizations. According to Keston News Service, two previous members representing minority religions and one Jewish rabbi were not invited back. Scandal surrounds one new member of the council, Metropolitan Mefodi. Fellow members of the Russian Orthodox Church have accused him of being an atheist and a spy for the KGB intelligence agency during the years of Soviet control. According to Keston, the council now consists of members with secular and governmental interests, rather than those of their respective religions. The powers of the council are also tied closer to the executive branch of Russia's government.

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ROANOKE, Va. (EP)—The American Civil Liberties Union is threatening to sue the Virginia Military Institute (VMI) unless the school drops its tradition of meal-time prayers. School officials have rejected the ACLU's demand, and promise to defend the tradition. "The Supreme Court has never said adults assembled for an official meal on a college campus may not hear a blessing offered for the meal," Virginia Attorney General Mark Earley told the *Roanoke Times*. The school tradition calls for a non-sectarian prayer during which cadets are not required to bow their heads or fold their hands.

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GARDNERVILLE, Nev. (EP)—A Nevada man faces a 101-count federal indict-

*Continued on page 96*

## The Bible & Newspaper

*Continued from page 95*

ment for bilking more than 2,500 people out of \$74 million in a faith-based investment scheme. John Zidar of Gardnerville and four others are accused of lying to investors about their qualifications and of falsely promising investment returns of 120 percent. Officials say it was a Ponzi scheme, which uses money from new investors to pay old investors. Zidar's attorney, Robert Caruso, said Zidar, 58, is the head of the Isaacson Society, a "faith-based Christian organization that believes government shouldn't be on the backs of the people."

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WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP)—A proposal to eliminate the marriage tax penalty passed the U.S. House of Representatives by a 282-144 vote March 29. The bill now goes to the Senate. A similar measure was passed by Congress last year, but was vetoed by former President Clinton. The marriage tax penalty is an unintended consequence of tax law in which many married couples pay more taxes on their joint returns than they would if they were single taxpayers filing separately. The House proposal would raise the standard deduction for married couples to twice that of a single person, and would also phase in President Bush's proposal to increase the \$500 per child tax credit to \$1,000. House Speaker Dennis Hastert said, "This is not simply a matter of more tax relief. This is a matter of fair tax relief."

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AUSTIN, Tex. (EP)—The principle suspect in the murder of atheist leader Madalyn Murray O'Hair and two of her family members received a 20-year prison sentence March 30 for a federal extortion charge. David Waters, 54, has admitted that he did "threaten and commit physical violence" to O'Hair and her family members. In a plea bargain settled earlier this year, Waters agreed to lead authorities to a mass grave containing their remains.

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BERN, Switzerland (EP)—The Swiss Parliament voted in favor of legalized abortion on March 23. A new law that legalizes abortion until the twelfth week of pregnancy passed with large majorities in both the National Council and the council of States. The law, which was debated by the parliament for almost eight years, will not take effect for several years yet until a national vote is taken. Previously, abortion was illegal in Switzerland, but women were allowed to have abortions if their doctors recommended the procedure. Abortion is legal in almost all European nations.

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NEW YORK, N.Y. (EP)—Three decades of doctrinal talks between the

Southern Baptist Convention and the U.S. Roman Catholic Church have come to the end. Baptist leaders called off the talks, which have been a point of contention for some Southern Baptists. "We're not ecumenists. We're evangelicals committed to sharing the Gospel," explained R. Philip Roberts, president of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Two already-scheduled meetings of the 14-member panel will be held, one Sept. 6-8 and

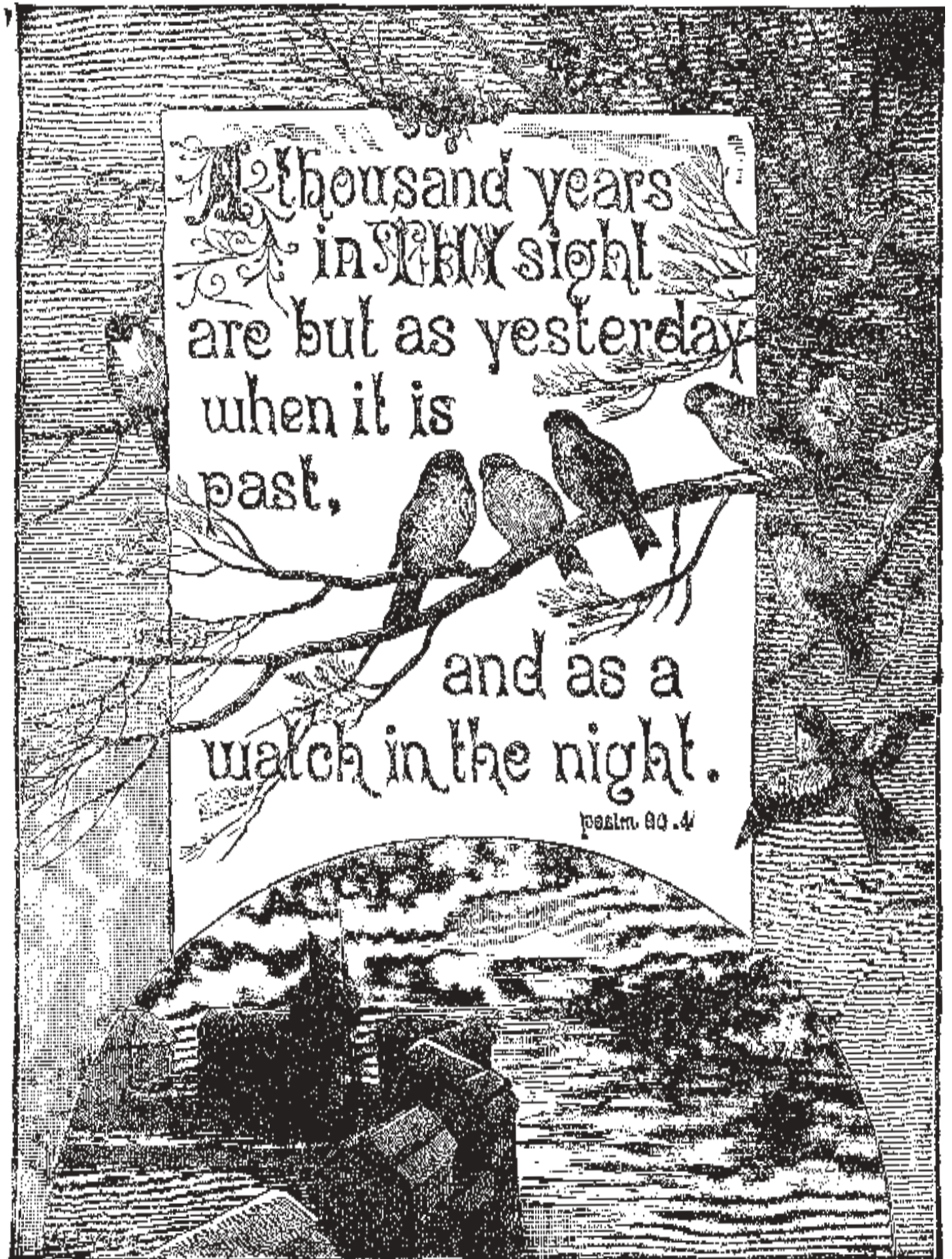
a final session in 2002. Participants hope to issue a document on salvation and an overall report summarizing the 30 years of dialogue.

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RICHMOND, Va. (EP)—The world's population of non-religious people is shrinking. A new study by statisticians David B. Barrett and Todd M. Johnson found that the number of religious people in the world continues to rise while the

ranks of atheists and non-religious people dwindle. Their findings, published by IDEA News Service, show that the global atheist population will decrease by almost two percent in the next 25 years. In contrast, Barrett and Johnson estimate that Christianity will increase in number by over half a billion people in the next quarter century. Islam will also grow during that time by three percent. Hindus,

*Continued on page 97*





## The Bible & Newspaper

*Continued from page 96*

Jews, Sikhs and animist populations will probably not change, conclude Barrett and Johnson, while the number of Buddhist followers will decrease slightly.

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CINCINNATI, Ohio (EP)—A federal appeals court ruled March 16 that Ohio's state motto, "With God, all things are possible," is constitutional. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit met as a whole to reverse an earlier ruling made by a panel of the court. Associate Solicitor David Gormley told the judges that the motto, adopted in 1959, "means the same thing as. . . 'In God We Trust.'" Mark Cohn, representing the American Civil Liberties Union, argued that the Ohio motto was more specific than the national motto, and was therefore unconstitutional. A three-judge panel of the circuit court earlier ruled 2-1 to outlaw the motto.

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Suffering from uncontrollable crying and haunting visions, a California woman won a lawsuit against a Planned Parenthood clinic for a 1997 "botched abortion" that left one of her twin unborn children alive. The second baby was aborted more than two months later, when the woman—after repeatedly being told that everything was normal—discovered she was still pregnant (*National Right to Life News*, March 2001).

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There may have been as many as 11 million illegal immigrants residing the United States last year, according to a study by Northeastern University, but the federal government, charged by the Constitution with regulating immigration and defending the nation's borders, deported only about 1% of them. The rest were allowed to stay and—if liberal Democrats have their way—may someday be given amnesty and allowed to become full-fledged U.S. citizens, and thus voters (*Human Events* 3-26-01).

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A few years ago, Howard Lyon, a musician in Erie, Pennsylvania, was flipping through his daughter's science textbook, Prentice-Hall's widely used *Exploring Physical Science*, when he started noticing errors. Then, according to the *Boston Globe*, he kept looking until eventually he had compiled a list of errors that grew to 45 single-spaced pages. . . . Today, *Exploring Physical Science*, along with 11 other science textbooks widely used by middle schools around the nation, is coming under fire once again. According to the *Washington Post*, after a two-year study of the books, "researchers compiled 500 pages of errors, ranging from maps showing the equator passing through the southern United States to a photo of singer Linda Ronstadt labeled as a silicon crystal." "These are terrible books, and they're probably a

strong component of why we do so poorly in science," said John Hubisz, a North Carolina State University physics professor who led the two-year survey (*The New American*, 3-26-01).

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Concerned that children might not be able to view pornography at school, the American Library Association and its allies sued March 20 to halt the implementation of a federal law that is supposed to take effect on April 20. The Children's Internet Protection Act would prohibit federal technology grants from going to schools and libraries that do not install filters that prevent minors from seeing obscene material (*Human Events*, 4-2-01).

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"A carefully controlled study that tried to treat Parkinson's disease by implanting cells from aborted fetuses into patients' brains not only failed to show an overall benefit but also revealed a disastrous side effect," reported the march 8<sup>th</sup> *New York Times*. In about 15 percent of the patients surveyed, the cells grew much more rapidly than expected, thereby "churning out so much of a chemical that controlled movement that the patients writhed and jerked uncontrollably" (*The New American*, 4-23-01).

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Unification Church founder Sun Myung Moon says America has been in decline since the end of World War II "because they didn't recognize the truth that was brought to them by Rev. "Moon." He claims to share "the ultimate truth, directly from God" (3-19 Church News). He calls his 46-state speaking tour his gift to America. He calls himself a third Adam sent to complete the task of restoring God's kingdom on Earth that Jesus failed in due to his crucifixion (*Calvary Contender*, 4-15-01).

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The Christian Brotherhood Health Newsletter, billed as a "proven and biblical method for Christians to share one another's medical bills without using insurance of any kind," is being sued by Ohio for fraud and conversion of ministry funds and property to private use (4-2 *Chr. Today*). It now operates in all 50 states. (*ibid.*).

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The Vatican has confirmed it is acting on allegations that some priests, mainly Africans afraid of contracting AIDS from prostitutes, have regularly forced nuns to have sex with them (3-26 *Chr. News*). In some instances, priests are said to have impregnated nuns and then forced them to have abortions. A nun charged that when a mother superior complained to the local bishop that 29 of her nuns were pregnant, the bishop replaced her instead of acting on the problem. Rome's unscriptural "forbidding to marry" (I Tim. 4:3) teaching invites such sexual abuse (*ibid.*).

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President Bush invited senior Sen. Robert C. Byrd, West Virginia Democrat, and the senator's wife, Erma, to the White House for dinner the other night. And what impressed Mr. Byrd the most about our new president? "I like that fact that he said grace. He asked God's blessing, upon the food," says Mr. Byrd. "In many circles in this town and across this land, the word 'God,' except in a profane use, is taboo. Don't mention God" (*Washington Times*, April 9-15, 2001).

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Lockheed Martin, which received more U.S. dollars last year than any other U.S. defense contractor, has built a naval surveillance system for the People's Republic of China on Hainan Island—coincidentally the same location where a Lockheed built EP3E surveillance plane was forced to land last week after being bumped by a Chinese fighter jet (*Human Events*, 4-9-01).

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The Capital Research Center has produced a study of its Organization Trends newsletter that documents unreported income to Jesse Jackson PUSH. "In February, Jackson disclosed that his annual salary of \$120,000 is paid by his church, People United to Serve Humanity. However, People United divides Jackson's entire salary and charges it to two of his other groups—the Citizenship Education Fund and the Rainbow PUSH Coalition," says the center. "Neither CEF nor Rainbow PUSH discloses the salary arrangement with People United on any of their recent filings of financial statements. If Jackson is providing services to CEF and Rainbow PUSH through People United, the groups' reports should identify Jackson or People United as an Independent contractor." Capital Research noted the CEF has not reported to the IRS its highest-paid contractors and employees since 1994. In an additional discrepancy, Jackson's Keep Hope Alive PAC reported a \$5,000 contribution from a Service Employees International Union made a \$12,450 contribution to Keep Hope Alive PAC in March 2000 (*ibid.*).

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Vatican City (Reuters) – Queen Elizabeth and Pope Paul, leader of the world's one billion Roman Catholics, met on Tuesday and spoke of their hopes for Christian unity around the world. The Queen, on the second day of a state visit to Italy, held private talks with the Polish Pontiff, who on Monday marked the 22<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of his pontificate (*The Protestant Challenge*, 2001, No. 1).

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During an interview aired on NBC's Today show for January 19<sup>th</sup>, new First Lady Laura Bush was asked if the Supreme Court's notorious 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision should be overturned. She replied, "No, I don't think it should be overturned," then hastily added that she favors other efforts "to limit abortions," such as

"talking about responsibility with girls and boys, by teaching abstinence, having abstinence classes everywhere—in school, in churches, in Sunday schools" (*The New American* 2-26-01).

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Secretary of State Colin Powell told the House International Relations Committee March 7 that President Bush intends to keep his campaign promise to move America's Israeli embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, which is Israel's capital. "President Bush is committed to moving our embassy to Jerusalem," he said. "The process is on going. We have not started any actions yet" (*Human Events*, 3-19-01).

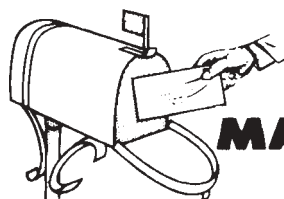
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ATLANTA (APB) – Two Atlanta Baptist churches under fire for welcoming and affirming homosexuals survived a second ouster vote from their local association March 12. Atlanta Baptist Association approved by a required two-thirds majority a new bylaw excluding any church "which knowingly takes, or has taken any action to affirm, approve or endorse homosexual behavior." A separate vote, however, to sever ties with two churches earlier removed from the Georgia Baptist Convention for pro-gay stances fell short of a required two-thirds majority, with association messengers voting 254-188 for expulsion (*Western Recorder*, 3-20-01).

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In their drive to consolidate power over Russia, Lenin's Bolsheviks sought to use the government school system to seize control of the children. "We must remove the children from the crude influence of their families (and ensure that). . . from the first days of their lives they will be under the healthy influence of Communist children's nurseries and schools," Soviet educators were told at a 1918 conference. In 2001, American state and municipal executives of both major parties agree with the socialist nostrum that the school, not the home, should be the central institution in the upbringing of children. The newest educational anta may as well be: Never let them leave the building," reported the January 10<sup>th</sup> *New York Times*. "Mayor Rudolph Giuliani of New York wants Saturday classes. The state's governor, George E. Pataki, says students should stay in school until after dark. And in California, Gov. Gray Davis plans to tack 30 days onto the academic year—stretching it by 17 percent for middle school students fallen behind in an area of mounting expectations." These statements are typical of proposals that have littered recent state-of-the-state-city speeches by governors and mayors who subscribe to the view that "America's school schedule—which was based not on educational needs but on those of agrarian economy—should be ripped up and redrawn" (*The New American*, 2-26-01).

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## FROM THE MAILBOX

Brother Cockrell,

Greetings in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I hope you and your wife are well and able to labor in the Lord's vineyard.

Is your daughter still there to help you? I surely hope so. She seemed like such a good person when I talked to her some time ago. Good children are a blessing from the Lord.

What kind of lessons are you going to have for your correspondence school? Can anyone get them? Please let me know.

—Illinois

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Dear Bro. Cockrell,

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Today I received the BBB (Volume XXI, Number IV) dated April 5, 2001. First I want to say thank you for sending it so faithfully to me here in Brazil. It is one of the very few papers I receive.

I have not read this issue yet, but did read your sermon of "The Prince of the Seventy Weeks," and enjoyed it very much. It expressed very well my own convictions about the subject. One of our strong points that we teach here among the churches we have organized these past four decades plus in Brazil is the literal, pre-millennial and glorious coming of the Lord Jesus Christ after the repentance and restoration of the true remnant of literal Israel. Praise the LORD for keeping His precious promises!

I also read "Gleanings," Baptists before 1641, and enjoyed it very much. I have been having a running battle with some weak-kneed so-called Baptists here who think we are only a branch of Protestants.

—Brazil

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Dear Bro. Cockrell:

I write this on Saturday morning – you are still asleep on Friday night now.

Just wanted to let you know I went outside this AM and found the envelope with the BBB inside – the envelope covered with frost!!!!!!

Our mail service leaves somewhat to be desired!

Have only had time to read one article – the LIFE AND TIMES OF HAROLD HARVEY. It was a blessing, although I could not keep from weeping as I read it through. Thanks for writing it!

—Romania

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Dear Brethren in BBC:

Greetings in the Lord. Please continue to give us subscription of BBB. It is the only sound reading materials we read and it is profitable to our Bible Students. We

are a Sovereign Grace Landmark Church. Please kindly furnish us with Elder Milburn Cockrell's personal e-mail address; we have some important communications for him.

Thanks and God bless you.

In His pleasure,

—Philippines

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My Dear Brother,

Greetings in the name that is above every name, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen!

Enclosed please find check for five years subscription, extra is for postage in Canada.

I appreciate being able to receive the papers. Your continued stand for Baptist truth from the Baptist Book.

We here continue to preach forth the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. The enemy is still alive and active here, but praise God he causes us to persevere.

—Canada

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Dear Bro. Cockrell,

Greetings in His precious name!

Hope you and yours are blessed each day!

I am enjoying hearing you preach each Sunday on Vernon radio.

I note that my subscription is out. Please extend it for 2 years. My check is enclosed. Use balance for what ever the need.

—Alabama

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We are praying for Chris!

May God bless you all and all the work there.

—Tennessee

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To whom it may concern:

I would like a year subscription to *The Berea Baptist Banner*. I read a sermon on the internet by Wayne Camp, in which at the end of the sermon there was an ad about the paper. Enclosed is a check for \$3.00.

—California

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Dear Berea Baptist Banner,

Grace and peace be unto you!

I am in desire of reading some sound doctrine. It is my prayer that ya'll shall be able to help me. Would ya'll please put me on ya'lls mailing list so I can receive ya'lls monthly issue of *The Berea Baptist Banner*?

I pray God shall continue to bless ya'll with His providence.

—Texas

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Dear Brother Cockrell,

Enclosed is our check for \$12 to cover the subscription costs.

We thank you for all your efforts – we all enjoy the Banner so very much.

—Missouri

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Dear BBB Folks,

Greetings in Christ. Hope all are well. I appreciate the articles in the paper and

their spiritual text and quality. I can tell a lot of work and time goes into finding them.

Enclosed is another years' subscription and please put me down for 2 hymnals.

—South Carolina

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Brother Cockrell,

Hope this very brief note finds all of you well. I am amazed of the great work that the Lord has called you to. Truly you are a voice crying in the wilderness. "Make the paths straight."

—Indiana

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Dear Bro. Cockrell,

I sent you an e-mail a few days ago, but it may not have been your current address. Anyway, we recently put T. P. Simmons on electronic format on our website. We also have several other reference materials and resources. I also would like to put some of your works on our site, if this would be OK with you.

Please take a look at our site when you get time, and let me know what you think.

Our address: [faithbaptistchurchoflawtey.org](mailto:faithbaptistchurchoflawtey.org)

—Florida

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Dear Brother Cockrell and Family,

Brethren we will be praying for you. What a great privilege it is to be able to pray knowing we have such a "Great High Priest" that makes intercession for us. Our High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ, is also touched with the feelings of our infirmities. He knows all about our problems even before we ask for mercy, He knows. Thank God for prayer!

—West Virginia

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Good Morning,

Just now checked my mail box and found the message from Bro. Pugh concerning the need for prayer there for Bro. Cockrell and for his sister.

Be assured that we will hold them up before the Throne of God's Grace and ask that He be pleased to deal favorably with them, their families, and the Lord's church there at this trying time.

May I also to encourage you all to remember that He is the Absolute Master, and His choices are ALWAYS the wisest of choices. What is His good pleasure is to His glory and ultimately for our good. I do not understand that, but I know that it is the truth.

Please keep us posted as to the circumstances, and remember, that we love you all, and will pray for your well being.

—Alabama

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Dear Bro. & Sis. Cockrell,

Greetings to you and your family. Bro. Pugh forwarded us the letter from Marsha about your eye problem, Brother, and we want to let you know you are in our prayers.

—Honduras

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Dear Brother Cockrell,

We were shocked to hear of the problem you are having with your left eye and I want to assure you I am praying for you and your great need at this time and your family.

I'm very sorry I haven't e-mailed you like I should have to let you know what a blessing you have been to me do down through the years that I have known you, and the blessing your paper is that you so faithfully send me.

I count you as my dear friend in the ministry, and I have always enjoyed it so much to hear you preach when I've had the opportunity as you always bring out so much to help those that hear you. And that is what my love for you is based upon. It's because of "the truth's sake," because all that really matters is the truth of God's Word. I love you brother. I John 3:14

—Michigan

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Beauty Ridge Missionary Baptist Church, Rt. 2, Box 181-S, South Shore, KY 41175 and Pastor Doug Newell will have a Bible Conference May 11-13. The speakers are Elders Gene Kiger, Lewis Kiger, Dan Phillips, Don Pennington, Ray Brown, Walter McCoy, John Pruitt, Pete Horn, Jim Walters, Don Banks, Eldon Joslin, Bob Asbury, Harry Balmer, Tom Hysell, Jim Hobbs, David Green, Al Malo, Jim Crace, the pastor's son Doug Newell IV, and the pastor Doug Newell. For more information contact Pastor Newell (606) 932-6291, by mail Rt. 2, Box 181-S, South Shore, KY 41175, or by e-mail [dpower123@hotmail.com](mailto:dpower123@hotmail.com).

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The Salem Missionary Baptist Church, Willow Hill, Ill., and Pastor Billy Holbrook will have special services May 14-20. Elder Dennis Riddick will be preaching Mon.-Thurs. at 7:00 p.m. On Friday night Elder Raymond Johnson and Elder Riddick will speak and on Saturday at 10:00 they will speak again with a meal to follow. On Sunday Elder Troy McGahan will preach. For more information call 618-592-3806 or e-mail [holbrook4@frsb.net](mailto:holbrook4@frsb.net).

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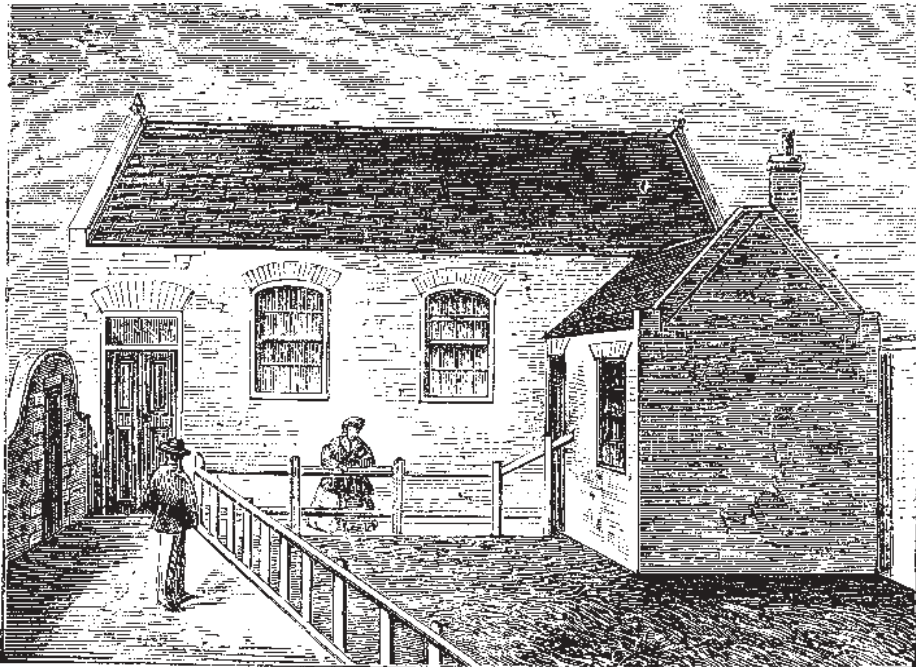
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# The Young Preacher

A mother was present at the setting aside of her son to the ministry. Afterwards he preached to a large congregation; and his mother, pleased with her boy's faithful words, wrote this poem.



*He held the lamp of Truth that day  
So low that none could miss the way;  
And yet so high, to bring in sight  
That picture fair - the world's great light -  
That gazing up, the lamp between,  
The hand that held it scarce was seen.*

*He blew the trumpet soft and clear  
That trembling sinners need not fear;  
And then, with louder note and bold,  
To raze the walls of Satan's hold:  
The trumpet coming thus between,  
The hand that held it scarce was seen.*

*He held the pitcher, stooping low  
To lips of little ones below;  
Then raised it to the weary saint,  
And bade him drink, when sick and faint;  
They drank - the pitcher thus between,  
The hand that held it scarce was seen.*

*But when the Captain says, "Well done,  
Thou good and faithful servant - come!  
Lay down the pitcher and the lamp;  
Lay down the trumpet - leave the camp;"  
These weary hands will then be seen  
Clasped in those pierced ones - naught between.*

## GLEANINGS



### THE DEATH OF COMMON SENSE

Mourning the loss of a Dear Friend.

Today we mourn the passing of an old and dear friend. . . .

Common Sense lived a long life but died from heart failure at the brink of the millennium. No one really knows how old he was since his birth records

were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape. He selflessly devoted his life to service in schools, hospitals, homes, factories and offices, helping folks get jobs done without fanfare and foolishness.

For decades, petty rules, silly laws and frivolous lawsuits held no power over Common Sense. He was credited with cultivating such valued lessons as to know when to come in out of the rain, the early bird gets the worm, and life isn't always fair.

Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you earn), reliable parenting strategies (the adults are in charge, not the kids), and it's okay to come in second.

A veteran of the Industrial Revolution, the Great Depression, and the Technological Revolution, Common Sense survived cultural and educational trends including feminism, body piercing, whole language and "new math."

But his health declined when he became infected with the "If-it-only-

## Funnybone

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

Jimmie Johnson: "My mother has trained herself to walk in her sleep every night."

Joe Lodo: "Why would she want to do that?"

Jimmie Johnson: "To save time. This way she can get her exercise and her rest all at once."

\*\*\*\*\*

Deacon Jones told Bill Tightwad, "I can't go to sleep at night."

Bill asked, "Have you tried counting sheep?"

Bill replied, "It will bore you, and you'll fall asleep."

A few days later Bill asked, "Have you been able to sleep?"

The deacon answered, "Nope." Bill inquired, "Did you try to count sheep?"

The deacon answered, "Yep. I got up to 5,432."

"Then what happened?" Bill asked.

The deacon said, "Well, then it was time to get up."

\*\*\*\*\*

Jimmie Johnson: "Did you know the USA has four new states?"

Jane Jones: "You mean, besides Hawaii and Alaska?"

Jimmie Johnson: "Yes, -New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, and New York."

helps-one-person-it's-worth-it" virus. In recent decades his waning strength proved no match for the ravages of overbearing federal regulation.

He watched in pain as good people became ruled by self-seeking lawyers and enlightened auditors. His health rapidly deteriorated when schools endlessly implemented zero tolerance policies, reports of six-year-old boys charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate, a teen suspended for taking a swig of mouthwash after lunch, and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student. It declined even further when schools had to get parental consent to administer aspirin to a student but cannot inform the parent when the female student is pregnant or wants an abortion.

Finally, Common Sense lost his will to live as the Ten Commandments became contraband, churches became businesses, criminals received better treatment than victims, and federal judges stuck their noses in everything from Boy Scouts to professional sports.

As the end neared, Common Sense drifted in and out of logic but was kept informed of developments, regarding questionable regulations for asbestos, low flow toilets, "smart" guns, and nurturing of Prohibition Laws and mandatory air bags.

Finally when told that the homeowners association restricted exterior furniture only to that which enhanced property values, he breathed his last.

Common Sense was preceded in death by his parents Truth and Trust; his wife, Discretion; his daughter, Responsibility; and his son, Reason. He is survived by three stepbrothers: Rights, Tolerance and Whiner.

Not many attended the funeral because so few realized he was gone.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, Martin Road Spur, Northport, Ala., and Pastor Todd Bryant will have special services June 8-10. Services will be at 7:00 p.m. Friday night, and 10:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Saturday, and at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Sunday. The speaker is Elder Roy Mitchell, Corbin, KY.

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The Faith Baptist Church, Horton, Mich., and Pastor Mike Channell will have special missionary services May 19<sup>th</sup>. The seminar starts at 10:00 a.m. The four speakers are Elders Randy Titus, Bill Brooks, Mike Clark, and Jerry Asberry. For more information contact Pastor Channell 1-517-524-8903 or [mchannell@webtv.net](mailto:mchannell@webtv.net).

\*\*\*\*\*

The West Milton Baptist Church, 1070 South Miami St., West Milton, Ohio, has called Elder Mark Clark as pastor, and he has accepted the call.

### Now Available!



The Seventy Weeks  
by Milburn Cockrell

\$4.00

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## WORLD SCENE

By G. Russell Evans - Norfolk, Virginia

### *The Real Reason Kids are Killing Kids*



One of the most troubling questions of our national conscience has to be, most certainly, the tragic violence in our schools: Why are kids killing each other?

The real reason, without question, is the lack of character, caring and control—the foundations of religious teaching and, indeed, the very principles on which our nation was founded.

#### **SUPREME COURT RULING**

In 1892, long before the onslaught of the Reverend Barry Lynn and his American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) against virtually everything religious, the US Supreme Court ruled that our laws and institutions are Bible-based and that “our civilization and institutions are emphatically Christian.”

Now, God and all vestiges of religion are banned from schools—a primary training ground for character, caring and control in molding America’s future. Of course, the home is primary too, but today, we’re talking about violence in our schools and asking why!

#### **GUN-GRABBERS QUIET**

Surprise! The gun-grabbers have been quiet about more gun control since the March 5<sup>th</sup> shooting spree at Santana High School, in California by 15-year-old Charles Andrew Williams, charged with killing two classmates and wounding thirteen.

The US House of Representatives passed a resolution, condemning “heinous atrocities” but no call for anti-gun laws, no angry press releases, no trashing the National Rifle Association—not even a Million Moms marching. In the Senate, the usually suave Chuck Schumer (D-NY) called focus “where we can get something done.” All are so busy looking they can’t see the obvious, or don’t want to.

#### **ARE BULLIES TO BLAME?**

The psychologists and counselors are asking if school bullies are to blame for the killings in Santana, Littleton, Colo., and Pearl, Miss.—where the suspect has been an out-cast, bullied and teased to the breaking point.

Said Counselor Kate Cohen-Posey, author of *How to Handle Bullies, Teasers and Other Meanies*: “Kids are uncomfortable with differences. If they don’t like someone, they lash out. . .with violent options.”

#### **THE REAL REASON**

All true. All true. But the root cause

of school violence may be right on the Internet, sent to me by my son Sam from Florida—Banning God and the Bible from our schools—step by step.

All of which reminded me of Sam’s 1967 letter, shortly after the death of his Mother, my precious Myrtle, thanking us for his Christian training at home and in school which, he found, was such a great asset in his career with Johnson & Johnson—and for which, he said, “I’ll thank Mom in my prayers.” Needless to say, I treasure that letter.

#### **GOD IS BANNED**

Herewith straight from the Internet may well be the real reason kids are killing kids—in the vernacular by “Huntgretel”—truly a nobleman!

Dear God: Why didn’t you save the school children in Littleton, Colorado?

Sincerely, Concerned Student

Dear Concerned Student: I am not allowed in schools.

Sincerely, God

After God was banned, here’s what happened step by step:

\* Let’s see, I think it started when Madeleine Murray O’Hare complained she didn’t want any prayer in our schools. And we said, OK.

\* Then, someone said you better not read the Bible in school, the Bible that says, “Thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, and love your neighbor as yourself.” And we said, OK.

\* Then, Dr. Benjamin Spook said we shouldn’t spank our children when they misbehave because their little

personalities would be warped and we might damage their self-esteem. And we said, an expert should know what he’s talking about, so we won’t spank them anymore.

\* Next, someone said teachers and principles better not discipline our children when they misbehave because we don’t want bad publicity and don’t want to be sued. And we accepted their reasoning.

\* Then, someone said let our teenage daughters have abortions if they want and they won’t even have to tell their parents. And we said, that’s a grand idea.

\* Then, some wise school board member said since boys will be boys and will do it anyway, let’s give them condoms so they can have their fun and we won’t tell the parents they got them at school. And we said, that’s another great idea.

\* Then, some of our top elected officials said it doesn’t matter what we do in private as long as we do our jobs and the economy is good. And we said, sure, even the President, just so everybody does his job is what counts.

\* And then someone said let’s print magazines with pictures of nude women and call it wholesome appreciation of the female body. And we said, no problem.

\* Next, someone said let’s get pictures of nude children and put them on the Internet. And we said, everyone’s entitled to free speech.

\* Then, the entertainment industry said, let’s make TV shows and movies with profanity, violence and illicit sex and records to encourage rape, drugs, murder, suicide. And we said, it’s just entertainment, no bad effect. Free speech. Sure, go ahead.

We have allowed this creeping carnage. So, why do we ask why our kids have no conscience, why they don’t know right from wrong and why they can kill strangers, classmates and even themselves? Meanwhile, consider

Galatians 8:7.

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

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

I am pleased to announce that we exceeded the 1,000 hymn books for *The Berea Baptist Hymnal* (No. 3). I wanted to get them to the printer by April 10<sup>th</sup>, but I was delayed due to physical reasons. I have been suffering loss of some vision in my left eye, and I have learned that I have malignant Melanoma in my left eye. Thus my wife, Chris (oldest son), and I have spent time away from home while I was in the hospital in Memphis. I am to return for treatment shortly. Thus the hymn book will suffer a minor delay in going to the printer. Nevertheless, I do plan to complete the project in the next few weeks, God willing. I am sorry for the delay, but it cannot be helped. We have had to work hard to get out this paper due to so many staff being away from the church office some days. Your prayers would be appreciated.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Landmark Baptist Church, Lyons, Ga., and Pastor Paul Jackson will have the Ancient Landmark Baptist Bible Conference May 25-27. Various speakers are on the program.

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The Central Independent Baptist Church, Old Brandon Rd., Highway 80, Pearl, Miss., will have a Church Camp June 18-22. For more information contact Pastor David E. Lee – [davidelee@juno.com](mailto:davidelee@juno.com).

\*\*\*\*\*

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, 2411 Walnut, Seguin, Texas, is without a pastor. Any interested elder may contact Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, P. O. Box 1570, Seguin, TX 78155 or Jeff Dodson 830-303-3721 or Louis Esquivel 210-649-1825.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Heritage Landmark Baptist Church, Given, W. Va., and Pastor Dan Stepp will have a Bible Conference May 24-27. Various speakers are on the program. For more information e-mail Pastor Stepp – [dstepp@citynet.net](mailto:dstepp@citynet.net).

\*\*\*\*\*

The Grace Bible Baptist Church, Denham Springs, La., and Pastor Jerry Dodson will have a Bible Conference June 8-10. There will be various speakers on the program. For more information contact Pastor Dodson at (225) 664-3223 or e-mail at [jdodsonsr@aol.com](mailto:jdodsonsr@aol.com).

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### Coming in the next issue . . .

*Hitler and Rebirth of Israel* by John Osburn  
*The Second Commandment* by Milburn Cockrell  
*The Empty Grave of Jesus* by Milburn Cockrell

### INDEX

Bible and the Newspaper .....	p. 94
<i>Crucifixion Day</i> by Henery A. Griesemer .....	p. 81
Cockrell's Corner .....	p. 83
Forum .....	pp. 90 - 91
From the Mailbox .....	p. 98
Funnybone .....	p. 99
Gleanings .....	p. 99
<i>God Voted Out of Kansas Class Room</i> by Philip C. Parks .....	p. 92
<i>The First Commandment</i> by Milburn Cockrell .....	p. 81
<i>The Invisible Church Idea</i> by John Newton Hall .....	p. 81
<i>The Righteous and the Wicked</i> by Milburn Cockrell .....	p. 81
<i>The Young Preacher</i> .....	p. 99
<i>Who Are the Baptists?</i> by David B. Cheney .....	p. 81
World Scene: <i>The Real Reason Kids are Killing Kids</i> by G. Russell Evans .....	p. 100