

The Berea Baptist Banner

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The Work of the Pastor

By Timothy Hille

Ashland, Illinois

"But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word," (Acts 6:4).

Read Acts 6:1-4. The Word of God is the rule of all that is to be said and done in and by the Lord's kind of church. Many today seemingly take it upon themselves to decide for themselves (and for others) what the will of God is, not considering that God's will is revealed by God's Word. It is fitting that we should, by the leadership of the Holy Spirit, take note of the work of the pastor as described in the scriptures: for one year ago this present Lord's day, on the seventeenth day of August in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred ninety-seven, you, the Pleasant Plains Baptist Church of Pleasant Plains, Illinois, did vote to call me as your



Timothy Hille

pastor. We are not to assume what the work of the pastor is, nor are we to be indifferent with regard to the work of the pastor. We are much rather to take heed unto the scriptural t e a c h i n g s

concerning the work of those whom the Lord calls to pastor His churches, and be diligent to follow the will of God.

Perhaps the first truth that we should consider whenever considering the pastor and his work

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Sincere Hearers

By Samuel Stennett

(1727-1795)

The amount of the whole is this, Those hearers who are sincere, will derive real profit from the Word; and give clear proof they do so, by bringing forth fruit, in various degrees, to the glory of God and their own everlasting advantage. And now in order to the fully discussing this argument, we shall,

I. Shew the necessity of men's hearts being made *honest and good*, in order to their profiting by the Word they hear:

II. Describe the kind of fruit which persons of this character bear, and which furnishes incontestable proof that they are benefited by the Word:

III. Consider the variety there is in regard of degrees of fruitfulness, and the reasons of it; and,

IV. Represent the blessedness of



Samuel Stennett

such persons, which, though not directly expressed, is yet implied in the general purpose of the parable.

I. As to the necessity of the heart's being made honest and good, in

order to men's duly receiving the Word and keeping it, this will clearly appear on a little reflexion.

I suppose it will scarce be denied, that the will and affections have a considerable influence on the operation of the understanding and judgment. To a mind, therefore, under

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Goldberg Seals the Deal on Media Bias

By G. Russell Evans

Norfolk, Virginia

So much has been written and reported about media bias that we are being lulled into a sense of *déjà vu*.

So, one can say: Expect it, deal with it and



G. Russell Evans

besides, who do we ordinary mortals think we are to match wits with the pros, such as TV anchormen Peter Jennings, Tom Brokaw and Dan Rather?

These experts and their producers, and the writers and editors of the press, are not only smooth, but, in so many instances, do not believe they are biased at all. They are reporting the world the way they see the world.

Mike Wallace of "60 Minutes" fame said, "When people suggest there is a bias in the media, always liberal and

not conservative, well then. . .it's almost a joke." And ABC's Peter Jennings: "I think bias is very largely in the eye of the beholder."

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Observation During My Ministry

By Rosco Brong

(1908 - 1985)

Preached Nov. 23, 1979, at the Thanksgiving Conference of Calvary Baptist Church, Ashland, Ky.)

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For



Rosco Brong

men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without

natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly

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What Christians Are

By Milburn Cockrell

Mantachie, Mississippi

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (I Pet. 2:9).

The unity of the saints does not depend upon geography, or upon chronology, but on character, temperament, and spirit. Born-again believers are a privileged people. In Christ we have received many

spiritual blessings. When these privileges and blessings are fully understood, Christians are caused to see our great responsibilities to God.

CHRISTIAN PRIVILEGE

At the beginning of my text I see first of all Christian privilege: **"But ye are a chosen generation. . ."** A. T. Robertson renders this from the Greek: "An elect race (*genos eklekton*)."
John Calvin gives it: "A race chosen."

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

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Goldberg Seals the

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INBRED BIAS

Bernard Goldberg explains bias in spades in his best-selling book *Bias* (Regency, 2002)—an arresting exposure of the inbred and arrogant bias in Big Media with anecdotes and case histories to "seal the deal."

He lost his job as a CBS-TV Insider and reporter for telling the truth, but won high praise from many itching to say the same, but unwilling to break ranks.

In this book, many weeks on *The New York Times* best-selling list and generating international attention as well, this 28-year veteran journalist and producer, lets it all hang out—no holds barred.

He probably wouldn't have done it if he'd not been fired—which happened in the Summer of 2000, after four years of dilly-dallying pique by CBS executives over Goldberg's *Wall Street Journal* op-ed piece (Feb. 13, 1996) about blatant ongoing media bias and dishonesty. The bosses at

CBS were going to fire him anyway, it is clear, but chose the Chinese torture route: drop by drop, string him along, 'til the very last day to squeeze out the last drop of vengeance.

But, with his popular book, one could say, Mr. Goldberg has the last laugh.

JOURNALIST ARROGANCE

Author Steven Brill said it well: "When it comes to arrogance, power, and lack of accountability, journalists are probably the only people on the planet who make lawyers look good."

Mr. Goldberg's op-ed column, that eventually got him fired, admits that fewer people are watching network news because "they don't trust us" because of the liberal bias that just comes naturally to most reporters.

ENGBERG SMEARS FORBES

One example is CBS Evening News reporter Eric Engberg's smear of presidential candidate Steve Forbes's flat tax proposal, using a liberal economist as tax expert without telling viewers he's from the "liberal think tank" Brookings Institute—and encouraging his prediction of "hideous deficits" because of tax cuts when conservatives were blaming increased spending. This was liberal bias in not covering the other side.

Mr. Engberg continued his insult by saying that Forbes's "Number One Wackiest Flat-Tax Promise" was Forbes's belief that a flat-tax would give parents "more time to spend with their children and with each other." Mr. Forbes meant that families would pay less tax and, therefore, actually have a chance for a "family wage" without the need for mothers to supplement the family income with an outside job.

Incidentally, it's routine for reporters like Mr. Engberg to call a respected conservative like Mr. Forbes "wacky," but he'd never dream of using the term on any plan of Ted Kennedy or Hillary Clinton.

More time with kids is worth campaigning for. Working mothers usually means double incomes (counting the husband's), more day-care for kids, and more freedom for mothers, most of whom "are disinclined to make caring for the children their primary occupation," according to sociologist Andrew Hacker, writing in the *New York Review of Books*.

Consequently, studies have shown that the absence of mother-care for children during the formative years in the home, has generally brought disastrous results. These stories have not often been covered by reporters who prefer the sensational ones about murders, school shootings and rape, for example.

Moreover, the April 2001 study on day care by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development found that 17 percent of kids who spend 30 hours per week in day care are more aggressive, throw more tantrums, talk too much and get in lots of fights.

Big Media have called such studies "controversial," but have done virtually no in-depth reporting on what Goldberg calls "the story about the terrible things that are happening to America's children." He charges, "Our media don't report the really big story—arguably one of the biggest stories of our time—that this absence of mothers from America's homes is without historical precedence—children left to fend for themselves."

FOUR REASONS FOR BIAS

Author Goldberg offers several reasons for this failure and bias of our national TV reporters and news producers:

1. *They are lazy.* They don't ask why these things happen in our culture and come up with original stories. They prefer storms, airplane crashes, murders and political conferences—the easy stuff and their producers don't prod them.

2. *They don't inquire* about what happens when kids' parents aren't around. The sadness and loneliness are no good for TV news; they want sexy and mysterious stories, headline grabbers, such as "latch key kids" shooting up the cafeteria—or, "Who killed JonBenet?" or "What did O. J. say?" or "Where's Chandra?"

3. *They want votes* of viewer approval five nights a week, and if working mothers are exposed for doing a bad job with their children, these mothers are going to *tune them out* because such reporters are seen as uncaring and unsympathetic to working moms. They don't get mom's vote—but instead, a sure label as "hostile to the advancement of women."

4. *They fear the feminists*—the pressure group that media elitists and their friends are aligned with. Feminists resist all threats to gains they've made since the 1970s and view troubling questions about day care and "latch key kids" as out-and-out attacks.

The Heritage Foundation reports that 80 percent of pre-school children in day care come from married couples with two incomes. Feminist Katha Pollit writes that the day care debate has always been about college-educated working moms.

AUDIENCES ARE SHRINKING

Since 1980, audiences of TV news have been shrinking from 75 to 43 percent. When Walter Cronkite

turned over *CBS Evening News* to Dan Rather in 1981, he was in first place. Mr. Rather is now last, having lost half of the CBS viewers.

Television's "ascendant talk star" is now Bill O'Reilly on the Fox News Channel. He is called "the hottest anchor on the hottest news. . . on cable." He is trusted and known for being fair and unbiased.

Bernard Goldberg calls O'Reilly "bad news for the old guard," adding, "As far as I'm concerned, the three people Bill owes so much of his success to are Tom Brokaw, Peter Jennings and Dan Rather."

Perhaps the most virtuous feature of the Goldberg book is the fact that the author himself is a liberal—pro-choice, gun control and affirmative action, for example—but simply asks for honest and journalist integrity.

Big Media didn't listen and Goldberg's story has become such a national and international sensation that even Dan, Peter and Tom will be judged as the traitors to journalist integrity—a label they tried on Bernie Goldberg, but one that didn't stick. Instead, Goldberg was truly able to "seal the deal" on media's liberal bias.

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


Work of the Pastor

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is that the Lord is the One who calls men to the ministry and makes them pastors over His churches. One cannot be a pastor except in name and title only if this is not his case. Many have aspired or claimed to be that which God has not called them to be, and this is many times evident in that they do not meet the qualifications of the scriptures with regard to the ministry. God calls men and places them into the ministry according to the good pleasure of His own will. Read Acts 9:10-16. The Apostle Paul was chosen of God to bear His name, and God placed him into the ministry "who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious," (I Tim. 1:13). "And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry" (I Tim. 1:12). Paul did not place himself into the ministry, but the Lord called him, for which cause he stated, "Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles" (II Tim. 1:11). "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by

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Cockrell's



Corner

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

A PERSONAL WORD

I try not to say much about my health. It brings pain to my friends, and it causes joy to my enemies who seem to plan new schemes of attack. But due to my present condition, a word is in order. The month of April has been spent in great pain. The blood vessels are trying to grow back in my left eye (where the cancer was). This is causing fluid build-up and great eye pressure.

I have gone days without either rest or sleep due to very severe pain in my eye. It comes suddenly and no one knows how long it will last save God. This pain has blurred the vision in my good eye so that I have been able to do very little the whole month. I have gone to Memphis to the eye doctor as much as twice a week to try to get relief. There seems to be little relief in sight.

If the pain does not soon cease, the doctor will have to remove my left eye. Needless to say, I am greatly behind with my letter writing—nothing save this in “Cockrell’s Corner.” I have had to depend on others to do many things, but we have done what we could due to the circumstances.

I do not know how long this may continue. Some times I am too sick to even talk on the phone due to this pain, but at other times I am able to talk. Your understanding and patience is appreciated. Please keep me in your prayers.

Milburn Cockrell

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his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood” (Gal.

1:15,16). (Read Jer. 1:4-10 Isa. 6:1-8.) The work of the ministry and the office of a preacher and a pastor is an holy office which belongs not unto men but unto God. God selects and places men into the ministry of the Word: men do not enter into the ministry any other way, either by education or lack thereof, by volunteering, or because their ancestors were in the ministry. God told the children of Israel, and it is still true today, **“I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding”** (Jer. 3:15).

God never calls a man to pastor who does not fit the qualifications of the Word of God. (Read I Tim. 3:1-7.) Today many people have begun to make excuses why a person can be in the ministry who does not meet the qualifications of the Word of God. The reality is that God does not place men in the ministry who do not meet these prerequisites, so then someone other than the Lord must have called them. People are confused about the truth today, but the reason is because they want to have their own way and are not satisfied with God’s way. **“For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints”** (I Cor. 14:33). Confusion is not the work of God. If people will believe God then they won’t be confused about the ministry and the work of the Lord.

A man who is called of God and placed into the ministry is a servant of Christ. The pastor is first the servant of the Lord, and then the servant of the church for Jesus’ sake. The Apostle Peter identified himself thusly, **“Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ”** (II Pet. 1:1). Paul, speaking of himself and others who were ministers of God, stated to the church at Corinth, **“For we are labourers together with God”** (I Cor. 3:9); and, **“Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God”** (I Cor. 4:1). God calls men into the ministry for the spiritual benefit of His churches. The church does not belong to the pastor, and the pastor is not controlled by the church insomuch that the church is not to hinder him in his work, for his work is given him of God for the spiritual benefit of the church. His office being one of a servant, the pastor’s life is one of service. His work is not his own or for his own benefit, but the work is the Lord’s and all is to be done as the Holy Spirit directs unto the honor and glory of God. The pastor is the Lord’s laborer, and to the Lord he must look for direction, for instruction, and for reward. He is not

a lord over the people of God, but a servant of God for their sakes. He is called of God to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ that men might be saved and the Lord’s church added to and built up in the faith.

By the help of God this morning, I would that we should note some truths regarding the work of the pastor, and may we thereby be blessed. First, beloved, there are some responsibilities that exist in the work of the Lord that are not the pastor’s primary responsibility, as noted by the words of the twelve unto the multitude in Jerusalem: **“Look ye out among you seven men . . . whom we may appoint over this business. But we . . .”** Secondly, the work of the pastor is a sacrificial work: **“we will give ourselves.”** Then, let us note the substance of that work: **“to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.”** Finally, let us note how this work is to be done: **“continually.”**

Our text reveals to us some wonderful truths regarding the pastor’s work. The events of which we have read occurred in the first church which was in Jerusalem. **“The number of the disciples was multiplied,”** and the membership of the church had become large in number. There were some things that needed to be done that were not being done. Many in the church were poor, and so the church as a whole helped those who lacked. There were some who previously had sold their possessions and gave the money to the church to help provide for the welfare of the members who had need. (Read Acts 4:32-35.) There was much work to do and many who were in need, however, and so **“there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration.”** There are always things which need to be done with regard to the carnal and worldly concerns of the church. At Jerusalem, there were many poor widows who needed to be served. Yet, if the apostles made this their primary work, they would be neglecting the most important needs and concerns of the church, which are the spiritual needs that can only be met by prayer and the preaching and teaching of the Word of God. It would not have been right or fitting for the twelve to neglect the Word of God to oversee the distribution of food to the poor widows of the church.

Beloved, take note of the word used by the twelve in introducing the work which they were to tend to: **“But.”** This word sets forth a contrast of two things. On the one hand there were the carnal needs and concerns of the

church, and on the other the spiritual work to which the Lord had called them. They did not say that the widows were unimportant or that the daily ministration did not need to be done. This is the case in the Lord’s churches today. There are things that can, could, and even need to be done in the Lord’s work, but they cannot and should not become the pastor’s responsibility over the ministry which the Lord has given him. The Lord’s money which is in the care of the church has to be overseen; the expenses of the church have to be paid; the poor, weak, and sick of the church must be ministered to; the church house must be maintained; and many other such duties and responsibilities must be taken care of. Yet, **“it is not reason that”** the pastor **“should leave the word of God”** in order for these things to be done. They are necessary and vital concerns, but they are not the work of the pastor.

When others tend to the carnal concerns of the church, they help and support the pastor in that he may give himself to his spiritual duties. Some come to church and never give a thought to who cleans the pews they sit on, who vacuums the carpet they walk on, who shovels the snow off the sidewalk they come in on, who makes sure the bills are paid so the lights are on while they are there, and many other such things. These are all things that must be done, but they are never to be put ahead of the ministry of the Word of God! What is truly sad is that some come to church and never give a thought to inviting someone to come and hear the gospel preached; they never pray for the services or for the preacher, that God might speak through him in a great and mighty way; they never have any concern that the lost might hear the Word of God and be saved; and they give no thought to the uplifting of God’s name in song, hymn, prayer, and preaching. The spiritual cares of the church are the pastor’s first concern, for he has been charged with the responsibility of feeding the sheep of God’s pasture.

Having noted some things of which the pastor’s work are not, let us note the nature of his work, that it is a sacrificial work: **“we will give ourselves.”** The work of the pastor is a sacrificial work in that other things must be given up for the work to which God has called him. Many other things are forsaken when a man works to fulfill the ministry given him as a God-called pastor. The life of a man of God may truly be said to be a decreasing life: he must decrease in self and Christ must be magnified. John the Baptist stated of himself and

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Christ, **"He must increase, but I must decrease"** (John 3:30). The pastor's life is not his own, but belongs to God, and he must seek to glorify God in every aspect of his life. He must give up self in order to serve Christ.

"And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it" (Col. 4:17). A man can hardly fulfill his ministry if he is constantly pursuing the cares and pleasures of this life. The pastor must give up the things of the world. He must often give up things that from a human perspective are close to his heart and meaningful to himself so that he may do the work to which he has been called. He may have been a man of business before the Lord called him; but now his business is to preach **THUS SAITH THE LORD**, and the pursuits of worldly goals must be given up. The pastor who neglects his family is not a good pastor; but a faithful pastor will give himself to the ministry over his family. His wife, his children, and his possessions are all superseded by the reality of God's call and the office to which he has been appointed.

The work of the pastor is also a sacrificial work in that it must be done willingly: **"we will give ourselves."** **"The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind"** (I Pet. 5:1,2). The pastor's work is a work that must be done for the Lord's sake and for the work's sake, and for no other reason. A man who "enters the ministry" as a career or in hopes of making his fortune, so to speak, will not be a faithful man of God. The pastor does not preach and see to the cares of the church for money's sake, nor because he is coerced into doing so; but because he is willing to so be used of God for Christ's sake. A preacher must preach, not because he is obliged to do so, but because he loves to do so for the grace of God which has been given unto him. A pastor must feed the sheep of God, not because he is forced of God, but because he loves God and will gladly do whatsoever God asks of him. The ministry is not a hardship to one who gives himself willingly to the work of the Lord.

What then, we may ask, is the

substance of that work to which the pastor has been called? God calls men to give themselves **"to prayer, and to the ministry of the word."** These are the things that make up the work of the pastor. There may be many other needs that arise, but the things that must occupy the pastor are prayer and the ministry of the Word. These are the things to which the man of God must be devoted and from which he must not become distracted. These are not just some duties that go along with being a pastor; they are the work of the pastor, the things he must singularly and steadfastly give himself to if he is to fulfill the ministry to which God has called him. Many people think that the pastor's work consists of superintending programs and so-called "ministries", doing "good deeds", counseling, and the like. There are duties which ought to be performed by all true Christians. **"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world"** (James 1:27). Many today, however, think these are the pastor's duties and the pastor's work only.

Prayer and the ministry of the Word are at the heart of all that the pastor does. His study time is time spent prayerfully seeking to understand the scriptures and be led of the Holy Spirit in proclaiming the wonderful Word of Life. A preacher who spends little time in prayerful communion with the Lord, diligently studying the Word of God, will have little of value to communicate to others. A church with such a pastor will be a spiritually weak church, seeing they lack the nourishment of God's Word with which the pastor is commanded to feed them. A pastor who does not pray will be a powerless pastor. His heart will not be strengthened in spiritual things for he has spent no time on his knees before God. He will have little help in the spiritual warfare in which he has engaged, for he went not to the throne of grace where **"we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need"** (Heb. 4:16). He will have little to say to the lost, for he himself will have spent but little time in God's Word beholding the Lamb who taketh away the sin of the world. His preaching will be nothing but an exercise in oration and not the bold proclaiming of the very testimonies of Almighty God.

In order that the pastor may fulfill his work, he should be supported to that end. In our text we read of the events that led to the ordaining of the first deacons in a Baptist church. The reason these were selected was to see

MARK OF THE BEAST

Look at your name on the front page of this month's paper. If you see the mark 5-02, so detestable to a Baptist, wash it out by renewal of green-backs. If not your paper will stop next month. We are not able to credit. It is not a good plan.



to the **"daily ministration"** that the apostles might be able to give themselves **"continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word."** One way to support the pastor and his work is to see that the things which do not have to do with his primary responsibility are taken care of so that the spiritual duties God has given him may be attended to fully. Another way to support the pastor and the work God has given him is to help him financially with his needs. (Read I Cor. 9:11-14; I Tim. 5:17,18.) The pastor should be supported in this fashion so that he may devote himself to his work. If the pastor gives himself **"continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word,"** that will profit the church in the greatest degree; therefore, the pastor should be supported as much as possible to that end.

Finally, in what manner is the pastor's work to be done? The answer is found in our text: **"continually."** The work of the pastor is a full-time responsibility. Many have made the mistake of saying that some who have to work and who also pastor one of the Lord's churches are "part-time pastors". There is no such thing as "part-time pastoring" if a man is truly called of God to the ministry. Yet, this has more to do with than simply the amount of time devoted to the work, but rather the manner in which the work is done. A pastor must be steadfast in his work. He must be totally committed to the ministry which he has received of the Lord. A faithful pastor is one who never ceases from his spiritual labors for the Lord. His work will require much time, but it will be time well spent if he spends it **"continually"** in the things to which God has called him.

Pastor's do not take vacations from the work God has given them. There is no time in which a man of God takes a leave of absence from the service of the Lord. Those who have been given this ministry are to daily serve the Lord, striving for the advancement of the cause of Christ, until Jesus comes again. **"But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after**

righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses. I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; that thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: which in his times he shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen" (I Tim. 6:11-14; cf. II Tim. 4:5-7.) The work of the pastor requires faithfulness. To give oneself **"continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word"** means a lifetime commitment with daily responsibilities. The pastor's work is a work for which one day he will give account unto the Chief Shepherd, and his faithfulness in all things shall be examined. One who is faithful in prayer and in studying and preaching all the counsel of God will be used of God, and will one day receive his reward from the Lord.

When the church at Jerusalem did what they could to support the apostles in their work in selecting deacons to see to the **"daily ministration,"** the scriptures tell us that the result was spiritual growth and prosperity. (Read Acts 6:2-7.) The work of the pastor is a work that will be used of God, for God always honors His Word. If you are here this morning and have never repented of your sins and trusted in Christ, then the work of this pastor is to tell you that you are lost and undone and that you will only be saved if you turn from your sins and trust in Jesus as Saviour and Lord. If you are a member of this church and you have grown cold toward the things of God, the work of this pastor is to warn you, admonish you, and exhort you by the scriptures to confess your sins and make things right with God and with this church. The work of this pastor is to hold back nothing that is profitable unto you, but to declare all the counsel of God.



Sincere Hearers

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the tyranny of pride and pleasure, positions that are hostile to these passions will not easily gain admission. Their first appearance will create prejudice. And if that prejudice does not instantly preclude all consideration, it will yet throw insuperable obstructions in the way of impartial enquiry. If it does not absolutely put out the eye of reason, it will yet raise such dust before it as will effectually prevent its perceiving the object. What men do not care to believe they will take pains to persuade themselves is not true. They will employ all their ingenuity to find out objections, and having cast them with great eagerness into the opposite scale to positive unexamined evidence, will at length pronounce confidently against the truth, and in favor of error. Such is the manner of the world, and thus do men impose upon themselves in a thousand questions, civil and religious, which thwart their inclinations.

Now the gospel (if the account we have given of it be true) is most humiliating to the pride of the human heart, and most disgusting to that inordinate passion for worldly pleasure which prevails there. Why then should it be thought strange, that men of this character should be violently precipitated by their prejudices into false and dangerous reasonings? To these causes we may, without breach of charity, impute a great deal if not the whole of that opposition the gospel meets with in the world. Hence the cross of Christ became to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness. And hence multitudes in our time upon their first hearing the gospel are offended, and with the men of Capernaum say, **“There are hard sayings, Who can hear them?”**

If then the Word of the kingdom be received and kept in the manner it ought, the heart must be first made honest and good. When once a new bias is given to the will and affections, and a man from a proud becomes a humble man, from a lover of this world a lover of God, his prejudices against the gospel will instantly subside. The thick vapors exhaled from a sensual heart, which had obscured his understanding, will disperse; and the light of divine truth shine in upon him with commanding evidence. He will receive the truth in the love of it. The method of salvation by a crucified Jesus, will become highly pleasing to him; and all the little objections which originated, not in sound reason but in disaffection

and perverseness, will vanish. And so that divine saying of our Saviour's will be found to be true, **“If any man will do the will of God, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God”** (John 7:17).

How important then is regeneration! How earnestly should we pray to God to renew our will! And what pains should we take with ourselves, to subdue our stubborn prejudices and passions! **“Thus laying apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receiving with meekness the engrafted word, we shall find it able to save our souls”** (James 1:21). The seed thus sown in the understanding, thus insinuating itself into the heart, and thus mingling with the affections; will not fail to spring up and in due time bring forth fruit.

—This leads us,

II. To describe the kind of fruit which such persons will bear. It is good fruit—fruit of the same nature with the seed whence it grows, and the soil with which it is incorporated: of the same nature with the gospel itself which is received in faith, and with those holy principles which are infused by the blessed Spirit.

Here let us dwell a little more particularly on the nature and tendency of the gospel. **“God is in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses to them”** (II Cor. 5:19). No less a person than His own Son He devotes to death for their sakes. This great sacrifice He exhibits to the view of the whole creation, as the most striking spectacle of His just resentment against sin, and the most sure pledge of His tender compassion to the guilty. The merit of this divine Saviour He accepts. The plea He admits in bar of the sentence that hung over the head of the devoted criminal. “Deliver him,” says He, “from going down to the pit, for I have found a ransom.” He absolves him, he justifies him, he makes him everlastingly happy. **“Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died”** (Rom. 8:33-34) So **“grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord”** (Rom. 5:21). O how inflexible the justice, how venerable and holiness, and how boundless the goodness of God!

And if this be the gospel, Who can hesitate a moment upon the question respecting its natural and proper tendency? Who will dare assert, that it is not a doctrine according to godliness? that it does not teach and enforce the purest and most sublime morality? What man who believes it

can admit a doubt, with the divine character thus held up to his view, whether he ought supremely to revere, love, and obey the blessed God? How can piety languish and die amidst this scene of wonders? How can the heart, occupied with these sentiments, remain unsusceptible to the feelings of justice, truth, humanity, and benevolence? How can a man believe himself to be that guilty depraved helpless wretch which this gospel supposes him to be, and not be humble? How can he behold the Creator of the world expiring in agonies on the cross, and follow Him thence a pale breathless corpse to the tomb, and not feel a sovereign contempt for the pomps and vanities of this transitory state? How can he, in a word, see him rising from the dead, triumphing over the powers of darkness, and ascending amid the shouts of angels up into Heaven; how can he, I say, be a spectator of all these scenes, and remain indifferent to his everlasting interests? We appeal then to the common sense of mankind, whether the scheme of salvation, thus exquisitely constructed, is not adapted to promote the interests of piety and holiness? It is as evident as that the sun was created, to give light and heat to our world; and the earth made fruitful, to afford food and nourishment to those who inhabit it.

But bring the matter more fully home to the point before us, What kind of a man is the real Christian? Let us contemplate his character, and consider what is the general course of his life. Instructed in this divine doctrine, and having his *heart* made *honest and good*, he will be a man of piety, integrity, and purity. **“the grace of God, which bringeth salvation,”** will teach him **“to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world”** (Tit. 2:11-12).

As to piety. A due regard to the authority of the blessed God, will have a commanding influence upon his temper and practice. With that great Being in his eye, he will aim to

discharge the duties of religious worship, public and private, with sincerity, attention, and devotion. Remembering the allegiance he owes to his Sovereign, he will tremble at the idea of offending Him; and calling to mind the various expressions of his bounty, he will feel holy joy in every effort to please Him. Relying on His pardoning mercy through Christ, he will ingenuously repent of his sins, and cordially return to his duty. When contemplating His excellencies, he will revere Him. When enjoying the tokens of His favor, he will delight in Him. When chastened by His afflicting hand, he will submit to Him. When assaulted by temptation, he will confide in Him. And when employed by Him in any difficult and arduous service, he will rely on His gracious assistance.

As to social duties. His conduct will be governed by the rule his divine Master has laid down, of doing to others as he would have them do to him. He will be just in his dealings, faithful to his engagements, and sincere in his friendships. He will aim to live on terms of peace with all, be cautious of giving offence to any, and gladly interpose his best offices, when required, to extinguish the flames of contention wherever they are kindled. He will feel with the afflicted, and rejoice to have it in his power to smooth the brow of adversity, and to pour consolation into the bosom of the sorrowful. To a mean and base action he will be nobly superior, and in acts of generosity and kindness his heart will exult. A stranger to sullen reserve and corroding selfishness, his soul will mingle with kindred souls, and participate largely with others in their pleasures. In a word, by his influence and example he will endeavor to promote the civil, but more especially the spiritual and everlasting interests of mankind.

And then,

As to personal duties. He will use the comforts of life, which he enjoys as the fruits of divine benevolence, with temperance and moderation.

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Berea Baptist Broadcast

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

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The wealth and splendor of the world will not be his object: on the contrary he will hold them in sovereign contempt, when they dispute the pre-eminence with intellectual and divine joys. Of many gratifications he will deny himself, not only that he may have it in his power to do good to others, but may promote his own best interests, by bringing sense into subjection to reason, and the world in to obedience to God. His pride he will endeavor to mortify, by severely studying and censuring his own temper and actions, and by candidly judging and excusing those of others. He will think soberly of himself as he ought to think. His angry passions he will restrain and soften, and a spirit of meekness, gentleness, and forbearance he will cultivate to the utmost of his power. In fine, the salvation of his soul will be his grand object, and the care of that will have the preference to every other concern.

Such are the fruits which they bring forth, who hear the Word in the manner our Saviour describes, and who keep it in good and honest hearts. They **“walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called”** (Eph. 4:1), and their **“conversation is as it becometh the gospel of Christ”** (Phil. 1:27). **“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law”** (Gal. 5:22-23). Of this description were the primitive Christians, and, I trust, there are some such to be met with in our time.

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

(To be continued)

What Christians Are

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Here the word **“generation”** does not mean just the people living at that time, nor does it mean a period of 33 years which we sometimes call a generation. In I Peter 2:9 **“generation”** (*genos*) means “a race” or “class of people.” Adam was the head of a race known as humankind. Christ is the Head of a new race, “an elect race,” known as Christians. This new race consists of all of those born again (I Pet. 1:23).

All believers are an elect race; they make up one great family. They are a species of people different from the common world. They have another spirit, principle, and practice. This is because God choose them to be a

special people unto Himself. **“. . .the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth”** (Deut. 7:6). **“For many are called, but few are chosen”** (Matt. 22:14). **“. . .but for the elect’s sake, whom he hath chosen. . .”** (Mark 13:20). **“. . .God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth”** (II Thess. 2:13). **“Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom?”** (Jas. 2:5).

The doctrine of unconditional election is taught in holy Scripture. Before the morning of time God chose certain individuals from among Adam’s race to be objects of His love and grace. These, and these only, He purposed to save by the atonement of Jesus Christ, and the effectual call of the Holy Spirit. God could have chosen to save all men without exception, for He had the power to do so. Or, He could have chosen to save none (like in the case of the fallen angels), for He was under no obligation to show His favor to any. But it was His sovereign will and good pleasure to choose some and to leave the others. **“What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded”** (Rom. 11:7).

Israel was for many years God’s elect nation. Isaiah 44:1 speaks of **“Israel, whom I have chosen.”** Christ came and they rejected Him, they hated Him, and they crucified Him. For this the nation of Israel was set aside. The Jews and Gentiles who received Christ as Savior are in this dispensation a chosen race. This rejection by the nation of Israel is only in part (Rom. 11:25) and during the church age (Rom. 11:1-29).

Peter begins at the proper starting point, for God’s eternal election is the source and spring of all spiritual blessings. God’s elective purpose provided these blessings and secured them for the covenant people. All these good things are bestowed in connection with God’s sovereign election.

CHRISTIAN DIGNITY

Next we note Peter speaks of Christian dignity: **“. . .a royal priesthood. . .”** Peter follows the Septuagint Version of Exodus 19:6 here. Exodus 19:6 of our version reads: **“And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests. . .”** This verse in Exodus points back to the desire of the Lord that His earthly people should perform intermediary work among the nations, speaking to them for God and interceding, and, for the

present time, they have forfeited that privilege. They will not regain this privilege until the millennium (Isa. 66:19-20).

In the New Testament all believers are priests. In his first epistle Peter addresses Christians in five Roman provinces (1:1-2), and then he says: **“Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ”** (I Pet. 2:5). In Revelation 1:5-6 we see that every blood-washed believer is a priest: **“Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father. . .”** **“And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred,**

and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth” (Rev. 5:9-10). Those washed in the blood of Jesus are a **“royal priesthood.”**

The word **“royal”** is used of these believer priests because they belong to the King of kings. They are royal in their relation to God and Christ. They wear the royal robe of Christ’s righteousness. They sit at the King’s table and feed on royal food. They are a royal priesthood because they are separated from sin and sinners, for I Peter 2:5 calls them **“a holy priesthood.”** This is a privilege denied to the elect angels.

True Christians are a kingly priesthood. Christ brought into being a new order of the priesthood. Like Melchisedek (Heb. 7:1-2), Christ is a King-Priest: **“Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he**

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The Rantings and Ravings of Brother Ritechus N. Dignation

by Joseph Harris



SORRYNESS IN THE PULPIT

I know some folks might think I only get fired up and shoot off at the mouth about churches and church members, but sometimes there’s sorryness in the pulpit. I can’t stand lazy preachers. A shepherd that won’t feed or tend to the sheep gets me hotter than boil’in possum fat. Preachers who won’t study and work in the ministry ought to get out of the pulpit and make an honest liv’in at something else.

I remember something an old preacher brother told me years ago. He said that if a man will study and pray long enough and hard enough during the week, he’ll have something to say in the pulpit on Sunday and won’t have to steal another man’s sermon. A diligent preacher won’t be found late on a Saturday night go’in through Pulpit Helps, try’in to scratch up something to preach. Now that don’t mean that he can’t read another man’s sermons. He just ain’t supposed to totally depend on them. . . or steal them.

Something else that fires me up is when a preacher uses another

man’s thoughts or personal illustrations and never let’s on that they’re not his. I’ve actually heard preachers use other preacher’s illustrations and tell a story as if it happened to them personally. Why that’s lower’n a snake’s belly in the Grand Canyon. Shame! You can bet that preacher won’t be preach’in on ly’in and deceiv’in the next Sunday, or anytime soon.

A lazy preacher won’t take care of his sheep is another seed that sticks in my craw. If a man won’t visit and take care of the spiritual needs of his people, why he ought to be horsewhipped. Generally though, things take care of themselves and they will run his sorry self off. Of course, he then just goes to another church and repeats his same sins. It’s hard to break a dog from suck’in eggs. It makes me wonder if some preachers think they were called to be served instead of called to serve.

If a man’s going to be successful in the pulpit, he’s going to have to work at it. If he’s going to be successful in ministering to people, he is going to have to apply himself. There ain’t no room in the ministry for laziness.

Brother RND

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shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both" (Zech. 6:13).

Those who constitute the royal priesthood in this age are king-priests. In a sense we are already like kings. We have the power of kings, in that we have been given power over sin and Satan. We are rich like kings (Eph. 3:8), and we have angels as our servants (Heb. 1:14).

But believers are not yet reigning as they shall during the millennium. We are not yet reigning over the earth: **"Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you"** (I Cor. 4:8). Our reigning as kings over the earth awaits the first resurrection and the return of Christ: **"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witnesses of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years"** (Rev. 20:4-5). We must suffer on earth with Christ before we can reign with Christ on earth (II Tim. 2:12).

What dignity we enjoy being a royal priesthood! As the world would say, blue blood is in our veins. We are members of a royal family. Nobility brings responsibility. We must be careful how we live, lest we bring dishonor to our title and to our King. We also should have very high thoughts of all our brothers and sisters in Christ, for they are all kings and queens.

Believer priests are to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. This is the highest service into which we can enter in time and eternity. There are many spiritual sacrifices which we are to offer as the royal priesthood.

First, there is the sacrifice of self (Phil. 2:17; II Tim. 4:6; I John 3:16). Romans 12:1 commands us to offer

our **"bodies a living sacrifice."** We must lose our life for Christ and the gospel.

Second, there is the sacrifice of singing: **"By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name"** (Heb. 13:15).

Third, there is the sacrifice of substance. Paul called the missionary offering he received from the Philippian church **"a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God"** (Phil. 4:18; cf. Acts 24:17).

Fourth, there is the sacrifice of service: **"But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased"** (Heb. 13:16). As priests this surely includes speaking for God to the people.

Fifth, there is the sacrifice supplication: **"Pray without ceasing"** (I Thess. 5:17; cf. Rom. 8:26-27). We are to extend our prayers and entreat the blessings of God for others.

CHRISTIAN QUALITY

Then Peter calls attention to Christian quality: **"... a holy nation. . ."** This expression is taken from Exodus 19:6 and other Old Testament passages (Lev. 19:2; 20:26; Deut. 7:6; Isa. 62:12). The Israelites were a holy nation, separated from the heathen and consecrated to God's service. But Israel of old became an unholy nation, and her holiness as a nation will not be restored until the millennium (Isa. 62:12; Zech. 14).

∴ The nations of earth are separated by boundaries and borders. Languages and culture also separate them. But the holy nation Peter speaks of knows no such barriers. It overflows all languages and cultures. All Christians compose one holy nation. We are governed by one Lord and His laws. All believers are a holy nation, separated from the unsaved world and consecrated to God. We all have the **"sanctification of the Spirit"** (II Thess. 2:13; I Pet. 1:2).

CHRISTIAN PECULIARITY

Peter continues by speaking of Christian peculiarity: **"... a peculiar people. . ."** The word "peculiar" does not mean "odd." The Greek text might better be translated "a people acquired," or "a people for God's own possession," or "a purchased people." It is the same idea as in Ephesians 1:14 where we read of the **"purchased possession."** The King James translators' word "peculiar" is derived from the Latin word *peculium* (property). Believers are God's possession, acquired through the redeeming work of Christ (Tit. 2:14; I Pet. 1:18-19).

John Gill says on these words: "They are a people for acquisition,

purchased, and possessed, as the words may be rendered; whom God has obtained, procured, and purchased for himself, with the precious blood of his Son; hence the Syriac Version renders them. . . a redeemed company; the same with the church of God which he has purchased with his blood, Acts 20:28 and the purchased possession, Eph. 1:14" (*Gill's Expositor*, Vol. IX, p. 547).

The elect are God's by right of redemption (Isa. 43:1; I Pet. 1:18-19). If all are equally redeemed by Jesus Christ (believers and unbelievers as some say), then there would be no special reason for believers to serve God. The point that Peter is making is that the chosen generation are a special people because they have been purchased by the death of Christ. The elect race is God's possession being acquired by the redeeming work of Christ, and in this sense the unregenerate are not God's possession.

We must never forget we are not our own; we are God's possession: **"What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's"** (I Cor. 6:19-20). Sometimes, believers think they are their own, and they think they can do any way they please. We belong to the Lord and we must do His will and His work. Like the Apostle Paul, we should ask: **"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"** (Acts 9:6). Or, say like our Lord: **"Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done"** (Luke 22:42).

CHRISTIAN RESPONSIBILITY

Having given a definite set of characteristics, Peter proceeds to stress the responsibility of the chosen race, the royal priesthood, the holy nation, and the purchased people. He writes: **"... that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."** These words are very much like Isaiah 43:21: **"This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise."** "Praises" in I Peter 2:9 would perhaps better be translated "excellencies" or "virtues." **"To show forth"** in the Greek has the sense of "send a message," or publish abroad His excellencies. The chosen race who are upon this earth are here for a purpose. We are to witness of the greatness of God to the world.

Some Christians spend much time publishing abroad their own virtues. This we should never do, for, at best, we are unprofitable servants. It is

God's excellences we are to spread abroad. Those who spend their time spreading the excellencies of God will not lack material.

Darkness and light are often contrasted in the Bible. Conversion is passing from darkness to light. Those to whom Peter was writing were called out of the darkness of heathenism, and some most likely out of the midst of Jewish ignorance.

By nature man is in a state of darkness. He **"walks in darkness"** (I John 1:6), and he loves **"darkness rather than light"** (John 3:19). He is ignorant of spiritual things, of God in all His perfections, and of the claims of God's law upon him. He is ignorant of God's Son and the gospel (II Cor. 4:4). Spiritual darkness covers the hearts of the unconverted, however mentally great or learned, or however illiterate.

Note the light is called by Peter **"his light,"** meaning God's light. God only can create light. He declares in Isaiah 45:7: **"I form the light."** Hence we find the psalmist saying: **"The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?"** (Ps. 27:1). **"... in thy light shall we see light"** (Ps. 36:9). **"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ"** (II Cor. 4:6).

God chose them before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4; cf. I Pet. 1:2), but He called them in time by the effectual work of the Holy Spirit and the gospel: **"... because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel. . ."** (II Thess. 2:13-14; cf. I Pet. 1:23-25). **"Moreover whom he predestinated, them he also called. . ."** (Rom. 8:30). Calling is what makes election sure: **"Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure. . ."** (II Pet. 1:10).

Consider also that the light is **"marvellous."** It is marvelous because many are left in the dark dungeon of sin. How wonderful to be among the few effectually called out of ignorance, slavery, and misery. It is marvelous because it comes from a God who is marvelous in the working of His grace and power. The recipients of this call are like a man kept in a dungeon where he never saw light. Then suddenly he is brought out into the light. What wonders seize upon such a man when he suddenly sees the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. How beautiful is the sight of

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The Conflict of Power at the End of this Age

By Wilbur M. Smith

Part 3

(1894-19??)

IV. THE PRESENT STRUGGLE FOR POWER

It remained for the twentieth century, and especially the last forty years, to give birth to the terrible phrase, "world powers," which may be called a brother of the phrase also born in this century, "world war." In the nineteenth century, forty different nations could, at one time or another, each be engaged in its own separate conflict; but today we behold a life-and-death struggle between only the few of the pre-eminently mighty powers of this earth. In the first World War it was Russia, France, England, and the United States on one side, and Germany on the other; in the second World War, a power that went down quickly before Hindenburg rose to be one of the three great powers of the world—Russia. With her at the same time one reckoned with Germany, France, Italy, Great Britain, the United States and, for the first time in history, Japan. Italy was soon out of the way, and probably never will again be a world power. Germany was beaten to her knees, and will certainly not be a world power in our generation. France crumbled early in the war. The potential power of Japan, no one knows; she is defeated today, but, united with Korea and China, could be a terrific force to reckon with. There remain, then, only three real world powers—Russia, Great Britain, and the United States—but actually only two—Russia, with her enormous land areas, and the greatest population now under one rule on earth, far advanced in technology, in research, with certainly a greater army, air force, and submarine fleet than all the western powers and the United States could bring together. This vast potential power would not be quite so frightful if the human heart were somewhat different; but with Russia's godlessness and her passion for ruling the world, it is inevitable that some day a final struggle for world mastery will occur.

With these enormous powers now available, the greatest of which have come into the possession of mankind only since the dawn of this century, of course the question of questions, as every man knows today, is, How is this power going to be used—for good or evil? That will depend upon who has the power, and upon the character of those possessing that power.

Late in the nineteenth century, one of the greatest historians, Jacob



Wilbur M. Smith

Burckhardt, wrote an epochal work, *Force and Freedom* (recently reprinted by Pantheon Books, Inc., New York, 1943). In it he said, after a lifetime devoted to history: "First and foremost, what the nation desires implicitly or explicitly is power. Its previous dismemberment is abhorred as a brand of shame. Now power is of its nature evil, whoever wields it. It is not stability but a lust and insatiable, therefore unhappy in itself and doomed to make others unhappy. The man who desires power and the man who desires culture—it may be that both are the blind tools of a third still unknown force" (pp. 183, 184). This historian gives an illustration in a previous chapter: "The truth is—we have only to think of Louis XIV, Napoleon, and the revolutionary popular governments—that power is in itself evil. Utterly regardless of all religion, the privilege of egoism which is denied to the individual is bestowed on the state. Weaker neighbors are subjected and annexed, or in some way deprived of their independence, not in order to forestall hostilities on their part, for that hardly costs a thought, but to prevent another from taking them and turning them to his own political ends; and once on that road, there is no stopping" (p. 114).

Spengler, believer in Germany's world destiny, one of the great philosophical historians of our century, gave as his final conclusion that "the great beasts of prey are noble creatures of the most perfect type, and without the lies of human morality due to weakness."

Far back in 1834, the German, Heine, remarked, "These doctrines have developed revolutionary forces which only wait the day to break forth and fill the world with terror and astonishment." "The future belongs to Communism. . . . I think with horror of the time when these gloomy iconoclasts will arrive in power." (See Antonina Vallentin: *foet in Exile*, N.Y., esp. chap. IX, "The Powers of the Future.")

Recognizing that the most threatening world power of today is a godless, cruel, dishonest, deceitful

ME

Lord, I am me. There is no one else just like me, not in the years past, nor in the years to come, has there ever been or will there ever be another me. There are billions in the world and yet there is not another me. Some parts of me need changing – attitudes, habits, but the mind you gave me and the capacity to use it is uniquely your gift. It's what makes up me. This body is not me – it's just my house. I am deep inside with thoughts like no one else. You made us all special, yet all in your image. This makes us all brothers but this does not make us all think alike, act alike or react alike. Help us to learn to like ourselves because You made us. Let us not try to become someone else but to become the very best "me" possible. Let us respect the differences we find in other people and love them for their very differences. I know why You didn't make us all alike – You would have been bored with us as we would be with each other. How many of us would like to spend all our time with just ourselves. This is why we desire companionship with each other because of our differences and this is why we can like ourselves because we, too, are different. May we always recognize that you made us in your wisdom with the capacity to change but not to the extent we become someone else. I am proud to be me.

—Mary Dickson

nation, ruling a greater area of earth than any previous empire ever possessed; and, on the other hand, recognizing that a vast world government is rising up from the ruins of similar thwarted attempts, one begins to realize with what awful certainty this world is setting a stage for that final conflict of power which we have just studied. As the startling editorial, "The Nature of the Enemy," in *Life* magazine for February 27, 1950, said: "This is the age of obliteration. . . . The enemy of the free world is determined to destroy the free world. . . . The danger and power of obliteration on a nuclear scale are new to mankind."

V. THE FINAL DESTRUCTION OF THESE ANTAGONISTIC POWERS

While the Word of God clearly foresees wars, conflicts, struggles, a world dictator, a world government, and an evil ruler over this world at the end of this age, the same Word of God also foresees the final destruction of all these powers, and the enthroning of God's Son, our Saviour, as King of Kings and Lord of lords! This final victory of Christ is seen in the Scriptures in a preliminary conflict, and then in two final conflicts: one at the beginning of the Millennium, with earthly powers, the kings of the earth; and one at the end of the Millennium, with spiritual powers, the world rulers of this darkness. At least, so I seem to read the Scriptures.

1. *In general—the ultimate victory of Christ prophetically set forth.* Here we may choose, from the many passages of the Old Testament, one verse from the Psalms and one theme from the Book of Daniel. In Psalm 8:6, a prophecy of the Son of God, we read:

"Thou makest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet." The writer to the Hebrews, after the ascension of our Lord, quotes three verses from this Psalm, and interprets the one we are using: **"Thou didst put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he subjected all things unto him, he left nothing that is not subject to him. But now we see not yet all things subjected to him"** (Heb. 2:8).

This is also used by the apostle Paul in I Corinthians 15:27-28.

In the Book of Daniel, which is, in large measure, occupied with the kingdoms of this earth, in the familiar second chapter, we read that **"a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold"** (v. 45), that is, the great kingdoms of this earth which these metals symbolize. At that time shall **"the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed. . . . but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever"** (v. 44). In the parallel prophecy of Daniel 7, where the kingdoms are symbolized by four beasts, we read that the last great beast is to be slain and burned with fire, that the other beasts have their dominion taken away, and that **"the kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High: his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him"** (v. 27).

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Conflict of Power

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2. In particular

a. *The preliminary victory at Calvary.* While our Lord was on earth, He was obedient to earthly powers; and these earthly powers participated in His death—Herod and Pontius Pilate—so that, as the apostle Peter said: **“The kings of the earth set themselves in array, And the rulers were gathered together, Against the Lord, and against his Anointed: for of a truth in this city against thy holy Servant Jesus, whom thou didst anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, were gathered together”** (Acts 4:26, 27). But when the Lord was crucified, in those hours on the cross, He won a tremendous victory over the spiritual powers of this world, the world rulers of this darkness, graphically set forth by Paul: **“Having despoiled the principalities and the power, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it”** (Col. 2:15). As Lightfoot reminds us, the nature of these powers is to be determined from Ephesians 6:12—**“spiritual rulers in heavenly places.”** “That power which Satan had exercised was so prostrated that everyone believing on Christ is free from his [Satan’s] vassalage. Christ’s death was a battle, and in it God achieved an immortal victory. The conflict was a furious one, mighty and mysterious in its struggle. The Combatant died; but in dying He conquered. The prince of this world was now cast out” (John Eadie).

It seems to me that there will be two major conflicts in the future, involving the ultimate, absolute, final destruction of all evil powers. The first will be the battle of Armageddon.

b. *The battle of Armageddon*

The Scripture here is so important, every word of it, that we should have the entire passage before us: **“And I saw the heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and he that sat thereon called Faithful and True; and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. And his eyes are a flame of fire, and upon his head are many diadems; and he hath a name written which no one knoweth but he himself. And he is arrayed in a garment sprinkled with blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and pure. And out of his mouth proceedeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them**

with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath of God, the Almighty. And he hath on his garment and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS” (Rev. 19:11-16).

Without going into detail, note the warlike terms here: **“a white horse. . . .to make war. . . .flame of fire. . . .a garment sprinkled with blood. . . .the armies of heaven. . . .a sharp sword. . . .smiting the nations. . . .ruling them with a rod of iron. . . .the wrath of God. . . .The Almighty. . . .KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.”** This is to be on earth; it will end with the destruction of all military power, all international power, and all the engines of warfare that man has developed, including every conceivable device of war, such as bomb, poison gas, and rocket.

c. *The final victory and the disposal of all antagonism forever*

There will come one final conflict, after the Millennium, partly on earth, partly in the heavenlies. The one on earth involves the enemies, Gog and Magog, and their instantaneous destruction by fire from Heaven (Rev. 20:7-10). However, is there not the strong suggestion in I Corinthians 15:24 that there will be a gradual process of the subduing of other enemies, which will be consummated at the end of the Millennium? **“Then cometh the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom of God, even the Father; when he shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power”** (I Cor. 15:24). Notice the completeness of the vocabulary here—**“all authority,”** designated, of course, by man to the rulers and monarchs and dictators of the earth; **“all rule,”** that is, all exercise of authority over men, including certainly **“the world rulers of this darkness”**; and then **“all power,”** that is, the might, the substance behind these antagonistic forces, whether it be material power or spiritual power, satanic power or intellectual power, whatever it be, they will all be suppressed. In this way will every enemy of the Lord be undone, each consigned to its own designated place of eternal imprisonment. Righteousness and peace will prevail in the universe in which the redeemed of the Lord shall live. Every earthly event, even the most godless, the most brutal, will all unconsciously fulfill this Word of God—**“until the words of God should be accomplished”** (Rev. 17:17b).

What Christians Are

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this marvelous light! How glorious to come into the light of the matchless worth of Christ, of freedom from sin, of the joy of salvation, and of the hope of eternal life! Oh, let us act like the children of the day and walk in the light (Eph. 5:8-9).

CONCLUSION

1. The true state of a lost sinner before God is one of spiritual darkness, a darkness associated with all that is wretched and woeful. Reason, without the Spirit, in spite of its natural powers, is spiritual darkness. It cannot apprehend what faith is. Such a person gropes as one without eyesight, stumbling from one thing to another, not knowing what he is doing.

2. What a privilege to be called out of darkness into marvelous light! Oh, to be reckoned among the chosen race, the royal priesthood, the holy nation, and the purchased people! Oh, to resemble the priests under the law and to enjoy kingly dignity! Let us keep our distance from the man whose portion is in this evil world. May we never live a day in this world without showing forth the wisdom, love, mercy, power, sweetness, and faithfulness of our God (Phil. 2:15-16).

Observation During

Continued from page 321

women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was. But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and has been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto

salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: **That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works”** (II Timothy 3:1-17).

I’ll admit that all my observations are from my point of view and you can’t very well dispute what I say I’ve seen from my point of view. Now you might accuse me of having a warped view. This is a shotgun sermon. It is bound to hit something or somewhere. I suppose if I were to select a text from this reading it would be verse 13: **“But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.”** That is part of my observation.

I was ordained over 45 years ago in April 1934. During a great deal of that time I have pastored Baptist churches and also served in Bible college education which has given me some knowledge, not only of my own life and problems directly, but a window on a lot of other peoples experiences and problems. In case I don’t have time to detail many of these observations, I will give you four things that I have observed in these 45 years based upon Scripture. I don’t believe that I know anything new or have seen anything new. In fact Solomon said: **“There is no new thing under the sun”** (Eccl. 1:9). There are always new faces on things. Some say “the more things change the more they stay the same.” I have Scripture for the possibility of things getting worse. There is no change in the fact that there are evil men and seducers. No change in the fact that there is sin in the world. There is the truth of Scripture and certainly if my observation didn’t agree with scripture then I would need to be examined. That wouldn’t cast any doubt on the Scripture. The facts of life, we’ll find, do accord with what God has told us of life and truth in His Word. We have a lot of foolishness now days about the Bible not being relevant to life. The trouble with people that talk that way is they don’t know life and they don’t know the Bible, and they can’t see any relevance between them. If we will really read and understand the Bible and if we will really open our eyes to life and the world as it is, the Bible is more relevant to life than tomorrow’s newspaper. Yesterday’s newspaper is already out of date.

I have observed four things, nothing new, except for I have observed that these things the Bible

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We had a man in view of a call to preach in our church, but he couldn't tell us whether the Lord was leading him to our church or not. Shouldn't he know? --- Louisiana



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We must realize that the best among God's ministers are far from being infallible in the choices they make. They are not automatic in making the proper decision in such matters apart from much prayer and deep thought.

Preachers can act without giving deliberate consideration as to what the will of God may be in accepting a pastorate. Such hasty action often brings big problems for both the preacher and the church. A preacher must do his best to determine God's will before taking upon himself the duties of a pastor. He is responsible to obey the greatest impression from the Holy Spirit upon his mind, never to give over to what he may feel would be more advantageous or in his best interest.

I have a firm conviction that in a matter like this God will always work, by His Spirit, in both the preacher and the church. The Spirit does not always suffer a preacher or a church to do that which seems to be right. This was certainly true with Paul, Silas and Timotheus (Acts 16:1-9).

A church should be ready to give a preacher a reasonable period of time to determine God's will in this matter, and on the other hand the preacher should not unduly put off giving the church a definite yes or no as to his intention.

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Acts 20:28 declares: **"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the**

Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." The holy Spirit moves upon the heart of a true preacher and the heart of the church in which he is to pastor. The Holy Spirit works on both ends and brings together a wonderful fit between pastor and church. I believe that none of God's purposes can be thwarted or overturned, so every pastor is where the Lord wants him at any given time. However, when a church asks a pastor to come in view of a call, it does not mean that the man will necessarily make a decision to come right away. He must seek the face and will of God concerning the matter. It requires prayer and fasting. This is probably why the man in question responded by saying he wasn't sure whether the Lord was leading him there or not. He will know in God's time, not yours or his!

I remember when I went to Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church in view of a call. When they voted to extend a call, I told them that I would have to pray and fast. I sought the Lord for about a month and came to the conclusion that was where God was leading me. It has been a wonderful fit for me! I love our church and I enjoy pastoring God's flock in Chesapeake. However, I didn't know whether it was the Lord's will for me to go there the day I preached a trial sermon in view of a call. Such solemn decisions require reflection, time, and much prayer.

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"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28).

It is the Holy Spirit that makes one the overseer (bishop) of the church.

If a man is to be the pastor and be a blessing to the church, he must be set in that church by God (I Cor. 12:28). Too often churches have been hasty in calling a pastor and then discover that they have the wrong man.

When a church has a man to preach for them in view of a call, they are seeking the leadership of the Holy Spirit as to whether he is to be their pastor. Many times the church is not sure until they spend some time with the man and with God in prayer. The preacher must do the same. Sometimes it can be very difficult for the preacher to determine the will of God in this matter and must seek His will with much prayer. A preacher can not take upon himself this great responsibility. He must be sure that it is the Holy Spirit that is placing him in the church as overseer.

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I certainly cannot answer for another person as to what they know or do not know. I personally have been in circumstances as a preacher when I did not know what to do. In such circumstances, I have always found it wise not to do anything until I was sure I had the Lord's mind or will in the matter.

I believe the responsibility is equally upon the preacher and the church in finding out the will of God in calling a pastor.

I'm afraid many times we rely too much upon fleshly feelings or emotions rather than looking at all the facts and circumstances. In selecting a pastor, qualifications, character, present circumstances such as the livelihood of the pastor, his financial obligations, etc., just be considered. I believe if the Lord is in a preacher becoming the pastor of a church the Lord will work out these matters sufficiently to where both the church and pastor are satisfied.

A church should not be too hasty

in selecting a pastor and must be willing to give a preacher reasonable time to seek the will of the Lord.

A preacher should never seek or accept another pastorate until he is sure of God's will for him because too much is at stake, the possible future of two churches as well as the preacher. Only the preacher can answer for himself what the will of the Lord is for him.

GARNER SMITH

Observation During

Continued from page 329

declares and that are true have become more and more evident and pronounced in these 45 years. One of my prayers is just as Apostle Paul prayed in II Corinthians 5 that he might live until Jesus comes and be spared the ordeal of death. He prayed that he would not have to die and that he might be changed by the return of the Lord. If that was all right for Paul to pray in the first century, then it surely is all right for us to pray in the twentieth century. I will not be surprised if this prayer is answered, although God's people have been praying this for years. I pray "if it pleases God I will not have to die; that the Lord will return." **"Now it is appointed unto men once to die"** (Heb. 9:27). Now there are a couple of exceptions and there will be an exception of a whole generation of believers when the Lord comes back. I pray that I may be one of those. Wouldn't that be wonderful?

1. I have observed that people are depraved. People are sinners.
2. I have observed that Satan is still running loose.
3. I have observed that God is good.
4. I have observed not only from the written prophecy of God's word but the signs of the times and the events in history and society that Christ is coming.

1. *People are depraved.* Paul gets into this somewhat in detail in Romans 13 and Psalms 14:2-3: **"The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one."** I've heard preachers talk all my life about people being hungry for the gospel. I've never found it. I find occasionally an individual soul that God has touched and made to hunger and thirst after righteousness. I've never found a town or community that is hungry and seeking after God. God couldn't see

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If a church is a democracy, why do we speak of Christ as the Head of the church? -- Mississippi



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“And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all”^: (Eph. 1:22-23).

Even though the church is a democratic body of baptized believers, it still must answer to the leadership and dictates of its Sovereign Head. Even in a pure democracy, people are accountable to someone for the decisions that are made. In everything the church body does, Jesus Christ is to have the preeminence. In every decision, Christ's glory and honor should be carefully sought and maintained. The Head is pleased to work through His body in accomplishing the terms of the Great Commission. If a church is in tune with the Lord Jesus Christ it will make decisions as a body that reflect the desires of the Head.

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Since the Bible tells us in no uncertain terms that Christ is the Head of the church (Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18), under His Headship and right to rule by His Word the church ought to be understood to be a theocracy. We should never question the authority over the church belonging to the Founder.

However, the Founder of the church—Jesus Christ, has delegated certain authority to the members of His church while He is in Heaven awaiting the time of His return for us. **“And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and**

whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Matt. 16:19). Whatever one may believe as to the teaching of this verse, it is apparent that delegated authority plays an important role.

Acting on earth as a democracy the church must be diligent in following the instruction of its Head. We do have examples of a church voting on certain issues and of the church as a body making decisions about different matters. The vote of a church should in all cases correspond with Christ's commands clearly set forth in Scripture. When there is no clear command we are never authorized to violate those things which are clearly stated.

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“And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence” (I Col. 1:18).

The church is independent, local, and self-governing. Having no outside interference, it is a self-ruling body by majority; therefore, it is a democracy, but it cannot do as it pleases. It has been entrusted with the responsibility of carrying out the laws of Christ who is chief (first in rank) holding first place as its head. In all things, He is to have the preeminence. The church has been given executive powers but it does not have legislative powers. Christ is the head of the church in that He is its King and lawgiver. Churches can make a wrong decision. If the majority of the church makes a decision that is not in agreement with its Legislator (Head), they are in error. Many churches have suffered because they became legislators instead of executors.

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In reality the Lord's church is to operate as a theocracy, Christ being her head (Col. 1:18). By theocracy we mean a church is to seek and follow the leadership of the Lord by the person of the Holy Spirit as directed by the Scriptures as the Holy Spirit gives us understanding of the Scriptures.

The way a church in the final analysis arrives at what the leadership of the Lord is for the local congregation is by the consensus of the membership, and this is done in a democratic form of government. The members individually seek out the Lord's will for the church and then collectively declare by vote what, to the best of their ability, they believe the Lord would have the local church to do. The church then operates in a democratic way to arrive at what the Lord has already decreed for the church to do (Matt. 16:19).

So in truth a true church is a theocracy, but seeks out the will of the Lord by casting votes declaring what each member feels is God's will concerning the functions of the local church. This is what makes a true church to be considered to be an independent autonomous body.

GARNER SMITH

Observation During

Continued from page 330

any so these preachers claim to find what God couldn't find. This was written hundreds of years before Jesus came in human form. God looked down and saw they are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy, there is none that doeth good no not one. I've observed that.

In Psalm 39:5 it says that **“man at his best state is altogether vanity.”** That accords with my observation. I have observed that this is true in the world of sinners among whom we live. The world of lost sinners. The

world is all around us and we do need to observe and to know that the world of lost sinners is a world of depraved human nature. 1 John 5: 19 says: **“And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.”** I have observed that it is more prominently, outstandingly true every year that I live.

I know there are better times and worse times, humanly speaking, in world history. I can remember when the wicked people in the community were recognized as such and more or less, if they stayed sober long enough to think about it, were ashamed to having being classed that way. There has been a change in that in my lifetime. I can remember when I was a boy we never locked our house. How many people can live that way now? We live in a world of sinners and they are almost, instead of being ashamed, proud of it. Isaiah 3:9 says: **“The shew of their countenance doth witness against them; and they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not. Woe unto their soul! For they have rewarded evil unto themselves.”**

This might furnish a little balance to the idea that we have sometimes, and I know that some of Jesus' harshest words were spoken to scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites. Sometimes we think that it is better to be honestly wicked than hypocritically religious. There may be something to that in a way, but someone else has said that hypocrisy is a tribute that vice pays to virtue. Isaiah said that these people have rewarded evil to themselves because they have declared their sins as Sodom. They are not ashamed of it. The Sodomites of America are demonstrating, parading and publishing their materials and making their organizations and bringing their political pressures to bear to get what they call “gay rights”. Even the prostitutes do this as a prostitute was elected to state legislature in one of the western states. A world of sinners has become worse and more flagrant and more bold and demonstrative in the parade of their own wickedness in the face of God. Not only, however, is this true but sin has progressed among the people that call themselves Christians.

There was a time that it meant something to be called a Christian. I know that Jesus said even in New Testament days: **“And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?”** (Luke 6:46) and **“Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven but he that doeth the will of my father which**

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Observation During

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is in Heaven" (Matt 7:21). It seems that we have more and more difficulty seeing any difference between the respectable people of society and the nominal Christians of the community. What is the difference? How often I have been told as a pastor, "Well, I'm as good as your Christians". People are depraved and that reaches even to churches; true churches and our members. Paul wrote to the church at Corinth. Some of our brethren may have trouble recognizing the church of Corinth as a New Testament church, but the Scriptures still call it the church of God at Corinth, that there were divisions there, differences and heresies. It seems that when I was younger somebody would talk about a church being a Baptist church I had a pretty good idea of what kind of a church it was. That is not true anymore. How many different kind of Baptists are there? How many different groups of fellowshippers, associations or whatever do we have. There is great differences in churches in different communities with different leadership. The depravity of human nature is showing in the lives of God's people. **"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would"** (Gal 5:17), but it seems like more and more the flesh is prevailing among the Lord's people. This is an observation that accords with scriptures, because Jesus himself said: **"Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold"** (Matt. 24:12). I see that more and more.

I have seen this fact of human depravity increasingly among those that are supposed to be preachers of His Word. When I was ordained one good old brother presented the Bible and held it up and said, "Now this is the Word of God and one way that I know that this is the Word of God is that it has stood so much preaching, and it is still recognized as God's Word." Paul told the elders at the church at Ephesus when he met them at Miletus that there would be false prophets and then he said even of your own selves will men arise speaking perverse things to draw away disciples unto themselves. Jesus said there would be people come to him in the last day and make their boasts of their wonderful works and preaching in His name and working miracles in His name and He will say unto them: **"I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work**

iniquity" (Matt. 7:21-23). It has seemed to me that more and more among the professed people of God generally, and even among the scriptural churches of the Lord Jesus and in the ministry of those churches, in the pulpit more and more there is the depravity of human nature the sinfulness of the human flesh prevailing over the leading of the spirit of God in the ministry of His Word.

It is always easy to talk about the sinfulness that we see in other people. I have observed human depravity in the mirror. James reminds us that some things we can do something about and of course you look in the mirror and your face is dirty you can do something about that if you need to shave you can shave you see your hair is mostly gone there is not much you can do about that. The reason that we look in the mirror is to see if there is something wrong there and see if we can correct I and put on a better face. James tells us: **"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves"** (James 1:22), but I am afraid too often that the preachers forget to look to the mirror of God's word. We use the mirror to see others people sins and fail to see ourselves there.

I remember 30 years ago a friend in the ministry wronged me grievously, and I rebuked him for it and he denied it. I found a Scripture in II Timothy 4:14: **"Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works."** Alexander demonstrated himself to be an enemy of the Word of God. I had completely forgot about this man and hadn't thought about him in years until I was preparing this message. I remember that when Jesus was on the cross He said: **"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do"** (Luke 23:34). When Stephen was being stoned to death he said: **"Lord, lay not this sin to their charge"** (Acts 7:60). I have had to ask myself why is it so easy for me to pray to God concerning someone else, "Lord, reward him according to his works," and why it is so hard for me to pray, "Lord, lay not this sin to his charge." I don't want to be rewarded according to my bad works. As the children of God none of us want that, we might be chastened but really as far as eternal judgment is concerned our bad works are under the blood. We are not rewarded for them, but we do hope to be rewarded for our good works. But can we honestly and sincerely pray that same way for our brethren. "Lord, he's done wrong, forgive him, teach him better. If he is lost, save him." It is so much easier to say, "Reward him according to his

works, but don't reward me that way."

2. *Satan is still loose.* We read in Revelations 20 that Satan will be bound for a thousand years, and I heard years ago that was already done, and that we are in the thousand years now, and that was a figurative period and already done. One wise old preacher told me if the devil is tied up now I would hate to be around when he is turned loose. Peter told me in the scripture a long time ago that **"your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walking about, seeking whom he may devour"** (I Peter 5:8). He is still at it. Somebody said that just has to do with deceiving the nations. The United States of America, its government, and the government is what the people elect it to be, and the government of the United States has set on the course of national suicide for most of my lifetime. If that is not the deception of Satan, then what is? The devil is still running loose.

3. *I have observed that God is good.* I thank God that He makes His sun to shine on the evil and on the good, on the just and on the unjust. He gives His rain and His sunshine. Even the wicked enjoy His blessings. Paul tell us in Romans: **"Or despiseth thou the riches of his goodness and**

forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" (Rom. 2:4). I thank God that He is good and that I enjoy His goodness, not because I deserve it or you deserve it, but simply because God is good. He is good when I am bad. He is faithful when I am unfaithful. I can't begrudge His goodness to someone else because I want Him to be good to me and I'm glad He is.

4. *I've observed from the signs of the times as well as prophecy that Christ is coming.* That brings joy in the midst of trials, discouragements, sorrow and disappointment. **". . .weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."** (Ps. 30:5). There is a morning coming, a great day coming. Christ is coming back and He has a place prepared for me and for you if your faith is in Him. He is coming back to take us to that place. I believe that day is soon. I don't know about all the details, and I don't go out on a limb on these details because I can't change it and it is going to be the way that God has it planned, whether I think so or not. I do know that He is coming back and I'm looking for Him.

(This article was transcribed from a cassette tape by Sister Stacy Short wife of Bro. Jeff Sort.)



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

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COMMENTARY: RED CROSS STILL DOESN'T GET IT

SANTA ANA, Calif. (EP)—The cross that serves as their logo is red. Their faces should be too, but they're not.

The Red Cross apologized—sort of—for a recent debacle in which its Orange County, Calif., chapter turned away a high school singing group from a volunteer recognition event because the group's planned medley of patriotic songs included the words "God" and "prayer." But the apology is almost as troubling as the original incident, and suggests that something is wrong in this important American institution.

The problem began when First Act, a singing group from the Orange County High School of the Arts, was invited to entertain at a March 10 Red Cross luncheon. The group planned to dedicate its "Heroes' Trilogy" to the Sept. 11 volunteers. The medley includes three songs: "America the Beautiful," "Prayer of the Children" and Lee Greenwood's

"God Bless the U.S.A."

Red Cross spokesperson Patricia Johnson said the songs were inappropriate because their religious words might offend some listeners. She reportedly also objected to a song based on the Declaration of Independence because of the political nature of that document. Music teacher Cheryl Bacon withdrew her group from the event and told the world what had happened.

The Red Cross initially defended its decision, saying that the issue was its "sensitivity to religious diversity" and its desire to be "inclusive."

After a flood of public response—much of which boiled down to "Are you people nuts?"—the response changed. After hearing a lot of people begin to question the wisdom of continuing their financial support, the Red Cross issued a sort of apology. The apology noted that the Red Cross had been motivated by its fundamental principles of "humanity,

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impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntarism, unity and universality." If anybody was offended by its principled stand, the group says, it certainly wants to apologize for that.

How's that for a non-apology? They're very sorry if their lofty principles have somehow offended the less enlightened among us.

Any lingering question about how the organization really feels was cleared up when I called their headquarters. A fellow in their press office told me darkly that the California choir director stirring up the trouble was active in the Republican Party, as if this explained everything. I noted that some folks might not understand their squeamishness about kids singing "God Bless the USA" since, after all, their symbol was a big red cross. He got defensive right away, telling me how tired he was of people calling them up to tell them how stupid this made them look.

You have to admit, it does make them look a little silly. Here's a group that uses a cross for its symbol, and they're worried about some kids singing patriotic songs seeking God's blessing. The irony is that while the kids' songs were generic and could be interpreted to fit nearly any religion, the cross is a distinctly Christian symbol. The Red Cross logo is based on the Swiss flag, which in turn is based on an emblem of the Holy Roman Empire signifying its role as a protector of Christianity. The Muslim would certainly recognize the Red Cross as a religious symbol—that's why their corresponding groups are called Red Crescent societies. As for being politically neutral, the American Red Cross is chartered by Congress. Officially that makes them every bit as politically neutral as the VFW.

The Red Cross is not a religious organization, but many of the people who support it do so because they are motivated by their religious beliefs. The board of the Orange County Red Cross reportedly includes Muslims, Christians and Hindus—all of whom should be able to agree with the simple sentiments expressed in the song "God Bless the USA." (The Hindus may want to change it to "gods bless the USA," but the basic idea remains.)

You'd think the Red Cross would have wised up after the Sept. 11 fund debacle—the controversy stirred when the group decided that some of the money donated for victims of the disaster should instead be banked by the Red Cross for unspecified future spending. But this latest incident suggests that they may still be out of touch with many of those who support them.

By turning away a children's choir for singing songs that mention God, the Red

Cross sends an unmistakable message to people of faith: "We'll take your money, and your blood, but keep your beliefs to yourself." Until the Red Cross takes stronger action to distance itself from such nonsense, Christians might do well to seek alternative organizations to support.

"Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint" (Prov. 25:19).

FEDS TARGET WORLDWIDE INTERNET PORN RING

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP)—The U. S. Customs Service has partnered with 10 other countries in an effort to stop a global child pornography ring operating over the Internet. The investigation involved the execution of search warrants in New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Tennessee, Nevada, Oregon and Alaska. Customs agents seized computers and hundreds of DCs, floppy disks, and videos, as well as a manual on how to seduce children. Other nations involved in the investigation and searches included the United Kingdom, Canada, France, Germany, Switzerland, Spain, Japan, Finland, Austria and Sweden.

The FBI reported March 18 that it had shut down a nationwide Internet child pornography ring, charging at least 89 people in 29 states. The case targeted three Internet discussion groups administered by Yahoo, one of the largest Internet portals. Investigators said that many of those charged had positions that brought them into close contact with children. Suspects include Little League coaches, Catholic priests and other clergy, a school bus driver, and law enforcement personnel.

The FBI said that more than half of those arrested had admitted to molesting children. The others were charged with possessing pornographic images.

The FBI said it expected to arrest at least 50 more in Operation Candyman, named after one of the Yahoo-based e-groups it had targeted. The group had an estimated 7,000 members, including at least 2,400 residing outside of the United States, who used the site to collect and distribute child pornography.

"A new marketplace for child pornography has opened in the dark corners of cyberspace," said Attorney General John Ashcroft. "There will be no free rides on the Internet for those who traffic in child pornography."

Don Wildmon of the American Family Association said his group had been pressuring Yahoo to close down the chatrooms and clubs that distribute porn, but that so far the web portal operator had not complied. "Yahoo has refused to do the right thing, and in fact indirectly makes money off these snake pits full of child porn addicts," Wildmon said. "What the Justice Department has done is a good first step, but much more needs to be

done, and Yahoo should be investigated and prosecuted if found guilty."

Jan LaRue, senior director of legal studies for the Family Research Council, said, "The prosecution of Candyman and other child sexual exploitation groups operating online should include the Internet service providers that knowingly host them and blatantly advertise them."

The Candyman site was promoted on the Internet as a site "for people who love kids." Those who controlled the site advertised it as a place where "you can post any type of messages you like. . .or any type of pics and vids you like, too." They added, "If we all work together we will have the best group on the Net."

FBI Director Robert Mueller said of the crackdown, "Operation Candyman should serve as an example that the FBI will not tolerate the collectors and distributors of child pornography who continue to exploit our children."

Said Bruce J. Gebhardt, FBI executive for criminal investigations and cybercrime, "I'd like to see one sweep a day. We want to keep the pressure up on all these people."

"For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil" (Rom. 13:3).

MOSQUE PROJECT IN NAZARETH PUT ON PERMANENT HOLD AFTER CHRISTIAN PROTESTS

JERUSALEM (EP)—After years of protest from Christians, the Israeli government has ordered a halt to the construction of a controversial mosque in Nazareth.

On March 2, the Israeli cabinet of President Ariel Sharon released its decision to permanently stop construction of an Islamic mosque on land adjacent to the Basilica of the Annunciation in Nazareth. According to Christian tradition, the Basilica of the Annunciation is located on the site where the angel Gabriel told Mary that she would be the mother of Jesus. Muslims want to build a mosque on the site, which they claim is the burial location of Shehab el-Din, a relative of Muslim hero Saladin who defeated European Crusaders in the 12th century.

According to the *New York Times*, protests made by Christian groups within and outside of Israel and by international leaders, including the Vatican, influenced the decision against the mosque. The issue was raised by President George W. Bush when he met with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon in 2001. Even controversial Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat publicly opposed the plan in 1999 when Muslims defiantly laid the cornerstone of the new mosque.

Muslims in Nazareth have pledged to ignore the cabinet's ruling and continue construction of the mosque. The decision reverses two previous rulings in favor of the mosque made during previous

administrations. In its decision, the cabinet suggested that the mosque be relocated and offered seven alternative construction sites.

Islamic agitators have occupied a section of the square in Nazareth since 1997 and have used the spot to erect anti-Christian banners and stage protests. Salman Abu Ahmed, deputy mayor of Nazareth, told reporters that the cabinet's decision against the mosque was a declaration of war against Islam.

Nazareth Christians, who are outnumbered by Muslims two-to-one, said the ruling protected their interests, which are usually overshadowed by the Israeli-Arab conflict.

The International Christian Embassy Jerusalem (ICEJ) heartily welcomed the decision of the Israeli Cabinet. The ICEJ was founded in 1980 to express Christian support for the nation of Israel.

"This decision shows tremendous wisdom and courage, and should be applauded by Christians everywhere," said David Parsons, media spokesman for the ICEJ. "It has reinforced our long-held confidence in Israel as the proper guardian of holy sites in the land, and gives new impetus for Christians to stand in support of this embattled nation."

The ICEJ expressed its hope that all parties involved will peacefully respect the decision. It also commended Minister Natan Sharansky in particular for guiding the investigative committee's thorough examination of the dispute and leading it to a responsible conclusion.

"Whatever decision we make, there will be somebody unhappy," Sharansky told reporters March 3. "It was very important to us to make a real decision which takes into account the real needs of the local population and the feelings and sensitivities of the faithful people all over the world."

Parsons claimed that the aggressive efforts to build a mosque on the site fit within a disturbing pattern of Muslim encroachment on authentic Bible sites throughout Israel, including the destruction of antiquities on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. He hoped that this resolution of the Nazareth dispute could forge an alliance between Christians and Jews in order to prevent further encroachments on sacred sites.

"Any Christian truly concerned about safeguarding our biblical heritage in Nazareth should be just as troubled by what has been happening on the Temple Mount," said Parsons. "Not only were the first and second temples located there, but also more events recorded in the New Testament occurred on the Temple Mount than any other single place in the land of Israel, making it a uniquely significant Bible site that must be preserved."

"The earth is the LORD's" (Ps. 24:1).

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VOORHEES, N. J. (EP)—Carl McIntire, a fiery fundamentalist preacher whose multimillion-dollar ministry struggled during his battles with the FCC and with other Christian leaders, died March 19. He was 95. McIntire was ordained in the Presbyterian Church (USA), but the denomination withdrew his ordination in 1935 after finding him guilty of “sowing dissension in the church.” That finding was based on his attacks on what he called liberal leanings in the denomination. McIntire’s congregation withdrew from the denomination and founded the Presbyterian Church of America. Soon, McIntire determined that the new denomination was also too liberal, and left to start yet another denomination, the Bible Presbyterian Church. From 1938 to 1998 he was pastor of the Bible Presbyterian Church in Collingswood, N. J. He was also the president of the International Council of Christian Churches, an organization of conservative fundamentalist churches. From his church’s headquarters in New Jersey, McIntire broadcast a half-hour radio program, “The 20th Century Reformation Hour,” which during the 1960s was heard on as many as 600 stations throughout the U. S. and Canada. On the program McIntire presented fundamentalist Christian doctrine and ultra-conservative political commentary, tackling such issues as communist infiltration of the government, homosexuality, liberal leanings of churches, fluoridation of water, modernism and socialism. In 1973 McIntire lost his radio license for failure to abide by the FCC’s fairness doctrine, which requires stations to make airtime available for responsible opposing views on political issues. The loss of his stations contributed to a decline in ministry revenue and influence. “I think you’d have to say that he was the most consistent fundamentalist of the 20th century,” Martin Marty, a University of Chicago religion scholar, told the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. “Whatever he decided was the truth he followed to the very end, no matter how few friends or colleagues were left.”

GLEANINGS HERE AND THERE

JAKARTA, Indonesia (EP)—The leader of a militant Muslim group that has terrorized Indonesian Christians said his warriors are ready to fight against America. Jafar Omar Taleb is the leader of the Laskar Jihad, a terrorist organization whose members have attacked predominantly Christian villages in the Indonesian Maluku Islands and killed hundreds of innocent civilians. In an interview with the daily newspaper *Al-*

Hayat in London March 25, Taleb said that humanitarian aid organizations in Indonesia and other countries populated by Arabs are corrupting those they help with American ideology. When asked if he would support the Al Qaeda’s activities against America, Taleb said, “Muslims continue their *jihad* against America, and it is our obligation to support them as best we can.” During peace talks in February between Christians and Muslims in disputed areas of Indonesia, Christians requested that Laskar Jihad warriors be forced to leave the territory they invaded in 1999. However, the Indonesian government has not yet required the Muslim fighters to leave, disband or give up their arms.

CINCINNATI, Ohio (EP)—A number of black Cincinnati residents are promoting a boycott of Billy Graham’s summer crusade, endangering a planned emphasis on racial reconciliation. The boycott is in response to a fatal police shooting of a black man and three days of riots in April of 2001. Al Sharpton, a black community activist, suggested that Graham should change his plans. “He can see what kind of controversy is going on there,” Sharpton said. “He doesn’t need to get himself involved in that.” Local crusade officials voted unanimously to reaffirm their invitation to Graham. The boycott is not aimed specifically at the Graham event; entertainment events and conventions have also been affected and some have canceled planned stops in Cincinnati.

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (EP)—A disturbing pattern of attacks against Christians is developing in Sri Lanka, reports church officials there. The Evangelical Alliance of Sri Lanka says that persecution is on the rise against churches and Christians by Buddhist monks and an organization known as the Society for the Preservation of Buddhism. The most disturbing attacks occurred in March against a pastor’s family and church in the village of Veyangoda who were targeted by Buddhists. After initial warnings to stop his ministry, the church of Pastor Chandrakumar was raided by a mob. Chandrakumar’s church was vandalized and one of his children was stabbed. Attacks continued on the church for 17 days. On March 19, stones thrown onto the church by the Buddhists fell and severely injured another of Chandrakumar’s children. Police arrested two members of the mob for the attacks, but the Chandrakumar family remains in danger from the Buddhists. This is one of several attacks on Christian churches by Buddhist followers and monks during March, said Mark Albrecht, member of the World Evangelical Alliance’s Religious Liberty Commission. “This situation is quite serious, as small numbers of radical monks and their followers have damaged

or destroyed numerous churches, and several pastors and church members have been murdered in recent years,” Albrecht said, “As this report indicates, the local police are often not sympathetic to the plight of the churches, which only emboldens the anti-Christian agitators and mobs.”

BUFFALO, N.Y. (EP)—U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia told a March 13 luncheon crowd that women have no constitutional right to abortion. “My votes in abortion cases have nothing to do with my pro-life views,” Scalia said after this speech. “They have to do with the text of the Constitution. And there is nothing, nothing in the Constitution that guarantees the right to an abortion.” Scalia also noted that nothing in the Constitution explicitly prohibits abortion, and said the issue should be decided by constitutional amendment. His speech emphasized the importance of judges abiding by the original intent and actual words of the U.S. Constitution. “It says what it says, and it ought not to be twisted,” he said.

AUBURN, N.Y. (EP)—A Boy Scout troop in Auburn, N.Y. has been kicked out of a bank building because of the organization’s policy forbidding adult homosexuals from leading groups of boys. The U. S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of the Boy Scouts’ policy, but the bank, affiliated with the London-based HSBC Holdings, “determined that the BSA’s philosophy is in conflict with its commitment” to diversity.

LOS ANGELES, Calif. (EP)—NBC has reversed its decision to run advertisements for distilled liquors. While the network had begun running public service ads on responsible drinking as a precursor to the liquor ads, it decided not to run advertisements for liquor brands such as Smirnoff Vodka. NBC had faced a barrage of criticism from public policy groups, pro-family organizations like the Family Research Council, and lawmakers. For years television networks have voluntarily limited their advertisements for alcoholic beverages to beer and wine. NBC’s earlier announcement that it planned to carry ads for hard liquor appeared to signal an end to the networks’ co-called “gentleman’s agreement.” NBC’s reversal was seen as a victory for pro-family advocacy groups, which had lobbied the networks to maintain its ban on hard-liquor ads. “We are extremely happy that NBC executives got the message and returned to the practice of socially responsible advertisements,” said Sandy Rios, president of Concerned Women for America.

DURHAM, N. C. (EP)—Most members of the clergy say they are deeply satisfied with their jobs, according to a survey conducted by Duke University

Divinity School. The National Clergy Survey, which includes nearly 900 respondents from more than 80 faith groups, found a high level of job satisfaction, with six in 10 clergy reporting that they have “never doubted” their call to the ministry and seven in 10 reporting they have never considered leaving pastoral ministry. Over 70 percent of clergy questioned said they think the “difficulty of reaching people with the Gospel” is one of the primary problems for pastors.

WASHINGTON, D. C. (EP)—Nearly a score of United Way affiliates around the nation have cut off funding of the Boy Scouts because of the organization’s refusal to allow homosexual scout leaders. According to the *Washington Times*, the list of United Way affiliates stopping funding of the Boy Scouts includes chapters in Boston, Seattle, San Francisco, and Santa Fe. In February, a Boy Scouts council in Madison, Wis. turned down at least \$75,000 in funding from the United Way of Dane County because of conflicts the two organizations had over homosexuality. The affiliates that have stopped funding the scouts represent only three percent of the approximately 1,400 United Way chapters in the United States. “the vast majority still support us,” Gregg Shields, spokesman for the Boy Scouts of America, told the *Times*. He said that pressure from the groups would have no impact on the Boy Scouts. “They won’t stop us,” he told the *Times*. “We have a mission to help young people build lives of character.”

HARRISBURG, Penn. (EP)—The Association of Baptists for World Evangelism (ABWE) announced that it is not suing the U.S. and Peruvian governments for damages and wrongful death. The group released a statement referring to the case of Jim and Veronica “Roni” Bowers, ABWE missionaries who were on board a small pontoon Cessna 185 with their two children on April 20, 2001, when the plane was attacked by a Peruvian military jet. Roni Bowers and her infant daughter Charity were killed during the attack, and pilot Kevin Donaldson sustained serious injuries to his legs. Dr. Michael Loftis, president of ABWE announced in a statement that his organization and the Bowers and Donaldson families are not planning to sue. Despite reports to the contrary, Loftis said that the ABWE had issued no ultimatum regarding a lawsuit and did not desire to become involved in such a suit. The organization is only seeking compensation for out-of-pocket expenses, said Loftis. “Friends of our ministry, including members of congress, as well as our attorneys, have approached the government agencies involved over the past several months

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in order to seek redress for the families victimized by the wrongful deaths and physical injury caused by the negligent actions of government agents," Loftis explained. "Neither Jim Bowers, nor Kevin Donaldson, nor their families desire to sue the U.S. or the Peruvian government in spite of great personal and financial loss."

OKLAHOMA CITY, Okla. (EP)—The pastor of a 3,600-member Baptist church in Oklahoma City withdrew his recently published book on Islam after allegations of plagiarism and faked endorsements surfaced. Brian Waite of Quail Springs Baptist Church said he's stopping sales of *Islam Uncovered* and will destroy remaining copies. He acknowledged that "significant information" in the 178-page book was not properly attributed. He also acknowledged false claiming endorsements from columnist Cal Thomas and evangelist Franklin Graham.

IRVINE, Calif. (EP)—Pastor Roberts Liardon returned to the pulpit March 10, ending a three-month absence that began with his admission of "moral failure." In December Liardon, pastor of Embassy Christian center in Irvine, Calif., acknowledged that he had been involved in a homosexual relationship with the church's youth pastor, John Carrette. Liardon, 36, said his appearance was "just for one Sunday. I am still working with my counseling." About a quarter of the church's members have left since his admission. Missionaries and Bible College students at affiliated ministries have also left.

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (EP)—An Alabama judicial panel dismissed a bias complaint against Alabama Supreme Court Chief Justice Roy Moore. The complaint was made after court awarded custody of three teens to their father instead of their lesbian mother. Moore was accused by homosexual activists of "bias" for a written decision which called homosexuality an "inherent evil." The state Judicial Inquiry Commission exonerated Moore of any bias, noting that Moore simply ruled according to existing state law.

NEW ORLEANS, La. (EP)—Louisiana's Supreme Court refused March 28 to strike down the state's 197-year-old sodomy ban. In a unanimous vote, the court said the law does not violate the privacy rights of citizens under the state constitution. The law was challenged by the Louisiana Electorate of Gays and Lesbians Inc.

Mini Edition

By Joseph Harris
Chairman of Biblical Studies
Southeastern Baptist College, Laurel, Mississippi



LESSONS FROM COMICS

I hope the kid in me never grows up. For instance, I like to read the Sunday comics. It's amazing what can be found in what I used to call, as a kid, the funny papers. Sometimes they are profound and true to life.

A couple of weeks ago, I came across a series that was new to me. "Zits" was the name of the comic series. The panels showed a woman pulling on a pair of rubber gloves and attaching a face mask, kind of like a filter. She then took a pair of tongs and pulled a tape from a VCR and dropped it in a garbage bag, with a look of disgust on her face, as if she smelled a bad odor. The last panel contained the only dialogue in the strip. Two guys were sitting in front of the TV and the first one made a remark about how the woman (the other guy's Mom) did not like coarse language. The second guy responded with an exasperated look on his face saying the movie was only rated PG-13.

How true to life. I expect this attitude from the world, since society has become so de-sensitized. Things are accepted today that would not have been tolerated 30 years ago. I do, however, expect something different from professing Christians who seldom use much discrimination in their choices of film entertainment. I have been told, "Well, it's only rated PG or PG-13" as if the rating alone makes it acceptable. Usually, films with these "mild" ratings contain obscene, vulgar, and profane language. When you point out the adultery and homosexuality that might be in the film, the excuse is, "Well, this is real life. These things exist in the real world." True, and these things are not rebuked in the real world either. A film containing these themes at least has some redeeming value when it shows the consequences, tragedy, and destruction of these and other sins, instead of presenting them in an amoral, nonjudgmental way. Plus the world view presented and promoted by the film should be considered. And remember, the Motion Picture Association rates films, and they are not conservative Bible believers.

A steady diet of filth, perversity, blasphemy, nudity, hedonism, etc, etc, *does* have an effect on the

consumer. We as Christians believe constant exposure to the Word affects people. How can we not believe constant exposure to the *world* will do the same? In the name of entertainment, professing Christians will subject themselves to vile, lewd, anti-God behavior and language while they as Christians abstain from the use of the same language and lifestyles portrayed on the screen. This is inconsistency with a capital I. If you do not use profanity, then don't pay to hear others use it. If you don't take God's name in vain, then don't promote it by endorsing it and financially supporting the ones who profane God. If you do not believe in adultery, homosexuality, etc, then don't laugh at the crude humor and applaud when it is practiced by others. Any woman who bares her body for millions to see is on the level of a harlot and should be prayed for, not exalted and adored as a sex symbol.

I'm not saying bury your head in the sand, but I am trying to use sanity guided by Scripture. **"Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."** Beware what you allow into your heart, **"For from the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks."** Sadly, this simple comic strip of few words, speaks volumes.

AMNESTY? THEN HAVE LAWS?

Here's the latest from DC. The House has passed a bill that would grant amnesty to illegals in this country, giving them time to legitimize themselves by becoming citizens. At the front of this madness is our own conservative, otherwise sane president, and Congressman Dick Armey. Congressman Armey made a statement about "showing compassion" and President Bush referred to "keeping families together" as a result of this piece of legislation.

Is it just me? I mean, am I standing alone on my thinking about this matter? This is just flat out condoning and rewarding criminal behavior. To reward these lawbreakers by placing them at the head of line to become citizens is to tell those who played by the rules and became citizens the good old fashioned honest way, that they were just suckers. This is more than "fine free week" at the library. Library lawbreakers with overdue books aren't

usually prosecuted, but then, apparently neither are those who crash the border and those who over stay their visas. This is a got-out-of-jail-free card and the illegals are given Parkplace and Boardwalk while honest immigrants and tax paying Americans end up with Baltic & Mediterranean Avenues (See the game of Monopoly for interpretation).

It's no coincidence that President bush and Congressman Armey both hail from Texas which has a high percentage of Hispanic votes. You don't have to be a mathematician to put two and two together and get the sum total. It adds up to a lot of appreciative voters on election day for both of them. And I would rather see Presidente Bush back in office a second term than just about anybody else I can think of. He has done a superb job so far, but let's just be honest and speak the truth concerning him, Mr. Clinton, Mr. Gore, Congressman Armey or anyone else.

It's never the right time to do the wrong thing and this is wrong and unfair. I think I'll just sit back and wait for a FULL amnesty on not paying the IRS, and to be fair, this would need to be amnesty concerning penalties, interest, and full payment. I'll be holding my breath.

MY JEWISH BIAS

The recent terrorist acts/murders on innocent Israeli citizens should be enough to help a liberal press see the truth about the murderer called Arafat and his murdering minions. The month of March has been unprecedented in attacks on the elderly, Dads, Moms, children and babies. You would think the lens of common sense would help the vision impaired, but then, corrective lens will do nothing for those who are already blind, and choose to remain that way.

In a Mini Edition not long after the September attacks, I made reference to the Palestinians and their claim to Israel's land. I called them land squatters and was rebuked by a reader who accused me of being prejudiced toward Israel. The reader then wrote to editors of some of the papers/periodicals that publish Mini Edition weekly and monthly and complained to them about my article, since they published it. The reader also contacted me. After no response, he continued to send letters to me and the editors until I responded. His contention was that land purchased by Palestinians was legally theirs. I understand his point, but my issue was that the land had originally been given by God to Abraham and his descendants through Isaac, not Ishmael, so from a historical and

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Mini Edition

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spiritual viewpoint, the Jewish descendants have a stronger claim to the land than anyone else.

Now concerning the charge that I was prejudiced, I happily plead guilty 100%. I am biased toward Israel, not the Palestinians or any other Arabs, just as others are prejudiced toward the Arabs. This is my right of choice and doesn't mean I hate Arabs. It just means I favor the Jews in their plight and support them in their spiritual rights and desire to live in safety. My view has nothing to do with race or ethnicity, but has everything to do with their spiritual and religious heritage. You see, I'm just playing follow the leader. God is also biased toward Israel, and the Old Testament contains a plethora of verses as evidence. And if you believe God has washed his hands of Israel and is totally disconnected from his earthly covenant people, welcome to the school of replacement theology. The church has not replaced or displaced Israel, spiritually speaking. Rest assured, God "hath not cast away his people" (Rabbi Shaoul, Romans 10), but is very much interested and involved in what is happening on that little strip of dirt over there.

The Palestinians do not want to co-exist with the Israelis. Sane people have known this all along and now with recent events, even a child should be able to see the Palestinians DO NOT WANT PEACE OR COEXISTENCE. Benjamin Netanyahu claims the Palestinians want nothing short of the destruction of the Jewish State. If I hear another Palestinian or Arab representative say that Israel does not want peace, I will scream. The Israelis deserve a world peace award for not blowing the Palestinian Authority, Hamas, and Islamic Jihad off the map so far. But that may be about to change. They have shown unbelievable restraint as they have watched their innocent men, women and children blown to bits as they went about their daily affairs in the supermarkets, cafes, etc. How dare we, or anyone else tell Israel not to root out terrorists and terrorist regimes when we have done exactly that in Afghanistan. It's called self defense and prevention.

The New Encyclopedia of Christian Martyrs \$29.95

Over 200,000 martyrs drawn from over 50 countries from Biblical times through today. It has 956 pages and is hardcover. Add \$5 for postage.



Brother Cockrell,

I am sending \$5 for a 2-year extension of the BBB. I find much joy in your sticking to God's Word and also the KJV. I look forward to each issue of the paper. We are in a world of liberalism and I am comforted to know there are still some God-fearing Baptists out there. My prayers are with you and your church.

—Ohio

Pastor Cockrell,

I received your letter today, your informing me that your ministry shall continue to send me in grace ya'll's publication of BBB. And, I am still in prayer on my becoming a Landmark Baptist, and I also appreciate your joining in prayer with me in that!

—Texas

Dear Bro. Cockrell,

We want to congratulate you on your outstanding "the Year 2001 in Review" in the Feb. 5th *Banner*. You covered very important developments in such an interesting write-up.

We also send our prayers for your recovery and better health. You survived a lot and fought through a tough period with faith and determination.

You turn out a fine paper every time with truth and honesty. I think that's why you use my material—because always I strive for truth and honesty, even if it may be unpopular.

I thank you for using my piece "People Need to Know More About Islam." Some editors and political leaders will not criticize Muslims. Coast Guard editor of the *Bulletin* said, "No, we got Muslims in the CG" when I sent a piece on why CG captains of the port could benefit from knowledge on the Muslim background. Much the same when I talked with the Hampton Roads Captain of the Port. He said the Crusades were just as bad. Well, I told him I disagreed. Even so, I'll send him a copy of my article and also, to the *Bulletin* editor.

With best wishes to you and your family and to your ministry.

—Virginia

Dear Bro. Cockrell,

Many thanks for your magazine, which I enjoy very much and I missed a lot. A friend of mine, an American pastor, has kindly give me a cheque for \$15 to cover 6 years of subscription.

—England

Dear Brother Cockrell,

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the God of all grace. The church here in Indianapolis has heard of the difficulties that you are having with

your radio ministry and would like to help.

We have enclosed a check for \$300 to be used wherever needed.

We appreciate the labor of love that you and the church make in the many fine works that you are involved in. Many of God's people benefit greatly from your efforts.

—Indiana

Dear Sir:

I am an inmate at Hamilton C.F. in Jasper, Florida. We receive *The Banner* here on occasion. I have been trying to keep up with the articles on the Ten Commandments, but we have only received Commandments number 7 and 9. The chapel does not have any of the issues with Commandments 1-6 or 8. I pray that the issue with the 10th comes in when it is published. I would like to receive a copy of those Commandments that I am missing if possible.

—Florida

Dear Bro. Cockrell,

Enclosed is our monthly donation of \$20 for the BBB.

We pray for you and the family as you labor for Him.

May God bless you with continuing improvement of your health.

—Texas

Dear Brother Cockrell,

I apologize for the fact I didn't mention your health problems and show some sympathy. I sincerely hope the gracious Lord Whom we try to serve in our weakness and unworthiness will restore you to health and strength that you can continue in His work and still be a blessing to a host of people. I'm glad and thankful the gracious Lord still has men like you that is earnestly contending for the faith that was once delivered to the saints.

Blessings in the name of our precious Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to you and your family and staff.

—West Virginia

Milburn Cockrell,

I would like for you to take my name off your mailing list.

Billy Harrison e-mail

Dear Brother Cockrell,

I want to renew my subscription to *The Berea Baptist Banner*. \$3 for I year, the check is for \$50. The other \$47 is for the use and support of the Berea Baptist Church you pastor.

—Kentucky

Dear Bro. & Sis. Cockrell,

The BBB is a blessing to us each month. You mentioned that you have some extra copies that you could send to churches and we wanted to ask if you could send about 5 copies to us each month airmail. Enclosed is a love offering towards this expense. We want to share it with some of the brethren who are fluent in English.

I read about the Berea Bible School and wanted to ask you some questions about it. What I'm wondering is if we could order the materials for some of the pastors here, and then I would teach them and grade their work here. Most of the pastors are not well educated and I could help them with the language in this way. Their English is sometimes mixed with Melanesian Pidgin words or written in a sentence structure for Pidgin instead of English. Even the way you say negatives is the opposite in Pidgin from English. It sometimes takes knowing both languages to understand what they mean. I'm just wondering about all of this and want to know what your ideas are on the matter.

—New Guinea

We pray that Pastor Cockrell is improving. When you aren't feeling well, it sure makes big potholes in your life. However, I expect that's God's way of insuring us that His love will make Heaven even more wonderful for us.

Please use the enclosed check where you need it most.

—Kansas

Dear "Ones,"

Always, you all are in our prayers. Praying every thing will go well. We miss the wonderful fellowship we remember in by-gone days.

Pray for us. God bless and continue to bless every phase of the work of our dear Lord and Savior you undertake.

—Tennessee

Dear Pastor,

I am sorry to hear there has been sickness—I had hoped that you all were on the upswing now. And do sincerely pray that you are. I will be glad to get the tapes again—they were part of my early morning devotions. And will look forward to the April issue of the *Banner*. I know it is quite a job getting the paper out, but all the articles are great. I also got the new announcement about the site notices. I am not a genius on the computer, but I think I can visit these sites with a little concentration on my part. Thanks for everything.

—Maine

Dear Bro. Cockrell,

I list "and friends," due to the fact that so many others are utilized to put such a teaching paper together. I keep every paper, and find myself often referring back to them for some article. In my case, I have a limited supply of resources here in Thailand. So, the *BBB* often is very helpful, if in nothing else, encouragement and fellowship.

—Thailand

Bro. Cockrell,

Thank you very much Brother Cockrell. Not many churches in MT that I really enjoy, so your paper (and your articles) mean a lot to me. I share them with my children, and they too enjoy the articles.

—e-mail



ONE RESPONSIBILITY OF HEARERS—GOOD LISTENING

By John A. Broadus

We are willing to grant, if you insist on it, that there is not much good preaching; but we beg leave to remark that the proportion of good preachers is quite as great as the proportion of good listeners.

It is evident that each will help the other. One great point of excellence in a preacher, especially to the restless hearers of the present day, will be that he is easy to listen to. There is no desire in



John Broadus

this article to lessen the preacher's responsibility in this respect. Let all preachers strive to be so clear, so sprightly, so earnest and magnetic, that men may hear with ease and pleasure and profit; nay, let them solemnly strive so to speak, in love of their hearers and in the fear of God, that men cannot choose but hear. Meantime, the hearers have also a great responsibility.

Consider then some of the reasons why you should listen well.

1. For your own sake. The Saviour spoke the parable of the sower for the express purpose of showing that the same word of the Gospel will produce no effect, a light or temporary effect, or a good effect in various degrees, exactly, according as it is properly heard; and his own application of the parable is, "**Take heed therefore how ye hear.**" The best preacher in the work, even Paul, even Jesus, has often been heard to no profit; and the very poorest preacher, provided he gives some grains of real gospel truth, may be so well heard as to do real good. Remember, O hearer, that this man in his weakness is trying to preach to us God's Word of salvation. We shall not answer for his speaking. But we shall assuredly answer for our hearing.

2. For the preacher's sake. Demosthenes is reported to have said that eloquence resides as much in the ear as in the tongue. It is a great truth, and might well have been uttered by the greatest of orators. O, what a comfort it is to preach when all the

people listen with all their hearts! Even a few very good listeners greatly help the preacher; even one who listens with full sympathy may sometimes save a sermon that would otherwise have utterly failed. And alas, even a few conspicuously bad listeners may render the preacher's task almost helpless. When a new pastor is coming, or a visiting minister, people often wonder how they will like his preaching; it rarely occurs to them as a matter of interest, how he will like their listening. They ask one another afterward, "How did you like him?" Right seldom do they ask, "How do you suppose he liked us?" Let us always try to listen so well as to help the preacher.

3. For the sake of other hearers. Few things are more promptly contagious than good or bad listening. One very bad listener will often annoy and hinder a large section of the congregation. And it is beautiful to observe how one deeply earnest listener will be gradually felt, more and more, in gently widening circles, by those around. Many people find it very hard to listen to preaching. They may be in bad health and low spirits, or consumed with cares. They may be sadly indifferent to the greatest thoughts and the highest things. If you listen well, that will make it a little easier for them to do likewise and how could you render them a greater kindness?

4. For Christ's own sake. He sends His servants to speak in His name the gospel of His salvation. He lays it as a burden of responsibility on their hearts that they must preach, in love to men and in love to Him. If they bring the real Gospel, and are at all in earnest, He speaks through them; and we should receive what they say, as being not simply the words of a fellow-man who seeks our good, but as in a just sense the Word of Christ. Surely he deserves to be heard.

Good friend, suppose you lay to heart these reasons for listening well. Some other day we may try to indicate in what consists good listening.

(*Western Recorder*, March, 1888).

THE JOY OF THE LORD

By A. E. Waffle

"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy may remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (John 15:11).

In the last will and testament of our Lord there are many legacies, but the most remarkable is this legacy of joy. The words seem to be connected with the words which Jesus had spoken to them in this last discourse. It is a

wonderful discourse and the central thought is a revelation of a personal God, and a possibility of a union of the believer with this God as the foundation of this joy. We would deduce from this:

I. God is a joyous Being. The doctrine is plainly revealed in Scripture. He is God blessed forever; blessed means joyful. There is in God the joy of perfect being. Any normal, healthy, perfectly organized being finds in existence itself a source of joy. God has this joy in perfect being. All of His powers work with infinite vigor and infinite harmony, one with another, and so there is in God an infinite joy. (a) There is in God the joy of infinite love, or infinite loving. God is love, and He has many objects in which He delights. And because of His love for His people and His desire to save them it is possible for God to have joy in His children in spite of their natural sinfulness. The joy of redemption, the joy of reaching out to save them, is so great that it leaves no room even in an infinite nature for grief.

(b) There is in God the joy of infinite power. A man never feels the power for work swelling within him without great joy at the consciousness of possessing this power. When the disciples returned to Jesus and reported that the devils were subject to them at His word they brought the report with joy. Because God has infinite power and knows that He is using this power for holiness, He has infinite joy. He abides in infinite tranquility because He has infinite power.

II. This joyousness of God is communicated to the believer. The joy of forgiveness, hope, redemption, is not the only joy. There is a direct joy given to the believer from God, as the branch abiding in the vine partakes of the nature of the vine. The divine nature is given to every believer and then the joyousness is given.

Some of the results: (1) Our nature will be made healthy by a divine healthfulness. It is possible to make a desert in the soul and call it peace, but it is only a shadow of peace; but when Christ comes into the soul He brings all the faculties into healthy harmony and there is joy of peace. (2) There is the joy of working for the salvation of others. (3) The joy of power not our own, power communicated from God. A power not our own has come in the redemption by Christ restoring our shrunken and deformed nature. This joy does not depend upon outward circumstances, but upon how much of divine grace we have in the soul.

Finally: The joy of the Lord is your strength. (1) In arising superior to adverse circumstances. It does not

arise from without but springs up within, and so as it is not dependent upon circumstances it cannot be destroyed by them. Paul and Silas in prison singing songs is an illustration. If we have the joy of the Lord in our hearts we shall not be disturbed in calamity.

(2) The joy of the Lord is our strength in overcoming the world. If Christ be in us we shall not hunger after the things of the world. If we have the joy of the Lord in our hearts we shall not crave cards, the dance, the theatre, because we shall have something much better. Come out of the kingdom of this world and let the joy of the Lord abide in you, and you will rise above these things.

(3) The joy of the Lord is our strength for work. It is the joyous heart to whom work is light and easy. Get the joy of the Lord in your heart and it will come out in songs, in testimonies, and in loving efforts for the salvation of others.

There is a joy in being a Christian that never can come to the worldling. Put Christ up and self down, and the joy of the Lord will abide in your heart and send you forth to do mighty work in His kingdom. (*The Pulpit Treasury*, Jan. 1888).

THE NOISELESS SAVIOUR

By C. Hiden

"He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear His voice in the streets" (Matt. 12:19).

Deep waters are usually still. This furious, fussy age does not appreciate this truth. With our newspapers, steam-engines, telegraphs and telephones, we live in public. It is supposed that we know everything important that takes place. The quiet student is ignored. The work of Christ was quiet.

I. In its conception. This took place in the divine mind. It was no sudden emergency that produced it. Man's great works are often the results of emergencies. "Necessity is the mother of invention." There are no emergencies, in God's government. In man's preparations for great emergencies, what a noise he makes! His drums, his cannon, his "public speaking" burden the ear. But, in the divine conception of the scheme of redemption, God was so quiet that even the angels did not find it out. "**Which things the angels desire to look into**" (I Pet. 1:12).

II. In its execution. Perfectly performed feats are accomplished with apparent ease. "Hamlet" reads easily. The infant Jesus was heralded

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Gleanings

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by an angelic host, singing such a song as had not been heard since the celestial chorus of the morning stars greeted the infant firmament, and delighted the new-born universe of God with their glorious heavenly melody. And this grand performance had for an audience some obscure shepherds whose very names are unknown.

It is commonly supposed that boys of genius are to be wild and wayward. The Galilean peasant boy minded His mother, and worked quietly in His father's shop; and, until He was thirty years old, this is all we know of Him, except that he one day asked and answered some questions in a Bible-class at Jerusalem. His ministry was singularly quiet. There is not a single instance of His making an appointment beforehand to preach anywhere. All His sermons were occasional. He never troubled Himself about the size of His congregations, except when they became *too large*; and then He would retire, or else say something that would be sure to thin out the crowd. His marvelous sermon on regeneration was delivered to one Jew. The remarkable discourse at the well was delivered to one obscure and disreputable woman. His wondrous transfiguration, at which law, prophecy and Gospel—Moses, Elijah and Christ—all assisted, was transacted before an audience of three sacred fishermen. Probably no great crowd was present at His crucifixion. Nobody saw Him rise from the dead. And now His work is done, and He is about to return to His Father.

See that little knot of eleven men gathered on Mount Olivet. How eagerly they listen to the loving words of their risen Lord, as He promises that in a few days they shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit! Look at their beaming eyes and parted lips. His last lingering words die away on the pure mountain breeze; and look! He noiselessly mounts upon the air. No blinding lightnings blaze from the clouds upon the astonished eyes of the little band. No bellowing thunders reverberated through the skies, to tell that Heaven is weary of His long absence. No retinue of angels awaken the echoes of the mountain with their heavenly chorus of **"Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in."** But a sunlit cloud opens its lovely portals and noiselessly receives the majestic form of the Prince of peace.

God's mightiest agents work

quietly. The glorious sun "sends down his rays of light and life and joy more quietly than the sleeping infant breathes." The marvelous power of gravitation binds the sweet influences of Pleiades, and forges bands for Orion; but we hear no stroke of hammer in the great work-shop.

III. In its application. This consists in the conversion of the soul. This is not a noisy process. No machinery is necessary. You need not wait for turbulent exercises of mind before accepting Christ. The Redeemer did not break the bruised reed of the old dispensation. He did not stamp out the expiring sparks in the smoking flax of the Mosaic economy. The Gospel quietly superseded the legal economy. There was no violent revolution, but a quiet reformation.

Have you no interest in this work of Christ? Then remember His "judgment" and His "victory."

*"Every eye shall then behold Him
Robed in dreadful majesty;
Those who set at naught and sold Him.
Pierced and nailed Him to the tree.
When the solemn trump has sounded,
Heaven and earth shall flee away;
All who hate Him, must confounded,
Hear the summons of that day."*

(The Pulpit Treasury, July, 1887).
At the time this was written he was pastor of the First Baptist Church, Lexington, Ky.

THE MODEL MOTHER

By R. H. Rivers

The responsibility of mothers cannot be too strongly emphasized. They do more in forming the character of the men and women who are to follow them, than all others. They begin with the infant in the cradle. The expression of countenance, the intonation of voice—the tenderness and the patience manifested by the mother in the nursery must tell upon the character and destiny of the child all through life to eternity. The model mother is a blessing beyond the power of language to express:

1. She is gentle and firm. Mild as the zephyr, yet strong as the mountain, is the mother who is fitted, both by nature and by grace, to bring up children for her country, her Church, and her God.

2. She is patient. She never gives way to temper. She has perfect control of her tongue. She does not fret. She does not scold. She bears and forbears. Her language, however firm and strong, is never violent, never threatening. Her patience is unyielding; her sweetness of temper

perpetual.

3. She is truthful. She is extremely careful never to exaggerate. She does not make promises to be broken. She states facts with perfect accuracy. She does not extenuate or set down aught in malice. She is no gossip. She is free from the vice of slander. Her words may be relied on almost as the words of Holy Writ.

4. She is prudent. No word or act of imprudence ever stains her character. Her husband can safely trust in her, and her children can rise up and call her blessed.

5. She is impartial. She does not excite the envy of one child by her weak partiality for another. As children possess different dispositions, she may have to treat them differently, but never with injustice.

6. She is free from groundless suspicions. Mothers may do much harm by indulging in unjust suspicions of either son or daughter. Never suspect a child of wrong without the strongest evidence of its

guilt, is the motto of the model mother.

7. She is a Christian in the strongest and most spiritual sense of that word. She is full of love to God and man. She is without guile and free from all inconsistency. She is a woman of constant, earnest prayer. She has faith in God. She loves the Saviour. She is filled with the spirit divine. With these qualities, she possesses a power over her children which will be felt long after she is wearing her crown in Heaven. Mothers, let one who appreciates in all the depths of his nature the womanly character of the mothers in our land, beseech you to rise to the model here presented, and then your reward will be great on earth but greater in Heaven. Such a mother never spoils her children on the one hand nor is tyrannical on the other. She controls others with a power almost superhuman because she has perfect self-control.

(The Pulpit Treasury, Oct. 1887).

The Fear of God

Part 1

Mantachie, Mississippi

By Milburn Cockrell

"Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways" (Ps. 128:1).

"Fear God, and give glory to him" (Rev. 14:7).

When Adam sinned in Eden he dreaded to see God and sought to hide himself from His holy presence. Ever since that day, Adam's children have been subjected to fear, for sin produces guilt, and guilt produces slavish fear. This causes men to shut out the thoughts of God from their minds, or to seclude themselves in places they imagine God cannot see them. Since the fall of our race man has been fearful and afraid. He has known paleness of cheeks, trembling of limbs, confusion of face, and a sinking of his spirit.

THE TWO KINDS OF FEAR

Fear itself is not a sinful thing. It is an uneasiness of mind from a sense of danger, attended with a desire to avoid it (John 9:22). It is a natural thing which is essential for man's preservation, implanted in him by the Giver of all good gifts.

There are many different kinds of fear. There is fear and respect due to parents (Lev. 19:3; Heb. 12:9). In marriage there is fear and respect which a wife owes to her husband (Eph. 5:33; I Pet. 3:5-6). We owe our employer a certain amount of fear and respect (Eph. 6:5; Mal. 1:6), and people of authority in government (Prov. 24:21; Rom. 13:7). According to holy Scripture, there is fear and respect due ministers of the gospel (I Sam. 12:18; Mark 6:20). But the fear

of God is more important than any fear due to man (Matt. 10:28; Rev. 21:8).

Generally, in Scripture there is clearly distinguished two different kinds of fear. There is **"godly fear"** (Heb. 12:28), which is the effect of faith. It is not that of a slave but of a son. Then there is servile fear, which is the product of doubt. The former leads to hope, as relying on God in whom we believe. The latter leads to despair, as not relying on God, in whom they do not believe. The true believer fears to lose God, and the unbeliever fear to find God.

Slavish fear is full of suspicious watchfulness, of anxious apprehension, and of terror and dismay. Filial fear of God is but another form of reverence. It is our sacred duty: **"O fear the LORD, ye his saints"** (Ps. 34:9). Slavish fear of God is a sin. A son-like fear of God shrinks from sin, but slavish fear sinks from punishment. Filial fear keeps men from departing from the living God, but slavish fear drives men from Him. Godly fear makes men like Jesus Christ, upon whom rested **"the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD"** (Isa. 11:2). Slavish fear may scare us from sin, but it does not destroy the desire to sin. Filial fear makes us avoid whatever would be offensive to our heavenly Father. Slavish fear causes us to care for ourselves and makes us a little more prudent than the Devil.

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The Fear of God

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GODLY FEAR DEFINED

Years ago Charles Buck gave this definition of the fear of God. He said, "The fear of God is that holy disposition or gracious habit formed in the soul by the Holy Spirit, whereby we are inclined to obey all God's commands; and evidences it—1. By a dread of His displeasure. 2. Desire of His favor. 3. Regard for His excellences. 4. Submission to His will. 5. Gratitude for His benefits. 6. Conscientious obedience to His commands" (*A Cyclopaedia of Moral and Religious Truth* by John Bates, p. 346, 1866 edition).

One might sum up the whole of true religious in two things: "**Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man**" (Eccl. 12:13). If religion is genuine, then the fear of God must reign in the heart. We must have a reverence of His majesty, a respect for His authority, and a dread of His judgment.

When the Bible describes a true believer and worshipper of Jehovah, he is often said to be one that fears the Lord. The Lord told Abraham on Mount Moriah: ". . .for now I know that thou fearest God. . ." (Gen. 22:12). "**Now Obadiah feared the LORD greatly**" (I Kings 18:3). ". . .thou knowest that thy servant did fear the LORD. . ." (II Kings 4:1). Jonah told the sailors on his ship: "**I am an Hebrew; and I fear the LORD**" (Jonah 1:9). "**But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings. . .**" (Mal. 4:2). It is said that Cornelius "**feared God with all his house**": (Acts 10:2). ". . .that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the servants, and them that fear thy name. . ." (Rev. 11:18).

In the Holy Writ God is called "**fear**" itself. Jacob told Laban: "**Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, the fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty**" (Gen. 31:42). "**And Jacob sware by the fear of his father Isaac**" (Gen. 31:53). Here we see Jacob swearing by the God his father Isaac feared, served, and worshipped. The Lord God is to be the fear and dread of His people: "**Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread**" (Isa. 8:13).

THE NATURE OF THIS FEAR

First, a believer is to fear the person of God. I mean God in all His attributes. Returned and regenerated Israel is said to "**fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days**" (Hos. 3:5). There is a day coming when "**all the nations**

of the earth" shall "**fear and tremble for all the goodness and for all the prosperity**" God bestows on David's kingly line (Jer. 33:9).

There must be in our hearts a dread of the terrible majesty God possesses. He dwells in unapproachable light which no man has seen or can see (I Tim. 6:16). He is clothed with such honor and majesty the light conceals rather than reveals His glory (Ps. 104:1-2). Nehemiah called Him "**the great and terrible God**" (Neh. 1:5; 4:14; 9:32). Job 37:22 says: ". . .with God is terrible majesty."

Second, a Christian must have respect for God's presence. In a sense God is present all over the world at the same time, but on certain occasions He grants His special presence. "**And the LORD was gracious unto them, and had compassion on them, and had respect unto them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them, neither cast he them from his presence as yet**" (II Kings 13:23; 24:20). ". . .and cast you out of my presence" (Jer. 23:39). "**But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD. . .**" (Jonah 1:3). "**And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man. . .**" (Rev. 1:13).

Jacob met with God by a dream and saw a ladder which reached to Heaven. He saw angels and talked with God. Then he said: "**Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate to heaven**" (Gen. 28:16-17). Jacob realized to be in the special presence of God is a dreadful and terrible thing (Dan. 10:8-17; Isa. 6:1-5; Rev. 1:17).

When we come to the services of the church on the Lord's day and take our seat in a pew, we are in the special presence of Almighty God (Matt. 18:20; 28:20; II Cor. 6:16). The psalmist said: "**But as for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy; and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple**" (Ps. 5:7). Church members should say to their pastor: "**Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God**" (Acts 10:33). Disrespect for the special presence of God has serious consequences (Lev. 10:1-3; I Sam. 2; I Chron. 13:9-10; Acts 5:1-11; I Cor. 3:17).

Third, the name of God must be feared: "**But unto them that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings. . .**" (Mal. 4:2). This especially means the name Jehovah which is expressive of His nature and essence (Ex. 3:14; 6:3). Most of the verses in the Old Testament

which enjoin the fear of God mention the name of Jehovah (In the KJV it is LORD). Moses speaks of "**the glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD**" (Deut. 28:58). We must never take this name in vain (Ex. 20:7).

Fourth, we are to have a fear and reverence for God because of His works: "**By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him**" (Ps. 33:6-8). The creation attests the greatness and goodness of God. The millions of creatures on land and in the sea display the majesty and wisdom of God. "**O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches**" (Ps. 104:24). "**Fear ye not me? saith the LORD: will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it: and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it?**" (Jer. 5:22).

Fifth, God is to be feared because of His judgments: "**My flesh trembleth for fear of thee; and I am afraid of thy judgments**" (Ps. 119:120). A holy God is severe in punishing evil doers. He warns His own people to stand in awe of His judgments. When the wrath of God is poured out men will hide in the cleft of the rock "**for the fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty**" (Isa. 2:19, 21). We are to have our schooling at the suffering of the wicked. "**I have cut off the nations: their towers are desolate; I made their streets waste, that none passeth by: their cities are destroyed, so that there is no man, that there is none inhabitant. I said, Surely thou wilt fear me, thou wilt receive instruction; so their dwelling should not be cut off, however I punished them: but they rose early, and corrupted all their doings**" (Zeph. 3:6-7).

False prophets were to be stoned that "**all Israel shall hear and fear**" (Deut. 13:11). The man who did wrong presumptuously was to die that "**all Israel shall hear and fear**" (Deut. 21:21; 19:20). God's judgment in the earth begets fear in the hearts of men (Rev. 11:11).

Sixth, it behoves us to fear the written Word of God: "**The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether**" (Ps. 19:9). The Bible contains much instructions concerning the need to fear the Lord

(Ps. 34:11). It is written in Deuteronomy 6:1-2: "**Now these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go to possess it: That thou mightest fear the LORD thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged**" (cf. Deut. 10:12; 17:18-19). God has a special love and affection for those who tremble at His written Word (Ezra 9:4; Isa. 66:2). He who has no respect for the written Word of God has no respect for the God of the Word.

THE SOURCE OF GODLY FEAR

First, godly fear is one of the blessings of the covenant of grace: "**And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me**" (Jer. 32:39-40). Such a fear of God is not natural in the hearts of men. The grace of God must put it there as a covenant blessing. This blessing is only bestowed upon the elect, and all others are destitute of it. Until a man receives a new heart from Heaven, he has not the fear of God in his heart. It is this everlasting fear that causes the saints to persevere in holiness until the end of their life.

Second, it is the fruit of the work of the Spirit of grace: "**Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear**" (Heb. 12:28). Grace is the root from which proceeds reverence and godly fear, and this comes from "**the Spirit of knowledge of the fear of the LORD**" (Isa. 11:2). Apart from this Spirit-wrought fear, we cannot serve God acceptably. Therefore we must avoid light-heartedness in the service we offer God.

Third, a holy awe of God proceeds from genuine repentance for and from sin. "**For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge!**" (II Cor. 7:10-11). The truly penitent person fears the God he

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MISSIONARY NEWS

Often I am asked what topics do the brethren preach on in the Philippines. At a doctrinal revival held in Nabunturan, Compostela Valley Province last April 5-6, 2002, the following were their topics:

1. Why there is a need of a doctrinal revival these days?
2. Why God did not delegate nor authorize men to build His church?
3. The succession and perpetuity of the church built by Christ.
4. The sins committed by the human founders and their members against the Lord Jesus Christ and His church.
5. Apostate churches and their leaders and members shall be punished without mercy.
6. Only the church personally built by Christ is recognized by Him as His own.
7. Only the church built by Christ has the authority to baptize.
8. The devil has now succeeded in dividing Christianity.
9. What does the word "build" in Matthew 16:18 really mean?
10. The abandoned doctrine of being sent.
11. The six divine elections held in eternity.
12. The doctrine of total depravity, nothingness, and inability of man.
13. The doctrine of absolute predestination.
14. Arminianism is set to discredit and destroy the Lord Jesus Christ.

These topics were sent to me by Elder Cecilio R. Mangubat Sr.

The Fear of God

Continued from page 339

grieved by his many sins, and he fears this God so much he will forsake his sins. ". . .by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil" (Prov. 16:6; 28:13).

Fourth, it is attended with faith and trust in God: "Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!" (Ps. 31:19). Please observe how the fear of God and the faith of God are put here side by side. If there is no faith in God, there is no fear of God.

Fifth, a son-like fear of God is the beginning of all spiritual knowledge and wisdom. "Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom" (Job 28:28). "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom" (Ps. 111:10). "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge. . ." (Prov. 1:7). "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding" (Prov. 9:10). The first discovery of the soul's apprehension of

God in Christ imparts a holy awe of God. Until a person comes to personally know Christ, he is not spiritually wise unto salvation. It is spiritual knowledge and wisdom that teaches a person to escape eternal ruin which overtakes a fool.

Seventh, this fear flows from a sense of God's love and mercy in forgiving sinners: "If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared" (Ps. 130:3-4). Free and full pardon for all sins is in the nature of the God to the chiefest of sinners who confess their sins. None fear God like those who have experienced His forgiving love. Gratitude for pardon produces far more reverence for God that all the dread inspired by punishment. The pardoned sinner fears the loss of one glance of His love. He fears one sin that would mar his fellowship with his Lord. He fears error that might lead him away from the God of truth. He has a dread of displeasing his forgiving God. The doctrine of gratuitous forgiveness of sins does not make a person live an ungodly life. Rather, it begets a true and genuine fear of God.

(Continued in the next issue)

**BEREA BAPTIST BANNER
Financial Report
2-28-2002 to 3-31-2002**

Beginning Balance	\$2,033.07
RECEIPTS:	
A. D. Richardson, Cedarville, WV	100.00
B.C. of Brimfield, Brimfield, IL	28.38
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	200.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL	60.00
Berea B. C., Westpoint, TN	50.00
Berea M. B. C., Mansfield, OH	50.00
Bethel M. B. C., Pasadena, TX	30.00
Bethesda B. C., Tarpon Springs, FL	50.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne WV	300.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	125.00
Central Avenue B. C., Tampa, FL	25.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL	20.00
Faith B. C., Clarksville, TN	100.00
Faith M. B. C., Lynn, AR	25.00
Gerald Price, Johnson City, TN	20.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
Grace B. C., Tulsa OK	45.00
Grace B. M., Marion, IL	25.00
Helen Sturm, Ashland, KY	100.00
Hillcrest B. C., Winston-Salem, NC	50.00

Indore B. C., Indore, WV	500.00
J. L. Sadler, Alford, FL	100.00
James Swindell, Russell, KY	47.00
John Otis, Agra, KS	150.00
Joseph Jurzec, Lake-in-the-Hills, IL	25.00
Landmark B. C., Moncks Corner, SC	25.00
Landmark S. G. B. C., Ft. Worth, TX	50.00
Larry J. Ricklets, Skagway, AK	2.00
Leroy Bullard, Albuquerque, NM	75.00
Matthew Bailey, Sparta, IN	2.00
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 Testamnet B. C., Lizton, IN	56.00
Ocoonia 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	12.00
Solid Rock B. C., Kenedy, TX	20.00
South Park M. B. C., Seattle WA	25.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Columbus, MS	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Fulton, MS	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Galena, OH	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Raleigh, NC	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Silsbee, TX	30.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA	200.00
Dividing Checks	225.00
Subscriptions	340.00
Sub Total	\$4,512.38
TOTAL	\$6,545.45
EXPENDITURES:	
Wages	2,375.00
Printing	502.00
Postage	868.35
FICA taxes	181.70
Dividing checks	225.00
Total Expenditures	4,152.05
.....	2,393.40
Bank charge	-19.32
ENDING DEFICIT	\$2,374.08

**BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST
Financial Report
2-28-2002 to 3-31-2002**

Beginning Balance	\$1,704.33
RECEIPTS	
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
Berea B. C., Westpoint, TN	165.00
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	200.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	150.00
Westbrook New Testament B. C., Indianapolis, IN	300.00
Leston Farrell, Long Beach, MS	120.00
Calvary Ind. B. C., Everson, WA	1200.00
Susan Bryson, Harsens Island, MI	100.00
Dividing checks	200.00
TOTAL RECEIPTS	2,535.00
TOTAL	4,239.33
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio Time	1027.00
Dividing Checks	200.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	1,227.00
BALANCE	\$3,012.33
CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT	
Beginning Balance	\$1,693.32
RECEIPTS	
Total	1,693.32
EXPENDITURES:	
WCTT	160.00
Total Expenditures	160.00
ENDING BALANCE	\$1,533.32

**Exposition of Job
By Joseph Caryl
\$350.00**

This is a set of hardcover books which retails for \$475.95. We sell these for \$350. which includes shipping by UPS ground service. This set is 12 volumes of about 500 pages each (two volumes have nearly 1,000 pages). Caryl (1602-1673) has not been reprinted in hundreds of years. There is nothing like it ever written. It is in old English.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, Northport, Ala., and Pastor Todd Bryant will have special services May 31-June 2. Services will be Friday (7:00 p.m.) Saturday (10:30 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.), and Sunday (10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.). The speaker will be Elder Tom Ross, South Point, Ohio. For more information call (205) 333-8449 or email toddbrant@juno.com.

The Philadelphia Baptist Church, Decatur, Ala., and Pastor Doyal Thomas will have special services April 26, 27 & 28. Services will be Friday (7:30 p.m.) Saturday (11:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.), and Sunday (11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.). The speaker will be Elder Leroy Pack, pastor of Morris Street Baptist Church, Hobbs, New Mexico. For more information call Elder Thomas at (256) 773-1474 or e-mail coraltom@aol.com.

The Grace Baptist Church, Ceredo, W. Va., and Pastor Robert Patton have opened a mission in the Buckhannon, W. Va., area. For more information write Pastor Patton at 3337 Graydon Drive, Catlettsburg, KY 41129.

Grace Bible Baptist Church, 26080 Wax Road, Denham Springs, La., and Pastor Jerry Dodson have changed the date of their Bible Conference to June 14-16. For more information contact Pastor Dodson at 225-664-3223.

At the request of several people, Elder Wayne Camp is tackling the task of updating the directory of Sovereign Grace Baptist churches. He is seeking the following information: Church name, address and phone—pastor's name, address and phone, e-mail address—Church website URL, publications—Bible schools, colleges, or seminaries—preachers in church not pastoring—sponsored missionaries. The directory will be found at this URL: http://gpp.camps-computer.com/directory_churches.htm.

Coming in the next issue . . .

- The Christian Footprints* by A. J. Gordon
- Growth Presupposes Life* by Milburn Cockrell
- The Fear of God Part 2* by Milburn Cockrell

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