

The Berea Baptist Banner

"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." Matt. 21:22

Mother's Day

By Roger Reed
of Mansfield, Ohio

"Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee" (Ex. 20:12).

"Honour thy father and thy mother, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee; that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee" (Deut. 5:16).

"Honour thy father and thy



mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matt. 19:19).

"For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death" (Mark 7:10).

"Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy

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The Red Heifer Ordinance Part 8

By Nathaniel Hille
of Plant City, Florida

—He Shall Purify Himself—

"He that toucheth the dead body of any man shall be unclean seven days. He shall purify himself with it on the third day, and on the seventh day he shall be clean: but if he purify not himself the third day, then the seventh day he shall not be clean" (Num. 19:11-12).



We are coming to a close on "The Ordinance of the Red Heifer." And we have seen the wonderful work of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We have seen that He is the Red Heifer, without spot, wherein is no blemish, and upon which never came yoke; which was slain outside the gate and the

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Faith In Action

By Joseph M. Sidders
of Guntown, Mississippi

"And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died? Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days. Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe,



thou shouldest see the glory of God? Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid.

And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus,

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Here I Raise Mine Ebenezer

By David Green
of Hortense, Georgia

A Sermon preached during the 25th anniversary services of Sovereign Grace Baptist church in Hortense GA.

"And when the Philistines heard that the children of Israel were gathered together to Mizpeh, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the children of Israel heard it, they were afraid of the Philistines. And the children of Israel said to Samuel, Cease not to cry unto the Lord our God for us, that he will save us out of the hand of the Philistines. And Samuel



took a sucking lamb, and offered it for a burnt offering wholly unto the Lord: and Samuel cried unto the Lord for Israel; and the

Lord heard him. And as Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel: but the Lord thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten before Israel. And the men of Israel went out of Mizpeh, and pursued the Philistines, and

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The purpose of the Berea Baptist Banner is as follows:

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

Mother's Day

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father and thy mother" (Luke 18:20).

Five times in five different Scriptures we find the commandments to honour our parents. But Christ also said in Luke 14:26 **"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."** And again in Matthew 10:37 **"He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me."**

But then we come to the fourth Commandment in Exodus 20:8 **"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it."**

Brother Cockrell in his book *"The Ten Commandments"* says, (and I quote) "This command is the longest of any of the ten in its wording. It shows that God is the sovereign Lord of our time. On the sabbath which He has appointed we are to worship and serve Him. God must be served and honored daily, but one day in seven is to be particularly dedicated to His honor and spent in His service. This day we must always remember, for in our depravity we tend to forget it.

The main reason to remember this day is to keep it holy unto the Lord" (End of quote).

It is a special day set apart by the Lord the **"first day of the week"** and is to be filled with praise and worship to God. If we take away from that or put something else to over shadow it, then we do harm to the Scripture.

The Argument: We are to **"Honour thy father and thy mother;"** yes, that is what the scripture teaches. But we have also seen that nothing is to be put above or before our service to the Lord especially on the Lord's Day. This is the Lord's house. He deserves our full attention and is to be revered. What about Birthdays, the Fourth of July, Thanksgiving etc.? Someone will always find arguments to get around from getting to the truth of the matter which brings us to our next point.

Back in 2008 I researched the origin of Mother's Day so this is borrowed and I cannot remember the source, so I take no credit for "The Origin," just the research. I have come to believe the reason more Baptist do not research these "worldly" special days, is because they simply do not want to know the truth about all these Pagan holidays. I have shortened the history so the editor does not have a coronary, and has room for this lengthy article, so there is more concerning Mother's Day in a more spiritual sense, but I think the reader will get the idea, and if you are really interested it makes for a good study.

Read the History: The history of Mother's Day is centuries old and the earliest Mother's Day celebrations can be traced back to the spring celebrations of ancient Greece in honor of Rhea, the mother of the gods. During
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Brief Truths

By Randy Johnson of
Texarkana, Texas



"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation" (Ephesians 1:13).

God is Our Creator

"O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee" (Psa. 69:5).

As created creatures we are at the mercy of our Creator. The thing created can never make demands of the one creating it. God asked this question, **"Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour"** (Rom. 9:21)? Does the vessel-maker do as He pleases with the clay? Then, God went on to ask another question, **"And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles"** (Rom. 9:23 - 24)? Then the Lord compared this vessel-making to people. Therefore: it must be concluded that the "vessels" the Lord was talking about were people because He said Jews and Gentiles, meaning they were the people in this world.

God was asking if He, as Creator, has the right to make His created vessels as He chooses. He can make one unto honor and another unto dishonor if He chooses, as He chooses. God can create one vessel to be Abraham and another to be Satan if He chooses. People, and sometimes Christians believe that God somehow owes them something; some believe God should make

them happy in life and let no bad come to them.

So, let me ask a question, what exactly does God owe us? If God were to give people what they deserve, they would all have been created vessels of dishonor, because we were all born in dishonor. The Psalmist wrote, **"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me"** (Psa. 51:5)? This is true of every single soul ever born, apart from Jesus the Son of God. When God said He created some vessels of honor, He meant He would make them vessels of honor by His mercy and grace. Please understand God created two souls, Adam and Eve; every other soul was born in sin. God created Adam and Eve as "upright" souls. They became sinful when they disobeyed God. There is no question that God hates sin, but God also hates the workers of sin or sinners. **"The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity"** (Psa. 5:5). Therefore let us understand that God is not obligated to love anyone. He did not have to create any vessels of honor at all.

Anything God does for mankind is strictly by mercy and grace. So, those vessels that God elected to make vessels of honor are made or created by God's gracious hands, so to speak. Listen to God when not only did He save us by grace and not of works, but He also said, **"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ**

Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10). This is His creating us His vessels of honor. While we were born sinners, God by His "workmanship, creation" made us what He wanted us to be in life before the creation of the world. Therefore, the Apostle Paul wrote these words, **"...by the grace of God I am what I am..."** (I Cor. 15:10).

We must understand that everything God gives is a gift of grace, not a merit payment. We are sinners: even if God makes us vessels of honor, we are still sinners. We must be honest with God and ask His forgiveness of our sins because He knows them. He knows our foolishness, and our sins are open to Him, but through grace, He forgives our sins and our foolishness. God does not have to forgive us; He chooses to because He is a merciful and gracious Creator. The Psalmist pleaded with the Lord in Psalms 51:9-12 **"Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit."** He knew God did not owe him anything, he was asking God for grace.

God knows our foolishness; He sees everything and knows even our thoughts. But He chooses to forgive us. So, no matter where the Lord leads us, it is what the Potter has ordained for us. Let us all walk in that ordained path thanking God. He chose it for us, no matter what road the path is. God knows what our needs are, and He will supply those needs. Making demands of God will only get you

a "no" answer for your requested demands. Let us remember in hard and needful times as the Psalmist did, **"Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful. The LORD preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me"** (Psa. 116:5-6).

(Randy Johnson is pastor of the Sovereign Grace Missionary Baptist Church of Texarkana, Texas.)



Faith In Action

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come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go" (John 11:37-44).

We have two great examples of faith in action in our text. The first is that of Jesus Himself. **"Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me"** (John 11:41). Now we can read from the beginning of this chapter that the Lord knew the "exact" prognosis of Lazarus' sickness and He says in verse 4 **"...This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby."** Then we read later in John 11:14 **"Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead."** Jesus knew of his illness. Jesus knew of his death, and looking back to verse 41 we see that Jesus had been praying for His friend. He had conversed with our Heavenly Father in regard to the condition of His friend and to the affect that the Father would be glorified by the actions of the Son.

We should pray similarly over the sick in our lives. "Father, may
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Faith In Action

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your will be done and prepare within me the appropriate response that you might receive all the glory for it.” **“In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried unto my God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, even into his ears”** (Ps. 18:6). Faith in the Father will enable us to stand and speak confidently. Has our faith seen action? Jesus **“cried out with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.”**

God does not change, beloved. When we see His promises fulfilled we can confidently stand and proclaim His glory in a loud voice, for we know He is worthy to be praised! **“I will call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies”** (Ps. 18:3).

The second example of faith in action that we find here is from Lazarus. Those dry bones were given life from God Himself and then commanded or called into action...and he responded in kind: **“And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin”** (John 11:44). This might seem odd to our flesh, “How does this man simply responding to the commandment of God display his faith?” Recall Bartimaeus’ faith in action as he heard Christ coming and could not be silenced as he cried out for mercy: **“And they came to Jericho: and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the highway side begging. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy**

on me. And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee. And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus. And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way” (Mark 10:46-52).

In the testimony of Lazarus of Bethany, we find the sovereignty of God. It was God who gave life! Surely you and I have a part to play in that we witness of Jesus and we share the Gospel, but while you may plant and I may water surely, it is God who giveth the increase, beloved. Lazarus was not merely restored to his sick state from which he departed, but he was given life and made new! What wonderous experiences have

awaited the newly born-again. Can you recall your helpless and hopeless condition before? Surely you do not long for such days!

We also find the depravity of man. It is no stretch of scripture for us to picture here the righteousness of man. Lazarus is described here from the beginning of the chapter all the way through verse 44 as being “*thnēskō*” and this Greek word, beloved, means dead. He came from the grave as he was placed, bound hand and foot and wearing the uniform of the dead, complete with its mask of submission. This “soudarion” was also referred to as a “sweat-cloth” and even this gives us a vivid picture to reflect upon.

See the command of Jesus to **“Loose him and let him go”?** Wycliffe’s Bible Commentary points out that “the Lord left untouched the work of loving hands that had prepared the body for burial, that they might have the thrill of undoing that work and setting Lazarus free.” Recall as well, dear readers, that they were called to remove the stone as well.

Do you remember that the Leper, if clean, were joyfully welcomed back into the camp? We see there in the Old Testament

that God’s people were still accountable to keep the purity of the camp. Here we see that they were still accountable to bind the body and protect the living. From this we see a powerful picture of our need to uphold Church Discipline. We may have a great rejoicing one day should the Lord call for us to **“take ye away the stone...loose him and let him go”!** Until that time in which there is repentance and restoration we must protect the living, we must keep the purity of Christ’s church!

Do you remember the prodigal son? It was surely not an enjoyable experience that the father went through in seeing his son go...but oh the joy of receiving him unto himself again!

We find here as well reference to the rewards to come. **“Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead. There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him”** (John 12:1-2). It is a brief glimpse and, in many ways, only at the rewards to be experienced in this life, but look at those words **“Lazarus... which had been dead...was one of them that sat at the table with him.”** I am a firm believer in the doctrine of rewards and though I do not have enough room in this article to expound much upon the subject: I do not want to let the opportunity pass us by to point out proofs when they arise.

Look at the proof of predestination here: **“Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick”** (John 11:3). Here we see that Jesus loved him. Before he was made to walk alive again, he was precious in the eyes

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Exodus 2:5-6 **“And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself at the river; and her maidens walked along by the river’s side; and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it. And when she had opened it, she saw the child: and, behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, This is one of the Hebrews’ children.”**

The Red Heifer

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ashes burned. Last sermon, we noted that these ashes were to be mixed with running water, which signified the Holy Spirit of God, **“He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly [heart] shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Spirit was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified)”** (John 7:38,39). Is this not a blessed picture of what the Lord Jesus Christ is doing to His people to cleanse us from all unrighteousness? Is this not a most wonderful encouragement to you and me, whom the Lord is purging our consciences from dead works? **“This is the LORD’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes”** (Ps. 118:23). That the Lord continually purges me from my uncleanness. I am so defiled. You are so defiled. From dealing with all this death. Nevertheless, the Lord has made provision in the death of His Son and through the work of the Holy Spirit by taking the Word of God and convicting us that we would turn to the Lord for cleansing.

“If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us” (I John 1:6-10).

He Who Cleanses Us

Now, I want you to recall that the Lord Jesus Christ gave us a glimpse of this while He was here upon the earth. **“And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, to betray him; Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all”** (John 13:2-10). Here the Lord washed the disciples feet. Now they were in church capacity when this took place. By that, we mean that they were in the assembly of the church. They were not just some disciples hanging out. But they had met for the purpose of worshipping the Lord. In fact, the Lord instituted the Lord’s Supper at this assembly. There He washed the disciples feet. This was a picture of the cleansing of the saints of God. This was a picture of what the Lord would do to His saints through the preaching of the word of God

“That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word” (Eph. 5:26). Now, remember that we told you that this is the work of the Lord. **“And the clean person shall sprinkle upon the unclean on the third day, and on the seventh day: and on the seventh day he shall purify himself, and wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and shall be clean at even”** (Num.19:19). The work was to be done by a clean person. Beloved, I do not know but One Person who fits that description—the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the only One who is clean, pure, righteous, just. Let me assure you and myself, that we do not have to worry about the Lord not doing His office work. I do not need to worry that the Lord Jesus Christ is going to neglect to sprinkle me with the cleansing wave. Here we have the work of God the Son and God the Holy Spirit in cleansing His people. Purging us. Washing our feet.

Our Privileged Duty

Beloved, we have a duty, yea rather a privilege. We have a responsibility in this ordinance of the red heifer. **“He that toucheth the dead body of any man shall be unclean seven days. He shall purify himself with it [a water of separation—Vv.9] on the third day, and on the seventh day he shall be clean...”** (Num.19:11,12). “Note that right there!”: **“He that toucheth the dead body of any man...” he shall purify himself...”** Do you see that? Did you read that? That he (or she) who touched the dead body, who is impure—whether it was in word, in thought, or in deed, was to purify himself. Now, you might say, “Hold on just a minute. You said it was the Lord who does the purifying.” That is exactly right. And, yet, we have a privileged

duty to **“purify himself”**, or purify ourselves. Does not God call on His people to cleanse or purify themselves? **“And I commanded the Levites that they should cleanse themselves, and that they should come and keep the gates, to sanctify the sabbath day. Remember me, O my God, concerning this also, and spare me according to thy greatness of thy mercy”** (Neh. 13:22). **“And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure”** (I John 3:3). Beloved, we have been called by the Lord to purify ourselves. When God through the eternal word, reveals to us by the work of His Holy Spirit speaking to our spirits that there is uncleanness in our lives, we **“must”** purify ourselves.

It seems to me that this cleansing, this washing of the feet, this sanctifying has a special application in the house of the Lord. Is that not where Jesus washed the disciples feet? Was it not a church of the Living God to whom Paul wrote when he penned, **“That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of the water by the word”** (Eph. 5:26)? Most assuredly it is!

Thus, we might say that if we are going to be cleansed, if the water of purification is to be applied, then we had best assemble ourselves with the church of the living God. Beloved, take note of some of the words unto the seven churches of Asia. To the angel of the church at Ephesus He states, **“Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent; and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent”**

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Faith In Action

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of our Lord and Savior. It was for his need, and the benefit of the church that Jesus made this trip. **“Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him”** (John 11:14-15). Consider also the Lord’s promise of perpetuity: **“His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again”** (John 11:8)? Sure violence, sure strife, sure persecution await the Lord should He dare...and for His sheep He would dare go in unto Judaea again!

No scoffing faithless mourners **“And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?”** (John 11:37), no stone upon the tomb, no sickness or death unto the body, nor bindings around the body could prevent the power of God! No deaf ear of a dead man could withstand the penetrating call of the Holy Spirit to **“come forth”**. The reason Baptists do not do altar calls is because God is not waiting on us to invite Him to act upon the lost of this world. In faith we pray He will, but God gives commandment to feeble hands, He does not wait upon them.

Lazarus was not accepting or inviting Christ into his life that day, beloved. He was dead! If you are reading this paper and you are lost today, you are spiritually dead and you need Christ to live. Fall before Him this day and repent, believe on Him for He is your only hope for salvation. **“He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he**

that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God” (John 3:18).



Mine Ebenezer

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smote them, until they came under Beth-car. Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Eben-e-zer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us. So the Philistines were subdued, and they came no more into the coast of Israel: and the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel. And the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron even unto Gath; and the coasts thereof did Israel deliver out of the hands of the Philistines. And there was peace between Israel and the Amorites” (I Sam. 7:7-14).

We will take our text from verse 12. We read here of the enemies of God’s people going against the people of God and the Lord answering the prayer of Samuel. A great victory was won that day. As a memorial of this victory, Samuel placed a stone between Mizpeh and Shen, to which he gave the name of Eben-e-zer, i.e., stone of help, as a standing memorial that the Lord had thus far helped His people.

Notice how this passage is marked. How the hand of God is marked in the lives of the Old Testament saints of God. Oh, how we rejoice at the reading of the history recorded in the pages of the Sacred Text and how profitable it is for us to study these things.

We think about and rejoice at Noah and the Ark...How our

hearts are filled when we read about the children of Israel at the Red Sea when it split wide open for them to cross. See it in your mind’s eye as they were fearfully wondering what to do with the water in front of them and the armies of Pharaoh behind them and can you not hear Moses as he says **“Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD!”** Think about little David killing Goliath....Daniel in the lions den... The three Hebrews in the fiery furnace....

It is not just Old Testament stuff when we see the hand of God. Look there at the New Testament. **“At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at**

Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance. For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me. Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles” (Acts 26:13-23). Oh, how Paul had a grand testimony before Agrippa that day as he told of the events that had taken place and informed him **“Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day”** (v. 22).

Like Paul, those who have been saved should be able to look back on their life and will delight to trace everything all to God. They will recognize the hand of God and see His providence in all things. How we rejoice to see how God worked among those men who have gone before us even in our lifetimes. I am talking about men like Brother Reggie Moore, Brother Joe Wilson, and Brother James Hobbs. I love history, and I really enjoy Baptist history. It thrilled my soul to read where J. H. Grime wrote in his booklet on History of Alien Immersion and Valid Baptism, **“Georgia is, and has been from the first, a great Baptist state...”** But, beloved, is it not more interesting and profitable to consider the work of God in our own lives? I speak to every child of God here but especially and particularly to the Sovereign Grace Baptist Church. Anniversaries matter. Every married couple can attest to

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The Red Heifer

(Continued from page 5) ◊

(Rev. 2:4,5). Unto the angel of the church at Pergamos He states, **“But I have a few things against thee...Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth”** (Rev. 2:14-16). Beloved, see how the word of the Lord comes to the church. See how the Lord gave His word unto the angel of the church, the messenger, or the pastor of the church? The message was to be conveyed to the church. Now, imagine, if you missed the service. Imagine if you got up and left in the middle. Imagine if we spent the whole time daydreaming or thinking about something else? Not only are we not being cleansed, we are adding to our defilement. Do you know what you are missing out on? You are missing out on the application of the waters of separation being applied that our uncleanness might be purged from us. It is absolutely essential for our purification to be in the house of the Lord. Without hesitation we make that statement. No wonder the Holy Spirit stated, **“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching”** (Heb. 10:25).

He Shall Purify Himself With It

“He shall purify himself with it on the third day, and on the seventh day he shall be clean: but if he purify not himself the third day, then the seventh day he shall not be clean” (Num. 19:12).

One of the greatest tragedies in all the world is to sit under the preaching, teaching, and studying of the Word of God and it has

no effect upon our lives. Some folks will say, well, that is because God did not intend it to have an effect. Oh really?! **“For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it”** (Isa. 55:10-11). The Word of God always has an effect! Always! Now if you are sitting under the preaching of the Word of God and it is not affecting you, let me tell you what it is doing. The Lord is just heaping coals upon you. **“.. Son, Remember, that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things...”** (Luke 16:25). You heard it. You heard the word of God, but you did not turn and repent. It was like coals on an already smoldering fire. One day, all the times of being warned, all the sermons, all the letters, notes, texts, statements, etc. will be recalled to you **“Son, remember.”** You need to repent! Folks need to stop resisting the Holy Spirit (Acts 7:51).

We saints need to purify ourselves. We need to stop grieving the Holy Spirit **“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption”** (Eph. 4:29-30). Church members need to forsake quenching the Holy Spirit. How do we do this? By despising not the preaching of the word of God **“Quench not the Spirit.**

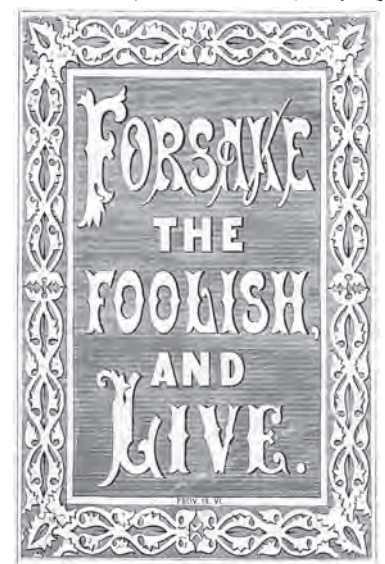
Despise not prophesyings” (I Thess. 5:19-20). Let me give you the amplified Bible text: **“Do not quench** (suppress or subdue) **the (Holy) Spirit. Do not spurn the gifts and utterances of the prophets—do not depreciate prophetic revelations nor despise inspired instruction or exhortation or warning”** (*The Amplified Bible* - I Thess. 5:19,20). Are we doing this?

Beloved, when is the last time we fell upon our knees (our spiritual knees) and cried out to God to cleanse us from some sin, some uncleanness, some dead work that has had safe haven in our lives for far too long? All too often we are minimizing sin and we neglect and negate just how unclean and defiled we truly are. All too often I feel like the ground with thorns and thistles. The cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches are choking out the Word of God in my life. Why we get done with one sermon and hardly have time to really take it in; to taste of it; to feast upon it; have to hurry up and get the next one out; have to go to work. When is the last time God said to you, **“Thou art the man”** (II Sam. 12:7) and we responded with **“Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness; according unto thy multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin... Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow”** (Ps. 51:1-2, 7)? Do you see how we are to **“purify himself”** (Num. 19:12)? Oh, beloved, we have a great responsibility in this. Why if all we ever do is sit under the preaching of the Word of God, read our Bibles, and we do not repent of the specific sins in

our lives, seek to be purged with hyssop from these sins that the Lord has revealed to us in our lives...why we are no better than the Israelite who did not submit to being washed with the water of separation. You recall what their end was? **“But the man that shall be unclean, and shall not purify himself, that soul shall be cut off from among the congregation, because he hath defiled the sanctuary of the LORD: the water of separation hath not been sprinkled upon him; he is unclean”** (Num. 19:20). Did not Jesus say to Simon Peter, **“.. If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me”** (John 13:8)? Most assuredly He did!

Closing

Sinner, you need to repent and be saved. You do not stand a chance before the Lord in your present state of uncleanness. You need to be washed in the fountain filled with blood, drawn from Emmanuel's veins. Then, you will be clean, every whit (John 13:10). Beloved, fellow brethren and saints, let us submit to the Word of God. Let us confess our faults, our sins to the Lord that He might cleanse us from all unrighteousness.



Mine Ebenezer

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that. And the 25th anniversary of the founding of a church matters in a big way, especially in a day and age such as this.

Gallup poll reported that for the first time, church membership fell below 47% in our country. (<https://news.gallup.com/poll/341963/church-membership-falls-below-majority-first-time.aspx>) The article said "U.S. church membership was 73% when Gallup first measured it in 1937 and remained near 70% for the next six decades, before beginning a steady decline around the turn of the 21st century." Taking into account all denominations, even before the pandemic, there have been more church closings than there were churches being started. (<https://religionnews.com/2021/05/26/study-more-churches-closing-than-opening/>)

The last 25 years might not have been as exciting as the things we read of in the Old Testament, the New Testament, or the days of Jesse Mercer, that pioneer Baptist preacher: but we ought to be like Samuel as he was piling the stones that day and saying, **"Hitherto hath the Lord helped us..."** We ought to be like Paul when we give our testimony and tell others, **"Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."**

It was a miracle that the Jews made it across the Red Sea. It was a miracle that the three Hebrews got out of the fiery furnace. It was a miracle that Job survived to tell the story of what happened to him. And it is a miracle that you are here today. It is not chance, fate, nor luck that brought you to this place, nor was it fate, chance or luck that brought you to this year.

As you reflect over the past

twenty-five years, you have gone through some good times, as well as some bad times. You have seen the sunshine and felt the rain. You have been on the mountain and you have spent some time in the valley, too.

Review your diaries, your memories and you will see the hand of God just as clearly over the last twenty-five years...for the same God who was with Samuel was with this church. Folks, Israel is not the church and the church is not Israel, but I tell you the same God who was with the Jews that day when the Philistines came against them was with this church when the enemies of God might have destroyed us.

In the life of this church and in your own life we can find deliverances, periods of refreshing, victories, etc that all can be traced to the hand of Almighty God. **"Hitherto hath the Lord helped us!"**

We read this text and we look backward and is not that what this day has been mostly about - a celebration to our Lord for what He has done. But we also see in these words **"Hitherto hath the Lord helped us!"** You know, that means there is more to come. Hitherto - up to this point. But we are not finished yet. God's grace has brought us this far and by His grace we have got some more time to go.

Concerning the next 25 years. I am no prophet - I am not even the son of the prophet so I cannot tell you what the next 25 years will be like. For one, we may not get there. (Oh, will it not be great if the Lord comes back before then!?)

Are you a bench warmer? Jesus Christ did not die on the cross as your fire escape! What have you done? Are you actively serving the Lord in His church?

◊ (Continued on page 11)

Mother's Day

(Continued from page 2) ◊

the 1600's, the early Christians in England celebrated a day to honor Mary, the mother of Christ. By a religious order the holiday was later expanded in its scope to include all mothers and named as the Mothering Sunday. Celebrated on the 4th Sunday of Lent (the 40-day period leading up to Easter), "Mothering Sunday" honored the mothers of England.

During this time many of England's poor worked as servants for the wealthy. As most jobs were located far from their homes, the servants would live at the houses of their employers. On Mothering Sunday, the servants would have the day off and were encouraged to return home and spend the day with their mothers. A special cake, called the mothering cake, was often brought along to provide a festive touch.

As Christianity spread throughout Europe the celebration changed to honor the "Mother Church" - the spiritual power that gave them life and protected them from harm. Over time the church festival blended with the Mothering Sunday celebration. People began honoring their mothers as well as the church.

With the passage of time, the practice of this fantastic tradition ceased slowly. The English colonists settled in America discontinued the tradition of Mothering Sunday because of lack of time.

In the United States, Mother's Day was loosely inspired by the British day and was first suggested after the American Civil War by social activist Julia Ward Howe. Howe (who wrote the words to the Battle hymn of the Republic)

was horrified by the carnage of the Civil War and the Franco-Prussian War and so, in 1870, she tried to issue a manifesto for peace at international peace conferences in London and Paris (it was much like the later Mother's Day Peace Proclamation). During the Franco-Prussian war in the 1870s, Julia began a one-woman peace crusade and made an impassioned "appeal to womanhood" to rise against war. She composed in Boston a powerful plea that same year (generally considered to be the original Mothers' Day proclamation*) translated it into several languages and distributed it widely. In 1872, she went to London to promote an international Woman's Peace Congress. She began promoting the idea of a "Mother's Day for Peace" to be celebrated on June 2, honoring peace, motherhood, and womanhood. In the Boston Mass, she initiated a Mothers' Peace Day observance on the second Sunday in June, a practice that was to be established as an annual event and practiced for at least 10 years. The day was, however, mainly intended as a call to unite women against war. It was due to her efforts that in 1873, women in 18 cities in America held a Mother's Day for Peace gathering. Howe rigorously championed the cause of official celebration of Mother's Day and declaration of official holiday on the day. She held meetings every year at Boston on Mother's Peace Day and took care that the day was well-observed. The celebrations died out when she turned her efforts to working for peace and women's rights in other ways. Howe failed in her attempt to get the formal recognition of a Mother's Day for Peace. Her remarkable contribution in the

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Mother's Day

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establishment of Mother's Day, however, remains in the fact that she organized a Mother's Day dedicated to peace. It is a landmark in the history of Mother's Day in the sense that this was to be the precursor to the modern Mother's Day celebrations. To acknowledge Howe's achievements a stamp was issued in her honor in 1988.

It should be well to remember that Howe's idea was influenced by Ann Marie Reeves Jarvis, a young Appalachian homemaker who, starting in 1858, had attempted to improve sanitation through what she called "Mothers Friendship Day". In the 1900's, at a time when most women devoted their time solely on their family and homes, Jarvis was working to assist in the healing of the nation after the Civil War. She organized women throughout the Civil War to work for better sanitary conditions for both sides and in 1868 she began work to reconcile Union and Confederate neighbors. Ann was instrumental in saving thousands of lives by teaching women in her Mothers Friendship Clubs the basics of nursing and sanitation which she had learned from her famous physician brother James Reeves, M.D. In parts of the United States, it was customary to plant tomatoes outdoors after Mother's Work Days (and not before).

It was Jarvis' daughter, Anna Jarvis, who finally succeeded in introducing Mother's Day in the sense we celebrate it today. Anna graduated from the Female Seminary in Wheeling and taught in Grafton for a while. Later she moved to Philadelphia with her family. Anna had spent many years looking after her ailing

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Heavenly Hymns

"...Be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 5:18-20). [This hymn was printed with permission from the Olmstead Baptist Church and written by Manie Payne Ferguson in 1911. You may access their free-domain hymnal by going to www.olmsteadbaptistchurch.org/hymnal.pdf]

BLESSED QUIETNESS

19



1. Joys are flow-ing like a riv - er, Since the Com - fort - er has come;
2. Bring-ing life, and health and glad-ness, All a - round this heav'nly Guest,
3. Like the rain that falls from heav-en, Like the sun-light from the sky,
4. What a won - der - ful sal - va - tion, Where we al - ways see His face!



He a - bides with us for - ev - er, Makes the trust - ing heart His home.
Ban-ished un - be - lief and sad-ness, Changed our wea - ri - ness to rest.
So the Ho - ly Ghost is giv - en, Com - ing on us from on high.
What a per - fect hab - i - ta - tion, What a qui - et rest - ing place!



REFRAIN



Bless-ed qui - et - ness, ho - ly qui - et - ness, What as - sur - ance in my soul!



On the storm - y sea, He speaks peace to me, How the bil - lows cease to roll!



Mother's Day

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mother. This is why she preferred to remain a spinster. When her mother died in Philadelphia on May 9, 1905, Anna missed her greatly. So did her sister Elsinore whom she looked after as well. Anna felt children often neglected to appreciate their mother enough while the mother was still alive. Now, she intended to start a Mother's Day, as an honoring of the mothers. In 1907, two years after her mother's death, Anna Jarvis disclosed her intention to her friends who supported her cause wholeheartedly. So supported by her friends, Anna decided to dedicate her life to her mother's cause and to establish Mother's Day to "honor mothers, living and dead." She started the campaign to establish a national Mother's Day. With her friends, she started a letter-writing campaign to urge ministers, businessmen and congressmen in declaring a national Mother's Day holiday. She hoped Mother's Day would increase respect for parents and strengthen family bonds.

As a result of her efforts the first Mother's Day was observed on May 10, 1908, by a church service honoring the late Mrs. Reese Jarvis, in the Andrews Methodist Church in Grafton, West Virginia, where she spent 20 years teaching Sunday school classes. Grafton is the home to the International Mother's Day Shrine. Another service was also conducted on the same date in Philadelphia where Mrs. Jarvis died, leaving her two daughters Anna and Elsinore. So it was more of a homage service for Mrs. Reeves Jarvis than a general one conducted in honor of motherhood. Nevertheless, this set the stage for the later Mother's Day observances held in the

honor of motherhood.

Following this, it gained a widespread popularity across the nation. The Mother's Day International Association came into being on December 12, 1912, to promote and encourage meaningful observances of the event. Anna's dream came true when on May 9, 1914, the Presidential proclamation declared the 2nd Sunday of May to be observed as Mother's Day to honor the mothers.

It was here in the first observance that the carnations were introduced by Miss Jarvis. Large jars of white carnations were set about the platform where the service was conducted. At the end of the exercise one of these white carnations was given to each person present as a souvenir of Mother's Day. All this was done because the late elder Jarvis was fond of carnations.

From there, the custom caught on -- spreading eventually to 45 states. The first Mother's Day proclamation was issued by the governor of West Virginia in 1910. Oklahoma celebrated it in that same year. It started the same way in as far west as the state of Washington. And by 1911 there was not a state in the Union that did not have its own observances for Mother's Day. Soon it crossed the national boundary, as people in Mexico, Canada, South America, China, Japan, and Africa all joined the spree to celebrate a day for mother love.

The Mother's Day International Association came into being on December 12, 1912, to promote and encourage meaningful observances of the event. Starting from 1912, Mother's Day began to be officially declared a holiday by some states. Anna's dream came true when in 1914, President Woodrow Wilson declared the

first national Mother's Day, as a day for American citizens to show the flag in honor of those mothers whose sons had died in war.

The House of Representatives in May 1913 unanimously adopted a resolution requesting the President, his cabinet, the members of both Houses and all officials of the federal government to wear a white carnation on Mother's Day. On May 7, 1914, a resolution providing that the second Sunday in May be designated Mother's Day was introduced by Representative James T. Heflin of Alabama and Senator Morris Sheppard of Texas. It passed both Houses and on May 9, 1914, President Woodrow Wilson made the first official announcement proclaiming Mother's Day as a national holiday that was to be held each year on the 2nd Sunday of May. He asked Americans to give a public expression of reverence to mothers through the celebration of Mother's Day:

"Now, Therefore, I, Woodrow Wilson, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the said Joint Resolution, do hereby direct the government officials to display the United States flag on all government buildings and do invite the people of the United States to display the flag at their homes or other suitable places on the second Sunday in May as a public expression of our love and reverence for the mothers of our country." And issuing a Mother's Day Proclamation has since then been a convention.

Nine years after the first official Mother's Day, commercialization of the U.S. holiday became so rampant that Anna Jarvis herself became a major opponent of what the holiday had become. While honored for her part in

the growth of the holiday, Anna Jarvis' last life was miserable. As the observance of Mother's Day enjoyed increasing popularity, new dimensions came to be added to it. This made Anna Jarvis disillusioned with her own creation. Though the original spirit of honoring the mothers remained the same, what began as a religious service expanded quickly into a more secular observance leading to giving of flowers, cards, and gifts. And Anna Jarvis was unable to cope with this changing mode of expression.

In 1934 Postmaster General James A. Farley announced a stamp to commemorate Mother's Day. The stamp featured the famous painting "Arrangement in Grey and Black." The painting was a portrait of the mother of James Abbott McNeill Whistler, an English artist. It was brought in to the United States as part of an exhibit in the year 1934.

Mother's Day continues to this day to be one of the most commercially successful U.S. occasions. According to the National Restaurant Association, Mother's Day is now the most popular day of the year to dine out at a restaurant in the United States. The occasion is now celebrated not so much with flags as with gifts, cards, hugs, thank yous and other tokens of affection. While many countries of the world celebrate their own Mother's Day on different days and at different times throughout the year, there are some countries such as Denmark, Finland, Italy, Turkey, Australia, and Belgium which also celebrate Mother's Day on the second Sunday of May. In some countries, the appreciation lasts for two days.

Today, Mother's Day is a day

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Mine Ebenezer

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Are you growing in the Lord? Can you imagine being married to someone for 25 years and not knowing a thing more about them than the day you met? That would be scary, would it not? Do you know more about Jesus today than you did 25 years ago? Do you have a plan to grow in the next 25 years? To do something for Him?

Some folks will be absent for the 50th anniversary service. Some will go on to be with the Lord... even some in this room. Praise the Lord, for the child of God, truly the day of one's death is better than one's birth. Some will leave to serve the Lord in other places. I rejoice in that, too.

Some, though, will depart from the faith to go after fables. Oh, how I sorrow over that. So many in my generation are not in church anymore. It is a terrible tragedy. People want to blame parents and churches and preachers as to why that happened. But at the end of the day, when this generation stands before Jesus Christ the Judge, guess who will be responsible for their actions? I will give you a clue. Nobody is going to be able to say "Daddy should have done this" or "Momma did not do this." Without Christ as your Saviour you will stand before God condemned! How will it be with you?

I tell you, unless the Lord has some plan I do not know anything about I pray that twenty-five years from now I am still pastoring this faithful church right here at the end of Willow Drive in Hortense (Popwellville), Georgia. **"But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet**

not I, but the grace of God which was with me" (I Cor. 15:10).

Whatever good we are or do as individuals or as a church is by the grace of God. Oh to grace how great a debtor daily I am constrained to be! Truly, **"Hitherto hath the Lord helped us..."** May we be faithful to our Lord however He leads.



Mother's Day

(Continued from page 10) ♦

honoring mothers, celebrated on various days in many places around the world. It is the day when you acknowledge your mother's contribution in your life and pay a tribute to her, often with flowers and gifts. It complements Father's Day, the celebration honoring fathers.

To bring this to a close, I have been greatly criticized on my stance of Mother's Day in the church, notice I said in the church, so let me ask you dear reader a few questions.

What does Mother's Day and the Lord's Day have in common? Nothing, in fact most churches spend more time honoring mothers than they do God on that day.

Whose day is it? It should go without saying, it is the Lord's Day! What is to be done? **"But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him"** (John 4:23). **"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come"** (I Cor. 16:2). Who is to be worshiped? God! Why is He to be worshiped? Because it is His house and His day! **"Remember the sabbath**

day, to keep it holy" (Ex. 20:8).

Now do not get me wrong, I do not think it is wrong to take your mother out to dinner, or get her a lovely card, or even a gift (flowers), if you so choose to do so. I thank God for every mother, I thank God for my mother, but mothers should never have a higher place in the church than God. The bottom line is the Lord's Day is the Lord's Day! God Bless!



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Be Fruitful and Multiply Elder Perry Ames

"And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Gen. 1:28).

This is the first commandment God gave to man. Think about it, all of mankind are descendants of the first couple, Adam and Eve. This text should point us to many important lessons such as, obey the Lord your God, husbands love your wife, children obey your parents, and many others. However, we are only going to briefly enlarge upon God's command to be fruitful and multiply.

God knew what He was doing when He issued that command. Furthermore, He has never changed that command. Scripture tells us, Jesus (who is God) is "...

the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever" (Heb. 13:8). God's instructions are good for all time. His laws or commandments do not change.

Today there are many that have bought into the myth that the world is over-populated. But did you know that the world's entire population would fit into Texas, with every person having over 1,042.6 square feet. That means a family of four would have a 4,170.56 square foot lot. That is enough room for a home and yard on a city lot. A family of six would have 6,255.6 square feet.

Let us do the math: Texas is 268,601 square miles but 6,804 square miles is water. Therefore, we will use only the 261,797 square miles of land. A mile is 5,280 lineal feet so a square mile is 5,280 x 5,280 which equals 27,878,400 square feet. (27,878,400 sq. ft./sq. mi.) X (261,797 sq. mi.)=7,298,481,484,800 sq. ft. The world population was 6.7 billion so let us round up to 7 billion [This population figure was from the time of the writing of this article. The population in as of today, November 2022, is estimated to be 7.8 billion.] So 7,298,481,484,800 sq. ft./7,000,000,000 people = 1,042.6 sq ft per person [using today's numbers this would put that measurement at 931.3 sq ft].

The population density of Texas would then be 26,738 people per sq. mile. That is about the same density as New York City, and New York has roads, stores, etc.

Points to Ponder: Since it is a fact that the world's entire population could easily fit into Texas, is the world really over-populated? Should we be spreading hope rather than this fear?



The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1) Do churches have an obligation today to maintain an online ministry of some kind?

Roger Reed
20 Ledgewood Dr.
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Pastor
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43162

West Jefferson Baptist Church has a YouTube channel, and we have a website. But before I continue, let me just say I have mixed feelings about online ministries, and to answer the question, I do not believe that churches are obligated to maintain an online ministry.

Let me first state, there will “never” be an online, or TV ministry that will ever take the place of going to church on Sunday. People have always had an excuse for not getting out of bed and getting ready to go to church. Many are tired of hearing this, but it is the truth and it is scriptural. **“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching”** (Heb. 10:25).

I have seen many websites from our type of Baptists, including ours here at West Jeff, and not to offend anyone, but there is only one I would recommend, and that is: <http://www.pbcofdecaturalabama.org/>, but that is my opinion. But, there again, it is “no” substitute for being in church. Church websites are good to hear different preachers,

and the information on many sites is very valuable.

Even when people can not or do not go to church on Sunday, it is not always that they will sit down on Sunday and watch a video or watch a live stream of their church that is broadcasting the sermon for the day. Now do not blow steam out your nostrils, that does not mean no one at home does not watch the sermon if they can not make it to church.

Someone may throw this at me, and say “do websites not help fulfill the ‘Great Commission’ here in Matthew?” **“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen”** (Matt. 28:18-20). Websites do not replace our responsibility for reaching out and talking to people on a one-on-one basis.

So, what we are obligated to do, is be in church on Sunday morning and pray that the Lord would see fit to bring people in (through our efforts in preaching the gospel) and minister to them in the church not an online ministry **“Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen”** (Eph. 3:21). See what it says, God gets glory in His Church, not online. God Bless!

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Psalm 68:11 declares: **“The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it.”**

For better or worse, the reality of our time is that an overwhelming majority of people are now getting their information online. Though it may not be an obligation for a church to maintain an online ministry, it is definitely the better part of wisdom to consider an online presence. I have always been in favor of using any and all lawful means to get the Gospel of Christ and the truth of the Word of God out to the masses. An online presence is just another tool at our disposal.

I am what many would consider a dinosaur when it comes to technology and the internet. However, we have people in our church who have some level of expertise so we started an online presence. Our first real stab at an online presence was with a sermon audio account that has been quite useful through the years. I do not check the stats very often but our messages are being broadcast throughout the United States and in several countries throughout the world twenty four hours a day, seven days a week. We then put a simple, functional website together that has recordings of sermons, the book I wrote that is no longer in print ; “Abandoned Truth: The Doctrines of Grace”, as well as a confession of faith and other pertinent information about our church. Then Judy Rule approached us with a desire

to have the bound volumes of “The Baptist Examiner” paper digitally preserved. We found a company that professionally scanned all the material and we were able to put all the available Baptist Examiners online dating from 1931 to 1998. When the Pandemic of Covid hit we began broadcasting our services online through my Facebook account. It has been a valuable tool, especially for our shut ins and older folks who can not drive at night during the winter months. Our website address is www.mpbchohio.com, our sermon audio account is www.sermonaudio.com/mptpleasant and our Facebook live stream is under my page Tom Ross.

I have no idea what kind of impact our online ministry is making. I do know it is a way to get the Gospel of Christ and the truth of the Word of God out to the masses in an efficient, cost effective manner. Therefore, I would recommend that the churches of the Lord Jesus Christ learn to develop some form of an online ministry. **“And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature”** (Mark 16:15).

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Every church will have to determine how much of an online ministry to maintain. It might even depend upon if that church has someone that is technologically able to put up a website, social media page, or even just a “Yellow Pages” listing, so that interested folks passing through can find a

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2) What is the responsibility of a church member in regards to attending services in person vs online?

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Hebrews 10:22-25 states: **“Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works; Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”**

It is clear from this passage of Scripture that the spiritual fruit of a believer’s profession of faith in Christ is connected to faithful attendance to the Lord’s church. Church attendance is vital to growth in grace as well as maintaining fellowship with other believers of like faith and order. Being physically present in worship services is a powerful way to experience the presence and power of Christ in the midst of His church. It is an opportunity to cultivate loving relationships with brothers and sisters in Christ by way of exhortation and edification. There is something so special and powerful about joining in congregational singing,

corporate prayer, and hearing the Word of God preached. Above all, consistent, faithful church attendance is the fruit of cheerful obedience to the command of God, which in turn glorifies the Lord. I have made it a practice for over 42 years to attend every service of the Lord’s church unless providentially hindered or sick. Thankfully, church attendance has never been an issue for me by the grace of God. I was taught early on in my Christian life by my pastor through precept and practice to be faithful to the house of God. I think an attitude of cheerful obedience to the command to assemble goes a long way to establishing the spiritual habit of faithfully attending church. Therefore, faithful church attendance is a necessary part of Christian growth and discipleship. Moreover and more importantly, God says to do it, and what He says in His Word should be our final authority for all faith and practice.

The offering of online services should never take the place of church attendance. The online option should only be used when people are providentially hindered from attending actual church services. This may be due to sickness, work, caring for a loved one, travel, etc. Our church has several shut-ins who are elderly who cannot come to church, so it is a blessing for them to be able to access the preaching online. However, a healthy church member ought to be in church under normal

circumstances. Watching a service online is not the same as assembling with the saints of God in corporate worship. All believers should view assembling with God’s people to worship and exalt the Lord as a privilege to be looked forward to with joy and delight. Psalm 122:1 expresses such an attitude: **“I was glad when they said unto me, Let us GO INTO the house of the LORD.”** (Emphasis mine, TWR) May God be pleased to raise up more and more people of all ages who love to go to the house of the Lord to worship the Lord together.

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“Honour widows that are widows indeed. But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God. Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day” (I Tim. 5:3-5).

Honor “shut-ins that are shut-ins indeed” is a sometimes-contentious subject within church business meetings. Many are the “congregants” that are faithful in the Lord’s Baptist churches to “congregate,” praise God! But what about the ones that do not? Well, some are “shut-in” and cannot on a normal basis leave their home, usually for aging or health issue reasons. They cannot attend church regularly, but they also cannot go to the store, family

functions, or normal “outside of the home” activities on a regular basis. Honor “shut-ins, that are shut-ins indeed (in reality).” But are there some members in our midst that claim to be “shut-ins” when it is time to go to church, but suddenly not so “shut-in” when a family member offers to take them to some other event. People have not changed that much over the millennia, and the Apostle Paul is warning Timothy that “some folk” will take advantage of their “widowhood” and become a burden (sorrow) to the church. So, too, must churches today be aware of these “advantageous” folk! Selah! Huh?

Obviously it is going to require compassion, wisdom and a good bit of tact, for a church to investigate whether she is a “widow indeed” or just claiming to be a “shut-in,” as we mix these metaphors in this Selah! Compassion is listed first, because that should “really” be the primary purpose of checking up on our members, as to why they are not there at “every” church worship service. The tractor may have turned over on our faithful deacon, so someone needs to call, or go out in person to find out why that member was not at Sunday School. It did, in fact, save that “faithful” deacon’s life, as Brother Pete Chadwick used to tell the story! But sometimes when the compassionate pastor or neighbor member goes over to check on them, the reality is much different. Not only are we concerned that some disaster may have overtaken them physically, but we are also concerned that some spiritual disaster is perhaps occurring in their lives. Anything from the world’s invasive immorality standards to just an apathy for faithfulness, is something that the church membership can help with.

Forum Question #1

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good Sovereign Grace, Landmark, Independent, Missionary Baptist Church to visit while on vacation, etc... Selah! Think about it!

Are there any clear advantages to having an online presence? 1) This new generation that has already forgotten about the "Yellow Pages" and has instead, the instinctive response to "Google" everything on their mobile devices, will allow your church to pop up as an option. If we are going to be a church that is intent upon "Going into all the world," then an online listing, at the minimum, will help in these modern times. 2) Genuine "shut-in's" that are not able to come out to the weekly worship services will benefit if the worship services are broadcast on any of the multiple media sites out there. It enables them to sing along with the congregation, pray along for the needs of the church and her members, and receive a blessing from the teaching and preaching. 3) The truths of God's Word can be made available on a worldwide (web) format. Whether by the actual preaching and teaching of the ministers of the church, or by posting scripture, articles and devotionals, the truth should be clearly proclaimed, and false doctrine clearly exposed by scriptural exegesis. No foolish debates should be allowed on the church's main outreach pages, but if they desired a "log-in" format for teaching, reasoning and to **"speak forth the words of truth and soberness,"** then that would be up to the abilities and desires of each local church. 4) Folks in "church-deprived" areas will be able to have a steady diet of truth and godly teaching, until the Lord brings them into contact with a church (maybe ours?) that they

can resume a faithful membership within. 5) Preachers can listen to other godly preacher friends and be enriched spiritually online. But on the other hand, with all the heresy and error that the devil has "out there," it really is a mixed bag. Churches that broadcast their Bible conferences or area fellowships can truly bless those who are unable to attend these "love feasts" of Baptist gatherings. **"Therefore we were comforted in your comfort: yea, and exceedingly the more joyed we for the joy of Titus, because his spirit was refreshed by you all"** (II Cor. 7:13).

Having an online ministry has drawbacks, as well as the previously stated advantages. 1) Virtually "all" new visitors come to church attendance and membership via personal contact or connections. To start an online ministry with the goal of increasing attendance is a bit naive and can waste a lot of the pastor's and members' time. The vast majority of people that will "tune in" to a Baptist Church's broadcast will "not" be lost folk looking for a rebuke to their sins. Virtually all the listeners will be folks that the church members already know or have personally invited to watch in on their services. Our responsibility is to "go," not "send"! Selah! Think about it! **"And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us"** (Acts 16:9). 2) Internet church services generally create "peripheral" members, rather than "faithful" members. They want to get credit for "watching" or posting emoji "hearts" and "thumbs up," but I really wonder if they stay on any longer than necessary to leave their "online footprint" for evidence of their "faithfulness"... 3)

An undue emphasis by a church on their online ministries can cause apathy and an incorrect focus by their members, if they think the most important work is being done by the pastor and webmasters. To follow the "tally" numbers of the virtual watchers, instead of working to invite "warm bodies" to come fill the pews, to hear the truth, and participate in fellowship, is a losing battle of modernism and liberalism. The Apostle Paul says that salvation and the Gospel are **"revealed from faith to faith"**, or from one person's faith to another person's revelation of saving faith! **"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live (be made alive!) by faith"** (Rom. 1:16-17).

Whatever route the Lord uses His churches to send out the gospel truths, we should maximize our efforts as the days grow darker... diligently, let us Selah! Think about it!

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I do not believe Churches have an obligation to have an online ministry at all. I do believe it is just another avenue whereby a Church is able to spread the gospel to others in this world. The existence of this technology could be a very useful help, if it is used in a way that is not within the confines of a small circle. I will try to explain. Using Facebook, for

example, if a Church just posts a video the algorithm for the video will be made available to those who follow only, small circle. The video needs to be boosted or an ad needs to be paid for, as well as the boost, in turn the video will be made available to a wider audience to view. I am not an expert by any means on this and I know very little about all this, but if you want to spread it wide and far you need to pay the money to get it done.



The simple answer in searching the Scripture is in my opinion, no. There is no such commandment. There are churches in which the technology required either is not available or simply would not work, and there is not always an individual with the needed technical ability to complete the task. In addition, if we are entirely honest with ourselves, the availability of these service options, has, in fact, made our membership less concerned with actually attending.

"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Heb. 10:25). While this verse will undoubtedly appear a lot on the answers to the second question, I intend to use it here as well. The words assemble, one another, and together indicate that we are to assemble as a body in the same place. As capable as the internet is, it is not able to allow us to assemble together as a body

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Forum Question #1

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all in the same place. Sure, there are zoom meetings, livestreams, and many other options available but not one of these options can correctly be called assembling as a body. We can not and must not attempt to replace coming into God's House with relying upon the online services to replace that responsibility.

In addition to this, Matthew 28:18-20 states: **“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”** In this reading, the church was commanded to go into the world and teach the gospel. While online services can be an excellent tool in this effort, they should not be used in lieu of actually going into the world as we were commanded to do. The great commission commands us to go, not to stay and broadcast, or stay and wait. In other words, to hope to reach the world with online services instead of going out ourselves to reach them is not in accordance with Scripture.

“I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD” (Psa. 122:1). Perhaps I should have led off with this verse as it beautifully summarizes the thoughts of this reply. We should have a love for God, His House, Word, and people that we desire to assemble. Again, if a church maintains online services, that is wonderful

and they will be a blessing to many, however, as members we must not use these services as a crutch to miss church. One thing I have seen come out of the use of online services is the ability to broadcast in the event of hazardous conditions and illnesses, whereas prior to this, there would have just been no service of any kind at all.

While to this point my response has been negative, I will give two examples of when online services are helpful to the churches. Obviously, the main group that benefits from online services are those that are truthfully providentially hindered by something, Examples include: work, illness, being shut-in, absence of a sound church in your area, and many other such things. For times when this happens, folks are undoubtably thankful to be able to receive God's Word by way of internet. The second group that benefits from these services are those where missionaries and often Christians are not permitted. If these folks can access our services, they are undoubtably blessed by the ability we have to broadcast our services.



Forum Question #2

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“We need you in church more! It will be exactly what you need to strengthen your faith to hear the next sermon from the pastor and to sing the joyful songs of praise with your best friends in the world next Wednesday night! If you need me to pick you up because it is tough to drive at night, please let me help you!”

I understand that some do not want to be a burden. This is where real wisdom is going to

have to be utilized, both by the membership and the member in a pinch. Sometimes, the unhealthy member is going to have to see, that by rejecting the offers to help, he is denying those members the rewards God intended by enabling them to shower blessings all around. 1) I “get” to go to church and 2) They sincerely “want” to help me out. Please do not let “pride” get in the way of God's ordained blessings! After all, God has authorized this time of trial in your life, correct? But sometimes, the church really does not have the membership or the resources to help out fully. If the perceived way to help is going to cost too much, then God must have another way.

One of those ways might be the virtual attending of Church by “shut-ins indeed” via the broadcasting of church services online, by any one of multiple media formats that can easily be accessed by the church membership. This broadcasting that became almost universal during the recent “pandemic scare” can be a blessing, if not abused. Even vacationing members can now keep up with prayer requests and teachers’ “book studies.” But “virtual attendance” can never become accepted as a replacement for the “in person” requirements for our Baptist churches. No more than “FaceTime” phone calls by a working Dad can ever raise up a family and knit together a godly marriage, as the “in person” touching of love and faith will.

Church members that “claim” to be “providentially hindered” from “in person” church attendance, had better dissect that statement etymologically. “Providentially hindered” means that providence/God stopped you from coming. God said, “Do not go...”?? I wonder how often Jesus says, “I do not want you to go to meet with

Me and My body today!” Yeah, just those that are “providentially hindered shut-ins, indeed”! Selah! Think about it!



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Since I pretty much answered this question in the first question I will just say, the church member is one hundred percent responsible to be at church every time the church building doors are opened.

“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching” (Heb. 10:25).

“Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen” (Eph. 3:21).

The church member is not responsible, and there is no Scripture I know of to

attend services online. The only exception for a person to attend online services would be because they are either housebound, bedridden, or in the hospital. But if there is anything they would be responsible for, it would be reading the Word of God! **“Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God”** (Heb. 10:7). God Bless!

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Little Valleys

By Oscar B. Mink
(1924-2004)



"He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills." (Psalms 104:10).

ATONEMENT SUFFICIENCY EXAMINED

"And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement" (Rom. 5:11).

Voluminous are the writings of sovereign grace advocates under the heading of limited atonement or particular redemption, and this is as it should be, for in this great truth, God's attributes of omnipotence and omniscience are gloriously manifested. There is near to perfect accord in the school of sovereign grace as to the salvational effectuality of the atonement, but there is at the same time a disconcerting measure of discord in the ranks of sovereign grace believers as to the extent of the sufficiency of the atonement. Was Christ's expiatory sacrifice sufficient to remit the sins of mankind, or was it restricted in atone sufficiency to those chosen of God from the race of humanity? This question poses a dark enigma to many, and has been the basis of much debate throughout the history of Christendom. Nevertheless, our feeble efforts in this treatise shall be expended in an attempt to magnify the truth as relates to the question. If by God's grace our endeavor is rewarded with a small token of success, the proportionate measure of darkness will be lifted from the question, and our efforts amply recompensed.

Some brethren whom I esteem very highly, and whose friendship I am determined to keep in constant repair, espouse

what I consider an unorthodox view of the sufficiency of the atonement; namely, atonement sufficiency is equal in extent to human evil, but not in intent. This view is commonly referred to by theological scholars as, the sufficiency-efficiency view of the atonement, and is today, by far, the most popular view being propagated by Calvinists and Baptists. However, there are today among God's elect people, as there have always been, and shall ever be, a large and concerned number who take a more conservative view of the atonement of Christ, that view being, all that was wrought in and by the atonement was and is limited to the elect of God. This view magnifies the Majesty of God more than the other, for in it there is no undesigned sufficiency.

The position on atonement sufficiency, which I contend is the Scriptural one, and which I purpose to defend in this writing, can in brief be described thusly: "Atonement sufficiency and efficacy are equal in extent and application." This position, some would say, "Allows for deficiency in God, in that He was not able to provide a sufficiency adequate to the Adamic transgression." Inability and deficiency are incongruous to the nature of God, for with Him all things are possible, and they who would charge us with teaching that God's throne has a dim shade of insufficiency over it, need to learn it is the "Design" of atonement sufficiency we are

concerned with, and that the sovereignty of God's sufficiency has never been questioned by New Testament Baptists. The deficiency in sufficiency supposition is an absurdity that needs no further refutation or consideration.

I will strive vigorously for scriptural accuracy in this treatise, but it is needful to be understood by all, that the ultimate literary skill this side of Divine inspiration can, only with so great a theme, develop an abstraction of it. However, an abstraction can be more than the sharing of theory. It can be and should be an enlargement of fact, and this is my aim, and by Divine enablement, the end which shall be accomplished. So, let us embark henceforth.

To effect the purpose of this treatise, as stated above, the following three sub-headings are prescribed:

1. The design of atonement sufficiency.
2. Scripture typology and atonement sufficiency.
3. A passive or inoperative sufficiency is alien to the attributes of God.

In following the above order, let us first consider:

THE DESIGN OF ATONEMENT SUFFICIENCY

In introducing this point, I will set down a maxim, i.e., GOD IS THE ONLY ABSOLUTE INFINITY. Therefore, all things are subject to metamorphosis or transformation, except the essential and intrinsic glory of God. God's essential glory is not capable of more or less. Addition and diminution have to do with God's manifestive glory, and not with that glory which is inherent in His nature. All of creation is sovereignly appointed to serve

God's intrinsic glory, but some of creation is designed by Him to a greater manifestation of His glory than is some other.

The stars of Heaven are an infinite host, but God knows "...the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names" (Psa. 147:4). The universe is an infinity, but to the dismay of the pantheists, it is not the absolute infinity, for only God is omnipresent and non-dimensional. Atonement efficiency and sufficiency are infinite, but both are limited in design by the covenant of redemption (Heb. 13:20). This covenant knows nothing of sufficient grace that does not suffice.

In the eternal covenant God decreed to save a number of Adam's fallen posterity by the vicarious sufferings of Christ, and the rest He left in their sins to their just condemnation. Seeing that this covenant is eternal, that there can be no new thought with God, and what He does He always determined to do, I ask, Why would God make Christ's atonement sufficient for those whom He had already passed over in the covenant of eternal favor? What is the purpose of a sufficiency beyond that of Divine satisfaction? The design of the sacrifice of Christ was to reconcile the elect unto God, and the sufficiency of that glorious and infinite sacrifice was limited to that infinite sum, beloved of the Father and given to the Son in the covenant of redemption.

The value of the blood of Christ is not diminished by what it does not do. It did not procure repentance and faith for all men, it did not stay the retributive justice of God against the non-elect, and it did not provide salvational sufficiency for all men.

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Baptist History



Taken from *This Day in Baptist History*
Written by E. Wayne
Thompson and
David L Cummins

SHE SAW THAT HE WAS A PROPER CHILD

Scripture: *I Samuel 1:9-18*

Spencer H. Cone was born at Princeton, New Jersey, April 13, 1785, to parents of outstanding gifts. His father was a high-spirited, fearless gentleman who fought with great bravery in the Revolutionary War. His mother possessed a vigorous intellect and indomitable moral courage. The both were members of the Hopewell Baptist Church. Armitage quotes from one of Dr. Cone's sermons: "My mother was baptized when I was a few months old, and soon after her baptism, as I was sleeping on her lap, she was much drawn out in prayer for her babe and supposed she received an answer, with the assurance that the child should live to preach the Gospel of Christ. This assurance never left her."¹

At the age of twelve, the precocious youngster entered the freshman class at Princeton College, whose president predicted for him a brilliant future as an orator. But because his father developed a serious mental illness, Cone was forced to leave school at the age of fourteen

to support the family. He taught Latin, worked as an actor on stage, was a bookkeeper in newspaper offices, published a paper in Philadelphia, and was devoted to the politics of Jefferson and Madison.²

While Cone was in a bookstore, he discovered the works of John Newton, and he purchased the volume. Upon reading the *Life of Newton*, Cone was moved to the great agony of the conviction of sin. Armitage quotes him as saying, "I felt that as a sinner I was condemned and justly exposed to immediate and everlasting destruction. I saw distinctly that in Christ alone I must be saved, if saved at all; and the view I had at that moment of Christ's method of saving sinners, I do still most heartily entertain after thirty years experience of His love."³

Cone fought bravely in the War of 1812 as the captain of artillery at the battles of Northpoint, Bladensburg, and Baltimore. Not long after the war, he went to preach in Washington, D. C., and became so popular that he was elected as chaplain of the Congress. For a time Cone was a pastor in Alexandria, Virginia, and he ultimately accepted the pastorate of the First Baptist Church of New York City.

1 Thomas Armitage, *The History of the Baptists* (1890; reprint ed., Watertown, Wis. Maranatha Baptist Press, 1976), 2:904.

2 Jesse L. Boyd, *A History of Baptists in America Prior to 1845* (New York: American Press, 1957), p. 165.

3 Armitage, p. 905.

For about forty years, he was a leader in home and foreign mission work and in the great modern movement for a purely translated Bible. He firmly believed that the word "baptize" in the Bible meant to immerse, that it was his duty to God to preach it, and that it was as clearly his duty to print it; therefore, he had many enemies. There was a great stir when a revision of the word "baptize" should be rendered "immerse" and "baptism" should be rendered "immersion." It was claimed by the pedobaptists that such renderings were interpretations, not translations. Of course, *baptizo* should be rendered "immersion, if rightly translated, instead of being transliterated. Dr. Cone stood on solid ground.

In the prime of his life, Cone was said to have been the most active Baptist minister in the United States and the most popular clergyman in America. Though he valued education, he was mostly concerned with the purity of the Word that men might truly know the mind of Christ in the Scriptures, translated faithfully into the languages of all men. God help us to be as concerned with the purity of God's truth and as faithful in walking in obedience to its precepts.



Little Valleys

(Continued from page 16) ◊

The preciousness of the work of the Holy Spirit is not lessened because He does not once convict the non-elect of their sins, and does nothing to alter their hatred of God, but leaves them in their utter rebellion against all that is holy, just, and good, which culminates in their eternal suffering.

What is the value of the blood

of Christ? Surely no redeemed person would say it is less than infinite, but it borders on Arminianism to content that the blood of Christ sufficiently atones for the sins of mankind. The blood of Christ cannot be overvalued, but in the thinking of finite creatures, its value can be misapplied, and this is precisely what the universal sufficiency theory does. The atonement of Christ cannot be denuded of any of its parts, and neither can it be made to bear more than what omniscience designed for it to bear.

The blood of Christ was shed to satisfy the just demands of the law brought against the elect people of God, and when satisfaction is attained, it asks no more. God's atoning love is equal to the condemnation of His people, and when His justice was satisfied, He had no further quarrel with the elect. God's law is the basis or standard of His judgment, and the demands of the law levied upon the elect have been substitutionarily satisfied by the death of Christ, and the Righteous Judge has taken His legal pen and has written "Justified" on their record (Rom. 8:33). But the atoning sufficiency of Christ's death was not redundant. It did not exceed what was necessary to satisfy the debt which His people owed to His law, and now Divine Justice looks for satisfying sufficiency beyond the covenant of sovereign mercy and finds none, except in merited damnation of the non-elect.

Thus, the equitable and incontestable verdict rendered by the court of Heaven against all who die in their sins reads: "...I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:23). They were fully known by

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God's omniscience, but they were total strangers to the covenant of love, and their names being omitted from the Lamb's book of life, no redemptive sufficiency was provided for them by the atoning blood of Christ.

A sufficiency which satisfaction does not require is alien to His Scriptures and to the experience of all rational creatures. So it is, in realizing satisfaction, sufficiency and efficiency are co-extensive, for sufficiency is measured by the effect it renders. The old adage which says: "It is better to have too much than too little" is true in the general sense, but it can never apply to God, for He never has too much or too little; just the perfect measure.

The value of the blood of Christ is infinite, but it is a divinely preassigned infinity, and is restricted in its atoning worth and utility to the elect of God. Wherein is the wisdom in purchasing a sufficiency for a people whose sins are inexpiable and were reprobate before the foundation of the world? Wherein is the wisdom of God in extending the value of the blood to those whom He hated before the ages were born? Wherein is the wisdom of God in subjecting His beloved Son to infinite suffering in order to purchase a sufficiency for a people who would never receive the least benefit from it? Most certainly we would not think of questioning the wisdom of God, but the universal sufficiency view is a mooted one, and raises many questions.

God did not by the shedding of Christ's blood obtain a universal sufficiency for the curse of sin, but His sacrificial blood was the means of ratifying the covenant of

redemption (Heb. 13:20), which covenant beneficially precluded the non-elect.

1. The design and sufficiency of Christ's intercessory prayer is limited to the elect of God (John 17:9).

2. The design and sufficiency of Christ's imputed righteousness is limited to the elect of God (Rom. 4:6).

3. The design and sufficiency of Christ's atoning love is limited to the elect of God (Jer. 31:3; John 17:23; Rom. 9:13).

4. The design and sufficiency of Christ's justification is limited to the elect (Rom. 8:33).

5. The design and sufficiency of Christ's mediatorial office is limited to the elect of God (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25).

6. The design and sufficiency of the eternal covenant is limited to the elect of God (John 5:21, 6:63; II Tim. 1:9).

7. The design and sufficiency of regenerative grace is limited to the elect of God (John 17:6; Heb. 13:20).

8. The design and sufficiency of Heaven is limited to the elect of God (I Pet. 1:2-4).

The term "Sufficiency" in the eight postulates enumerated above could be replaced with the word "Efficiency" and it would not change the design or results in the least. As defined by Webster, both terms mean adequacy. The primary distinction between the terms if chronological, for sufficiency begets efficiency, but God is the author of both, and He, being omniscient, would not appropriate a sufficiency beyond the suitability of His designs for efficiency.

Jesus bled, suffered, and died as the substitute for His people, and the value of his blood was equal to their in debt, for the Father would not charge one farthing more than

that which was owed. "...**the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us** (the elect) **from all sin**" (I John 1:7). Forgiveness cannot extend beyond the offense, and the blood of Christ, though infinite in value, did not procure a sufficiency beyond that which was equal to the sinfulness of His people. **"Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound"** (Rom. 5:20), but this abounding grace has not to do with a redemptive sufficiency for the non-elect, but with the bestowal of sonship on the atoned ones, whereby they become **"joint-heirs with Christ"** (Rom. 8:17).

There is no question as to the capability of God. He could have, had He been pleased, provided satisfaction for the devil and his angels, but we know this was not His pleasure. It is the design of God's sovereign grace we are concerned with, and redemptive sufficiency is a product of the omniscient Designer. To talk of atoning sufficiency without forelove runs counter to the tenor of Scripture. Such terms as "uncovenanted mercies," "heathen virtue," and "universal sufficiency," should arouse infinite skepticism in the minds of all who hold the truth of God's sovereign grace.

It is God's eternal design to **"bruise"** His Son (Isa. 53:10) and by His infinite suffering provide atoning sufficiency for all whom He represented in His suffering. Therefore, Peter, in speaking to the elect, says: **"Rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy"** (I Pet. 4:13). Are the non-elect in any sense or measure partakers of the suffering of Christ? To affirm the universal sufficiency view of the atonement is to say Christ's substitutionary sufferings was

at least in part for the reprobate world, for there can be no atoning sufficiency apart from the sufferings of Christ.

The atonement of Christ is a very special and infinitely gracious work which is limited to the elect (John 10:11), but a general sufficiency which is common to all mankind would destroy the particularistic nature of the atonement, and put a wider dimension on the atonement than is Scripturally warranted.

God's love for His people is infinite, yet it is a fixed love, and it can never be more or less than what is has eternally been (Jer. 31:3; John 13:1; Heb. 13:8). God's infallible justice has drawn a demarcation line between the elect and the non-elect, and His love honors the line and limits which He has set for it. God is not divided in Himself. God's love will not manifest itself, even infinitesimally, toward any person whose name is not written in the Lamb's book of life. Why then, I ask, take atoning sufficiency and set it apart from God's love? Why make Christ's atoning sufficiency to go beyond His sufferings, beyond the covenant of redemption, and beyond God's restrictive "design" for it? The answer is simply because the universal sufficiency doctrine is ill conceived.

SCRIPTURE TYPOLOGY AND ATONEMENT SUFFICIENCY

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine..." (II Tim. 3:16). This text most assuredly includes the Old Testament and its many and various types, for the New Testament was not yet in existence. A type has been aptly defined as "A Divinely appointed illustration of some Scriptural truth." A better definition would

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be hard to come by and because of the sameness of meaning of type and symbol, I will use them interchangeably in this writing. Typical teaching permeates the Scriptures. Everywhere we turn in the Bible we are confronted with types and they are there for our profit.

A. First let us look at the Ark of Noah, a vivid type of Christ. I Peter 3:20 and 21 is a clear and unmistakable reference to Noah and the ark passing through the judgmental flood in connection with the atoning death and justifying resurrection of Jesus Christ. The design of the Ark was given to Noah in minute detail by the omniscient Designer and Architect of the universe (Gen. 6:14-16). Now, the question is, was the Ark sufficient in size to accommodate all who were living on the earth at the time? Surely, this question is answered in the asking.

It was not the divine purpose to save all the antediluvian posterity of Adam in the Ark, but only Noah and his family, and seeing there is no negligible quantity in God, all the space and sufficiency sovereignly vested in the Ark for flood survival was fully and gloriously utilized. Noah was “**a preacher of righteousness**”, and while the Ark was “**a-preparing**”, Noah preached Christ by symbol and sermon; for to preach righteousness is to preach Christ, for He is the believer’s justifying righteousness (I Cor. 1:30).

No doubt during this exceeding period of one hundred and twenty years of Ark preparation, Noah warned others as he was warned of God (Heb. 11:7). However, only seven believed his report and they were of his own house

(Gen. 7:1). Then God brought judgment upon the world of the ungodly and they perished in the flood (II Pet. 2:5). The Noachian family is a type of the household of God (Eph. 2:19), and Christ, the antitype of the Ark (Acts 4:12) and Head “**over his own house**” (Heb. 3:6), has made sufficient room for His family and none else. Christ is the Sovereign Sufferer, and having eternally loved His family, He made room for them and them alone in the storm swept citadel of His grace. The Ark as a type was not given to us in shorthand, but in minute detail, and every detail speaks of Christ.

Atonement sufficiency is anchored in God’s forelove, and Christ loves only those who were given to Him by the Father in the covenant of redemption (Jer. 31:3; John 13:1, 17:6; Rom. 8:37). In the redemptive scheme there is no such thing as uncovenanted love and hence, no universal atonement sufficiency.

The Ark was a divine provision made before the waters of judgment fell from Heaven, and in construction of the Ark, Noah followed the heavenly specifications with unvarying exactitude. “**Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he**” (Gen. 6:22). There was not one extra cubit inch in the fullness of the Ark, nor was there any unused or wasted space. The sufficiency of the Ark was according to God’s purpose, and His elective purpose was to save only eight souls from the flood (I Pet 3:20).

Likewise, Jesus Christ was provided by God before the foundation of the world, to deliver His people from the storm of His judgment upon sin (II Tim. 1:9). Christ’s mission to this earth, as with the Ark, was according

in every detail to the need of His people, and not one thing wrought by the atoning death of Christ was extended beyond those for whom He died. The sufficiency and efficiency of Christ’s sacrifice was eternally shut up to the elect of God, and there was “no” redemptive sufficiency left over. The purpose of atoning sufficiency must be measured by its accomplishments, and it has none beyond “**the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand...**” (Psa. 95:7). To contend otherwise is to argue for an unsure curse upon the sins of the non-elect, for who can say how long a sovereign sufficiency will remain in protraction? The universal sufficiency theory has the rudiment of universal restoration of mankind in it. “Beware”!

B. The second type we want to consider is that of the Passover Lamb of Exodus 12.

The pure, free, and infinite grace of God provided Israel with the Passover Lamb, and in this sacrificial Lamb was their redemption and sufficiency. However, let it be clearly understood that the taking of the Lamb from the flock, the slaying of it, and the roasting of it with fire was not sufficient to save Israel from the imminent judgment upon Egypt. The blood “must” be sprinkled upon the posts and lintel of the door of each Israelitish home. God emphatically declared that “**when I see the blood, I will pass over you**” (Ex. 12:13). This He said to Israel, and not to Egypt.

It is the common concurrence that Israel in slavery to Egypt is a type of God’s elect in their pre-regenerate state, in which state they “**walked according to the course of this world**” (Eph. 2:2), or like ancient Israel in bondage, walked according to the course of

Egypt. It is also uniformly held by students of Scriptures, that Egypt is a type of this present evil world, a tyrant to whom man in his native state pays perfect allegiance. However, the powerful tyranny exercised by the world over man does not in any degree lessen his responsibility to denounce the world and come out of it.

Christ said of all who have owned His Lordship over them, “**They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world**” (John 17:16). There is “no” spiritual commonality between the regenerate person and the world, and Divine sufficiency is certainly spiritual. Redemptive sufficiency is a product of God’s love and was purchased by Christ’s sacrificial blood. In view of this glorious truth, I ask, Does God’s atoning sufficiency extend beyond His love? Are they not both co-extensive, retrospectively and prospectively, and have as their objects the same number of people, i.e., the elect of God?

The Apostle Paul said, speaking of the antitype of Israel’s Passover Lamb, “**..For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us**” (I Cor. 5:7). To universalize the pronoun “us” in this text and make it apply in any sense to the reprobate world is to bedim the glory of the atonement. A sufficiency, the generality of which is such that it makes no distinction whatsoever between the people of God and those of the devil, is far too general for the Scriptures. God does not deal with the non-elect world though sufficient grace, but with sufficient and unadulterated justice, which provides no measure of atoning sufficiency, but eternal and merited suffering.

God’s counsel is eternal and so are all of His decrees. Thus,

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the decree of unpardonableness against the sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit is eternal (Matt. 12:31-32). Does it not follow then, seeing that contradictory decrees cannot emanate from God, that He would not decree an atoning sufficiency for a sin that He decreed never to forgive? Pharaoh is an unmistakable type of Satan. He was bent on the elimination of Moses, a type of Christ, and on the annihilation of Israel, a type of God's elect. His reprobation was glaringly manifest, and it was God's eternal intention to drown him in the Red Sea (Rom. 9:17), as it is God's purpose to cast Satan, the antitype of Pharaoh, into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:10). In view of this, I ask, Did the atoning sufficiency of Israel's Lamb extend unto Pharaoh?

"..The LORD doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel" (Ex. 11:7). This "difference" which distinguished Israel from Egypt was the Passover Lamb. God did not give Egypt a Passover Lamb, and consequently, no atonement sufficiency was provided for Egypt. When atoning blood is denied a people, they are left to themselves, and people left to themselves have never been objects of atonement sufficiency. Sufficiency is a vital part of God's redemptive purpose for His people, and that purpose and sufficiency corresponds precisely with the number of names eternally registered in the Lamb's book of life.

Knowledge of the importance and purpose of the Lamb was limited to Israel. Sprinkling of the blood of the Lamb was limited to Israel. The promise of God, wherein He said, **"When I see the blood I will pass over**

you", was limited to Israel. All redemptive or atoning benefits, including sufficiency, was limited to Israel. Conversely, the death curse of the firstborn was visited upon the household of Pharaoh and all the land of Egypt (Exodus 12:29). God's infinite holiness and inflexible justice sees the non-elect as unatoned for sinners, and has provided for them smiting rather than sufficiency. The only thing God ever does with sin is smite it, and God's atoning Lamb was not smitten with as much as one stripe for any beyond the limits of His shed blood.

Christ, the antitype of Israel's Passover Lamb and antitype of Israel's High Priest (Heb. 9:7), having obtained eternal redemption for His people (Heb. 9:11 and 12), entered into the tabernacle not made with hands. In the heavenly tabernacle behind the veil, the blood of Christ was sprinkled and accepted to the full satisfaction of the Father for the sins of His covenant children (Heb. 6:19, 10:24, 13:20). Therefore, the guilt of God's elect is forever removed from heaven's court docket and the sovereign verdict now reads, **"..their sins and iniquities will I remember no more"** (Heb. 10:17).

Peter speaking of the glorious and exclusive offering of the blood of Christ within the veil of Heaven's tabernacle, says **"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied"** (I Pet. 1:2). **"Grace"** and **"peace"** are blessings purchased for the elect by the shed and sprinkled blood of Christ, and every other purchase made by the vicarious sufferings of Christ shall be realized by the elect of God, and by them only,

for His intercession on the cross was eternally and sovereignly restricted to them. **"..the good shepherd...giveth his life for the sheep"** (John 10:11). In no sense did He die for the goats.

Every blessing the redeemed of God shall ever experience in time and eternity was procured for them by the sacrificial blood of Christ. On the other hand, all the suffering and grief which the non-elect shall ever know, is owing to their infinite hatred of the blood of God's Lamb (Heb. 10:29, and not to an ill-supposed sufficiency.

What is typically true of the Lamb of Exodus twelve is equally true of all the God ordained animal sacrifices of the Old Testament, for they all were typical of the all concluding sacrifice which God would make upon Calvary. The institution of animal sacrifices must reach its terminus, for the offended and infinite justice of God could never be satisfied with the blood of a beast as the means of expiation for the sins of utterly depraved men. Every sin is an infinite insult to the honor and holiness of God, and when the offense is infinite, so must the sacrifice be by which the sin is expiated. Hence, the incarnation and crucifixion of Christ. Christ **"..appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself"** (Heb. 9:26).

"For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Heb. 10:14). **"Sanctified"**, i.e., set apart by the covenant of eternal redemption. The saints' perfection is not of personal character, but of legal standing before the bar of God's inflexible and just law. The saints' perfection has not to do with personal righteousness, but with imputed righteousness which was appropriated for them in the covenant of eternal

and unconditional election, and merited not by them, but by the precious blood of Christ (I Pet. 1:18-20).

The justification or declaration of the saints' legal righteousness is eternally anchored in the sovereign, holy, and active love of God. The love of God is infinite, but exclusive. It does not reach all mankind, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. Thus it is seen that Christ is God's beloved Son, and singular channel of His blessings. All the blessings of the atonement come to the Elect of God through Christ, the Mediator of the covenant of grace, and no good thing shall be withheld from them for whom it was purchased.

Most surely, atonement sufficiency is infinitely good, and no good thing wrought by the propitiation of Christ shall ever be voided. Therefore, atonement sufficiency is limited to the elect, and they are made more than conquerors through Him that loved them (Rom. 8:37). All that was purchased by the atoning blood of Christ will be infallibly applied to all those for whom the purchase was made. To say otherwise is to charge God with vanity, and the universal sufficiency view of the atonement gives credence to this baseless allegation. "Beware"!

The Passover Lamb of Exodus twelve is not a picture of universal sufficiency, but of particular protection. Atonement sufficiency equals deliverance from the cure. Christ did not die to provide a sufficiency that would go eternally wanting for a people to protect, but His shed blood has provided a covering for the people of God, and Paul says: **"Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and**

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whose sins are covered" (Rom. 4:7). It irrevocably follows, all whose sins are not covered, Calvary's atonement has no value for them.

A PASSIVE OR INOPERATIVE SUFFICIENCY IS ALIEN TO THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD
"...The LORD spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified..." (Lev. 10:3). **"...My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure"** (Isa. 46:10). All of God's purposes and pleasures are rooted and grounded in His determination to glorify Himself. God has never done anything nor shall ever do anything that is not subordinated to this one supreme end, that is, the manifestation of His own personal glory.

God manifests His attributes, and in so doing, magnifies His Person. God is holy, so are all of His works. God is infallible; so are all of His designs. God is omniscient; so all of His works are perfectly wrought. God is just; so are all of His ends. "If my soul was sent to Hell, God's righteous law approves it well." God is immutable so His sufficiency changes not. God is sovereign and so is His sufficiency.

MAXIM: There is no such thing as a powerless power. God has sent forth His sufficiency, not inertly, but with power to achieve His purpose for which it was sent. Salvational sufficiency is a product of Divine love, and God's love cannot be other than effective. God's love is sovereign and so is the sufficiency which is sent to manifest that love. There is no such thing as an unpremeditated or purposeless sufficiency

emanating from God, as would be the case with salvational sufficiency for the non-elect, for it never suffices. Neither God's love nor His sufficiency can fall into a void, and neither of them know any disturbing influences, but run sovereignly to the goal appointed of Him **"Who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will"**.

What worth is atoning sufficiency to a people who were already in Hell when the price of it was paid? Abel's lamb had no sufficiency for Cain, Moses' lamb had no sufficiency for Pharaoh, and most certainly the blood of Calvary's Lamb did not provide salvational sufficiency for those who were already in hell when Christ died. To contend for the universal sufficiency view of the atonement is to charge God with designing a sufficiency to no avail, and raises the question, how can God be just and hold from any person that which was purchased for them by the precious blood of His own Son?

The universal sufficiency theory and Christ's words, wherein He said: **"I pray not for the world"** (John 17:9); have an element of incongruity in them. This incongruity causes some to wonder why Christ would not pray for those whom He would suffer the shedding of His blood to provide them with salvational sufficiency, and what the design of that sufficiency is, seeing that the blood purchased sufficiency does not prevail in behalf of all its objects.

The exclusiveness of Christ's mediatorialship, both on the cross and on the throne, was and is solely for the elect of God. Christ's mediation cannot be empty or futile, and all whom He interceded for on the cross, He now intercedes for them with the

crown of all majesty. There is in God a sufficiency toward the non-elect, but it is one of indignation, and not salvation. God says: **"Esau have I hated"** (Mal. 1:3; Rom. 9:13), and God's hatred knows nothing of salvational sufficiency, but only eternal damnation. If this truth seems harsh, it is not in the least so, for truth cannot adorn itself in any defective robe.

I have often read the following analogy from various sources and in every instance it is set forth in an effort to support the erroneous doctrine of universal sufficiency of the atonement. The analogy: "The sun necessarily gives off as much heat even if only one plant is to grow, Christ necessarily suffered as much even if only one person was to be saved." This analogy brings honor to God when properly considered, but when used to try and support the contention that the atonement of Christ purchased salvational sufficiency for the non-elect, it breaks down.

Christ would have suffered as much for one of His elect as He did for all of them. He would have also suffered as much for one elect person had his sin been but one (Jam. 2:10). Sin in any measure or nature is an infinite insult to the holiness of God, and therefore an infinite atonement is necessary to reconcile the sinner unto God. If the "plant" of this analogy is one of God's planting, then the grace of God's Son will shine just as brightly as if he was the only one whom the Lord planted. Christ never suffered in any degree or sense for the non-elect, and the salvational sufficiency of the Son has never shined upon any plant the heavenly Father has not planted (Matt. 15:13).

The analogy must be restricted to God's elect people, for the solar sun does nothing for rocks, but

hardens them, and the salvational sufficiency of the Son of God does nothing for spiritually reprobate rocks, but hardens them. The **"stony ground"** hearers of Matthew thirteen were not benefited by the gospel seed, for the simple reason the gospel was not endowed with sufficiency to convict them of their sins, and they were left with their hard and stone hearts. **"Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth"** (Rom. 9:18). The conviction sufficiency of the gospel is by omniscient design restricted to the elect of God.

Every part and parcel of atonement favor was realized by a ransom paid, i.e., the blood of Christ. Surely it is agreed that sufficiency, as well as efficiency, was purchase by the vicarious punishment of Christ. How, then, can the non-elect be objects of salvational sufficiency, seeing no ransom was paid for them? Only the sins of the elect were imputed to Christ, and only for the elect "many" did He give His life as a ransom (Matt. 20:28). Therefore, the ill-supposed atonement sufficiency for the non-elect adds up to universal zero.

There cannot be efficiency without sufficiency, and there can be no atoning sufficiency or efficiency without the suffering of Christ upon the cross. Therefore, it unavoidably follows that the advocates of the universal sufficiency theory of the atonement have Christ suffering for the non-elect on the cross. A most grievous error!

It is readily and gladly admitted that the power of Christ's blood is greater than all sin, yea, of angels and men. However, we need to remember that His atoning blood is the blood of the **"everlasting**

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BEREA BAPTIST BANNER
Financial Report
3-1-2023 to 3-31-2023

Beginning Balance \$9,571.84

RECEIPTS:

 Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS 750.00
 The Willetts, Cottonwood Shores, TX 125.00
 Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL 25.00
 Grace B. C., Gladwin, MI 50.00
 Grace B. C., Germantown, NC 25.00
 The Lord's B. C., Goose Creek, SC 100.00
 Martha Pacifico, Danville, VA 50.00
 Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH 100.00
 Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL 100.00
 Portland B. C., Plumerville, AR 50.00
 S. G. B. C., Wellington, KS 200.00
 Beauty Mtn. B. C., Edmond WV 50.00
 Indore B.C., Indore, WV 300.00
 Berea B.C., Stonington, IL..... 60.00
 Big Creek B.C., Wayne, WV 200.00
 Victory B. C., Courtland VA 25.00
 Grace B. C., Corbin KY 100.00
 Southside B.C., Fulton MS..... 25.00
 New Testament B. C., Goshen IN 100.00
 Faith B. C., Lynn AR.....12.50
 Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX.....50.00
 Parkway L. B. C., Springfield OR.....100.00
 West Jefferson B. C., West Jefferson OH.....75.00
 Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg KY..... 150.00
 S. G. B. C., Texarkana, TX50.00
 Davenport B. C., Davenport, WA 168.00
 JoAnn Mills, Barbourville, KY25.00
 Mrs. Dale Myers, Fossil, OR..... 5.00
 So. Park M. B. C., Seattle, WA 1,000.00

 Subscriptions 76.00
 Divided Checks..... 150.00
 Anonymous 125.00
 Sub Total \$4,421.50
TOTAL..... \$13,993.34
EXPENDITURES:

 Postage: 869.92
 Printing 459.10
 Wages 2,000.00
 Supplies 258.02
 FICA 153.00
 Div Cks 150.00
 Total Expenditures \$3,890.04

ENDING BALANCE \$10,103.30

BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST
Financial Report
3-1-2023 to 3-31-2023

Beginning Balance \$5,505.24

RECEIPTS:

 Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS 150.00
 Grace B. C., Corbin, KY 100.00
 Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY 100.00
 Calvary I. B. C., Sumas, WA 100.00
 450.00
TOTAL.....5,955.24
EXPENDITURES:

 Radio time 363.98
 Adobe 32.09
TOTAL EXPENDITURES 396.07

 Interest +0.23
ENDING BALANCE \$5,559.40

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covenant" (Heb. 13:20), and that it is shut up in redemptive exercise to all whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life (Rev. 13:8, 21:27). Surely, none would say that Christ in His atonement purchased salvational sufficiency for the fallen angels, but if not, why not, seeing the power of His blood is greater than all sin? The answer is simply that God never intended to save the fallen angels, nor reprobate men, so He limited the atoning power of Christ's shed blood to His elect.

To say God's love is greater than all the fires of Hell, is to speak the truth, but it does not mean that God loves a single person who is in Hell, or that shall ever go there. God's love for one of His elect is as great as it is for all of His elect, for His love is never less than perfect, and every elect person is as a "firebrand" plucked from the burning by the love of God. God's love is sufficient to quench every infernal blaze, but all who enter those dread gates, enter because Christ in His substitutionary and loving death, merited no atonement sufficiency for them. The Apostle John, speaking of the atoning death of Christ, says: **"...Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end"** (John 13:1).

Christ went to Calvary with infinite love for His people. He suffered their infinite penalty, and in so-doing, He purchased for them a sufficiency that is infinitely superior to the infinite condemning power of sin. **"But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound"** (Rom. 5:20). The Lord laid upon Him all the iniquity of all His sheep and He, in His death, atoned for their every transgression, but He

did not take to Calvary one sin of the infinite sum of the sins of the non-elect, and He suffered not in any sense or measure for the sins of the goats. Consequently, no blessing was purchased for them by the blood of Christ.

Christ made no satisfaction for the sins of the non-elect, so their sins remain, and the atonement sufficiency which some claim for them is of no value to them, and the proponents of the universal atonement sufficiency theory are left with a sovereign and omniscient sufficiency which has lost its way. Perish the thought. Wherever divine efficacy is limited, so is divine sufficiency. Even the thought of a sufficiency which effects not its designs is ridiculous, for sufficiency manifests itself by the fruit it produces. There is no such thing as a fruit without a root, and there is no such thing as a sufficiency without fruit.

Over and over in the Scriptures Christ is metaphorically referred to as the **"root"** of His people (Isa. 11:10, 53:2; Rom. 15:12), and by inspiration, Paul says: **"...If the root be holy, so are the branches"** (Rom. 11:16). But of the non-elect, the Lord says: **"...these have no root"** (Luke 8:13). Saying "they have no root" is equal to saying "they have no Christ", and saying this is to say they have no atoning sufficiency, for this sufficiency is of Christ. Paul says to the church at Corinth: **"...Our sufficiency is of God"** (II Cor. 3:5).

There is eternal and perfect harmony between all of God's attributes. His love never interferes with His holiness, for His love is holy. His justice has no argument with His grace, for it is by His grace the elect are justified (Titus 3:7). His sufficiency and His efficiency knows no variance. His sufficiency is not more or

less than His efficiency and vice versa. They are equal in strength and design. Salvational efficiency makes manifest the trophies of God's sovereign and sufficient grace, but they travel hand in hand in bringing to pass this glorious end, for where one is, so is the other.

It is a true premise from God's Word that the expression of one thing excludes all else, unless otherwise specified by the Scriptures. Many illustrations could be cited from Scripture which affirm this premise, but I will refer only to the all important one, and that is blood redemption. The blood of Christ is the biblically specified remedy for sin. Therefore, every other pretended remedy has been precluded by the blood of the everlasting covenant, and is nothing more than satanic quackery. Hence, all but the elect of God are excluded from the sufficiency of the atonement, for nowhere in Holy Writ is it even inferred that the blood of Christ was shed to make an atonement for the non-elect. So that which follows is not universal atonement sufficiency, but a limited atonement, for God will not provide a sufficiency for sins apart from the shed blood of His Son (I John 1:7; Heb. 9:22; Rev. 1:5).

There are no passive attributes in God. His love is ever reaching forth to bless its objects. His love and His redemptive sufficiency cannot be separated, and His love and redemptive sufficiency infallibly follow the lines set out for them in the covenant of election. Jesus was the personification of truth. He said **"I am...the truth"** (John 14:6). However, He said to the reprobate Jews: **"...My word hath no place in you"** (John 8:37). The Lord's salvational

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sufficiency cannot be separated from His truth.

The Lord's inflexible justice never quits its search for satisfaction. Therefore we read: **"Be sure your sin will find you out"** (Num. 32:23). God's loving sufficiency provided a substitute for His people in the person of Christ (II Cor. 5:21), and His just law, yet looking for satisfaction from all those who were not represented by Christ on the cross, provided Hell to serve that end. Salvational sufficiency and condemnatory sufficiency have had by eternal decree two classes of people to work with in satisfying God's justice, i.e., the elect and the reprobate, and these two distinct functions of God's sufficiency are never frustrated.

God is holy. **"...Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts"** (Isa. 6:3). Salvational sufficiency is holy sufficiency, and clothes the people of God with robes of righteousness (Isa. 61:10), but leaves the non-elect destitute of the prescribed garment (Matt. 22:12). The military wardrobe of salvational sufficiency has provided every piece of armor the elect shall ever need in their warfare with the world, the flesh and the devil, and makes them more than conquerors through the Captain of their salvation (Rom. 8:37; Eph. 6:11; Heb. 2:10). However, no salvational sufficiency is provided for those not subject to Holy Spirit conscription (John 5:40, 6:44; Rom. 8:7,8), and consequently, no protection from the penalty of the just and holy law of God.

As defined by Webster both terms, sufficiency and efficiency mean adequacy. The synonymity of the two terms is so exact that

a distinction between them is virtually non-existent, and if a distinction would be allowed, it would be one of chronology rather than design. However, let us remember, God is not subject to chronology as finite men are, He is not such a one as we. God is not subject to the rules of mathematics, and more often than not the equations of men run counter to the omniscient counsel. The chronology of Holy Spirit regeneration comes under the heading of language accommodation, for with God there are no prerequisite functions in bringing to pass the new birth of His people.

In the eternal mind, atonement sufficiency and efficiency have never known a distinction in design, function, or results. God is the sovereign and omniscient author of both, and He would not appropriate a sufficiency beyond the suitability of His designs for efficiency. The universal sufficiency theory does not as much as produce one straw of mercy upon the infinite ocean of God's everlasting judgment, but this lack of favor toward the non-elect does not in any wise vitiate the sufficiency of God, for it is immune to negation.

Let me reiterate, it was not the power of the atonement that was limited, but the design of that power. Every person for whom God intended to be saved by the atonement shall be saved. So it follows by inevitable deduction, that God never meant the infinite power of the atonement would prevail for or provide a propitiatory sufficiency for the non-elect, seeing, none of them are ever saved. Both, the unlimited power and design of the atonement are seen by the fact that some of every kindred, tongue, and people are saved.

All the elect are made willing by the power of God (Ps. 110:3), but all who are left to their own will are eternally beyond the scope of God's atonement designs. God is the sovereign discriminator, and the difference He has put between His people and those of the devil (John 8:44), is manifested by atonement sufficiency and efficiency. This divinely placed difference allows for no spiritual commonness between the saved person and the world, for there is no communion between light and darkness (II Cor. 6:14). And atonement sufficiency being spiritual, it cannot be held in common by all mankind, for all are not included in the covenant wherein atonement sufficiency is mandated.

Abraham's lamb (Gen. 22:13) had no atoning sufficiency for the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, for they had already perished under the fiery indignation of God (Luke 17:29). Did Israel's typical sacrifices picture a general sufficiency which included the pagan nations round about Israel? If so, it was a vain sufficiency, for they perished in their own ways (Acts 14:16).

What good is the digging of a sixty foot well, when the same measure and quality of water may be had a thirty feet? The answer, of course is, None. God is infinitely more wise, than the wisest of His creatures, and would not send forth a universal atonement sufficiency, when a particular sufficiency would accomplish the same end.

What good is a belt and buckle that never meet? What good is an atonement sufficiency for a people, who are never benefited by it? Are reprobates divinely appointed to both eternal wrath and eternal sufficiency? Or could it be the sufficiency purchased

for them by the atoning death of Christ, finally exhausts itself? Perhaps this atonement sufficiency loses interest in some of the people for whom Christ died in order to procure it for them, and finally entered an abeyance that can never be broken. Atonement sufficiency is a benevolent work of God, and there is not, nor shall ever be, such a thing as a disinterested benevolence emanating from God.

I do not mean to satirize, nor to try to rationalize the Scriptures, and would never knowingly tamper with the Word of God. But it is my purpose and aim to alert the reader of this paper to the fact, that in many cases what we want to believe is not necessarily the truth. Where is the one among us who does not love broad and spacious theological horizons? Is not the doctrine of the universality of the gospel appealing? Surely it is, and rightfully so.

Is not the doctrine of the universality of God's family appealing? Surely it is, and rightfully so. Is not the doctrine of the universal sovereignty of God appealing? Surely it is, and rightfully so. But where is the one among us who will not say that the doctrine of the universal sufficiency of the atonement that does not suffice for all whom Christ died to provide it, is appalling? Surely none, for so it is.

The atonement sufficiency of Christ is definite and absolute, and is limited in its designs, operations, and effects. To say this is not to question the sovereignty of God's sufficiency, nor is it to question His omniscience from which the redemptive scheme was formulated. But it is said to magnify both God's sovereignty

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and omniscience, for a sufficiency which is particular, and infallibly accomplishes all of its designs, is more honoring to God than an atonement sufficiency which leaves part of the people for whom it was purchased to perish in their sins.

No doubt what I have said herein will become grist for the mills of theological controversy, and some polemicists may seem to turn it to their advantage, but that disturbs me not. It might be at the mercy seat of Christ, I will say: "I wish I had not written that." But until I look upon the face of Him who atoned for my sins upon the tree of Calvary, I am confident I shall be contented with the position contended for in this treatise. One thing for sure, the sending forth of this writing has for now erased all the wonder as to whether I should have written it or not.

Either way, I am convinced that the disturbance of theological quiet, is more honoring unto God, that what some dear brethren refer to as; "Respectful Silence."



Special Thanks

Thank you to everyone who has prayed for our dear brother, Nathaniel Hille and his family. Pastor Sidders, editor of this paper, will be looking to continue making trips to Florida to support the family and Brother Hille's rehabilitation. Please see our church Facebook page for current updates and needs. James 5:16 "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

Forum Question #2

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The responsibility of a member to be in person when the Church meets together is the same as it always has been, that will never change no matter what society demands. No excuses are acceptable when a member lays out of Church when they are physically able to attend. People have come to Church sick with colds and injuries for centuries, braved harsh weather, and under threat of persecution or death. We have come a long way from what our fathers have been thru, to make the excuse to not attend, and it be tolerated by the Church for it to occur and be "okay" with it. "Online worship" is the exact opposite definition of Ecclesia.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Grace Baptist Church of Gladwin, MI is seeking to start a mission work in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. We are also seeking a sound preacher to go there. If you are interested and feel led of the Lord please contact Pastor Sam Wilson at 989-701-5564. You may also contact Brother Tom Coffee, who is currently working in the area at 843-254-3018.

This ministry currently has a blog written by Bro. Coffee that can be read online at <https://thefaithfulofgod.com/blog/>

The Maranatha Missionary Baptist Church located at 14460 Ravenna Avenue, Alliance, OH, 44601, is seeking a pastor. The church was organized in 1981 and currently has seven members that are grounded in sound Baptist doctrine. Any interested elder can contact Brother Denny Morgan at dennymatco@gmail.com or call (330) 324-3038.

The Grace Landmark Baptist Church of Buckhannon, WV, is seeking a pastor. The church is Sovereign Grace and Landmark in doctrine and practice. Any interested called pastor of like faith may contact

Brother Brad Butcher at (304) 669-4738 or (304) 745-6226.

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

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

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

Bethel Baptist Church, which is located at 2603 Penfield, Pasadena, TX 77506, is in need of a pastor. Any interested Elders should call Brother Risinger at 832-564-6350 which is his cell phone or you can call him at home at 281-476-5099.

Grace Missionary Baptist Church in Tulsa, Oklahoma is in need of a pastor. This calling has a parsonage located right next to the church building. Interested persons are to contact Brothers Charlie Hodges at 918-633-2713 or David Thorne at 918-373-6057.

Bethel Baptist Church of Lawton, OK is looking for a pastor. They have been an independent, sovereign grace Baptist Church since the late 1950's and they are seeking to call a man of God to guide, lead, teach, and rebuild their modest congregation. If you are interested please contact Bennie Burnsed at 580-695-4473.

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