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Whole Number 248

Dead Flies and A Little Folly

By Todd Bryant

Northport, Alabama

"Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour: so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour" (Eccl. 10:1).

Verses such as the one under consideration often give us problems when read. However, an in-depth study of such a verse can be a blessing from the oldest to the youngest of saints. We shall endeavor to bring out just such a spiritual blessing from this verse and how this message can relate to us theologically and secularly.

First of all, we must obtain a good definition of the words in our text. There are two accepted interpretations of **"dead flies,"** both of which are relative. The first definition is, "flies that are near death." These flies get into the ointment (usually in the



Todd Bryant

winter time) and die. This causes the ointment to ruin and stink. Another definition is, "flies that are deadly by nature, poisonous flies." These flies inject poison upon the ointment when they light on it, thus causing it to ruin. The sweet smell of the ointment is then turned sour. Both of these definitions are acceptable for the type of fly is not the primary problem, but, the spoiling of the ointment by it.

Continued on page 204

Trick or Treat: The History of Halloween

By Bill Uselton

Choctaw, Oklahoma

The Roman Catholic Church has traditionally sought to dispose of pagan holidays by using the tried and true formula of accepting the local date and then merely changing the meaning and sometimes ceremonies of the date.

Halloween is a practice originated, as far as can be told, from the ancient Celtic peoples. The expanse of the Celtic race is related in Barry Cunliffe's book, *The Celtic World*: "Traces of the Celts can be found almost anywhere in temperate Europe. Their fortifications—hillforts and oppida—are to be seen spreading in a broad arc from Yugoslavia to the north of Scotland: the museums of Europe store thousands of objects recovered from the excavations of graves and of settlement sites or



Bill Uselton

Other famous cities are built on Celtic foundations; London, England is a prime example. As to the identification of modern Celts, Ireland, Wales and Scotland are populated largely by those of Celtic blood and retain the indigenous Celtic languages, as do the

Continued on page 209

dredged from rivers and bogs; while many of our great cities, including Budapest, Paris, Belgrade, stand on Celtic foundations."

A Letter from the Past

Part 2

By Elvis Gregory (& Clarence Savage)

(1933 - 1981)

Since you agree that it is of prime importance in perpetuating the church by continuity of the lineage of scriptural baptism, how can you consistently



Clarence Savage

separate the authority for baptism from scriptural church authority for begetting other churches of like faith and order which authority has the same source and cause in the Lord Jesus Christ and the same resultant means of preaching the gospel of Christ, even **"my church"** of Matt. 16:18? Let us now look at three scriptural examples of direct scriptural authority in true church organization as follows: 1) at **"the city of Samaria"** as in Acts 8:5-25; 2) **"in**

Caesarea" as in Acts 10:34-48; and 3) **"at Antioch"** as in Acts 11:22-26; in all three cases the authority for organization came directly from **"the**

Continued on page 202

The Fruit of the Spirit is Meekness

By Tom Ross

South Point, Ohio

Perhaps one of the most misunderstood of any of the aspects of the fruit of the Spirit is the grace of meekness. Many people in our world confuse meekness with weakness. When the

word meekness is used to describe an individual most people conjure up a mental picture of a ninety pound weakling who is afraid of everything and everyone.

However, such an assumption could not be correct considering that the most powerful man who ever walked the earth told His disciples: **"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls"** (Matt. 11:29). The Lord Jesus Christ was responsible for creating the universe,

Continued on page 214



Tom Ross

The First Resurrection

By Milburn Cockrell

Mantachie, Mississippi

"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived

not against until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years" (Rev. 20:4-6).

These verses are understood differently by amillennialists, post-

Continued on page 205

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

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A Letter from the Past

Continued from page 201

first Church at Jerusalem" (which was organized by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ while He was "manifested in the flesh" as in I Tim. 3:16, before "he was taken up into heaven" as in Acts 1:9-11) so that in the first case at "Samaria" the church was organized by Peter and John directly from Jerusalem in the above mentioned passage; in the second case in "Caesarea" by Peter, directly from Jerusalem as seen in the above mentioned passage; and in the third case at "Antioch" by Barnabas, directly from Jerusalem as above passage reveals. It should be noted here that the direct scriptural authority to baptized and the direct authority to organize is identical and inseparable as in Acts 10:44-48 under Holy Ghost and direct scriptural church authority coming directly from our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit through daughters of "my church" down to the present time making this "link-chain" connection of direct divine import of direct infinite importance not to be lightly esteemed and carelessly ignored. Therefore, we

must conclude that the divine scriptural authority to baptize believers and the authority to organize churches in order to perpetuate the true church is direct, identical and inseparable.

In Acts 19:1-7, we have conclusive scriptural proof that the authority to baptize is the same identical authority to organize in that the Holy Spirit stamped divine approval on Paul's baptism "in the name of the Lord Jesus" as in verses 5 and 6 which means under the authority of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, just the same as the Holy Spirit stamped divine approval on Peter and John's organization of the New Church at the city of Samaria with direct scriptural authority from "my church" at Jerusalem as in Acts 8:14-17 where also they being in both of these cases under the direct divine scriptural authority of the Holy Ghost. After all the persons involved had been baptized "in the name of the Lord Jesus" where Paul likewise had direct scriptural authority from "my church" at Antioch as in Acts 13:1-5 and 15:40, so that in the "open face" as in II Cor. 3:18 of those holy scriptures there is no way to truly deny that "the Holy Ghost" and direct authority from a church of our Lord is identical and inseparable in both scriptural baptism and scriptural church organization being administered primarily on earth by the Holy Spirit and secondarily by "my church" of Matt. 16:18 in both cases; hence, let us never misunderstand the tremendous importance of the UNITY of the Spirit in direct church authority as in Eph. 4:4, 5 looking "unto him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think according to the power that worketh in us" as in Eph. 3:20 where the word "power" refers primarily to "the Holy Ghost" who is the "one Spirit" of Eph. 4:4, who is now on earth working primarily in "my church" which is the "one body" of Eph. 4:4 where this "one body" appears along with the "one Spirit." Here we can see the emphasis of the UNITY and ONENESS of the primary divine administrative work (in the personal absence of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ) of "the Holy Ghost" along with the secondary direct ordained work of the scriptural perpetuation and perpetuity of "my church" and proving without controversy and without contradiction that divine ordained scriptural authority for baptism and church organization is identically ONE and the same coming directly from GOD THE FATHER through GOD THE SON by GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT manifested here upon earth ONLY in "the church" of I Tim. 3:15, just the same as "eternal salvation" is direct

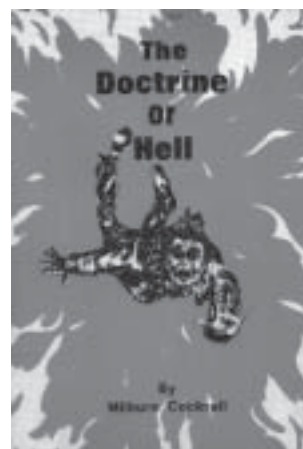
from GOD THE FATHER in ELECTION as in Eph. 1:4 and I Peter 1:2 through GOD THE SON in JUSTIFICATION as in Rom. 5:1, 2 and 6:23 by GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT in SANCTIFICATION as in Rom. 5:3-5; 15:16; II Thes. 2:13-17 and I Peter 1:2, 22 manifested here upon earth primarily in "the church" of I Tim. 3:15 and just the same as in I Pet. 1:2 where ELECTION is primarily the work of GOD THE FATHER, JUSTIFICATION primarily the work of GOD THE SON through the shedding of His blood on the cross of Calvary and SANCTIFICATION is primarily the work of GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT manifested here upon earth primarily in the resultant work and means of preaching "the gospel of Christ" to "every creature" in obedience to the command of the great commission making this DIVINE HOLY TRINITY (Father, Son and Holy Spirit), Three in One and One in Three—Oh, gracious God! what a glorious gospel that human eyes cannot see, that human ears cannot hear and that human hearts cannot receive as in I Cor. 2:9-16 and Isa. 64:4. It should be noted here that Acts 19:6 is the third and last scriptural record of speaking with tongues (the other two being Acts 2:4 and 10:46) proving that this kind of divine approval is not now necessary or needful since we have the Holy Scriptures "for doctrine for reproof, for correction for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" as in II Tim. 3:14-17; so that "man of God" will faithfully obey the holy scriptures by "rightly dividing the word of truth" after faithful study instead of wrongly dividing the Word of truth by hypocritically trying to practice modern charisma of so-called speaking in tongues as evidence of baptism "with the Holy Ghost" as in

Acts 1:5 which is blasphemy and an abomination in the eyes of God just the same as trying to go back to Old Testament sacrifice of animals for "eternal salvation" after our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ "finished" the ONE effective sacrifice of shedding His infinite blood as in John 19:30 having thereby "obtained eternal redemption for us" as in Heb. 9:12; therefore, may we never be guilty of wrongly "dividing the word of truth" in ignorance, unfaithfulness, unbelief, rebellion and disobedience thereby denying as in II Tim. 2:11-13 the only Saviour "under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" as in Acts 4:12; "preaching another Jesus," receiving "another spirit" and receiving "another gospel" as in II Cor. 11:4 and Gal. 1:6-9 observing that "tongues are for a sign to them that believe, but to them that believe not" as in I Cor. 14:22, who are guilty of using their tongues to deceive as in Rom. 3:13 "whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders" as in II Thess. 2:9 culminating in deceiving "them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles" of "another beast" as in Rev. 13:11-14. Just the same as the modern hypocritical charismatics are attempting to do on earth today in contrast to the "man of God" who by faith is not looking "at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal" as in II Cor. 4:17, 18, and who by faith is "looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" as in Titus 2:13-15; "even come, Lord Jesus" as in Rev. 22:16-21, Oh, gracious God! what a Saviour! Amen!

We have already conclusively proven from the holy scriptures that it is absolutely essential for a group of baptized believers to obtain direct scriptural church authority directly from another true church already in existence as in Acts 8:5-25; 10:34-48 and 11:22-26 in order to become a true church because "like begets like" as in Gen. 1:11, 12, 21-25 before that group can possibly become a true church or "one body" (as to kind) of the Lord Jesus Christ of like faith and order.

It should be noted here that baptism is only one of the seven unities that characterize and identify a true church or "one body" as to kind on earth today as in Eph. 4:4-6 who are faithfully walking "worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness,


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Continued on page 203



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

THE IMPORTANCE OF OBEDIENCE

True Christianity is to follow the Lord fully. Converting grace aims to bring **“every thought to the obedience of Christ”** (II Cor. 10:5). This is why Peter describes Christians as **“obedient children”** (I Pet. 1:14). The Christian’s life of faith begins when he obeys the gospel by believing it (Rom. 10:16). Those who obey not the gospel shall perish (II Thess. 1:8; I Pet. 4:17).

WE ARE COMMANDED TO OBEY

Obedience to Christ is enjoined. Acts 5:29 says: **“We ought to obey God rather than men.”** The verb here translated “obey” means “to obey one in authority, to be obedient to a ruling power.” God is the supreme ruler, and His commandments claim full and complete obedience. Paul was concerned that the Corinthian church **“be obedient in all things”** (II Cor. 2:9).

To obey is better than to make any kind of sacrifice: **“Behold, to obey is better than to sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams”** (I Sam. 15:22). A humble and sincere obedience to the will of God is more pleasing to God than all burnt-offerings and sacrifices (Micah 6:6-8). Disobedience is as bad as witchcraft and idolatry: **“For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry”** (I Sam. 15:23). Disobedience is as bad as idolatry because it makes self-will, the human I, into a god. All opposition to the revealed will of God is, like idolatry, a rejection of the true God.

If there is not a willingness to obey the Lord in all His commandments, there is no salvation (Acts 9:6). Hebrews 5:9 declares: **“And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all**

them that obey him.” Jesus Christ said: **“My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it”** (Luke 8:21). The person who has no desire to obey the commandments of God is spiritually deceived. Jesus said in Matthew 7:21: **“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.”** To put it simply: no holiness, no Heaven (Heb. 12:14).

The Apostle Paul said: **“Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness. But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness** (Rom. 6:16-18).

THE BLESSINGS OF OBEDIENCE

First, obedience to God is the key to spiritual knowledge: **“If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself”** (John 7:17). Blind submission never leads to knowledge, but an obedient faith (Rom. 1:5) illumines the mind. A willingness to do is the beginning of that doing which develops into the love of God. We must do what God commands because He commands it (Luke 1:6).

Second, Obedience to God secures material prosperity: **“If they obey and serve him, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures”** (Job 36:11). We serve God no more than we obey Him, and we worship Him no more than we serve Him (Matt. 4:10). Piety is the only sure way to prosperity (I Tim. 4:8).

Third, obedience to God gives evidence of the indwelling Spirit: **“And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him”** (Acts 5:32). The presence of the Holy Spirit in the obedient believer proves he is a real Christian. God gave the Spirit by Christ (John 14:26) and in answer to His prayer (John 14:16). Christ sent the Spirit from the Father to His people, and to no one else (Rom. 8:9).

Fourth, obedience to God lengthens life on earth: **“And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days”** (I Kings 3:14; cf. Deut. 4:40). **“My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart**

keep my commandments: For length of days and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee” (Prov. 3:1-2; cf. Eph. 6:1-3).

Fifth, obedience to God assures of Heaven: **“Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city”** (Rev. 22:14). There is no need to quote from a Catholic Greek manuscript to change the King James Version here. Here the verse should be left as it is. Those who have been given spiritual life desire to do His commandments (John 14:15, 21; 15:10; I John 2:3-4; 3:22, 24; 5:2-3). They certainly have obeyed this commandment: **“And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ. . .”** (I John 3:23).

A Letter from the Past

Continued from page 202

with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the good of peace” as in Eph. 4:1-3; **“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints”** as in Eph. 6:1-18 while endeavoring to carry out the Great Commission as in Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-20; Luke 24:47-53; John 20:21-23; Acts 1:8 and correlated holy scriptures with the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit as Comforter, Teacher, Guide and Administrator as in John 14:15 to 16:15 and correlated holy scriptures, remembering that the Great Commission involves preaching the gospel of Christ as in Rom. 1:14-17 which is characterized by seven phases of eternal salvation as in Heb. 5:9 as follows:

I. ELECTION by God the Father, Eph. 1:1-4; I Pet. 1:2;

II. CONCEPTION by God the Son, Rom. 5:19-21; I Cor. 15:22;

III. PREDESTINATION by God the Holy Spirit, Rom. 8:29, 30; Eph. 1:5-14;

IV. REGENERATION or CALLING by God the Holy Spirit, John 1:12, 13; 3:3-5; 6:63; Acts 15:13-18; Titus 3:5; James 1:18; I Peter 1:23; I John 3:1-10; and 5:18;

V. JUSTIFICATION by Faith, Rom. 5:1, 2; 8:30; Titus 3:7;

VI. SANCTIFICATION by God the Holy Spirit, Rom. 5:3-5; 15:13-19; I Thess. 1:1-10; II Thess. 2:13-17; II Pet. 1:1-8; I John 1:1-10; and

VII. GLORIFICATION by God the Son, Phil. 3:20, 21; I Thess. 4:13-18.

It should be noted here that most of the so-called preaching of today involves less than 10% of the whole gospel as outlined in the seven phases of “eternal salvation” above.

It has already been pointed out that Matt. 18:20 refers to a true church scripturally assembled even though all of the members of that particular body are not present at that particular time providing that those present are scripturally assembled for the proper purpose motivated by the LOVE OF GOD and verified originally on a “one time” basis by a true church of like faith and order as in Acts 8:5-25; 10:34-48; 11:22-26 as already explained dating back to **“my church”** of Matt. 16:18 after which this true “one time” scriptural authority is properly transmitted and received no repetition of such transmittal of authority is necessary or needful making that particular church qualified to transmit scriptural church authority to other groups of scripturally baptized believers thereby begetting new churches of like faith and order or “after her kind” as in Gen. 1:11, 12, 21-25.

We note here that after the “candlestick” has been removed or the Holy Spirit has departed (Rev. 2:5) or a true church falls away into a false church “it is impossible” to renew that false church “unto repentance” or to reorganize that kind of assembly into a true church as in Heb. 6:4-6; in other words, when the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit one leaves an assembly or church that particular assembly or church can never be organized into a true church or ever become a church of the Lord Jesus Christ just the same as the Catholic Church never repents but becomes more corrupt with time.

Your concept of a group of two or three “properly baptized members” of a local church or churches, “somewhere who desire, for reasons they determine to be logical and practical, to unite in fellowship as an ‘authoritative church’” would first have to become members of the same local true assembly for edification, jurisdictional and disciplinary purposes as in Matt. 16:19 and 18:15-20 after which Holy Spirit and direct scriptural church authority could be scripturally transmitted from the one true assembly of which they are all members at that particular time to the particular group after forming a mission for the purpose of organizing a new scripturally true church of the same faith and order. Otherwise “conventionism” is involved where the autonomy of the local church or assembly is destroyed which is completely unscriptural and therefore without godly authority re-

Continued on page 204

A Letter from the Past

Continued from page 203

sulting in false churches as in Rev. 17:1-18.

Your summation in next to the last paragraph of your letter is what principally happened in the original formation of the MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH," as in Rev. 17:5 and all of her harlot daughters including the Catholics, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Methodists, Congregationalists, Campbellites, Hardshell Baptists, Freewill Baptists, Convention Baptists, Association Baptists, Board Baptists and all other false systems in Christianity, including Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Mohammedism, Babylonism, etc., etc., etc. typified by Cain from Gen. 4:1 to Rev. 18:24 because "leaven" begins as a logical subtle improvement over the godly order of command as in Gen. 3:1-7 and 4:1-16 spreading to include all forms of idolatry, unbelief, iniquity and fornication culminating in total rebellion, blasphemy, disobedience and wickedness; so let us never be deceived into thinking that the true authority to baptize is different to true church authority to organize, because all true authority has the same godly and divine source as in Matt. 19:17 resulting in the same true ordained means as in Matt. 16:18, 19 and 28:18-20 of preaching the true "gospel of Christ" to every creature as in Mark 16:15; hence, may we be faithfully steadfast in resisting false authority and false doctrines of the devil as in I Peter 5:1-11, "**rightly dividing the word of truth**" as in II Tim. 2:15; "**thoroughly furnished unto all good works**" as in II Tim. 3:14-17; learning how to "**behave ourselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and the ground of the truth**" as in I Tim. 3:15.

The Pinehaven Baptist Church believes that: 1) "**My church**" of Matt. 16:18 is "**one body**" as to kind (see Eph. 4:4 to 6:24); 2) "**my church**" is Theocratic as to authority and government (See I Cor. 11:3; Eph. 1:22 23; 3) "**my church**" is autonomous as to assemblies, other organizations and all other influences (see Matt. 16:19; 18:15-20; 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-20; Luke 24:47-53; John 14:16, 17; 19:11; 20:21-23; Acts 1:8-26; 5:1-16; 6:1-15; 8:5-25; 9:17-31; 10:34-43; 11:22-30; 13:1 to 22:21; and I Pet. 4:17). This position establishes the "one" procedure for procreative succession of the same kind of church from Matt. 16:18 to the rapture of this "one body" by the authority of the

Lord Jesus Christ directly from body to body, just the same as "like begets like" as in Gen. 1:11, 12, 21-25 where procreation preserves the same kind of plants, animals, etc. from generation to generation or from parents to offspring; this position guarantees autonomous governmental authority from one source of righteousness as in Matt. 19:17; 28:18-20 and Eph. 5:23 administered by no one on earth except "the Spirit of truth" as in John 14:16, 17 making this "one body" set apart from "**the world**" which "**lieth in wickedness**" which autonomous governmental authority can be transmitted from "one body" or church to another church directly only by the Holy Spirit as in Acts 8:5-25, etc. which means that this authority is not invested in individuals but only vested in true scripturally authorized churches where "**the Spirit of truth**" abides which is only in "**my church**" which is the "**one body**" which is "**the pillar and ground of the truth**" where the "**one Spirit**" abides along with the seven unities of Eph. 4:4-6 which characterize "**my church**," so that the only possible way for true church authority to be vested in an assembly is for "**the Spirit of truth**" to transmit this divine authority directly from one church to another church of like faith and order, showing that all other procedures are false and "**Vanity of vanities**" Eccl. 1:2, 14, including the one you proposed in your letter which imagines and assumes that "perpetuated church authority is contingent upon the mutual agreement of born again properly baptized individuals, to gather together as a local assembly, to carry out the commission delivered to the church through the Apostles" instead of divine authority coming only direct from GOD THE FATHER through GOD THE SON, by GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT manifested in "**my church**" directly from mother branch to daughter beginning of another branch. On your basis a group like Simon of Acts 8:9-24 would be permitted by "mutual agreement" in direct violation of ordained scriptural procedure to gather together "by mutual agreement" without receiving "the Holy Spirit" as in verse 17 which was the transfer of divine authority directly from the church at Jerusalem directly to the group of believers who were baptized at the city of Samaria resulting in another body of like faith and order at "**the city of Samaria**"; also on your assumed false basis quoted above a group of "**grievous wolves**" as in Acts 20:29, 30 would be permitted to organized a false church under the guise of a true one without the transfer of divine authority by the Holy Spirit directly from

an already established true church, resulting in a false assembly with the abiding presence of "**the spirit of error**" as in I John 4:3 and 2:22, 23; on this false and unscriptural basis numerous false churches, radio broadcasts, T V telecasts, so called gospel teams and various missionary endeavors have been organized including THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS of Rev. 17:1-18, her many harlot daughters of protestantism and all of her other myriads of harlot daughters.

Now we can more clearly understand the infinite importance of ordained scriptural church authority being administered only by "**the Spirit of Truth**" which abides only in "**my church**" which is the "**one body**" which is the "**church of the living God**." Even though the Spirit of John 3:6 indwells every born of the Spirit believer as in John 3:1-21, but this "**Spirit of truth**" only abides in "**my church**" as Administrator, Teacher, Witness, Testifier, Reprover, Guide, and Comforter: as in John 14:16 to 16:15 making us realize that godly ordained church authority is the greatest authority on earth today next to the Holy Spirit as in Rev. 22:17 where "**the Spirit**" appears first and "**the bride**" appears next to "**the Spirit**" which means that "**the church**" is next to the Holy Spirit in ordained scriptural authority in accomplishing The Great Commission of Matt. 28:18-20 expressed here as "the Spirit and the bride say, Come."

Our summation then from the above listed holy scriptures in perfect harmony with all other scriptures in the King James Bible is that perpetuated true church authority is contingent upon every newly organized church receiving the Holy Spirit and scriptural authority directly from an autonomous branch of "**my church**" dating back to Matt. 16:18, 19 conforming to New Testament patterns set forth in the holy scriptures cited above.

May the Holy Spirit reveal to you "**the things which God hath prepared for them that love him**" as in I Cor. 2:9-16; "**For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, beside thee, what He hath prepared for him that waiteth for him**" as in Isaiah 64:4: "**Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end, Amen**" (Eph. 3:21).

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

Pinehaven Baptist Church
Elvis Gregory, Pastor

Dead Flies and A Little

Continued from page 201

The *ointment* is a liquid kept in a bottle. There were, in times past, two products that were called "ointment." These two were perfumes, of sort, and medicines. Either of these are acceptable in that when both are rendered ruined, they are useless. However, I believe primarily the passage is speaking of a perfume ointment as the smell is mentioned.

The *apothecary* is simply what we would call today, a druggist or a pharmacist. He is the one that is in charge of the ointment. He is the one that we will see has not held to his duty in protecting the ointment from being infected by "dead flies."

We can all see and relate this to our own lives. Many times God uses these type representations to teach us a deeper meaning. Our minds are not like the mind of God. We can't think on His terms. Therefore, He graciously comes down to our level in giving us examples such as this.

Our text states that just as dead flies cause the ointment. . . to stink; so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honor. In the latter part of the verse is where we will find the most benefit. The dead flies and the ointment are used here as a reference. They show us to what effect a little folly in the life of a child of God can have. They also show us to what degree a little folly can affect us. The "**dead flies**" will ruin the ointment when they are come into it. Therefore, a little folly can ruin many things in the life of a child of God if we allow sin and falsehoods to enter our "circle."

The first way I would like to relate this to our lives is theologically. We could rightly say, "A little error can cause our entire theology to be corroded with error." This is similar to the statement about the "**dead flies**" and the "**ointment**." Galatians 5:9 says, "**A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump**." This verse is one of the most telling verses of Christendom today. Throughout the world, we have over 300 denomination affiliations. The reason for this is not that there are that many truths, but, that there are that many errors. Churches have compromised the truth for the sake of numbers. "Getting people to walk the aisle" has given way to what the Bible says. The result is the majority of people who think they are saved today might not be. They could possibly die deceived, and will if they believe they are saved simply from walking a church aisle.

Arminianism, in its mildest form

Continued on page 205

Dead Flies and A Little

Continued from page 204

can lead to the crash of our entire way of thinking. Arminianism limits God. Any time we use statements such as, "let God," or "God has done all He can do," we are not using biblically true terminology. What problems can this cause? Well, it has brought many churches today to be nothing more than country clubs. Churches have more vacations, bake sales and sporting events than preaching of the gospel of Christ. Sure, these churches are missionary. But, to what are they missionarying? Are they persuading people to believe the gospel of Christ, or are they preaching a "health and wealth" gospel? One statement along the line of Arminianism has led to what we call "easy-believism" today. In its primitive state, Arminianism may have seemed harmless. I wonder what the people in Hell today that believed in that works salvation would deem it? Would they say it was harmless?

On the other side of the spectrum, we have hardshellism. This belief leaves out the use of God's ordained means of bringing His elect to salvation (II Thess. 2:13, 14). Christ has given His churches the commission to carry out, but, the hardshell says it is not necessary. One cannot believe the gospel is not used by God and believe in missionary work. The two beliefs don't harmonize. The fact that Christ gave the commission is reason enough to believe the gospel is used in salvation. The same God that **"worketh all things after the counsel of His own will"** (Eph. 1:11, was **"pleased. . . by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe"** (I Cor. 1:21). To deny these verses (and a great deal more) is to be drawn into hardshellism. This doctrinal standpoint is no more than a way out of doing missionary work. They aren't adding to the sovereignty of God. They are taking away from His ordained means. These same ones will ask, "What about the heathen in foreign lands that never hears the gospel?" To that, I say I believe in a sovereign God who is able to get the gospel to them as He did in the case of the Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8:26-40). This is another example where a little folly can lead to an entire breakdown of God's ordained way in a church.

Doctrinal deviations are detrimental. Compromising can do nothing but hurt us. When truth and error are combined, which one is hurt? The error is already 100% wrong. Therefore, it must be the truth that is hurt. II Timothy 1:13 says: **"Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou**

hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." We don't ever want to depart from the truth. When we do, we are just asking for trouble in one of the Lord's churches.

There is another way to look at our text. Just as **"dead flies"** can spoil the **"ointment,"** so can a little sin in a child of God. It only takes one rock to cause a rock slide. One small sound can cause an avalanche. One sin can lead a child of God into deeper sin. The unguarded moment when our minds aren't on the things of God, that hasty word, the irritable temper, the rudeness of manner—all of these will cause a child of God to give in to sin. We need to constantly be examining ourselves (II Cor. 13:5). This will cause us to be stronger. Always be on guard of Satan's tricks to draw us into sin. The smallest things in our lives should be kept sacred for God. One commentator said, "Let every corner of the field be cultivated for him" (*Ecclesiastes* by Charles Bridges, pg. 235). In other words, keep everything in its proper place and all will work out better. Christ said: **"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness"** (Matt. 6:33). If we keep God first in every aspect of our lives, we will do a much better job at keeping sin out.

One look from King David at Bathsheba caused a multitude of sin. We might think that lusting isn't so bad. I've heard some say, "It's OK to look, as long as you don't touch." This might sound all right to the human ear, but, it's not true. Look at what it led David to do. He lusted, he committed fornication, he lied, he cheated, and he eventually murdered. This was a man **"after God's own heart"**—a man famous for wisdom and honor. Do we think we are any stronger than he? Look at the reproach it brought on him. Look at the chastisement it brought on him. More importantly, look at the reproachment it brought upon the name of God (humanly speaking, of course). Because of David's sin, many unbelievers surely pointed a finger and said, "Does his God allow such a thing?" Is this not the case with many Christians today?

James 2:18 says: **"Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works."** Many people will never hear us speak one word, but, they will always take notice of the life that we live. We need to strive to show people our faith in Christ. We need to be Christ-like. People should see that we are Christians not only by our profession, but, by our actions also. It is well said, "Actions speak louder than words." The hypocritical professors are the

reason that many people are turned off where Christianity is concerned today. I have heard church going people say, "I don't care what anybody thinks, I know what I am." Brothers and sisters, we need to care what people think. We need to show our faith by our works. We need to follow the examples set in Scripture.

Our last point will be introduced by a question. How did the fly get into the ointment? Apparently, the lid wasn't sealed on the box. The apothecary wasn't doing his job. There was enough opening left in the container for the fly to get in and ruin the ointment. If the ointment had been properly secured, all would have been well. The entire episode of the flies ruining the ointment wouldn't have occurred. This can obviously relate to our own lives.

I Thessalonians 5:22 says: **"Abstain from all appearance of evil."** This is not a verse to be passed over. If something looks wrong, it is. If you are troubled as to whether you can do something with a clear conscience, you shouldn't do it. When we are not "on guard," we will sink into sin. This will cause our walk with God to diminish and suffer. We need to walk the road a Christian should walk. Stay out of what looks wrong. Don't put off studying God's Word. Once you put it off, you can put it off again. Don't forsake the Lord's assembly (Heb. 10:25). Once you miss church, it gets to be a habit. A penny soon adds up to a dollar. Little inconsistencies bring about big problems.

A child of God needs to **"watch and keep his garments,"** (Rev. 16:15). In other words, we need to be careful of what we do and say. It will follow us into the next life. When we are at the Judgment Seat of Christ, these failures to set an example will come up. The lack of doing the right things for the sake of unbelievers will be brought to a head. Watching and keeping our garments is something that we constantly have to do, but, there is a blessing that goes along with this. Our walk with God will be strong.

In conclusion, we can obviously see that a little folly can be a ruining thing to a saint of God. It's no accident that one of Satan's names, Beelzebub, literally means, "lord of the fly." Satan and his fly-like angels are trying to spoil the ointment of our salvation. We need to be the good apothecary and keep the lid sealed on our precious ointment.



The First Resurrection

Continued from page 201

millennialists, and premillennialists. First, amillennialists, following Augustine, make this a spiritual resurrection, or regeneration. They say since the "second death" is not physical, then neither can the first resurrection be physical.

Second, postmillennialists, following Daniel Whitby, hold the first resurrection to be one of principles, doctrines, spirit, and character of the Christian martyrs and the saints departed. They say it is part spiritual, part ecclesiastical, and part national.

Premillennialists see a literal resurrection prior to the 1,000-year reign of Christ and His saints in Revelation 20:4. Post-trib premillennialists see the resurrection of all the saints at the end of the tribulation and before the millennium. Pre-trib premillennialists see only a resurrection of the tribulation martyrs which completes the program of the first resurrection.

A LOOK AT THE CONTEXT

The 19th chapter of Revelation sets forth Christ coming from Heaven on His white horse, followed by the armies of Heaven (vv. 11-14). The occasion is the marriage of the Lamb (vv. 7-8). Antichrist and the False Prophet are cast in the lake of fire, and their followers are slain with the sword of the conquering Leader (vv. 20-21). Then Christ takes the world from under the dominion of Satan who himself shall be incarcerated in the dungeon of the abyss (Rev. 20:1-3). A great angel seizes him as a criminal and thrusts him into the dungeon, for a period of a thousand years. Satan becomes an unwilling prisoner at the hands of God's angel-sheriff. Then follows our lesson.

THRONE SITTERS AND SOULS

Verse 4 of Revelation 20 concerns the judgeship of the raptured saints and the resurrection of the martyred tribulation saints. It begins: **"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them. . ."**

FIRST COMPANY

"And I saw thrones. . ." Earlier John saw thrones: **"And round about the throne were four and twenty seats (Greek *thronos*—thrones) and upon the seats (*thronos*) I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold"** (Rev. 4:4). **"And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats (*thronos*), fell upon their faces, and worshipped God"** (Rev. 11:16). The Greek word *thronos* is

Continued on page 206

We Believe in Total Depravity

By Willard Willis

Monroe, Ohio

According to *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*, 8th Edition, the word "total" means "comprising or constituting a whole entire, complete; utter." According to this same authority, the word "depravity" means "marked by corruption or evil." Thus for us to say that the human race is totally depraved means that we believe each member of the human race to be in a state of complete and utter corruption or evil. We believe that said corruption has infected every part of one's nature. The result being that the unregenerate have not the ability to obey God. Dr. J. P. Boyce has said, "This corruption extends to every affection of the heart and mind" (*Abstract of Systematic Theology*, by J. P. Boyce, p. 243).

It is taught by some that God would not command men to do such and such if they were not able to do it. This teaching can be refuted by the fact that no one, except our Lord Jesus, has ever kept the ten commandments.

An examination of the teachings of our Lord will clearly show that He believed and taught that the human race is totally depraved. In fact, He said to Nicodemus, ". . . Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). He also said to the Pharisees, of which Nicodemus was a member, "Why do ye not understand my speech?" He then answered His own question with "Even because ye cannot hear my word" (John 8:43). Those who have not been regenerated and have only the flesh to rely upon, cannot understand, or comprehend the Word of God. After all, the Word of God deals with spiritual things and the flesh cannot rise above the carnal.

Total depravity has so alienated the human race from God that Jesus said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:44). Our Lord Jesus said further, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. And he said, 'Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come to me, except it were given unto him of my Father'" (John 6:63-65). We may say that the quickening of the Spirit relates to His enabling the totally de-



Willard Willis

praved to pass "from death unto life" (John 5:24). In fact, our Lord has said, "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth (make alive - my insertion) whom he will" (John 5:21). We may therefore say that the quickening and drawing (John 6:44) relate to the same thing.

One cannot receive a particular program via television if one does not have access to the channel on which the program is viewed. In like manner, one cannot receive the things of God if one has not been quickened, or made alive spiritually. In fact, we read from I Corinthians 2:14 that ". . . the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." It is said further in Romans 8:7 that ". . . the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

The apostle Paul confirms the above truths when saying, "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Spirit" (I Cor. 12:3). Our Lord also confirmed said truth when saying to Peter, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 16:16-17).

Those in our society who have been declared to be totally disabled, are not required to work for a living. They look outside their own efforts for their support. In like manner, the totally depraved must look away from themselves to the Lord Jesus, who as far as their eternal salvation is concerned, did all the work necessary for their eternal security. When referring to this matter, Paul said, "For by grace are ye saved through faith, AND THAT NOT OF YOURSELVES: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. FOR WE ARE HIS WORKMANSHIP, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:8-10).

An examination of God's Word

relative to the total depravity of the human race, will show that the unregenerate cannot SEE (John 3:3-7); cannot enter the kingdom of God without the new birth (John 3:3-7); cannot hear (understand) God's Word (John 8:43); cannot come to Christ (John 6:44); cannot believe on Christ (John 12:39-40); cannot be subject to the law of God (Rom. 8:7); cannot discern spiritual truths (I Cor. 1:14); cannot say that Jesus is Lord (I Cor. 12:3); cannot please God (John 3:6; Rom. 8:8).

It goes without saying that the totally depraved are in a state of bondage and slavery and can by no physical means free themselves. Their only hope for freedom rests in the Lord Jesus Christ. In fact, the Scriptures declare, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Romans 8:2).

The Scriptures refer to the totally depraved as being in a state of spiritual death. They have physical life, but have been alienated from the life of God, or spiritual life. After all, "God is Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and truth: (John 4:24). Then referring to this matter, the Scriptures say, "Ye have no life in you" (John 6:53); "you. . . were dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:5); "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses" (Col. 2:13).

The truths presented above make it quite obvious that the totally depraved can never pass from spiritual death unto spiritual life aside from the quickening power of God the Spirit. Again, this is why our Lord has said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him. . ." (John 6:44) and "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing. . ." (John 6:63).

The First Resurrection

Continued from page 205

translated 39 times in the Book of Revelation "throne" and five times "seat." It would have been better if it had always been translated "throne" in my opinion.

The twenty-four elders are the twelve sons of Jacob (Rev. 21:12) and the twelve apostles of the Lamb (Rev. 21:14). They represent the Old and New Testament saints caught out at the pre-trib coming of Christ (I Cor. 15:23; I Thess. 4:13-18). This is confirmed by the antecedent of the pro-

noun "they" (Rev. 20:4) which must be the armies which come from Heaven with Christ in Revelation 19:14. The saints cannot come from Heaven until they are first caught up to Heaven.

Thrones are promised to the saints in the Scriptures. Jesus said in Matthew 19:28: "Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (cf. Luke 22:28-30; Rev. 2:26). Revelation 20:4 is the fulfillment of this promise of Christ to His people.

Those who occupy these thrones have the power to judge: "And judgment was given unto them." This power also belongs to the saints. "The upright shall have dominion over them in the morning" (Ps. 49:14). "Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand; To execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people; To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; To execute upon them the judgment written: this honor have all his saints. Praise ye the LORD" (Ps. 149:5-9). "Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom" (Dan. 7:22). ". . . ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. 19:28). "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" (I Cor. 6:2).

If we allow Scripture to interpret Scripture, then the throne sitters in Revelation 20:4 are the saints which come from Heaven with Christ who comes to "judge and make war" (Rev. 19:11). These are not raised from the dead in Revelation 20:4. Rather they come from Heaven with Christ, having been resurrected at least seven years prior.

Christ did not come at His first advent to judge (Luke 12:14; John 12:47). The saints are not to act as judges in this present age: "Judge not, that ye be not judged" (Matt. 7:1). I Corinthians 4:5 commands: "Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come. . ." We can act as judges in the church (I Cor. 5:12-13), but not in the world. The saints shall judge the world when Christ judges the world.

This interpretation harmonizes with Daniel 7:9-10: "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the

Continued on page 207

The First Resurrection

Continued from page 206

Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened." The words "I beheld till the thrones were cast down" would better read from the Hebrew: "I was looking until the thrones were set up" (*A Literal Translation of the Bible* by Jay Green, p. 722). Here in Daniel we see Christ and the saints on thrones and judgment taking place. This fits well with Revelation 20:4.

How glorious the thought of saints being kings, wearing crowns of gold, and judging the world! Those who were persecuted and reproached of men are at last accepted and vindicated by God. The saints are seen on thrones who formerly had known only crosses. Though often degraded and disgraced in former times, now they are judging man and angels. Such a picture is sketched here by John.

SECOND COMPANY

... And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived. . ." First, John saw the throne sitters, and then he saw the tribulation martyrs. This second company had been beheaded and had lived during the reign of the beast (Antichrist). These are not the martyrs of all ages as some say. The Greek word translated "beheaded" (*pelekizo*) means "to cut away with an axe" (See *Young's Con.*, p. 84). This group is made up only of those beheaded during the reign of the Antichrist.

These martyrs are seen earlier in the Book of Revelation. In Revelation 6:9 I read: "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held." In chapter 12, verse 11, it is written: "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." Of the False Prophet it is said: "And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of

Berea Baptist Broadcast

STATION	TIME	DIAL	WATTS
WFTA, Tupelo, MS	Sunday 9:30 - 10:00 a.m.	101.9	3,000 FM
WJOR, Saint Joseph, TN	Sunday 1:00 - 1:30 p.m.	101.5	1,000 FM
WLZA, Starkville, MS	Sunday 1:00 - 1:30 p.m.	710	2,500 AM
WCNA, Myrtle, MS	Sunday 9:30 - 10:00 a.m.	95.9	3,000 FM
WYWY, Barbourville, KY ..	Sunday 7:30 - 8:00 a.m.	950	1,000 AM
KARI, Blaine, WA	Saturday 10:30 - 11:00 a.m. .	550	5,000 AM
DXRA, Davao City, Philippines	Sunday 8:15 - 8:45 a.m.	783 Khz ...	10,000 AM
DWSS, Manila, Philippines .	Sunday 5:30 - 6:00 p.m.	1494	16,000 AM

the beast should be killed" (Rev. 13:15). These martyrs are Jews (Rev. 12:11) and Gentiles (Rev. 7:9-17). The semiofficial toleration of Christianity by the nations will end at the Rapture.

Why does John call these martyrs "souls"? Because John sees them in their disembodied state in the process of being reunited to their bodies. John says: "I saw souls. . . and they lived." Beheaded people can only live in a physical sense. The meaning is that they live again as complete men (John 11:25), no longer with their heads missing. The "beheaded" ones, not just souls, lived again.

First, John sees in the vision disembodied souls, then in their reanimation: ". . . souls. . . and they lived. . ." This reanimation must mean a literal rising from the dead, for the two words employed in the passage put the matter beyond dispute. "They lived" (*edzesan*) is language which is never in the New Testament, applied to the souls disembodied, but to man in his complete condition of body and soul united.

The throne sitters are not said to live again. They were translated and resurrected at the Rapture of the saints. There is no translation of living saints at the end of the tribulation period. John says nothing here about any translation of living saints. In Revelation 20:4 John speaks only of a resurrection of people beheaded under the reign of the Antichrist. Those who are alive and saved when Christ returns to earth enter the kingdom in literal bodies as "sheep nations" (Matt. 25:31-46).

THE AMILLENNIAL ERROR

Amillennialists go to great length to say Revelation 20:4 is a spiritual resurrection. But there are many problems to this view. First, souls do not die, and hence they cannot be resurrected. Where would you bury an immortal soul? What would you raise it up from? Physical death is not applied to the soul. You cannot kill a soul by beheading it (Matt. 10:28).

Second, the new birth is never called the birth of the soul. Rather it is called the birth of the spirit (John 3:6). Soul and spirit are not synony-

mous terms (I Thess. 5:23); Heb. 4:12).

Third, the idea of a spiritual resurrection cannot be reconciled with Revelation 20:5: "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." Those who live again after the millennium are to live in the same sense as the first. In whatever sense one portion lives, the other lives, and in whatever sense some are dead, the rest are dead. If you bring the amillennial view to verse 5, it would say the rest of the spiritually dead shall be born again. Does this mean the whole world without exception will be spiritually resurrected? I know of no one who would so teach.

Fourth, how could we possibly conceive of people who were beheaded "for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God" not already being born again?

Where do you find the spiritually dead willing to be beheaded for the cause of Christ? I have never known an unsaved person to die for the reasons that John mentions in my text. Have you?

Fifth, it appears from the language of Revelation 20:4 that these all live at the same time. All are not born again at the same time. Regeneration occurs at different times to many different people.

POSTMILLENNIAL ERROR

The postmillennial view of Revelation 20:4 is equally untenable. G. W. Wilson, a postmillennial writer, says: "In taking the souls of the martyrs and placing them on thrones, was the first resurrection, the restoring of Satan to power by his deception to deceive the nations was 'the rest of the dead' living again. In both cases, it was the cause they stood for, was resurrected and not the bodies of the individuals who had been slain for the cause they represented" (*The Sign of Thy Coming*, p. 153). According to postmillennialists, Revelation 20:4-6 is a resurrection of principles—a resurrection of the courage and boldness of the ancient martyrs who are departed. Like amillennialists, they would rob the passage of any literal significance. This position would clearly lead us into spiritualism. Who

but a spiritualistic medium would place disembodied souls on the throne of a universal empire?

First, no one would ever come up with such an idea, if he had not some thesis to defend. Such an idea must be read into the text, for it is clearly not there.

Second, how do you behead a principle? Does a principle have a head? or is it an abstract thing? Does a principle have a soul? How could a principle worship the beast or his image? How could a principle receive the mark of the beast on its forehead or in its hand? Do men or principles have foreheads and hands? How can principles be represented as kings and priests?

Third, spiritual revivals are generally gradual in their beginning, and, I believe, are, without exception, gradual in their decline. But this is definite in its beginning and in its end. Simply a period of one thousand years—no more, no less. If the millennium is simply a triumph of righteous principles, what does the binding of Satan stand for? What about Satan being cast into the lake of fire? What is the purpose of the dead, small and great, standing before God to be judged? How can you know the dead are to receive their final destiny as set forth in the closing verses of Revelation 20, if we consent to spiritualize away the first six verses?

Fourth, this meaning cannot be reconciled with Revelation 20:5: "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." Does this mean the rest of the dead principles? You cannot honestly translate it that way.

Fifth, if this is a mere spiritual reviving, what does it accomplish? It does not convert sinners. For the subjects of it are only martyrs, and those who have not received the mark of the beast. For "the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." Thus postmillennialists in their efforts to explain away the literal first resurrection by one that is wholly spiritual, attempts to have the whole world converted by a theory which plainly declares that none are saved except those who were previously the holiest of men. They make no provision for the conversion of drunkards, infidels, harlots, gamblers or other sinners, for the plain declaration is that the rest of the dead lived not again for a thousand years. Only holy ones, martyrs and those of like spirit, are subjects of this rising again. Postmillennialists are supplanting a literal raising of the dead saints by a resurrection of those who are already saints.

Continued on page 208

The First Resurrection

Continued from page 207

Sixth, if this be a spiritual millennium, only those who shall have died before it began will be allowed to participate, since those who never died are not martyrs. But the worst of sinners who needs spiritual resurrection are not competent to receive it, having never been martyrs.

Seventh, according to this theory, none of the sinners will be changed during the thousand years, only martyrs and those who have not received the mark of the beast. But according to this theory, they all will be changed at its close. No sinners are converted while Satan is bound, and all of them are saved when he is loosed. Truly, "the legs of the lame are not equal."

A REIGN WITH CHRIST

"And reigned with Christ a thousand years." The martyred tribulation saints will not miss out on this reign with Christ. Since many of them have been beheaded by Antichrist, they must be resurrected, if they are to share the reign of Christ with the church and Israel (Rev. 11:15, 18).

The words "with Christ" are death to postmillennialism. They say the saints will reign 1,000 years "without" Christ being present on earth. They have a kingdom without the King. What would crowns and thrones be apart from Christ?

The length of the reign of the saints with Christ is one thousand years—no more and no less. This period of time is mentioned six times here in Revelation chapter 20. There is no reason to take the 1,000 years in any sense but the literal sense. All numbers in the Bible, including the Book of Revelation, are literal. There is no reason to spiritualize them, unless you are slow of heart to believe what John

has written by divine inspiration.

Abraham Kuyper, an Augustinian amillennialist, makes this confession: "In every other writing the construction of the first ten verses of chapter 20 would require a literal interpretation, but as in Revelation the idea 'thousand' is never taken literally, and also here merely expresses the exceeding fullness of Divine action, the precise, literal and historical understanding can not be imputed to God, and the exegete is duty bound to interpret what as Divine language comes to us according to the claim of the exegesis that is adaptable to it" (*The Revelation of St. John*, p. 277). An honest confession is good for the soul!

The term "thousand" is used other places in the Book of Revelation in combination with numbers. Consider 12,000 (7:5-7), 144,000 (7:4; 14:1, 3), 7,000 (11:13) and 12,000 (21:16). Also note "thousands of thousands" in Revelation 5:11. There is no proof whatever that other than the literal sense is intended in all these verses.

The reign of the raptured saints and the tribulation saints is contemporaneous with the binding of Satan (Rev. 20:1-3), and it is of equal duration with the binding of Satan. This reign of Christ and the saints is often mentioned in the Scriptures, and it is always in the future tense. "Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you" (I Cor. 4:8). "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him. . ." (II Tim. 2:12). "And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:10). This future tense is very strange language indeed, if the saints are now reigning with Christ as some teach.

(To be continued)

F u n n y b o n e

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

Pastor Brown was telling his banker about the new choir director.

"He has a marvelous voice," said the pastor. "He can hold a note for almost two minutes."

"That's nothing," said the banker, "I have held one of his notes for two years!"

The teller at the deposit window of the bank in Possumtrot sharply reprimanded Ted Johnson because he had neither filled out a deposit slip nor put his loose silver in the special little rolls of specified amounts.

"When you've done this properly, I'll be glad to accept your deposit,"

said the teller curtly.

Bro. Johnson accepted his tirade meekly and went to the counter to follow instructions. When he returned later to the window the teller half apologized.

"Oh, that's all right," said Bro. Johnson graciously. "I have a house full of teenagers, so I'm used to being spoken to as if I were an idiot."

Bill Tightwad was driving down Highway 72 and saw a sign, "Slow—Men at Work." A little further down the road he saw the men under a tree.

Bill said to his wife, "That's a true sign if I ever saw one."

Brief Catechism of Bible Doctrine

Part 3

By James Petigru Boyce

(1827 - 1888)

BAPTISM

1. What duty has God intimately associated with Faith?

The profession of that faith in the ordinance of Baptism.

2. What is Baptism?

It is the immersion of the body in water, in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

3. Why is it done in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost?

To denote that the person baptized thus professes to believe these three to be God, and to devote himself to His service.

4. What does the use of water in Baptism represent?

The washing away of our sins by the cleansing influences of the Holy Spirit.

5. What does the act of immersion represent?

The union of the believer with Christ in His death.

6. Do the Scriptures assign this union as a reason why we are to profess Christ by immersion?

They do; they tell us that it is on this account that we are buried with Christ by baptism unto death.

7. Who alone are the fit subjects of Baptism?

Those who exercise faith; for they only can properly profess to have experienced the things which Baptism represents.

THE LORD'S SUPPER

1. What other ordinance has Christ established?

The Lord's Supper.

2. In what does this ordinance consist?

In eating bread and drinking wine in remembrance of Christ.

3. Who alone are authorized to receive it?

The members of His churches.

4. In what way is it to be observed?

As a church ordinance, and in token of church fellowship.

5. Is there any established order in which these ordinances are to be observed?

Yes; the believer must be baptized before he partakes of the Lord's Supper.

6. What does the Lord's Supper represent?

The death and sufferings of Christ.

7. Does the mere partaking, either of Baptism or the Lord's Supper, confer spiritual blessings?

No; they are worthless, if not



J. P. Boyce

injurious, to those who do not exercise faith.

8. But how is it when they are partaken of by those who do exercise faith?

The Spirit of God makes them, to such persons, precious means of grace.

9. Whom has Christ appointed to administer Baptism and the Lord's Supper?

The authorized ministers of His churches.

THE SABBATH

1. What is the Sabbath?

It is one day of the week, which God requires to be kept as a day of rest, and holy to Him.

2. What day of the week did the Jews observe?

The seventh, which we commonly call Saturday.

3. What day do Christians keep?

The first day of the week or Sunday.

4. Why do Christians keep Sunday as the Sabbath?

Because it was on that day of the week that Christ rose from the dead.

5. What name is given to it on this account?

The Lord's Day.

6. Did the Apostles and the Christians of their day observe the first day of the week?

They did; and that is our authority for observing the first instead of the seventh day.

7. What truth was the Sabbath appointed to commemorate?

The completion of God's work of Creation.

8. What additional truth does the Christian Sabbath teach?

The triumphant completion of the still more glorious work of Redemption.

THE MERIT OF MAN

By Ernest W. Parks
Winston-Salem, North Carolina
(Penned, 1983)

My battle with GOD began on the Anzio beachhead (World War II) when as a young man, I would not reconcile the deaths of thousands of young men and GOD's love that I had been taught from a child. To my everlasting shame and disgrace, I vaguely remember tearing a New Testament apart, and casting it aside. In my depraved mind, I reasoned that if there was a GOD, HE had no plans for my life; and I definitely would leave HIM out of mine. At age twenty-seven, and not knowing a single verse of GOD's HOLY WORD, HE ended my life of infidelity, and gave me the only peace I have known in my life. In a recent period of affliction and agony of soul, I put my thoughts on paper, with the only intent to show my gratitude and praise for what my GOD did for me, as HE had to do for every sinner who has shared the COVENANT OF GRACE.



Ernest Parks

One day I thought wise to commune with my GOD,
In regards to the merit of man.
Why must I believe GOD is LORD over all?
The need of atonement, the loss in the fall?
"There is much good," said I, "in the vilest of men,
Good deeds they have done by the score.
Surely much goodness can be found in the heart,
His vile wicked deeds are not to the core."
"My son," said the FATHER, "the heart of all men,
Is as corrupt as the blackness of Hell.
His whole life is lived in rebellion to GOD,
In lust, and in filth; in sin he doth dwell."

At last I conceived of a near perfect man,
No drunkard, adulterer, a specimen grand!
A church member, mind you, who sings in the choir,
Whose outward appearance one has to admire.
Though in spiritual things he may be lukewarm,
His intentions are good; he meaneth no harm.
No 'total depravity' can be found in my choice,
FIND ANY WRONG DOING? I then raised my voice.
"Poor ignorant Arminian," GOD then seemed to say,
"Thy depraved wicked heart doeth lead thee astray.
The poor sinful creatures, you imagine Divine,
Will suffer forever in Hell in due time."
I determined in wrath I would not be outdone,
Man's battle with GOD in due time would be won.
"I'll do as I please, I'll captain my soul,
GOD's rule in my life, I shall then overthrow.
God has no right to demand my life,
A righteousness not obtained by my might."
"Poor soul," the voice of GOD rang in my ear,
"The GOD of all living, of you hath no fear.
Your rebellious and obstinate heart I can rend,
Like blindness at mid-day, your rebellion will end."

As Saul in his journey, who fell to his face,
I looked upon HIM who had died in disgrace.

"Forgive me, dear GOD, for doubting your power,
Forgive me, dear GOD, for each sinful hour.
Forgive me, dear GOD, your sovereignty doubt,
Forgive me, dear GOD, for shutting you out.
Forgive me, dear GOD, for doubting your grace,
Forgive me, dear GOD, for running my race.
T'was then I truly your mercy did see,
T'was then I saw fully, your dying for me."
Then as the Publican smote on his breast,
THY fountain of cleansing did grant me perfect rest.

"Dear son, there is pardon for poor sin-sick souls,
This message of mercy needs to be told.
Go tell the fallen that GOD's mercy abounds,
Go spread the Gospel where sinners are found.
Tell them of ONE who accursed on the tree,
Provided Redemption from sin to set free.
Go tell them of Hell and the Judgment to come,
Oh, tell them of the Blood of the Crucified ONE!
My son, there are mysteries the finite doth doubt,
There are depths of GOD's will you shall never find out.
But questioning your GOD, will only bring grief,
It is only through Blood that sinners find peace."

Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound,
GOD's love throughout the world is found.
From pole to pole, from shore to shore,
From mountain heights, from distant Moor*.
From paupers, rich and poor alike,
The world doth echo THY great might.
Oh! Blessed GOD, how great THOU art.
Thank GOD! YOU crushed the rebel's heart.
Thank GOD! YOU brought me to my knees.
Praise GOD! YOUR grace is all I see.
Precious GOD! Wilt THOU lead me?
And let me live my life in THEE.

* One of the dark race dwelling Barbary in northern Africa.

Trick or Treat:

Continued from page 201

cities of Cornwall, England and Brittany, France.

According to *Funk and Wagnall's Standard Reference Encyclopedia*, "Halloween or 'All Hallows' Eve' is a name applied to the evening of October 31, preceding the Christian fest of hallowmass, Allhallows, or All Saint's Day. The observances connected with Halloween are believed to have originated among the ancient Druids, who believed that on that evening Saman, the lord of the dead, called forth hosts of evil spirits. The Druids customarily lit great fires on Halloween, apparently for the purpose of warding off these spirits. Among the ancient Celts, Halloween was the last evening of the year, and it was regarded as a propitious time of examining the portents of the future. The Celts also believed that the spirits of the dead revisited their earthly homes on that evening."

Indications in our popular culture are that the public is becoming increasingly aware of the original rites of Halloween. Probably largely responsible for this reawakening are three movies which have grossed millions of dollars: "Halloween," "Halloween II," and "Halloween III—The Season of the Witch." In all three movies, this cult of death which is celebrated October 31st is very well illustrated. Now, for the first time in possibly one thousand years, many know the origins and true significance of Halloween. Unfortunately, a marked rise in the ancient practices has accompanied this new knowledge. In England, Ireland, Scotland, and France, as well as in America, many thousands of persons are reverting to the religion of their ancestors and to the "festival of the dead." Before examining modern witchcraft's rise, in relation to Halloween and its affiliated rituals, we should consult the Bible. Exodus 22:18 says, "**Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.**" The Bible contains repeated denunciations of witchcraft and other practices of this ilk. Therefore, claims by modern witches that they are "unopposed" to Christianity must be put to rest. Exodus 22:20 further warns, "**He that sacrificeth unto any god, save unto the Lord only, he shall be utterly destroyed.**" Thus, although the numbers of those who practice the black arts are growing, we must remember that the ancient practices of sacrifice and witchcraft are expressly forbidden.

Man, Myth, and Magic, a 24-volume encyclopedia of the supernatural, says, "All Hallows' Eve, or

Continued on page 212

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit questions on any Bible topic

The Berea Baptist Banner

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How much land did God give the nation of Israel? Will they ever occupy all the land promised to them? --- Arkansas



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The borders of the land that God gave to Israel are listed in Numbers chapter 34 and Joshua chapters 14 through 21. In the back of your Bible there are probably some maps which will show you the physical borders of the land that was actually promised.

As for the second question, there is no doubt in my mind that Israel will one day possess all the land that was first promised to them in the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 17:7-8), and later confirmed in the Palestinian Covenant (I Chron. 16:14-19). God has never gone back on His promise to Israel to give them the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession. When elect Israel is regenerated and restored to her land at the beginning of the Millennial Reign of Christ she will literally possess and occupy all the land that God promised. By comparing Jeremiah 31:31-37; 32:37-42; and 33:14-16 it is obvious that Israel will one day literally inherit all the land and blessings that God promised to her.

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In Genesis 12:7 God told Abraham, **“Unto thy seed will I give this land.”** Then in Genesis 13:15 God makes it clear that it is a promise for eternity, not just in Abraham’s day or his descendants during their life time. God said, “. . .to the will I give it, and to thy seed forever.” In Genesis 15:18 God gives the boundaries of this promised land, **“In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the**

river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.”

I can not find anywhere in the Bible or history where Israel (seed of Abraham) has ever had control of all this territory. According to Numbers 34, the borders of Israel were not as large or did not cover all territory mentioned in Genesis 15:18. Even in Israel’s golden age of King David and Solomon they did not have control of all the land God promised Abraham. David and Solomon’s rule only reached to the border of Egypt and did not include the Nile River (II Chron. 9:26).

We also know that the Abrahamic promise of the land by God has not been fulfilled because Israel has been driven out of this land many times when God promised it to them forever. I do believe though that God will keep this promise and it will be fulfilled in the future.

I believe the promise of the land by God to Abraham will be fulfilled when Christ sets up His millennial reign on the earth. Amos 9:13-15 brings this out very clearly. God never goes back on any promise. Therefore Israel having never occupied all the land promised by God, it must come to be later. Abraham never received this promise in his time (Heb. 11:8-9) but would afterward receive it (Heb. 11:18 tells us that Abraham died not in faith having revealed the promises but saw them afar off. Israel will occupy this land but only after the coming of Christ and His setting up of His kingdom on earth.

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“In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and

the Girgashites, and the Jebusites” (Gen. 15:18-21).

The boundaries of Canaan are given in Numbers 34:1-12. As near as I am able to tell, Israel has never occupied all of the land that God promised to give them. It appears that during the reign of Solomon, Israel occupied a greater part of the land but not all that God had promised.

“And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land” (Genesis 12:7).

The land became one of the central features of God’s program with Israel. Almost everyone of the Old Testament prophets had something to say about Israel possessing the land promised to them by God. In Genesis 13:14-15 God said to Abram, “. . .**Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.**” This promise was repeated to Isaac in Genesis 26:2-6. It is important to note that this promise was given to Isaac, not to Ishmael, and to Jacob, not to Esau. It was not given to all of Abraham’s children but was limited to the chosen seed (Jacob and his heirs). The promise of the land is a part of an unconditional covenant made with Israel and can only be fulfilled by the nation of Israel.

The covenant God made with Abraham promises his seed a permanent existence as a nation and permanent possession of the promised land. In Genesis 17:19 Abraham understood the term “seed” to refer to his physical seed which was Isaac and his descendants. The name “Israel” was given to Jacob which has always been used to refer to his physical descendants. It is the physical seed of Abraham that will inherit the land promised in the covenant. Israel will be restored as God’s people (Jer. 24:7; 32:38; Ezek. 37:23, 27; Zech. 8:1-8) and will occupy all the land promised to them.

God will not brake His covenant with Israel. **“Considerest thou not what this people have spoken, saying, The two families which the LORD hath chosen, he hath even cast them off? thus they have despised my people, that they should be no more a nation before them.**

Thus saith the LORD; if my covenant be not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth; Then will I cast away the seed of Jacob and David my servant, so that I will not take any of his seed to be rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: for I will cause their captivity to return, and have mercy on them” (Jer. 33:24-26).

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Canaan is promised as the homeland for Abraham and his descendants (Gen. 17:8; Jer. 32:40-41). Random House Webster’s College Dictionary gives the following definition to the term “Promised Land”: Canaan, the land promised by God to Abraham and his descendants (Gen. 12:7). The land of Palestine has been given to Abraham and his descendants as an unconditional gift. In Genesis 13:14-15 we read, **“And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward and westward. For all the land which thou seest to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.”** The same promise is stated in Genesis 15:18, **“In that same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the River of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.”** When you consider that Greek writers called Egypt “the gift of the Nile” one can see that a vast amount of territory is under consideration—from the River Nile to the River Euphrates.

Laying aside any desire to read something into the covenant God made with Abraham beyond what He actually said, it would appear to be evident that the physical seed of Abraham was promised the eternal possession of the Land. Those who contend that the covenant has been fulfilled in the past seem to have great difficulty in getting together on the meaning of the word “forever” in Genesis 13:14-15. Some hold that the promise is fulfilled because Abraham’s ashes now rest in the soil of the land, but this explanation seems

Continued on page 219

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit questions on any Bible topic

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What should be done to a pastor who has molested his own daughter? Should he be restored to church membership and position upon his repentance? Or, should he be restored to church fellowship but not to office? --- Missouri



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Without knowing all the sordid details of the case I believe that a man who is capable of sexually molesting his own daughter is of a reprobate mind. I would recommend that the church definitely exclude him from its membership. I personally believe that such a man is absolutely disqualified from pastoring or preaching and should be banned from preaching and teaching forever. I personally have a hard time believing that the God who knows the end from the beginning would ever call a child molester to preach.

From what information I have about child molesters they have a criminal, deceptive mind. They are capable of lying with no conviction or remorse. That is why I would seriously question the genuineness of such an individual's supposed repentance. I personally would recommend that a convicted child molester never be restored to church fellowship under any circumstances. I am sure that some will charge me with being harsh, unloving, and self-righteous, but I believe with all my heart that a majority of child molesters are reprobates. As such I don't believe that they should be members of the Lord's churches. The children of our churches deserve to be protected from such sexual predators. Hebrews 12:15-17 declares: **"Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears."**

TOM ROSS

We know there is forgiveness with God, and therefore there must be with us (Matt. 6:15; Gal. 6:1), but also in Galatians 6:4 it says that everyone must prove himself. When one sins they should not expect immediate acceptance as though they had never sinned. They must realize that it takes time to prove oneself after public disgrace.

In Leviticus 18:6 God's law speaks very clearly and strongly against incest. God says those that commit such sin defile the land and should be cut off from God's people (Lev. 18:29).

We therefore see that this is a horrible sin and will not be tolerated by God and must not be taken lightly by God's people.

I personally believe that if such a one repents to God sincerely that they will receive forgiveness and if sought from church the church must forgive them. I have serious doubts as to their ability to pastor a church again. I believe that possibly this sin falls into the category of what the Apostle Paul mentioned in the fear of becoming a castaway in I Corinthians 9:27. Paul said he kept his body in subjection so that by no means would he become a castaway.

Some may use the excuse of being human or weak etc., but this is no excuse because if one is a child of God, God has promised to be with you and provide a way out of temptation, which all believers face (I Cor. 10:13).

I personally could never trust a pastor of such a sin with my children, grandchildren, or young people, to teach them and be a role model for them.

Sin has consequences, and one of the consequences of such sin is not being trusted and accepted as though nothing every happened.

I do not believe that a person that has been proven guilty of such a sin could ever be accepted as a pastor. He

should be accepted back into the fellowship of the church, if he truly repents and promises to never again commit such an act, but I do not believe he could be trusted to be an example and teach others to be Christ-like. I believe he would be disqualified even as a preacher who would divorce his wife and marry again.

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"Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him" (II Cor. 2:6-8).

Many Christians do not know what it is to forgive. Jesus said in Matthew 12:31, **"Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men."** The word "forgiven" is defined as "to send away." It is from the Greek preposition "apo" which is translated "from" 393 times and is defined as "of separation" (Strong). When God forgives sin, that sin will never be remembered (Isa. 45:6; Jer. 31:34; Ps. 103:12). It is through the precious blood of Christ that we have redemption, and the forgiveness of sin according to the riches of God's grace (Eph. 1:7).

It is important that God's people learn what is it to forgive one another and put it into practice. A warning was given by the Lord in the model prayer. **"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."** **"For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses"** (Matt. 6:12; 14-15). In I Corinthians chapter 5, Paul

had instructed the church to withdraw from an incestuous man. In II Corinthians chapter 2, we see that this man, which was guilty of a great sin, had repented, and Paul instructed the church to forgive him, to comfort him, and to confirm their love toward him. All men are guilty of sin and find it necessary to seek forgiveness (I John 1:8-10; Ps. 130:3-4).

I am sure that there will be many opinions as to whether one who has committed this sin could remain effective as a pastor. This decision must be made by the church. Whatever the decision, it must be based upon the Bible and for the edification of the church (I Cor. 14:26). The qualifications for a pastor are found in I Timothy 3:1-7 and in Titus 1:1-9).

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The sin mentioned in this question is a serious one indeed. We do not like to hear of an unbeliever molesting an offspring, but how pathetic to hear of a pastor molesting his own daughter. There can be no question as to whether the church should deal with such a serious offense. If it follows scriptural teaching it must.

It is also made clear in the teaching concerning church discipline that when there is evidence of true repentance restoration to membership is proper. I Corinthians 5 is a record of a incestuous relationship and what the church is to do when such a sin occurs. The duty of the church is so plainly stated. However, the teaching in II Corinthians 2 speaks of forgiveness, on the part of the church, when true repentance is shown by the offender.

Restoring an incestuous pastor to membership is not equal to a restoration to office. In my opinion a pastor who is guilty of molesting his own daughter would have little if any influence in his home, church, or community. It seems that a church would be in desperate need of a pastor to even consider restoring him to the office. I cannot believe that a man who is so weak as to molest his own daughter could ever be a strong leader among those who have knowledge of his sin.

Church members, including the one who holds the office of a pastor, can rejoice in knowing that there is

Continued on page 219

Trick or Treat:

Continued from page 209

Hallowe'en, was originally a festival of fire and the dead and the powers of darkness. It is the evening of 31 October, the night before the Christian festival of All Hallows' or All Saints' Day. All Hallows' Day commemorates the saints and martyrs, and was first introduced in the 7th century. Its date was changed from 13 May to 1 November in the following century, probably to make it coincide with and Christianize a pagan festival of the dead. All Souls' Day in the Roman Catholic calendar is 2 November. It is marked by prayers for the souls of the dead." The intentional effort by the Catholic Church to stamp out the pagan ceremonies of Halloween failed, however. Whereas the original meanings were clouded or lost, the actual methodology of witchcraft and worship survives until the present day.

Let us specifically examine the original meanings of Halloween. *The Golden Bough*, by Sir James Frazer, is a considered and respected, albeit secular, work on the occult from the 19th century. Sir Frazer's comments seem most enlightening to our study: ". . . throughout Europe, Halloween, the night which marks the transition from autumn to winter, seems to have been of old the time of year when the souls of the departed were supposed to revisit their old homes in order to warm themselves by the fire and to comfort themselves with the good cheer provided for them in the kitchen or the parlour by their affectionate kinsfolk. It was, perhaps, a natural thought that the approach of winter should drive the poor shivering hungry ghosts from the bare fields and the leafless woodlands to the shelter of the cottage with its familiar fireside." So, one of the reasons for bonfires, so common on Halloween, are to attract the dead and to keep them away from the home, until their journey into the afterworld. This was a serious matter to those who practiced the Celtic religion. Samhain, or Sa-ween as it was pronounced, hence Hallo-ween, was the single most important festival concerning the dead to the ancient Celtic world. Bonfires were also used for one of the most hideous acts imaginable. *The Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology* tells us: ". . . on the eve of Samain the people of the side (otherworld) left their domain and wandered in the world of man. . . hideous and terrifying ritual at Samain. . . attacks by hostile supernatural powers and of sacrifices are indicative of this insecurity and the need for pro-

pitiation." Simply put, the Celts wished to know the future and believed that on this terrible night they could learn the future by use of a ritual. This ritual consisted of constructing a basket, containing a human being or an animal. This basket was then burned, with the unfortunate inmate within burned to the death. It was the belief of the Celts that by watching the victim die by fire, they would be able to see signs of the future as the sacrificial victim passed from this world into the next.

The Celts believed that on this night other creatures roamed with the spirits of the dead. Fairies, as reported by *Man, Myth and Magic*, ". . . could also be seen on All Hallows' Eve, moving from one fairy hill to another with the music of bells and elfhorns. They were sometimes identified with the dead." The Celts held that fairies could be good or bad; however, the introduction of Christianity changed this distinction. Jack Santino's work, *Night of the Wandering Souls* reveals: "Samhain, with its emphasis on the supernatural, was very pagan. While missionaries identified Christian holy days with native holy days, they branded the earlier supernatural deities as evil and associated them with the Devil. As representatives of the rival religion, Druids were considered evil; their gods and spirits, devilish and demonic. The Celtic underworld inevitably became associated with the Christian Hell. The efforts of this policy were to diminish but not totally dispel beliefs in the traditional gods. According to priests, fairies were fallen angels, thus identifying them with devils in Christian theology."

Thus, as the Celts converted to the new religion, they did not forget their stories of the dead traveling to the afterworld on Halloween, nor did sightings and activities of fairies cease being reported. Instead, manifestations of this night became overwhelmingly evil, and the festival adopted even more malicious overtones. Everything supernatural was attributed to demons who masqueraded as fairies, hobgoblins, vampires, werewolves, and virtually any other myth. Interestingly, until the advent of the 20th century, these supernatural beings were regarded as very real and very dangerous.

As more Celts became Christian, the native Druids or Celtic priests were correctly labeled "witches." Witchhunting became a very common phenomenon until the 17th century, with the usual punishment prescribed being burning at the stake. Whereas witchhunting crazes broke out indiscriminately, hunting witches during Halloween became virtually a national pastime. *Man, Myth and Magic* says, "Darker and colder creatures still roamed through the night on

Hallowe'en—demons and hobgoblins, witches who straddled broomsticks or shankbones, flew in sieves or eggshells, or rode on coal-black horses. The fires helped to keep them off and at Balmoral in Queen Victoria's time the effigy of a hideous old witch was ceremoniously burned on a bonfire at Hallowe'en." It should be noted that Queen Victoria ruled the British Empire at its height, during the 19th century. Witches were very much on the public's mind during the last two millennia. Midnight of October 31st was considered an extremely hazardous time, as witches were believed to be actively hexing people and community with the devil. Many Catholics took to making charms and casting "white magic" spells to protect themselves from the evil they knew to be very potent on this night. What many apparently did not realize was the charms themselves were as evil as the witches they were supposed to thwart.

Foretelling the future was an idea intriguing to the Celts, as much as anyone, and many still believed the Druids could do just that. As the Catholics believed the Druids were witches—or in the case of males, warlocks—they did not doubt this. Therefore, burning sacrificial animals and, occasionally, people was still not uncommon. Even in our time, animals are sacrificed on Halloween in Europe and in the Philippines, as well as in the Americas.

Using witchcraft to foretell the future was a crime that cost King Saul of Israel his life. I Samuel 28:7-8 reads, "**Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and enquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor. And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night: and he said, I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring me him up, whom I shall name unto thee.**"

The story of the witch of Endor already possessed several significant similarities to the witches of the Celts. Familiar spirits are nothing more than demons, and the fairies and leprechauns of Celtic myths are the same as familiar spirits.

The Lord's punishment upon Saul was pronounced to him the very same night. I Samuel 28:17-18 relates, "**And the LORD hath done to him, as he spake by me: for the Lord hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to thy neighbour, even to David: Because thou obeyedst not the voice of the**

LORD, nor executedst his fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore hath the LORD done this thing unto thee this day." The Lord's pronouncements concerning witchcraft are quite clear. There is no such thing as "white magic; it is all evil and empowered by evil beings. It should also be emphasized that these actions transpired at nighttime, as do traditional Halloween activities.

The other, and much more popular, so-called white magic act is the creation and wearing of charms. Few people realize that the wearing and use of charms is simply another manifestation of witchcraft. Be it rabbits' feet or religious medallions, trinkets, or other such relics, these objects are subject to demonic power. The word "charm" means "to cast a spell on." The Bible contains several passages about charms and the use thereof, Psalm 58:3-5 says: "**The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies. Their poison is like the poison of a serpent: they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear; Which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely.**" This is hardly a ringing endorsement of the use of charms. Furthermore, Isaiah 19:3 states: "**And the spirit of Egypt shall fail in the midst thereof; and I will destroy the counsel thereof: and they shall seek to the idols, and to the charmers, and to them that have familiar spirits, and to the wizards.**" The Lord purposefully groups together idol worshippers, witches with familiar spirits, wizards and charmers. This is not the only Scripture dealing thusly. The activities of Halloween, the making of charms, divining the future, the practice of magic, and dealing with unclean spirits and demons are explicitly forbidden to mankind. Deuteronomy 18:10-12 says, "**There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer (that is, "one who seeks to interrogate the dead," according to Schofield). For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee.**" This is a very explicit commandment from the Lord. Thus, the ancient Celtic ritual of Halloween practiced today in America is pagan in origin and innately linked with the occult, about

Continued on page 213

Trick or Treat:

Continued from page 212

which the Bible has much to say and warns against.

Among the Celts—as well as among the Chinese, the Egyptians, and even the Aztecs—it was thought that the spirits of the dead required food and drink. During the festival of Samhain, the people would leave various articles of food outside to placate the spirits. This was very important, for only the finest mutton legs, vegetables, eggs, and poultry—as well as honey and wine—were left outside for the spirits to consume on their way to the netherworld. To supply nothing meant that the hungry and possibly irritated spirit might intrude upon one's house and help itself to one's belongings. Leaving out food that had spoiled was also considered an open invitation to disaster. Therefore, families who faced uncertain diets, often of very low quality, gave what was most precious to them: food. This takes on added implications when we recall that, at that time, food was very difficult to preserve. Moreover, Halloween marked winter's beginning, when food was at its scarcest, and starvation not uncommon.

From this practice evolved one of the most remarkable aspects of Halloween; to quote Santino: "Virtually all of our Halloween customs today can be traced to the ancient Celtic day of the dead. Each of Halloween's many mysterious customs has a history, or at least a story behind it. The wearing of costumes, for instance, and the roaming from door-to-door demanding treats can be traced to the Celtic period and the first few centuries of Christianity when it was thought that the souls of the dead were out and around, along with fairies, witches, and demons. Food and drink were left out to placate them. As the centuries wore on, people began dressing as these dreadful creatures and performing antics in exchange for offerings of food and drink. This practice, called mumming, evolved into our present trick or treating. To this day, witches, ghosts, and skeleton figures of the dead are among the favorite disguises."

The practice of wearing masks and outfits to represent these evil creatures is universal in the human experience. From the Indians of America to China—in all the inhabited areas of the earth—traditions exist in which individuals who dress to represent a god or demon are imbued with supernatural powers and often given presents or beneficial treatment. There is a reason for this. Idols and masks of idols are representative of some-

thing! I Corinthians 10:19-21 says, "What say I then? that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing? But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and the table of devils." So the Bible tells us that idols represent demons, "demon" being the actual word used in the original Greek text. Offerings of food are offerings of good to demons; and trick or treating of today is reminiscent of that practice. In fact, trick or treating children often masquerade as demons. Food is given these children under the guise of a "trick or a treat." It has become a recent phenomenon that adults participate in these activities, a strange shadow of what transpired 2,000 years earlier.

Lest we should become confused as to how the concept of romping spirits became intertwined with children, we must again quote *Man, Myth and Magic*: "The guisers went from house to house, singing and dancing. Their blood-curdling masks and grotesque costumes may have been meant to keep evil at bay or, more likely, were a visible representation of the ghosts and goblins that lurked in the night. The masks have now been transferred to the children who, in the United States, visit the neighbors for the food offerings which belonged to the dead—or play tricks akin to the legendary destructiveness of witches and imps abroad on this night." This then is the story and significance behind trick or treating. But there is more to the story of Halloween. . .

Virtually everyone in this country has either made or seen a jack-o-lantern. These macabre, grinning pumpkins with candles inside often light the way of the errant ghost seeking his or her candy. Have you ever wondered where the idea for the jack-o-lantern originated? This, too, was a Celtic invention used during the ritual of Samhain or Halloween. In the United States, the jack-o-lantern is a carved pumpkin. The orange, grinning, candle-filled lamp of Halloween is extremely popular and may be observed virtually anywhere in the United States at Halloween. The use of a pumpkin for the jack-o-lantern is an invention of the American Indian. In Europe, where the concept for the jack-o-lantern was conceived, it is not a pumpkin but rather a carved-out turnip. The switch was made in America because, besides being much larger than the turnip, the

pumpkin is easier to carve. The turnip was the original jack-o-lantern, and here is the earliest known tale of how it originated.

The tale of the jack-o-lantern is, in several ways, reminiscent of the classical tale of Dr. Faustus in world literature. A blacksmith by the name of Jack made a contract with Satan. The deal contained a trade-off. Jack the blacksmith would be given powers by Satan that would make him the best blacksmith in the world for a period of seven years. In return, Satan would demand Jack's soul at the end of this seven-year period. Jack thus received the powers and hung a sign outside his shop proclaiming himself the master of all masters.

As the story goes, one day the Son of God came to the shop, accompanied by the apostle Peter. The sign have indicated that the owner was in need of religious indoctrination. Thus, the two worked several miracles—to no avail—in Jack's presence. Peter then offered Jack three wishes, which Jack immediately seized upon. Santino writes: "First, he wished that whenever he told someone to climb a nearby pear tree that person would have to stay in the tree until Jack allowed him to come down. He made the same wishes regarding his armchair and his purse: one must stay in them until Jack allowed him to go."

"You have wished very foolishly," said Saint Peer. "You should have wished for everlasting peace in Heaven."

"Nevertheless, Jack used these three wishes to trick the Devil when he came to take his soul. Each time the Devil came, Jack tricked him into climbing the tree, sitting in his chair, and finally, shrinking himself and entering his purse. Each time, the devil gave Jack seven years in return for his freedom, and finally he simply fled in terror."

Jack could not live forever, however, and one day he died. When presented at Heaven's Pearly Gates, Peter would not allow Jack inside. Denied entrance into Heaven, Jack went to Hell. At the gates of Hell, Satan refused Jack entrance, saying that Jack was full of too many tricks and would cause mischief. Satan then ordered the gates of Hell closed. But before Jack was thrown out, he managed to scoop out a burning coal from the fires of Hell with a turnip he had been eating. As this coal came from Hell, it was eternal and would never be extinguished. Thus, Jack, who was denied entrance into Heaven and Hell, was doomed to roam the earth with his peculiar lantern, his Jack-o-lantern, if you will.

The Halloween festival became fully established in America after the huge influx of Irishmen as a result of

the great Irish potato famine of 1846. America, in that era, was quite religious, and so the stories of fairies and leprechauns, as well as demons and ghosts were accepted as fact. Religious beliefs aside, those less well-educated tend to be more superstitious—at least that was the prevalent thinking of the early to mid-twentieth century. In America, those who were the most superstitious were also the least educated; the American Indian, the Negro, and poor white settlers in the Appalachian and Ozark regions tended to take superstitions very seriously indeed. Other than these groups, belief in the Bible as the Word of God confirmed, as a matter of course, the existence of ghosts and demons. Education—as taught in the mid-twentieth century until the present—has become increasingly secular and anti-supernatural in thinking.

Studies in the occult, from both religious and purely academic points of view, have shown a marked increase in the numbers and efforts of Satanists in the latter part of this century. By Satanist, we include such practices as witchcraft, following pagan religions, charmers, necromancers, and other practices of the black arts.

According to Paul Lee Tann's *Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations*, "Satan worship and all forms of the occult is evident everywhere. It is estimated that there are at least 100 million Americans who dabble in some form of Black Magic."

"In New Jersey, a young man was drowned by a group of his friends at his request, because he believed that a violent end would put him in command of forty legions of demons."

Witchcraft is not dead. In England, at the ancient ruins of Stonehenge, Druid priests perform ancient rites, as their ancestors did. Witch hunts, which resulted in the murdering of more than half a million persons in Europe during the last millennia, are not a phenomenon of the past. According to *Collier's Encyclopedia*, "In 1957 during a virus epidemic in Alaska, the civil authorities were hard put to it to prevent an Eskimo community from destroying the 'witches' held responsible."

No, the occult is not dead. In fact, the occult is currently probably stronger than at any time since the Dark Ages. Zombies are no laughing matter in Haiti, any more than demons are to Christians; and who is to say in what form demonic power can manifest itself? Astrology, chiefest of the black arts among Americans, has skyrocketed in popularity since the 1960s.

According to the *Encyclopedia of*

Continued on page 214

Trick or Treat:

Continued from page 213

7700 Illustrations, "Americans spend over \$200 million a year on astrology alone. A 1976 Gallup Poll indicated that those who take astrology seriously may number as many as 32 million. . . It is estimated that 1,200 of the 1,700 U.S. daily newspapers regularly print horoscope columns." The evil world of the occult wages an ongoing assault against Christianity.

We believe revival of witchcraft and the black arts is indicative of the end times. Satan knows the time of Christ's return is near, and he is mustering all of his forces to engage in a battle he has lost already. Let no one doubt that witchcraft and sorcery are very real. The number of occult-related murders has been on the increase in this country for more than a generation. Moreover, one of the most significant occult dates of all—the one favored for the Black Mass—is Halloween, celebrated the last day of October in our nation. On college campuses and universities today, Anton LaVey's *Satanic Bible* is often a best-seller—in some cases, outselling the Bible itself.

It is of great importance to realize that the powers some claim are not powers of themselves: real sorcery relies on demonic or Satanic power. Ephesians 6:12 states: "**For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.**" There is, in conclusion, only one way to win against Satan; that is victory through Christ Jesus.

Fruit of the Spirit

Continued from page 201

healing the sick and afflicted, feeding the multitudes, raising the dead, walking on water, and conquering death. In light of these facts Jesus was a man of extraordinary power, yet He considered Himself to be meek and lowly. Thus we must conclude that the power of God is associated with the virtue of meekness.

W. E. Vine rightly said:

"The meaning of *prautes* (the Greek word for meekness) is not readily expressed in English, for the terms meekness, mildness, commonly used, suggest weakness. . . to a greater or less extent, whereas *prautes* does nothing of the kind. . . It must be clearly understood, therefore, that the meekness manifested by the Lord and commended to the believer is the fruit of power. The common assumption is

that when a man is meek it is because he cannot help himself; but the Lord was meek because He had the infinite resources of God at His command. Described negatively, meekness is the opposite to self-assertiveness and self-interest; it is equanimity of spirit that is neither elated nor cast down, simply because it is not occupied with self at all."¹

If the power of the Holy Spirit is operating within our lives making us more like the Lord Jesus Christ then the fruit of meekness ought to be evident and abundant. Yet out of all the aspects of the fruit of the Spirit meekness often seems to be the least cultivated and yearned for. Time and again we are admonished in Scripture to grow in the grace of meekness which suggests it is an indispensable virtue. May God be pleased to enlighten our eyes to the meaning of meekness, the method of cultivating meekness in our lives, and the magnitude and importance of meekness in relationship to our testimony among men. Zephaniah 2:3 commands: "**Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness. . .**"

THE MEANING OF MEEKNESS

1. Meekness is the opposite of stubbornness and self-will. Meekness is marked by pliability and yieldedness to God. It is the opposite of being determined to have my own way, rather desiring that God would work His will in and through me.

George Bethune wrote:

"Meekness toward God is a humble and acquiescing submission of the soul to the truth of all His doctrines, however they may through their mysteriousness oppose the pride of human reason; to the excellence of all His commandments, however severely they may tax the vicious inclinations of our nature; and the paternal wisdom of all His providence, however it may defeat or postpone the wishes our hearts have formed, and afflict us with present sorrow. It is, thus, the fruit of the Spirit, which works in us that faith, which receives the Divine testimony in all things, and that contrition of repentance, which makes us sensible of our ill desert and our need of salutary chastisement."²

2. Meekness involves a genuine submission and resignation to the sovereignty of God in every area of our life. It is learning to respond to God's Word in a receptive manner especially when it goes against our fleshly reasonings and desires. James 1:21-22 shows the connection between meekness and receiving God's Word and will: "**Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughti-**

ness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." As we submit ourselves to God in all things, we will gladly and most freely learn to accept His providential dealings in our lives. Where in the past we may have expressed anger, bitterness, and rebellion in response to our circumstances, the heart that is seasoned with meekness is enabled to say: "God knows what is best for me, and it is my chief delight to daily put myself under His authority and in His wise care." Thus, meekness is the ability to say with the Saviour, regardless of the circumstances: ". . . **nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.**"

3. Meekness is also marked by the ability to bear the ill-treatment, rudeness, and persecutions of men without expressing anger or desiring revenge. Meekness consists in the maintenance of a calm and forgiving disposition in spite of provocation and the offensive behaviour of others. It is a temper of mind that is not easily stirred to be resentful. When we really understand the meaning of meekness in relationship to our response to those who are offensive and injurious we learn that this grace is rare indeed. It was said of Moses: "**Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth**" (Num. 12:3). Moses remained with, guided, and prayed for the children of Israel even though they insulted him, and rebelled against God. Moses would not allow the provocation's of a stubborn people to stir up feelings of resentment and revenge against them.

The Lord Jesus Christ was beaten, publicly humiliated, and hung on a tree of cursing by wicked men yet His complete absence of revenge or retaliation was manifested as He hung on the cross and said: "**Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do**" (Luke 23:34). The same spirit and attitude of meekness was found in Stephen as recorded in Acts 7:59-60: "**And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.**"

George Bethune observed:

"In the estimation of the world at large, it is considered infamous to brook an insult or suffer an injury unrevenged, and they call it honor to wash out a hasty aspersion in the blood of the reviler. But the brute of the field, nay, the meanest reptile that crawls, shares in such a spirit. Meek-

ness is the elevation of the soul above such brutal impulses, and he, who practices it, aspires to rule over his own heart. . . Not to feel the wounds of insult and wrong, is to be like a stone; to feel and desire revenge, is to be like the brute; but to bear and to forgive, is to approach as near the glory of God as human nature can."³

4. When our hearts are filled with resentment towards God and a vengeful spirit towards those who have offended us we can be sure that we have not discovered the true meaning of meekness. If feelings of bitterness, malice, and retaliation dominate our lives then we must conclude that we are sadly lacking in the fruit of meekness. May God help us to realize that all of the circumstances of our lives ultimately may be traced to the sovereign hand of our Master. Nothing occurs in our lives without His gracious permission. When we can resign ourselves entirely to God's will without resentment or desire for revenge against others we have learned the meaning of meekness.

METHODS OF CULTIVATING MEEKNESS

1. Since meekness is an aspect of the fruit of the Spirit, the Holy Spirit must ultimately produce this quality in the elect. Apart from the Spirit's indwelling and sanctifying influence the fruit of meekness will not be demonstrated. Therefore, the first step to cultivating this gracious temper of mind and heart is to submit to the authority and leadership of the Spirit of God in our lives. Since the Spirit is conforming us to the image of the Lord Jesus by developing His character within us we cannot hope to be more like Jesus in the way of meekness unless we are filled and controlled by the blessed Holy Spirit. Being under the control of the Spirit by following His guidance, promptings, and teachings is absolutely essential to our maturation in the fruit of meekness. Romans 8:14-16 declares: "**For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage against to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.**" If we are truly led and taught by the Spirit we give evidence that we are the children of God. Obedient children manifest the fruit of meekness when they delight in and resign themselves to the will of the Father in every circumstance of life. Psalms 25:8-10 demonstrates the attitude that must prevail in our lives if we are to grow in the grace of meekness:

Continued on page 215

Fruit of the Spirit

Continued from page 214

“Good and upright is the LORD: therefore will he teach sinners in the way. The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way. All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.”

2. If meekness is to be cultivated in our hearts and lives we must have a sense of our own unworthiness before God. When we understand what we are by nature and what we justly deserve, such a realization should serve to humble us. When difficulties or persecutions arise that call for a meek and quiet spirit before God we must remember that we are not worthy of the least of God's blessings. No matter what we are called upon to suffer, whether it be in the form of affliction or chastening from God, or the ill-treatment of men it is nothing compared to an eternity in the Lake of Fire which is what we deserve. When I think of the pit that God raised me from, the sins that He has graciously forgiven, and the love that He has shed abroad in my heart I should be able to patiently bear whatever God's providence brings my way in a spirit of meekness. These attitudes of holy resignation to the will of God and freedom from a spirit of revenge which characterize meekness can only be cultivated in the heart of one who understands his position in relationship to God. Notice how a spirit of meekness is linked to a sense of one's unworthiness before God in Psalms 130:3-5 which states: **“If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared. I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope.”** The sheer magnitude of God's mercies showered upon our unworthy souls should enable us to bow before Him in humility and meekness.

3. In order to cultivate the fruit of meekness in our lives we must learn to free ourselves from the bitter feelings of revenge against those who oppose, offend, or even persecute us. This can only be done by maintaining an attitude of reconciliation and a willingness to forgive. God does not call upon us to act as doormats for the world, but He does call upon us to be ready to forgive those who may be offensive or oppressive. Psalms 86:5 declares: **“For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.”** How often are we really like the Lord when it comes to

dealing with those who have offended, strongly disagreed, or persecuted us? More often than we want to admit we want to exercise retaliation rather than forgiveness. Colossians 3:12-13 commands: **“Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.”**

I must once again concur with the observation of George Bethune:

“Again, the Christian remembers what God hath borne with and forgiven him. No insults he can receive from men, no wrongs they can do him, can compare with those of his sins against God. Yet God has released him from his debt of ten thousand talents, and can he now take his fellow servant by the throat, when he owes him but a hundred pence? The joy of being forgiven so great a debt, should readily reconcile us to forgive such petty claims; nay, in justice we should consider God's kindness to have canceled them all. Who can demand square accounts with his neighbor, when he cannot settle his account with God?”⁴

4. In order to cultivate meekness in our lives we must crucify the lust of worldly ambitions for prestige, power, and possessions fostered by fleshly pride. If our chief goal and desire is to gain the approval and applause of men we will never grow in the grace of meekness. Worldly ambition is marked by a desire to be above others, and therefore struggle with them in order to gain the upperhand. Often those who thirst for power and prestige are characterized by envy, hate, slander, malice, and revenge; all of which are enemies to the grace of meekness. We must be careful not to fix our affections upon the things that the world has to offer which are fleeting and unsatisfying. The meek Christian has his hopes set upon a better country and therefore will not be so interested in receiving honor and distinction from the world. Those who are continually anxious for the admiration of others can never really seem meek. To desire the praise of God is noble, but the praise of men is not worth its cost. The accolades of men may please our flesh, but it is a meek and quiet spirit which pleases God. I Peter 3:4 declares: **“But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.”** It is not wrong to

have goals and sanctified ambitions for your life, your family, or your career. Ambition is wrong when it conflicts with the laws of God. Ambition is wrong when it drives you to do anything, even disobey God and hurt others, in order to reach your goals. May God grant us the grace to learn the balance that is achieved through meekness.

5. Finally, meekness is cultivated by learning from the examples of holy men and women of old who were models of his gracious trait. If we would be meek we must study the lives of men like Moses and Paul. They were both strong leaders, yet their lives were tempered by the virtue of meekness. They learned how to effectively deal with affliction and the ill treatment of others in a manner that pleased God. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the greatest example of meekness. He exemplified power under control. He knew that all His sufferings had been ordained of God which enabled Him to resign Himself to the Father's will. He was able to soundly rebuke the gainsayers on the one hand and yet respond to His persecutors in a meek and forgiving manner. Oh, that God would develop such a holy balance in our lives so that we may model the demeanor of the One of whom it is written: **“Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek. . .”** (Matt. 21:5). May we never forget that the greatest of all kings, the Lord Jesus Christ, was a model of meekness and humility while He walked upon earth.

MAGNITUDE OF MEEKNESS

1. The magnitude and importance of the grace of meekness is manifested by the frequency it is insisted upon and urged by the inspired writers of Sacred Scripture. As you read the Scriptures it is plain to see that the fruit of meekness is a commendable trait that is highly prized. Colossians 3:12 declares: **“Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering.”** A spirit of meekness is considered by God to be highly valued as I Peter 3:4 suggests: **“But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.”** If meekness is of great price in the sight of God then it is a trait that should be earnestly longed for in our lives.

Again I must quote from the suggestive pen of George Bethune:

“How serious and devout should be our endeavors to understand and possess a grace, to which the Holy Ghost so often exhorts, which is so essential a badge of Christ's true followers, which is so necessary to growth in

Christian knowledge, which gives on earth so rich a foretaste of Heaven, and adorns the soul with a loveliness God delights to look upon and to bless!”⁵

2. The magnitude of meekness is indispensable to our profession of faith as Christians. When we say that we are ambassadors and representatives of Christ, who have been sent into the world on a mission of mercy and grace, we are identifying ourselves with the Saviour's character and temperament. What was found in Christ when He walked upon earth should be evident in those who profess to be His followers as I John 4:17 implies: **“. . .because as he is, so are we in this world.”** If we are to truly be more like Christ we must learn and understand the importance He placed upon the cultivation of meekness. Jesus declared: **“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls”** (Matt. 11:28-29). According to Jesus conformity to His image in the process of sanctification included an education and practice of the grace of meekness. To maintain an attitude of meekness and humility in the face of difficulty, opposition, and persecution means that the Spirit of God is conforming us to the glorious image of our Saviour.

3. The magnitude and importance of the fruit of meekness is seen as an essential quality that must be found in those who are called to preach and pastor the Lord's kind of church. I Timothy 6:11 declares: **“But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.”** If the call to the sacred ministry requires the grace and display of meekness then it must be an important quality. In order to have an effective ministry among God's people pastors must not be stubborn, proud, self-willed, dictatorial, or indignant. Rather, the virtue of meekness should permeate every facet of their ministry, thus enabling them to effectively edify the saints of God by their teaching and example. If the Lord's churches are to flourish then the man of God who is called to lead and feed the flock must be marked by humility and meekness. The pastor himself must maintain a spirit and example of meekness if he hopes to see this grace in those he ministers to as Titus 3:1-2 implies: **“Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work. To**

Continued on page 216

Fruit of the Spirit

Continued from page 215

speaking evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men."

4. The magnitude and importance of meekness is manifested as an essential part of our Christian witness in the world. Christians are called upon to witness and minister to people who are disagreeable, stubborn, proud, disobedient, and lost. If we are to commend our Lord to a lost and dying world we must have an abundance of the grace of meekness operating within us as we deal with those who oppose themselves and the Gospel. I Timothy 2:24-25 declares: "**And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient; In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.**" In order to preserve and recommend the grace of God to others we must have much of the fruit of meekness.

George Bethune wrote:

"It was the unresisting and meek suffering of the early martyrs, that made them conquerors over the rack, and flame, and the wild beasts of the theatre. They had no other defense, no other weapon. They professed the religion of a meek and lowly Jesus, and it was to drive them from that religion that their enemies tortured them to the death. If one of them had railed from his stake, or cursed from his cross, or gnashed his teeth, and shaken his impotent fist at his tormentors, their victory would have been as complete, as by his recantation. The nobleness of his courage would have been lost, and the sublimity of the scene destroyed. It was the meekness, more than the blood of the martyrs, which was the seed of the church. . . Well doth the devil know, that, if he can distort the Christian's face with envy and anger and revenge; if he can pervert the Christian's tongue to revilings and stormy rebuke; if he can substitute for the meekness of the Lamb of God, the venom of his own serpent malice; he has destroyed the attraction of Christianity, seduced his enemy to his own ground, and made the victory complete."⁶

5. The grace of meekness is absolutely essential to receive the truth of God and grow in grace so it must be a virtue that is important. Meekness is associated with an increase of spiritual joy in Isaiah 29:19 which states: "**The meek also shall increase their joy in the LORD, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the**

Holy One of Israel." Meekness is also associated with the cultivation and manifestation of spiritual wisdom in James 3:13 which declares: "**Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.**" Our knowledge of God, practice of wisdom and joy in God are all closely related to the meek and humble reception of God's truth. With that in mind let us pray fervently that God will season our hearts and minds with the grace of meekness so that we may be better able to receive and practice the truths of holy Scripture.

6. The magnitude of meekness is seen as an essential ingredient to the peace, harmony, unity, and well-being of a New Testament church. Ephesians 4:1-3 declares: "**I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called. With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity**

of the Spirit in the bond of peace." There will be no unity or peace within a church that is made up of proud and self-willed people void of the grace of meekness.

7. Finally, the magnitude of meekness is illustrated by the rewards that are said to be reserved for those who practice and maintain an attitude of meekness. Psalms 37:11 declares: "**But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.**" If God is going to reward us with a place in the millennial kingdom for the manifestation of meekness, then it must be an important quality.

FOOTNOTES

1. Vine, W. E. *Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* (Olipant Ltd., 1952) Vol. 3, p. 56.
2. Bethune, George *The Fruit of the Spirit* (Swengel, PA, Reiner Publications, first published in 1839 by Harrison Hall) p. 165.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 166.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 167-168.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 165.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 169-170.



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

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GUNMAN KILLS SEVEN IN CHURCH RAMPAGE

FORT WORTH, Tex. (EP)—A gunman killed seven then took his own life at Wedgwood Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas, Sept. 15.

Larry Gene Ashbrook, wearing blue jeans and a black jacket and smoking a cigarette, entered the church as young people were listening to a Christian rock band play. After shooting a janitor and two others he entered the sanctuary and began cursing and making derogatory comments about Baptists.

Eyewitnesses said Ashbrook appeared to be taunting Christians. "What you believe is all bull***," he shouted. Some of the 150 teens gathered at the church said they thought Ashbrook was part of a skit until he began shooting.

Ashbrook, 47, fired repeatedly with a semiautomatic handgun, pausing at least twice to reload. Authorities estimate that 30 shots were fired. Ashbrook fatally shot three adults and four teens. Seven others ranging in age from 12 to 41 were wounded, three seriously. Ashbrook also exploded a pipe bomb in the church, but no one was harmed by the blast.

As police entered the building, Ashbrook sat down in a rear pew and shot himself in the head. Authorities said the killer had six full clips left when he took

his own life.

The shooting took place during a worship service planned as a follow-up to the morning's "See You At The Pole" youth outreach event, in which young people gathered at their school's flagpoles before the start of the schoolday for prayer.

Al Meredith, pastor of the church, said the victims included "Sunday school teachers and one of the favorite soloists in the church, the children's choir director, kids, youth members, some active, some just getting active, some just beginning to find God." Meredith said the church would continue its ministry as soon as police finish their investigation. "Our heart's desire is that the king of darkness will not prevail over the kingdom of light," he explained.

Despite Ashbrook's anti-religious tirade during the shooting, authorities say they do not have a motive for Ashbrook's actions. FBI agents found journals at Ashbrook's home filled with writing. "Some were religious and some were anti-religious," said FBI agent Robert Garrity. "I don't know that we'll ever know the answer to the question of why it happened."

But the pastor of the church said the reason for the shooting is clear. "The Prince of Darkness is behind it all, I'm convinced of that," Meredith told report-

ers.

Glen Bucy, a 17-year-old who looked Ashbrook in the eye as he entered the sanctuary, agreed, and said he sees the shooting as evidence of spiritual warfare. "The way he was cussing, I think he just had a real hate for God," Bucy told Associated Baptist Press. Bucy noted that Ashbrook spewed constant slurs against Christianity during his rampage. "I think he just wanted to kill Christians. . . I think there's a real war going on right now against Christianity. Even at Columbine, they asked the girl if she believed in God and she said yes and they shot her. Now they're coming into our churches. I think it was just a real hate for God that caused him to do this."

Franklyn Harber, evangelist in residence at Southwestern Seminary and one of the first to minister to the shooting victims at the scene, called the victims martyrs. "It is very much fair to classify this as martyrdom," Harber said. "These young people definitely died for their faith. That's exactly why this gunman was there. He was shooting them because they were professing Jesus Christ."

Neighbors of Ashbrook described him as a jobless loner known for screaming obscenities and exposing himself to others. Authorities say Ashbrook apparently ransacked his own home, breaking holes in the walls, pouring concrete in the toilets, destroying the furniture, and slicing up family photos.

Neighbors said Ashbrook's attitude took a turn for the worse after the death of his mother nine years ago. He lived for many years with his father, a member of Pleasant Ridge Church of Christ, who died two months ago.

Of those killed or wounded, five were current or former students of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. On Sept. 16, students and faculty packed the seminary's 1,600-seat auditorium to remember the deaths of three of their own and severe injuries to two more.

President Ken Hemphill wept as he called the dead Southwesterners "martyrs," and then he told the students that in the midst of their sorrow and grief, "there are some things that we know. We know that God is still on His throne. . . that death and devastation are tactics of the adversary. . . that the resurrection is a sure and certain reality. . . and that our fellow students are already present with the Lord. We know that our Lord is an ever-present help in time of trouble. There are no easy answers, but we know He will bring solace."

Hemphill said the tragedy shows the "need for a spiritual awakening." He added, "We need revival to end this senseless violence, so that our children will be free to walk our streets. . . feel safe in church and in school. I urge you to pray as you have never prayed and witness as you have never witnessed."

Vice President Al Gore used the shooting to call for stricter gun laws. "This kind of tragedy didn't occur to this extent before there was a flood of guns easily available to people who simply shouldn't have them," he said.

Continued on page 217

Bible & the Newspaper

Continued from page 216

Gov. George W. Bush left the campaign trail to return to Texas and "add some comfort." He blamed "a wave of evil," rather than a lack of gun laws, for recent shootings. "There seems to be a wave of evil passing through America," Bush said. "And we as a society can pass laws and hold people accountable for the decisions they make, but our hopes and prayers have got to be that there is more love in our society."

Bush added, "It's hard to explain how somebody would have enough hatred in their heart to walk into a church where people are seeking God's guidance and shoot them."

Janet Parshall, spokesperson for the Family Research Council, condemned the shooting, but said that hate crime laws are not the solution. "In response to such barbaric crimes, the issue of whether or not hate crimes legislation should be passed or invoked is avoiding the heart of the matter," she said. "In fact, the entire debate of hate crimes contributes to the devaluing of human life, by suggesting that one life should be more protected than another. Our response must be that every life is valuable, and harm to one life should be penalized with the full force of the law, no matter the motive."

Texas Pastor Peter Spencer also doesn't believe crimes should be treated differently, but suggests that Christians should feel free to use the term "hate crime" because of the way the term is used in today's society. "Since the media has spent billions of dollars and millions of man hours promoting the concept of hate crimes as unacceptable, then I would say, take the language of the day, irrespective of what its original purpose was, and turn it to your purpose," said Spencer, who is asking Christians to wear yellow ribbons that signify they will not tolerate crimes against fellow believers.

".. **haters of God.** . ." (Rom. 1:30).

U.S. RELEASES FIRST REPORT ON WORLD RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP)—The U. S. State Department released its annual report on religious freedom around the world Sept. 9.

The long-awaited report is the product of the 1998 International Religious Freedom Act mandated by the U.S. Congress and signed into law by President Clinton last October. The Act requires the State department to "assess and describe in the report the nature and extent of the violations of religious freedom in each foreign country, to describe U.S. actions and policies in support of religious freedom and to provide specified information on a variety of topics related to religious freedom." The Annual Report on International Freedom for 1999 is the first of such annual reports. Information contained in the report was compiled by U.S. embassies around the world.

In accordance to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights passed in 1949,

the report affirms Article 18 of the Declaration: "Everyone has the right to freedom, conscience, and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance."

"There's something very important that we cannot afford to lose in the pages of such a large report; it is the fate of millions of people throughout the world who are suffering because of their religious faith," said Robert Seiple, ambassador-at-large for international religious freedom. Seiple is a former president of World Vision, a Christian world relief organization. His ambassador-at-large position was created by the 1998 International Religious Freedom Act.

The 1,000-page report covers the status of religious rights in 194 countries. Afghanistan, China, Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Sudan were singled out as countries that severely repress the religious freedoms of their citizens.

Part of the purpose of the report is to identify countries that have the worst religious rights records. The report would then be used to determine future U.S. relations with those countries. Countries that do not respect religious freedom could face consequences from the U.S., from simple diplomatic pressure to sharp economic sanctions.

Critics of the report complain that although the report does a thorough job of reporting on specific examples of religious oppression, it does not provide the political muscle for the U.S. to act on these violations.

The introduction to the report, written by Seiple, states, "The right to pursue one's faith without interference can be a cornerstone of human dignity and of all human rights. To protect religious freedom is to protect a human endeavor that directly addresses the foundation of human dignity."

The report continues with definitions of religious persecution, the difficulties of reporting persecution and the rights of religious minorities, then concludes on an optimistic note. "The number of electoral democracies has almost doubled over the past decade alone. The implementation and protection of human rights, no longer merely an academic subject, has become a core element of international relations." It is assumed that countries with democratic governments will be more committed to preserving religious freedom than countries under totalitarian regimes.

Barriers to religious freedom cited within the report include authoritarian attempts to control religious belief or practice, state hostility toward minority or non-approved religions, state neglect of religious discrimination and persecution, state policies restricting religion, and stigmatization of religions by classifying them as dangerous cults or sects. The report then gives examples of countries that practice or support these barriers.

"**But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you.** . . ." (Luke 21:12).

UPCOMING ELECTIONS COULD MEAN

THE DEATH OF UKRAINIAN CHRISTIANITY

KIEV, Ukraine (EP)—This October Ukraine will hold presidential elections that could decide the future of Ukrainian Christianity. Pro-Christian president Leonid Kuchma is running for re-election against three hard-line communist opponents. Christian leaders in both the Ukraine and the U.S. fear that if Kuchma is defeated, Christianity will again be outlawed under communist rule. In the past 70 years under communism, practicing Christians were arrested and churches were closed. Ukrainians say there was an "open fight" between Christianity and communist ideology.

During his term in office, Kuchma supported the growth of Christian organizations by giving them land and allowing them to freely use public buildings. Kuchma even issued an official apology to Ukrainian Christians for their treatment during communism and approved a National Day of Prayer.

Since the fall of communism, the Ukrainian people have embraced Christian missionaries and organizations with open arms. Thousands of Christian churches, schools, media organizations and publications have been established. Christian missionaries are concerned about how the return of communist rule in Ukraine would affect the entire former Soviet Union. The country serves as a base of operations for missions to the surrounding region. Ukraine is also a source of missionary pastors that travel to other former Soviet countries. Missionaries told Religion Today they estimate that 95 percent of pastors in Russia and Belarus are originally from Ukraine.

At the present time, Ukrainian Christians are fearful that Kuchma could be defeated in October's elections. Kuchma and his communist opponents are neck and neck in opinion polls. All three opponents have promised a swift return to communism if they are elected. Like many former Soviet countries, Ukraine's economy is still suffering from a severe depression, making the return to communism a tempting option for many impoverished Ukrainians.

"**The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth**" (Ps. 37:12).

JEWISH LEADERS PROTEST BAPTIST PRAYER GUIDE

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (EP)—A new Southern Baptist prayer guide that urges Christians to pray for the conversion of Jews has angered Jewish leaders, who condemn the guide as anti-Semitic.

The world's press carried stories registering the outrage of Jewish activists over the "Days of Awe" prayer guide, which urged Southern Baptists to pray for Jews during the Jewish high holy days, a period beginning with Rosh Hashanah (the Jewish New Year) and continuing for 10 days until Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement). This year, those dates were Sept. 11-20.

Rabbi Eric Yoffie, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, told the *Washington Post*, "There's a

kind of theological arrogance that pervades all of this, a certain willingness on their part to play God, and an absence of awareness that these sorts of statements throughout history are associated with coercion, hatred and violence."

Baptist leaders say the media storm created an opportunity for evangelicals to explain their beliefs about salvation. One such opportunity came Sept. 10, when the CBS television network carried an interview with Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League. The segment, seen by an estimated one million people, also featured Don Kammerdiener, executive vice president of the Southern Baptist International Mission Board.

Foxman spoke for many Jewish activists when he condemned the prayer guide. "It's offensive. It's arrogant. It assumes that the Baptists and the Christians possess the absolute truth," he told CBS "This Morning" interviewer Thalia Assuras. "It's this attitude that Jews on their own, without Christianity, have no future that led to inquisitions and expulsions and is the basis of Western anti-Semitism. To say you are against anti-Semitism and at the same time work toward the nonexistence of the Jewish people is very, very ironic."

But Kammerdiener insisted that Baptists in America, far from being persecutors of the Jews, have been staunch advocates of the principle of religious freedom that has benefited Jewish Americans. "Baptists would find it ironic to be accused of anti-Semitism or persecution across the centuries," he said. "We've been the greatest defenders of religious liberty. The fact is, we do not claim Southern Baptists have a monopoly on truth. We claim that Jesus Christ is the truth, and we worship Him."

Foxman added, "Our goal is to offer to Jewish people the opportunity to understand that Jesus Christ is the promised Messiah."

Media reports often characterized the prayer guide as a conversion campaign. The *Washington Post* called it "an aggressive campaign aimed at converting Jews to Christianity." London's *Guardian* called it "an instruction manual on how to convert Jews to Christianity."

But a Jewish columnist for the *Boston Globe* had a different spin on the story. "If any Baptists are praying for me this week, I should like to express my heartfelt thanks," wrote Jeff Jacoby. "As a Jew I cannot share the Baptists' belief in Jesus. But I can certainly acknowledge that by their lights they are offering to the Jewish people something incalculably precious: eternal salvation."

Jacoby added, "There is not a harsh or bigoted word anywhere in the booklet." He criticized Jewish activists who have called the Southern Baptists anti-Semitic. "To listen to some prominent Jews, you'd think the Baptists were calling for a pogrom," he wrote. "Rubbish. Worse than rubbish. The 250 years that Jews have lived amid American Christians have been an era of peace and prosperity virtually without parallel in Jewish history. To link the Southern Baptists to

Continued on page 218

Bible & the Newspaper

Continued from page 217

European anti-Semitism—never mind to Hitler—is utterly indecent.”

R. Albert Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kentucky, told Baptist Press that the greatest threat to Judaism is not possible conversion to Christianity, but the fact that many Jews have already been converted to secularism. “The real enemy of Judaism is not Christianity, but the corrosive secularism that has so poisoned American culture,” Mohler noted. “Jewish protests against this prayer guide ring hollow when a majority of American Jews no longer express belief in a personal God.”

An estimated 130,000 to 150,000 Jews around the world have accepted Jesus Christ as Messiah. About 5,000 Messianic Jews are in Israel, while most of the rest are in the U.S. Perhaps 75 percent of the world’s 15 million Jews are no longer religiously observant, according to studies by missiologists.

“Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified” (Matt. 27:22).

GLEANINGS HERE AND THERE

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP)—Home schooled students performed well above their traditionally educated peers in American College Testing (ACT) scores. The average home schooled student scored 22.7 out of a possible 36, tying the average score of students in Rhode Island, the state with the highest ACT scores in the nation. The national average—reflecting the skills of 60 percent of America’s entering college freshmen in such areas as reading, English, math and science—held steady at 21 in the most recently released figures. “The triumph of home schoolers on the ACT provides Washington with a much-needed reminder of just how much parents and children can do without Washington’s interference,” said Janet Parshall, spokesperson for the Family Research Council.

BUDAPEST, Hungary (EP)—The Hungarian National Assembly is debating a new law that, if passed, will revoke the legal status of most minority religions in that country. Since 1989, religious communities were allowed to register as legal religions as long as they had a membership of at least 100 and could prove the existence of the religion for at least 100 years. Since the fall of communism, 80 groups have registered with the government. The new law, which would be retroactive, requires a membership of 10,000 people. Compass reports that an estimated 90 percent of registered religious communities will lose their legal status if the new law is passed. The ruling coalition of Hungary and officials of the Catholic Church of Hungary support the new measure.

MANILA, Philippines (EP)—Radical Buddhist leaders in Myanmar, also known as Burma, have declared Christian radio

broadcasting a threat to Buddhism. Far East Broadcasting, an international Christian radio ministry, broadcasts Burmese programs from Manila, Philippines. These broadcasts have been deemed a threat to Buddhists by a committee chaired by U Nu, former prime minister of Myanmar.

HENAN, China (EP)—Chinese police have arrested over 200 people in the last 10 months during raids on house churches. An Aug. 23 raid of a Protestant house church in Henan resulted in the arrest of 40 Christian leaders. House churches in China are widespread and have millions of followers, but are outlawed by the government. Chinese law requires all churches to register with the government.

BAKU, Azerbaijan (EP)—KGB officers and police arrested 60 Christians on Sunday, Sept. 5 during a worship service. The staff of Baku Baptist Church, 12 foreign visitors and members of the congregation were forced from the service and taken to a police station. Several youth and children were arrested as well. A small number were released after signing confessions that they had been attending an “illegal” service. Those who refused to sign were released, but confessions were still written out in their names with forged signatures. The pastor and his assistant were convicted of resisting police and sentenced to 15 days in prison. A court ordered deportation of eight of the 12 foreign visitors who were arrested and fined two others. All have appealed the rulings.

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. (EP)—A former Monsignor who was accused of fraud and sexual molestation embezzled more than \$250,000 from the church, the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of San Francisco says in a civil lawsuit. Former Roman Catholic Monsignor Patrick O’Shea is also facing criminal charges of fraud, grand theft and filing false tax returns. Charges of homosexual pedophilia have been dropped, but O’Shea was stripped of priestly duties in 1995 because of numerous molestation allegations.

“We can no longer base ethics on the idea that human beings are a special form of creation, made in the image of God, singled out from all other animals, and alone possessing an immortal soul. . . . Once the religions mumbo-jumbo surrounding the term ‘human’ has been stripped away. We may continue to see normal members of our species as possessing greater capacities of rationality, self-consciousness, communication. . . . than other members of any other species; but we will not regard as sacrosanct the life of each and every member of our species, no matter how limited its capacity for intelligent or even conscious life may be. If we compare a severely defective human infant with a . . . dog or pig. . . we will often find the nonhuman to have superior capacities. . . . Species membership alone. . . is not relevant. . . Humans who bestow superior value on the lives of all human being, solely because they are members of our own species, are. . . similar to. . .

.white racists. . .” (Bioethicist and philosopher Peter Singer—*Pediatrics*, Vol. 72, No. 1, July 1983, p. 129).

After lengthy conversation with Singer, Michael Specter wrote an article about him in the *New Yorker* (9-6-99). He wrote: “Singer believes, for example, that a human life is not necessarily more sacred than a dog’s, and that it might be more compassionate to carry out medical experiments on hopeless disabled, unconscious orphans than on perfectly healthy rats.” Specter continues about Singer’s views: “. . . killing a disabled infant is not morally equivalent to killing a person. Very often it is not wrong at all.”

Mr. Peter Singer is presently Ira DeCamp Professor of Bioethics at the Princeton University Center for Human Values (Adapted from *National Right to Life*, 9-14-99, p. 3).

Last month, Sergei Khrushchev (son of Nikita, ruler of the Soviet Union during the Eisenhower-Kennedy era) was formally sworn in as a U.S. citizen. When *Newsweek* made the mistake of asking the 63-year-old Khrushchev how he would vote in the next year’s election, he responded: “I will not vote for Democrats—it’s too dangerous for the country” (*Straight Talk*, 9-23-99).

Can accredited leftists be accused of “McCarthyism”? Mark Seddon, a member of the British Labour Party, may soon find out. Seddon has denounced the government of Prime Minister Tony Blair as a “Leninist” regime infested with hard-core Communists (*The New American*, 10-11-99).

WASHINGTON (Sept. 13) - Senator John McCain (R-Az.), a leading contender for the Republican nomination for President, said August 9, “Certainly in the short term, or even the long term, I would not support repeal of *Roe vs. Wade*,” the Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion on demand (*National Right to Life News*, 9-14-99).

Would some person please explain to me why the following things are permitted to go unchallenged?

The number who have publicly accused Gov. George Bush of snorting cocaine is zero. But when it comes to President Bill Clinton that is another story. Jennifer Flowers on Fox News’ “Hannity & Colmes” show said Bill often snorted cocaine. Roger Clinton got caught on tape saying: “My brother has a nose like a vacuum cleaner.” The press largely ignores all of this about Clinton, but they have for months blasted George W. Bush. Why is this?

The number killed by hand guns is very small compared to the number killed by alcohol. Nevertheless, the liberal press and liberal politicians call for more gun control, but not one word is ever mentioned about better alcohol control. Why is this?

The liberals repeatedly tell us we need to get Christianity out of the classrooms of our government schools because of the separation between church and state. But

these same government schools promote the religion of secular humanism and Satanism (I mean Halloween which public schools promote each year in October). But we never hear one word from the ACLU or others about the need to remove the religion of secular humanism and Satanism from our government schools. Why is this? Satanism has been involved in most of the shootings in government schools (generally today wrongly called “public schools”). We hear much about the need of gun control, but not one word about the need to rid our schools of Satanism. Why is this?

Why do we hear much about the need to ban handguns, but not one word about the need to ban rock concerts? In 1998 alone (9-6 *USN & WR*) at least 5,711 were injured at rock concerts. Why is this?

Southern Baptist Convention President Paige Patterson recently appointed a 15-person committee to study the Southern Baptist Convention’s Baptist Faith & Message statement for possible rewrite (9-2, *Ala. Baptist*). Adrian Rogers is chairman. Jerry Vine, O. S. Hawkins, Albert Mohler, Richard Land, Charles Kelley, and at least two women are on the committee—along with a Hispanic evangelist and African-American pastor. The BF&M was originally adapted in 1925 and revised in 1963 (this was the year they added the doctrine of a universal, invisible church—MRC). Patterson does not expect to have a big rewrite (*Calvary Contender*, 10-1-99).

United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan declared last week that the concept of national sovereignty was going to have to step aside as the UN backs more wars of intervention in the name of human rights and international law. . . . Annan said the UN Charter was flexible enough to allow the international organization to intervene in the internal affairs of any nation on earth (*Human Rights*, 10-1-99).

Clinton is against one kind of increase in litigation. Before he granted clemency to unrepentant Puerto Rican terrorists, he blocked the implementation of a law that allows victims to sue governments that support terrorists. American citizen Stephen Flatow won a \$247-million judgment against Iran for the death of his daughter at the hands of the Islamic Jihad, but Clinton invoked the 1996 law’s national security waiver to prevent him from collecting (*Human Events*, 10-8-99).

The anti-Christian bigots at the American Civil Liberties Union won’t relent in their vicious assaults on the American people and their institutions. In its latest suit against Chicago’s public schools to stop them from letting the Boy Scouts of America hold meetings on school property. The ACLU says the schools should end the courtesy because Boy Scouts take an oath to revere God (*Straight Talk*, 9-30-99).

As of this moment the federal government intends to tax away from the Ameri-

Continued on page 219

Bible & the Newspaper

Continued from page 218

can people over the next decade almost \$3 trillion more than the government itself yet knows how to spend. With the Federal budget already at \$1.7 trillion per year, that extra \$3 trillion in taxes equals almost two full years of extra tax revenue (*ibid.*).

The General Accounting Office (GAO) recently published a report that found soft-money contributions by gambling interests to both national political parties have increased by about 840 percent since 1992. The GAO report which was requested by Rep. Frank Wolf (R.-Va.) and conducted by the Center for Responsive Politics (CRP), an independent research organization, also found that hard-money contributions from individuals with gambling ties to federal candidates increased by 80 percent during the same period. The total number of candidates for federal office who received hard-money gifts from gambling interests was 146 in 1992, 239 in 1994 and 378 in 1996 (*Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal*, 9-1-99).

What does "Good" mean? Recently, Hillary R. Clinton described her philandering (lying, adulterous) husband as "a good husband and father" (8-21 World). Luciana Morad, the mother of rock singer Mick Jagger's latest illegitimate child, told Europe's Hello Magazine that, even though Mr. Jagger has yet to meet his 4-month-old son, he is a "very loving father" (*Calvary Contender*, 9-15-99).

Nobel Prize-winning author Gabriel Garcia Marquez, in a recent article, described a discussion during a social evening with President Clinton and Mexican novelist Carlos Fuente in 1995. Fuente asked Clinton whom he thought of as his enemies. Marquez recorded, His reply was immediate and abrupt: 'My only enemy is right-wing religious fundamentalism.' That pronouncement ended the evening (*Salon Magazine*, via *Straight Talk*, 9-16-99).

Partisanship disappears whenever a congressional pay raise rears its ugly head. Despite salary increases from \$89,500 to \$136,700 over the past decade, our underworked lawmakers (Congress was in session just 119 days last year) are plotting a "cost of living" raise of at least \$5,400. Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle (D.SD) has whined, "We don't make anything near what journalists in this town make" (*ibid.*).

Forum 1

Continued from page 210

rather empty when you consider the words, ". . .and to thy seed forever."

I can understand how those who believe that God is through in His dealings with Israel can believe the

"Ashes Theory" and the amill interpretation of I Kings 4:21, 24. However, if the dominion of Solomon, mentioned in I Kings 4 extended to all the land it would not militate against the prophecies concerning the restoration of Israel to the promised land.

It is my position that Palestine belongs to Abraham's physical seed forever, and that the Bible gives a marked and clear-cut distinction between Israel and the church. I continue to be strong in my "Futurist" belief that the physical seed of Abraham will see the fulfillment of the covenant in their restoration to the land.

JIMMIE B. DAVIS

Forum 2

Continued from page 211

forgiveness in Christ and among His people, but we must be aware of the fact that God's children who have engaged in adulterous or incestuous acts have experienced the sad consequence that follows in their lives.

JIMMIE B. DAVIS

BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 8-31-99 to 9-30-99

Beginning Balance \$ 2,346.87

RECEIPTS
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS 100.00
Grace B.C., Corbin, KY 100.00
Livingstone B. C., Barboursville, WV 306.64
Oakvale B. C., Danese, WV 50.00
Berea B.C., Westpoint, TN 132.00
Briar Creek, B. C., Williamsburg, KY 150.00
Calvary Ind. B. C., Everson, WA 150.00
Dividing checks 150.00
..... 1,138.64
TOTAL RECEIPTS 3,485.51

EXPENDITURES:
Radio Time 819.55
Postage 31.30
Tapes 307.00
Dividing check 150.00
Total Expenditures 1,307.85
Sub Total 2,177.66
Bank Charge - 2.20
ENDING BALANCE \$2,175.46

CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT

Beginning Balance \$343.32
RECEIPTS
Total 343.32

EXPENDITURES:
WYWY 140.00
Total Expenditures 140.00
ENDING BALANCE \$203.32

BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 8-31-99 to 9-30-99

Beginning Balance \$1,872.85

RECEIPTS:
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY 60.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne WV 300.00
Central Avenue B. C., Tampa, FL 25.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Silsbee, TX 30.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Fulton, MS 100.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY 125.00
Portland B. C., Plumerville, AR 50.00
Berea B.C., Mansfield, OH 50.00
The Lord's C. at Bev. Hills, Goose Creek, SC 50.00
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS 200.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA 100.00

Sovereign Grace B. C., Columbus, MS 50.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL 50.00
Morris St B. C., Hobbs, NM 50.00
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Memorial Heights B. C., Perry, GA 40.00
Jimmie Panos, Jemison, AL 25.00
Rebecca Williamson, Huntingburg, IN 5.00
J. L. Sadler, Alford, FL 92.00
E. W. Hall, Knob Noster, MO 350.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Bathgate, ND 30.00
Anonymous 371.32
Subscriptions 225.00
Dividing Checks 288.98
Sub Total \$4,118.50
TOTAL \$5,991.35

EXPENDITURES:

Wages: Milburn Cockrell 675.00
Sharon Cockrell 800.00
Christopher Cockrell 300.00
Derek Cockrell 200.00
Total Wages 1,975.00
Postage 803.39
Printing 537.14
FICA taxes 149.17
Dividing checks 288.98
Supplies 84.73
Total Expenditure 3,838.41
..... 2,152.94
Bank charge - 8.97
ENDING BALANCE \$2,143.97

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World Scene

By G. Russell Evans - Norfolk, Virginia

The Case of Lt. Daly and the Pentagon



When a military commander sacrifices his troops in the cause of appeasement, he violates the fundamental rule of leadership, respect and honor. Ultimately, he is doomed. This applies to a Commander-in-Chief and to all his commanders down the line.

A commander's greatest asset, by far, is his troops—well-trained, well-equipped and with high morale. Traditionally, they are unbeatable.

The very first rule for the military leader is simple: "Take care of your men (troops)." Military subservience to political goals brings to mind the chilling words of Homer Lea, brilliant military strategist and associate of China's Sun Yatsen:

"The most promiscuous murderer in the world is the ignorant military officer. He slaughters his men by bullets, by disease, by neglect; he starves them, he makes cowards of them and deserters and criminals. The dead are hecatombs of his ignorance; the survivors, melancholy specters of his incompetence. (*The Valor of Ignorance*, Harper, 1909).

THE CASE OF LT. DALY

When our Commander-in-Chief and others in the chain of command cover up and falsify a blatant laser-beam attack on a US intelligence officer in the name of "good relations with Russia," they are not "taking care of their men," but courting disrespect and dishonor.

Navy Lt. Jack Daly is the intelligence officer. On April 4, 1997, he was photographing the Russian merchant ship *Kapitan Man*, suspected of spying on the US missile sub *Ohio* in US territorial waters north of Puget Sound when shot, causing permanent damage in the eyes/with a laser beam by the Russians—all confirmed by the photos and medical tests.

The incident was kept secret by President Clinton to avoid any unpleasantness with Russia's President Yeltsin at their upcoming Vancouver meeting. The cover-up and deception that followed was classic appeasement and, only now, are known because of *Washington Times* reporter Bill Gertz's new book *Betrayal* (Regency, 1999).

STATE HEADS COVER-UP

The State Department's Strobe Talbot, Deputy Secretary, Ken Bacon and Nick Burns got into the act pronto, the latter claiming, "There were no conditions placed on the Coast Guard and Navy" in their search of the *Kapitan Man*.

Not true. An April 7th Secure Video Teleconference film revealed "instructions to search *public* areas of the ship only" in a search time limit of two hours—if the Russians cooperated.

They did *not* cooperate and prevented the search team to enter the ship's library, claiming they couldn't find the key. They had been tipped off.

State's director of Russian affairs Thomas Lynch had notified the Russian Embassy of the search party, giving the *Kapitan Man* time to hide the laser. All this was later confirmed by a National Security Agency intercept and explains the State Department's extraordinary interference with the Pentagon investigation—obviously, all in the name of sweet diplomacy! But not US national security and honor!

LT. DALY, A THROWAWAY

Lt. Daly became a throwaway, the victim of "betrayal and sacrifice for a political objective," i.e., Moscow must not be upset. He has now been passed over twice for promotion, his Navy career over, as reported by Bill Gertz in *The Washington Times National Weekly Edition* (Aug. 23-29, p. 1).

His frank testimony before the House Subcommittee on Armed Forces Procurement was apparently the last straw for the Pentagon, but not for Rep. Curt Weldon (R-Pa.), who vows to intercede because of the Navy's treating "this loyal American. . . like a piece of dirt." Nor Rep. Duncan Hunter, R-Cal., with his own investigation.

Let's not forget the Director of Naval Intelligence, Rear Admiral Lowell

Jacoby, who dismissed the Daly incident because "it took place before I assumed command." Is that "taking care of your men" or is it political subservience?

Maj. General Thomas A. Lane, U.S. Army, wrote, "Our military leaders cannot dismiss their responsibilities for the safety of the nation by saying we obeyed the president."

Hanson W. Baldwin, the great military writer and strategist, wrote in his book *Strategy for Tomorrow* (Harper and Row, 1970), ". . . uniformed officers of all services owe loyalty and obedience to the Commander-in-Chief, but they also have an obligation to the Congress, as well as to the president, to provide frank appraisals of all military matters. Fundamental loyalty is to the nation."

Lt. Daly deserves a fair hearing and an honest investigation.

(Capt. Evans is author of *Death Knell of the Panama Canal?*, available on the Internet at Amazon.com).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Memorial Heights Baptist Church, Perry, Ga., and Pastor Gordon Buchanan plan a Bible Conference for November 12-14 with 10 or 11 speakers. For more information call (912) 987-0724 or (912) 987-0882.

Pastor Randy Graber has written a booklet entitled "A Biblical Look at Church Succession." It is now available from Bro. Graber free of charge. Contact him at graber.fam@juno.com or (407) 952-0210.

Elder Pete Santos is available for work wherever the Lord may lead. His address is 308 N. Market Street, Caldwell, KS 67022, or phone (316) 845-6843.

The Westbrook New Testament

Baptist Church, Indianapolis, Ind., and Pastor Steve Cornett will have special services Nov. 12-14. The editor is the speaker. For more information call Pastor Cornett (317) 858-1411.

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Coming in the next issue . . .

- His People* by William Tiptaft
- The Fruit of the Spirit is Temperance* by Tom Ross
- The First Resurrection* (Part 2) by Milburn Cockrell

INDEX

<i>A Letter from the Past</i> (Part 2) by Elvis Gregory	p. 201
Bible and the Newspaper	p. 216
<i>Brief Catechism of Bible Doctrine Part 3</i> by J. P. Boyce	p. 208
Cockrell's Corner	p. 203
<i>Dead Flies and A Little Folly</i> by Todd Bryant	p. 201
Forum	pp. 210 - 211
Funnybone	p. 208
<i>Trick or Treat: the History of Halloween</i> by Bill Uselton	p. 201
<i>The First Resurrection</i> by Milburn Cockrell	p. 201
<i>The Fruit of the Spirit is Meekness</i> by Tom Ross	p. 201
<i>The Merit of Man</i> by Ernest W. Parks	p. 209
<i>We Believe in Total Depravity</i> by Willard Willis	p. 206
World Scene: <i>The Case of Lt. Daly and the Pentagon</i> by G. Russell Evans	p. 220