

The Berea Baptist Banner

Displaying Biblical truth for twenty-six years in the printed page.

The Reign of Sin

By Timothy Hille
of Ashland, Illinois

Read Romans 6:1-14
text: vs. 12

Those who are saved have been freed from the reign of sin: "sin shall not have dominion over you." The authority of sin has been broken, its power taken away, and its sway conquered. If you are here and saved today by God's amazing grace, sin once sat upon the throne of your heart, just as it now sits on the hearts of and exercises ruling power over every lost man, woman, boy, and girl outside of Jesus Christ. Sin's kingdom consists of those who are subject to sin, who obey sin, and who practice sin. This includes all who are born of Adam and who have not been regenerated by the Spirit of God through the new birth. **"For all have sinned, and come short of the**



glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom.

5:12). Those whom God has saved, having given them new life by faith in Jesus Christ, have been liberated from under the rule of sin and are entered into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

If I, as a saved person, were to live habitually in sin as I did before I was saved and rebel against the revealed will of God, I would be living as one who is under
◊ (Continued on page 208)

The Story of Joseph

By I. M. Haldeman
(1845 - 1893)

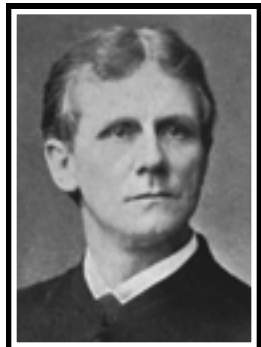
(Continued from last issue.)

Joseph was made known to his brethren the second time. **"And at the second time Joseph was made known to his brethren"** (Acts 7:13).

The application is self-evident. Only when our Lord comes the second time will His people, the Jews, know and own Him. **"And they shall look upon me whom they have pierced"** (Zech. 12:10; Rev. 1:7).

The conversion of the Apostle Paul is a typical verification of the Joseph type and a vivid illustration of the actual fact. Listen to what he says in I Timothy 1:15-16: **"I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting."**

Paul was not converted by the preaching of the Gospel but by the



appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ from heaven, in glory, above the gates of Damascus (Acts 9:1-5). **"At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me"** (Acts 26:13). Paul was converted by the appearing of Christ in glory; not since Paul's day has a single soul been converted by the appearing of Christ in glory. It has been, and is, by the Gospel alone that conversion takes place. It is never by the personal visible appearing of Christ to individuals. Yet Paul draws attention to this manner of his conversion. He draws particular attention to it. Let us read it: **"And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one**

◊ (Continued on page 205)

Believing Unto Salvation

By Rosco Brong
(1908 - 1985)

SAVING FAITH IS AN AFFAIR OF THE HEART---
A COMMITMENT OF THE SOUL TO CHRIST

"We are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul" (Heb. 10:39).

During more than fourteen centuries before the birth of Martin Luther, who led the Reformation movement with his discovery of the Bible doctrine of justification by faith, and on down to



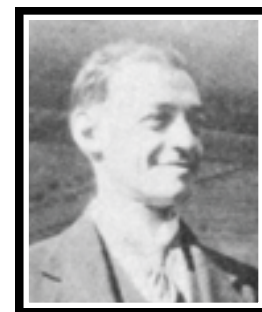
the present day, Baptists have preached around the world **"that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law"** (Rom 3:28).

Popular religions of the world reject the idea of justification by faith alone, because it is very humiliating to think that we can do nothing of ourselves to gain
◊ (Continued on page 207)

Sins of the Saints

By Arthur W. Pink
(1886 - 1952)

In every believer there remains the liability to sin. The new birth is not, as so many suppose, a change of heart, nor the removal of the carnal nature, but is the reception of an entirely new nature. The new birth is neither the elimination nor the transformation of the old nature, but is the communication and impartation of a new nature, a spiritual nature, the Divine nature. In every born again person there are two natures---the old and the



new---the flesh and the spirit---which the Apostle Paul tells us are contrary in disposition, continually warring against each other. As then the old, carnal nature, remains in the believer as long as he continues in this body, there is always a possibility of him sinning.

◊ (Continued on page 209)

Preparation For the Pulpit

By Thomas Armitage
(1819 - 1896)

"A workman that needeth not to be ashamed."

Beloved Brethren: ---Unless my mind is entirely misled, the only object of these Lectures is to offer you the first order of assistance in becoming what you all honestly aim at, namely, to be made powerful preachers of the gospel, and of the highest class. And as the stream must be governed both in its character and fullness by the fountain behind it,

I must say more of the preacher than of his preaching. If the preacher can be made just right, I have no fear for his sermons. With this in view, the present lecture ought to be of the most profitable character; for with the single aim of making the tree good, that the fruit may be good also, it has cost me more care than any other in the course.

This address is intended to incite to the creation of sacred thought for the pulpit, rather than to forms of preparation and the arrangement of words; to the spirit

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**We are to prove our grace, by a growth in grace.
We are to evidence that we are good-ground hearers by bringing forth fruit. A. W. Pink**

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

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The Young Visitor; or, The Deceiver Reclaimed

(Continued from last issue.)

CHAPTER IX RETURN TO SCHOOL

Octavia could not divert her mind from the painful thought that filled it. The more she dwelt upon her past conduct, the more painful did she see her guilt.

"Can I be forgiven?" such were her sad thoughts, "and shall I ever feel happy again?" Octavia was nearer to true happiness now, as she sat with her head leaning on her hand, and her tears falling fast, than she was when her voice was the gayest, and her eyes the brightest, and every one exclaimed, "What a happy little girl." But she had not learned all this yet. She did not know how repentance and confession leads to peace and happiness.

She had shed many tears this day; tears of mortification, of anger, of impatience, of grief, but now they were tears of real, heartfelt repentance that were coursing down her cheeks. She was not crying only because her thefts and deceit had been found out, but she had begun to think how wicked she had been. As the twilight began to thicken around her, she knelt down and tried to pray. It was a broken, imperfect prayer, but it was very different from those that she had been accustomed to offer when she said her prayers. She was learning the evil of sin, and was beginning to cry out to God for His pardon, but she had not yet seen how that pardon could be given. She lay down then with more of that peace which belongs to those who see their sin, and confess it, and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The impressions made on Octavia's mind, by the events that have been related, seemed likely to prove lasting. They were deepened by the influence of Annie. The crisis of her disorder had happily past, and at length all danger of infection was pronounced to be over, and the two little girls were again allowed to be together.

Annie was still very feeble. For several days she had to be carried up and down stairs like an infant, and she lay on the sofa nearly all the time. Her pale, gentle face was a continual reproach to Octavia, for she accused herself of having contributed to bring on the disorder. But more than this, their conversations together had a very decided effect upon Octavia's mind. Annie had been dangerously ill. She had seen death very near. Young as she was, life appeared different to her from what it had even done before. She had seldom seriously thought of death, but now that solemn hour was constantly

in her mind. She felt how important it was to live in constant preparation for the world to come. She had also felt, in those hours of weakness when her breath came painfully, and each day had seemed likely to be her last, that the only thing that afforded her consolation was some whispered promise of the Saviour's love, and the recollection of His all-sufficiency to save. She spoke of all this to Octavia, who scarcely comprehended it, yet listened with feelings of mingled interest and awe.

As soon as possible after the beginning of the session, it was thought best that Octavia should return to school, though Annie was still too weak to accompany her. Octavia went, with many misgivings with regard to herself.

"When I am away from you, dear Miss Maria," she said, "and from dear Annie, and all of you, I shall be sure to go wrong."

"This very mistrust of yourself," said Maria, "should lead you to seek help from a higher power, and thus it may prove your greatest safeguard. You must try to learn how to watch and pray, as the Saviour has commanded."

All of Octavia's school companions noticed the change in her. She had become so much more kind and obliging. Her first care was to restore, as far as she could, what she had stolen. This was sometimes impossible, as was the case with the cakes or candies which she had eaten. During the first week of the session, several of the girls were surprised by having a paper parcel slipped quietly into their hands; but when they exclaimed, "Oh, Octavia! how generous!" she would stop them very quickly, and say with a deep blush, "It is yours already. I owe it to you. Please forgive me."

Most of the girls were very good natured, and received Octavia's sad confessions with pity and kindness; but there were a few who were less generous. There was one in particular, Sally Forbes, who took every opportunity of mortifying her. She asked the teacher to have a lock put upon her desk, and always turned the key with as much noise as possible. If she had mislaid her books or pencils, she would ask for them with significant looks at Octavia.

Octavia felt all this very deeply, but she knew she had no right to resent it, as it was the natural consequence of her fault. She tried to bear it as patiently as she could.

Annie sent letters very frequently to Octavia. In these she told her about the thought which now chiefly occupied her mind. She felt that eternal things were all important, and she was very anxious that Octavia should also come to seek with all her heart an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ. Octavia was very unhappy. She had sought forgiveness from friends and schoolmates, but she had not yet truly sought forgiveness from God. She had

once said in a conversation with Maria, "I am afraid of God." And these words still expressed but too truly the feelings of her heart. She read Annie's simple child like expressions of trust in the Saviour, but she could not understand them. Her constant thought was, "Yes, Annie can venture to love the Saviour and trust in Him, for she has never sinned as I have."

During this sad and anxious winter, Octavia began, for the first time, really to attend to what she heard in the house of God. Formerly she would have told how every one was dressed in the pews before her, but she seldom paid any attention to the sermon, and only remembered the text because she was required to repeat it to the teacher in the evening. But now she began to listen with the earnest desire to know how her sins could be forgiven.

One Sunday morning, Mr. Williams preached from the words of Isaiah, "**Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.**" In clear and simple language he explained the way of salvation. He spoke of the blessed Saviour Who died for the ungodly. He told how He had said on one occasion, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance," and he earnestly entreated those who felt that they needed the forgiveness of their sins, not to hold back because of their own unworthiness, when Jesus Himself invited them to come just as they were.

It seemed all new to Octavia. She listened with breathless attention. It appeared like a message from Heaven directly to her. Often as she had heard that Christ was the Saviour of sinners, she never till now had understood it. She had always had some vague idea of becoming better and then going to Jesus. She had not thought of going as a great sinner, to be saved by Him. Now, however, she understood. The Spirit of God had brought the preached word home to her heart. She saw that Christ had died for sinners, that He invited sinners to come to Him. She felt that she could, that she must go to Him. The feelings of her heart were well expressed by the hymn which was sung at the close of the sermon, and she silently wept as she listened to these precious words:

*Just as I am without one plea,
But that thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou bid'st me come to thee
O Lamb of God, I come!*

*Just as I am and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot
To thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come!*

*Just as I am though tossed about
With many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fightings within, and fear without
O Lamb of God, I come!*

*Just as I am poor, wretched, blind;
Sight, riches, healing of the mind*

◊ (Continued on page 204)



From the Pen of a Country Preacher

Milburn R. Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)



The Great Change

“A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them” (Ezek. 36:26-27).

The primary meaning of this text is Israel's future restoration and regeneration. The removal of the blindness on their hearts involves the gift of a new heart. Presently, Israel in their unbelief possesses a stony heart bent on doing its own will. At the second advent of the Holy Spirit the nation is destined to receive a willing and obedient heart. This passage proves that Israel's evil inclination is finally to be removed.

But in all of the Old Testament there is no plainer passage on regeneration. Here we see some of the blessings of the covenant of grace. By the sovereign working of the Holy Spirit a new heart will be given to the covenant people so that by constraint of love they will walk in the Lord's ways. God's method of dealing with a depraved heart is revolutionary; it is regeneration. It is a great change; it is a new birth; it is spiritual resurrection!

THE DISEASE

What a description we have here of human depravity! First, man by nature possesses a heart as hard as a stone. It is unimpressible to spiritual things: **“His heart is as firm as a stone; yea, as hard as a piece of the nether millstone”** (Job 41:24). It repels all higher and holier motives. Humanly speaking, this heart is incurably wicked: **“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”** (Jer. 17:9). Like a stone, man's heart will sooner be broken in pieces than softened by a few blows. Man is inclined to be overwhelmed by God's judgments more so than being caused to yield to them.

Second, a stony heart is a hard heart, hardened by the deceitfulness of sin and confirmed in it by years of the habit of sinning (Heb. 3:12-13). Hardness of heart is one of the corruptions which seized on man's nature by Adam's fall. It is natural for man to withstand and oppose all means to keep him from sin (Ezek. 11:19). He has a perverseness of heart (Prov. 12:8). This hard heart does not respond to the call of the gospel: **“Because I have called, and ye refused”** (Prov. 1:24). It feels no Divine influence and does not

respond to heavenly voices: **“But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear. Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of hosts”** (Zech. 7:11-12).

Third, a stony heart is a cold heart. Not only does it not respond to the influence of God, it is insensible and unfeeling. All warmth of affection for God and His Word have died away. **“Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart”** (Eph. 4:18).

Fourth, this heart is a dead heart. A stone has no life. So the heart of man is destitute of spiritual life and motion. The unregenerate man has a petrified heart; he is **“dead in trespasses and sins”** (Eph. 2:1). Arminians teach that man is sick and needs a doctor; the Bible teaches he is dead and in the cemetery. The Arminian declares that man is unwilling to come to Christ for salvation, but a dead heart is as unable to come as it is unwilling. Behold here total inability. The unregenerate has no vitality toward God.

Fifth, a stony heart is an unnatural thing. The heart is the most vital organ. It is the ruling part of man: **“A man's heart deviseth his way”** (Prov. 16:9). But think of a heart of stone! What could be more unnatural and monstrous? Sin is unnatural. The moral law of God requires that a person love God with all his heart, soul, and mind (Matt. 22:37). It is contrary to man's original nature not to have feelings of love for God.

Man himself cannot do anything about his incurably wicked heart: **“Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?”** (Prov. 20:9). No man descended from Adam by ordinary generation has a clean heart. This is why Proverbs 28:26 says: **“He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool.”** The minister of the gospel cannot remove this heart of stone which is deaf to the call of the gospel: **“But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them”**

(II Cor. 4:3-4). A preacher of the gospel can regenerate a sinner as easily as he can turn a stone on the hillside into living flesh. A stony heart can only be removed by a supernatural work of omnipotence.

THE REMEDY

The only cure for a stony heart is “a new heart.” Polishing or carving a stone into an altered and improved form will not make it a living stone. Man has false ideas, corrupt desires, and evil affections--a great deadness of soul. The heart is wrong, foul, and diseased. We must go to the root of the problem. To patch up a man's stony heart does not solve his problem. The heart is the seat of the disease. Here the cure must begin. Sin is heart disease. Regeneration is heart replacement. It is as great a change in the soul as turning a dead stone into living flesh!

God does not sell us a new heart, nor does He offer it to us if we meet Him half way. By almighty power and efficacious grace He freely gives to the covenant people a new heart: **“A new heart also will I give you.”** There is this promise in Deuteronomy 30:6: **“And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart. . .”** In Jeremiah 24:7 the Lord promised: **“And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the LORD. . .”** This new heart is also called a new nature in II Peter 1:4.

The giving of a new heart is only part of the blessings of grace. God does not just give us a new heart, but He also removes the stony heart: **“. . .and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh. . .”** This is a stupendous operation by a sovereign God. It is no small task to remove an impenetrable heart. Only the Great Physician can do this. There is no attempt to clean up or improve the stony heart. The old heart cannot be improved; it can only be removed.

More than this, there is the implanting of a soft heart in the place of that old stony heart: **“I will give you an heart of flesh.”** This is a heart moved to shame and repentance over sin. It is a heart which melted at the sight of a crucified Christ. It is a tender heart, a heart sensible to the danger of Hell, a heart which can feel the faintest touch of God's hand. This heart of flesh is easily impressed by the things of God. Its cry is: **“Speak; for thy servant heareth”** (I Sam. 3:10). It is a teachable heart, a heart willing to be guided and governed by the Divine will. Pride, stubbornness, obstinacy are all gone!

This heart of flesh is a warm heart. We have often heard someone say, “He is a warm-hearted person, ‘or’ she is a warm-hearted person.” Whether this may or may not be true of such a person I cannot say in many cases. But I can say that a regenerated person possesses such a heart, according to holy Scripture.

The love of God has a home in this new heart. Romans 5:5 declares: **“And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”** This heart glows with compassion for perishing sinners and burns with indignation against sin.

The regenerate heart is a living heart. It once was dead, now it is alive. It is capable of communion with the living God. The psalmist wrote: **“My heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God”** (Ps. 84:2). The regenerate man serves **“the living God”** (Heb. 9:14) and feasts on the **“living bread”** (John 6:51). Such a soul is **“alive unto God through Jesus Christ”** (Rom. 6:11), and he walks **“in newness of life”** (Rom. 6:4). This new man is renewed day by day, and new spiritual energies spring from his heart. Verily he has within him a well of living water **“springing up into everlasting life”** (John 4:14).

The heart of the born-again man is a natural heart, the kind a man ought to possess that he might serve and honor his Creator. A stony heart is a monstrous thing, but this heart of flesh, this new nature, is what God intended for a man to possess. Regeneration restores true human nature in a man. Without a spiritual heart transplant man will never be what he ought to be in God's sight.

A NEW SPIRIT

Verse 26 also contains the promise of a new spirit: **“. . .and a new spirit will I put within you. . .”** This clause really explains more fully the new heart. In the New Testament this is called a **“new man”** and a **“new creature”** (Eph. 4:24; II Cor. 5:17). A new principle of life is infused into a man, and new light is imparted to his soul. He has a new will and new purposes. He has new affections and new desires. New delights and new joys are experienced. He has new actions and new motives. He seeks new companions and walks in a new way.

Prior to regeneration man has a bad spirit. The spirit which ruled and reigned in him was earthly, sensual, and devilish. His heart was determined to stay in constant rebellion to God and His laws. The Spirit of God must make the spirit of man a fit place for His dwelling. This is why the Spirit gives to man a **“new spirit.”** A true believer can be distinguished from a false professor because he has **“another spirit”** (Num. 14:24).

THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit comes to dwell in this new heart and new spirit: **“And I will put my Spirit within you.”** It would be wonderful to read that God put His grace in us, or His love in us. But this verse said more than that. It said that God puts His Holy Spirit within us. The Holy Spirit dwells in the heart of a saved sinner! He is within us as a teacher, guide, and sanctifier. We have God the Spirit in all

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The Young Vistor

(Continued from page 202) ♦

Yea, all I need in thee to find
 O Lamb of God, I come!
 Just as I am thou wilt receive,
 Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve
 Because thy promise I believe
 O Lamb of God, I come!
 Just as I am thy love unknown
 Has broken every barrier down;
 Now, to be thine, yea, thine alone,
 O Lamb of God, I come!

CHAPTER X

PEACE IN BELIEVING---BAPTISM

That memorable Lord's day was the beginning of a new life to Octavia. She now began really to love the Saviour, who, she felt, would save even her.

A year passed away, Octavia again became a visitor at Beechwood, during the summer vacation. Annie's mother had felt convinced from Octavia's letter, that she was greatly changed. She watched her with almost a mother's solicitude during her second visit to them. She observed with heartfelt joy that she was humble and quiet in her manners, that she was very careful to speak the truth in the most trifling matters, and that she was always ready to yield her wishes to those of others. The contrast to her former behavior was so great, that Mrs. Taylor could not help hoping that it was wrought by the Spirit of God.

A long conversation which she had with Octavia one morning, before her return to school, confirmed her in this hope. Octavia came to request her to add a few lines to a letter which she had been writing to her parents, asking their permission to be baptized and to unite with the church. She felt anxious to obey as soon as possible the Saviour's command. She had written to her mother some time before to tell her of her sin, and to say how sorry she felt. And she had told her of all the kindness she had received at Beechwood. Mrs. Hall, Octavia's mother, had written to Mrs. Taylor a letter full of gratitude for her kindness, and of sorrow for her daughter's misconduct. And now Octavia wished that Mrs. Taylor, since she appeared to be satisfied that there had been a real change in her heart and life, would write to her parents. She hoped that they would then feel assured that she was not deceiving herself, and would more cheerfully give their consent to her baptism. In the course of their long conversation, Octavia told Mrs. Taylor of her sad winter at school, her anxieties and fears, and the peace which at length filled her heart when she saw and felt that Jesus Christ came to save even the chief of sinners. Yet she owned that she could not rejoice as some others did. The remembrance of her sin was very grievous to her, even though she trusted that through Christ she had obtained

pardon. But she believed that His grace was sufficient to keep her from falling, and she desired therefore to be baptized in His name and enrolled among His followers.

Mrs. Taylor kissed her with tears of joy, and promised to write as she requested.

Among the family at Beechwood, none rejoiced more truly at the change in Octavia than did her friend Maria, whose wise counsels, and firm yet kind decision, had been the means of first arresting her in her dangerous course. She continued to be kind and faithful friend. To Annie the advice and assistance of her elder sister were invaluable. Annie's gentle disposition made her too ready to allow herself to be influenced for evil as well as for good. Maria endeavored to lead her sister to seek strength from on high, so that, while giving up none of her gentleness, she might be firm in the cause of right and of truth.

Early in the following spring, letters arrived from Mr. and Mrs. Hall, giving a glad consent to their daughter's baptism. They also informed Octavia that they had been able to make arrangements for her return to them, under the protection of a friend who was going out to India in the course of the summer.

Octavia's heart bounded with joy at the thought of returning to her beloved parents. But her joy was mingled with sorrow when she thought of bidding farewell to Annie and Mrs. Taylor, and all the loved circle at Beechwood. The two friends wept together, as they thought of the parting moment. But soon other and happier thoughts filled their minds. They spoke of that world where partings are unknown. They talked over all the steps by which they had both been led to trust in the Saviour, and enabled to look forward to meeting in his presence in Heaven.

The permission which they had wished for having arrived, Mrs. Taylor wrote to Annie that she was quite willing that she should be baptized by Mr. Williams at the same time as her young friend. And she also told her that she and her father would visit Morton to be present at their baptism.

It was a trying moment for Octavia when Mr. Williams, who had been informed of their desire to be baptized, called to converse with her and with Annie. She felt very much ashamed when she thought of that sad vacation at Beechwood; and once she almost resolved to give him only a very general account of those events. But the more she thought of it, the more she felt that this would not be acting right. She was really desirous at this important era in her life to receive some counsels especially suited to her state of mind. How could Mr. Williams give these, unless he knew her peculiar temptations, her besetting sins? These thoughts finally determined her, and she told him all her aggravated sins---her

deep repentance---the hope which she indulged in God's mercy through Christ. And her tears fell fast as she spoke of the conflict with evil habits which she was still obliged to maintain, and the shame with which she was ever filled at the thought of the past.

Mr. Williams spoke to Octavia plainly, yet with words of encouragement. He did not try to make her sins seem less than it had formerly appeared to her. He did not think that she felt it to be any greater than it really was. He knew that God Himself has said: "**Thou shalt not steal;**" and that "**lying lips are an abomination to the Lord.**" Yet, at the same time, he spoke much of the great compassion of the Saviour, whose blood cleanseth from all sin; and of the mighty power of the Holy Spirit, Who can take away the love of sinning from the heart. He wanted her to feel deeply that, if she fully overcame her easily besetting sins, it must be by the help of the gracious Spirit which the Father has promised to those who ask it from Him. As Octavia listened to his faithful but cheering words, she felt humbled yet at the same time strengthened and encouraged to press even onward.

It was with a calm and peaceful heart that she came to relate to the church the way in which the Spirit of the Lord had led her. Annie and six of their young companions, who, through their instrumentality, had been led to seek the Saviour of their souls, came forward with her. It was a season of special interest to the members of the church in Morton, when this little band, whom the Lord called so early to a knowledge of Himself, thus testified to their love to the Saviour, and told of their desire to be buried with Him in baptism.

The Lord's day, which had been appointed for the baptism, at length arrived. It was a calm and peaceful morning, and the glory of God seemed to shine forth in the sun, whose beams fell on the smooth surface of the baptismal waters. It was a beautiful sight as these eight young disciples were led down, one by one, into the water and baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. When they came up out of the water, Mr. Williams, standing on the river side, pronounced these precious words: "**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.**"

Those who beheld the peaceful and happy countenances of those young disciples thought they had already a foretaste of that blessedness. They looked as though they had found already in their own experience the truth of those words of sacred Scripture: "**His commandments are not grievous; and in keeping of them there is great reward.**"



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His life, light, and love! This Holy Spirit within influences the new spirit in man. The presence of the Divine Spirit keeps the spirit in man from becoming foolish. It is the Second Person in the Godhead in the believer that makes his spirit pure in character and conduct.

Contrary to ultra-dispensationalists, the Holy Spirit did regenerate Old Testament saints. We know from John 3:5 that regeneration by the Spirit is essential to seeing and entering the kingdom of God. Luke 13:28 proves the Old Testament saints are in the kingdom. Therefore, it follows necessarily that they were born of the Spirit. The Bible also teaches that the Old Testament saints were indwelt by the Spirit (Gen. 41:38; Num. 27:18). All that happened on the day of Pentecost was that the Holy Spirit came to empower the New Testament church.

The Holy Spirit comes to write God's law upon the new heart: "**Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart**" (II Cor. 3:3). To have the Spirit to write the moral law of God in your heart is one of the blessings of the new covenant: "**For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people**" (Heb. 8:10). This causes the born-again person to say: "**For I delight in the law of God after the inward man**" (Rom. 7:22). Psalm 1:2 says: "**But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.**"

It is not possible for a man to be indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God and to live a wicked, sinful life. Antinomian heretics are unregenerate heretics! The Spirit that dwells in the believer's heart is "**the Spirit of holiness**" (Rom. 1:4). The presence of the Spirit brings about in a man progressive sanctification (II Thess. 2:13; I Pet. 1:2). Such a man will be more and more separated from sinful things and more and more dedicated to spiritual things. This is so because he has the abiding presence of God in the person of the Holy Spirit in the temple of his heart. Such a person cannot habitually make a practice of sinning because he is born of the Spirit (I John 3:9).

AN OBEDIENT HEART

This new heart or new nature given to the sinner by the Spirit of God reveals itself by obeying God's law: "**And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep**"

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my judgments, and do them" (Ezek. 36:27). The words of the Lord God here are very positive. They run: **"I will"** and **"ye shall."** The verse does not say a person might occasionally walk in the Lord's statutes, or that on a few occasions he could keep some of the Lord's judgments. In regeneration the Holy Spirit writes the moral law of God in the new heart, and this results in an obedient heart to God. A man is first made alive and then he is given spiritual strength to walk in all the Lord's commandments. The Bible says that Zacharias and Elisabeth **"were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless"** (Luke 1:5-6).

There is a great heresy abroad in the land. Modern-day evangelists and soul winners, in a manner of speaking, tell sinners to accept Christ and continue to live as before. They say that you really ought to serve Christ, but such service is not necessary, seeing one is eternally secure in Christ no matter what he does. This is an abominable heresy and has damned countless thousands to the fire of eternal torment. When a man is truly regenerated by the Spirit, given a new heart and a new spirit, he will love and obey God. Jesus Christ taught: **"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven"** (Matt. 7:21). The writer of the Book of Hebrews declared: **"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him"** (Heb. 5:9).

God does not force a man to walk in His statutes by external violence. Rather, He causes him to do so by the internal principle of grace implanted in regeneration by the Holy Spirit. God does His part according to His promise in the covenant, and He enables a regenerated man to do his part by obeying His precepts. The promise of grace prompts obedience to His precepts. This is the truth of my text.

CONCLUSION

1. Man attempts to improve human nature by working without, dealing with such things as his environment and giving him new privileges. They

think that to improve man's outward condition will elevate his heart to higher things. The increase of crime and the ever-increasing social problems in our country demonstrate that such things are nothing more than failed policies of social dreamers. God's method of dealing with man is the reverse of this. He begins to work within and then makes an outward, universal change.

2. A new heart and a right spirit are the results of Divine power, not human power. No heart of stone ever turned itself into living flesh. Moral persuasion by some concerned person cannot do it either. The Lord God must by free and sovereign grace give the sinner a new heart. The Spirit of God must change the nature, or the heart of stone will never become a heart of flesh.

3. The hour-long invitation given by some preachers for sinners to give their hearts to Jesus is not according to the gospel of grace. The sinner does not need to open up his heart and let Jesus come in. What in the world would a holy God want with the incurable wicked heart of a lost sinner? Surely Almighty God could knock down the heart's door of the sinner, even if the knob is on the inside, as some preachers tell us. The sinner does not need to give his heart to Jesus. Rather, he needs Jesus to give him a new heart and a new spirit.

4. The sovereignty of God and human responsibility are not opposed to each other as some believe. They are co-existent, and they are both taught in holy Scripture. Here in Ezekiel 36:26 we see the Divine side of regeneration. But in the command in Ezekiel 18:31 we see the human side: **"Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?"** Although a man is responsible to make himself **"a new heart"** and **"a new spirit,"** he cannot do so unless God first gives him **"a new heart"** and **"a new spirit"** (text; cf. Phil. 2:12-13).

5. Is your heart right with God? Or, is it still in the bond of iniquity and the gall of bitterness? Do you believe in Jesus Christ with all your heart (Acts 8:37)? Have you obeyed God in His statutes and judgments so you may know you have passed from death unto life? Does God dwell in your heart in the person of the Holy Spirit? Has your heart been

broken by this message so that you have repented of your sins? Has it melted at the sight of a crucified Christ? O sinner, look to Jesus for a new heart and a new spirit.



Story of Joseph

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born out of due time" (I Cor. 15:8). Born out of due time is ahead of the time.

Now, let it be remembered that when our Lord appeared to Paul He spoke to him not in Greek but in the Hebrew tongue; more than that, He addressed him by his Hebrew name, Saul. Thus Paul was converted as a Hebrew.

Paul takes particular pains after his conversion to identify himself as a Hebrew, an Israelite. **"For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin"** (Rom. 11:1). Paul was converted as a Hebrew, an Israelite. He was converted as a Hebrew, as an Israelite, by the Appearing of Christ. His conversion is a witness that others will be converted as he was; even by the Appearing of the Lord.

But Gentiles are not to be converted that way in this age. In this age the Gentiles are to be converted only through preaching of the Gospel by the Church. If the Gentiles are not to be converted by the appearing of Christ in this age, then it must be the Hebrews, and, particularly, the Jews.

But this is not the age for the conversion of the Hebrews, as such, by the personal, visible appearing of Christ. This is the time for the "taking out" of the Church through the faith of the Gospel; and particularly, the taking of it out from among the *Gentiles*.

The time for the conversion of the Hebrews as Hebrews, therefore, is still future.

This is not their time. Paul says that as a *Hebrew* he was born out of the due time, *ahead of time.* Paul's conversion as a Hebrew was ahead of Hebrew time.

If then, Paul was converted as a Hebrew ahead of the time; if he was, so to speak, set out in the front line where all the world might see how as a Hebrew he was converted, then surely he is a pattern, a model of the way the rest of the Hebrews will be converted in the **"due time."**

As Paul was converted not by the Gospel but by the personal, visible appearing of Christ, so must the Hebrews, as such, as a people, a nation, be converted. As a nation, they will never be converted by the Gospel; we are specifically told that **"as concerning the gospel they are enemies for our (the Gentiles') sakes."**

Among the Jews, today, it is an **"election, beloved for the Father's sake,"** who believe the Gospel and are received

into the Body of Christ.

But the Jews as a people must be converted as Paul, the pattern, not by believing the testimony of the Gospel concerning the Messiah, but by *seeing* Him Whom they pierced, as it is written: **"Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him"** (Rev. 1:7). This appearing of Christ is a *Second Coming.* At the Second Coming the Lord Jesus Christ will be revealed to His people, the Jews, and accepted by them.

Thus we get back to the type in Joseph. Joseph was revealed in his true glory to his brethren the second time.

When Joseph was made known to his brethren the second time he had a close and tender interview with them.

There is nothing more tender and beautiful than the story of that interview as the Spirit records it for us: **"Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren. And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard. And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence. And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you, to preserve life. For these two years hath the famine been in the land; and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be earing nor harvest. And God sent me before you, to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither; but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt. Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not: And thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast: And there will I nourish thee; for yet there are five years of famine; lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty. And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaketh unto you. (What a wonderful double type is here: Joseph to them has been dead, and now he is endeavoring to convince them that he, Joseph is alive; that it is he, himself, and**

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Tune in to the Berea Baptist Broadcast

STATION	TIME	DIAL	WATTS
WFTA, Tupelo, MS.....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.....	101.9.....	3,000 FM
WCNA, Myrtle, MS.....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.....	95.9.....	3,000 FM
WCTT, Corbin, KY.....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.....	680.....	5,000 AM
KARI, Blaine, WA.....	Saturday 10:30 - 11:00 a.m.....	550.....	5,000 AM
DXRA, Davao City, Philippines	Sunday 8:15 - 8:45 a.m.....	783 Khz.....	10,000 AM

Story of Joseph

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not another: how beautifully anticipative of that other scene where the true Joseph seeks to convince His brethren that He is alive from the dead; that it is He, Himself, and not another.) **And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen; and ye shall haste, and bring down my father hither. And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck. Moreover, he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him**" (Gen. 45:1-15).

Not a word can be added to the simplicity and beauty of that description. Yet beautiful and deeply touching as it is, it is but a shadow of that other moment when the real Joseph shall be made known to His brethren.

Read what the prophet says in anticipating that moment: **"And they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn"** (Zech. 12:10-12).

"And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends" (Zech. 13:6).

Then will that wonderful chapter, the fifty-third of Isaiah, be understood in all its depths of meaning. For then will repentant Judah take up the chapter and make its sublime language the language of their sorrowful, yet believing, confession. Then will they cry: **"We hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows** (yes, through all these ages their sorrow has been a deep burden on His soul); **yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."**

It will be an interview the like of which the world has never seen; that moment when repentant Judah shall bow down with tear-wet cheeks before Him Who was, the crucified. In that hour they will bemoan *the crime of the cross*.

And the loving and tender Joseph will seek to comfort them, showing them that God in His eternal purpose was behind their fall; showing them that terrible and inexcusable as it was, God has made that great hour of darkness and blindness on their part to turn to the enlightenment

and enrichment of the Gentile world. What words of comfort He will give them, what assurance of His love.

Then the prophecy of Zechariah will be fulfilled: **"In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness"** (Zech. 13:1).

Judah and his brethren were brought to know Joseph before the rest of the household of Jacob.

The prophecy is that Judah shall be saved first. **"The LORD also shall save the tents of Judah first"** (Zech. 12:7).

Joseph sends for Jacob after he has revealed himself to Judah and his brethren.

In Scripture, Judah stands for Judah and Benjamin considered together. You will note that it is Judah and Benjamin who are made prominent in the revelation of Joseph.

Jacob in prophetic language signifies the Ten Tribes.

Sending for Jacob and his household, in typical language, is sending for the Ten Tribes of Israel. Precisely as the type brings Judah before the self-disclosed Joseph and then Jacob or Israel is brought into the land into the presence of Joseph, so the Scriptures clearly teach us after the Lord comes to repentant Judah and is received by them at Jerusalem, He will send for the remaining household of Jacob, for the lost and wandering tribes of Israel, to come into the land to own and greet Him. **"And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the LORD, out of all nations"** (Isa. 66:20).

In passing it may be said the account of the journey of these lost tribes as they seek to return to their own land to greet the manifested Joseph, is given in Ezekiel 20:34-38). Also, Isaiah thirty-fifth chapter.

After the revelation of Joseph, his brethren go forth to proclaim in the land of Canaan that he is alive and is the ruler in the land of Egypt.

"And they went up out of Egypt, and came into the land of Canaan unto Jacob their father, And told him, saying, Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt" (Gen. 45:25-26).

They went forth preaching good news. That good news had two parts:

Joseph was alive.

Joseph was a king.

Joseph who had been reported dead, and believed to be so through all these years by his brethren, was alive and reigning in power in the great Egyptian world.

After our Lord returns and has gathered all Israel unto Him, according to covenant, in the promised land, He will send them forth to be the missionaries of the world; they will go forth and preach the Gospel of resurrection, the Gospel of the Man alive from the dead; they will proclaim that this Man alive from the dead is returned unto the world from

whence He had been rejected, and is reigning in power in the land of promise; they will invite all nations to come up to worship the true Joseph, the King, in His glory at Jerusalem.

"Ye shall be named the priests of the LORD: men shall call you the Ministers of our God" (Isa. 61:6).

"Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the LORD. Thus said the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you" (Zech. 8:22-23).

What a wonderful facility they will have. The people of the polyglot tongue! Speaking all the languages of earth, they will go forth and tell that He Whom they denied and nailed on a cross, is alive; He Whom they rejected as the King of the Jews, is on the throne of all Israel; He is the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.

His name in that day shall be Emmanuel, God with us; the land shall be Emmanuel's land, the land of the God Who is with us.

Joseph makes ready his chariots and goes forth to meet Jacob (Israel) in the land of Goshen.

This is really the epiphany of Joseph. He reveals himself in splendor and kingliness to his people. He meets Judah in Goshen first, and then meets his father, the household of Jacob. This is a representation of the truth as we have already seen it. It is the coming of Christ in His glory to meet Judah first, and then all Israel.

Our attention is specially drawn to His appearing to the people in chariots of glory. So of the greater Joseph we read: **"For, behold, the LORD will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind"** (Isa. 66:15).

Joseph settles and establishes his brethren and the household of Jacob in the land of Goshen.

"And they came into the land of Goshen" (Gen. 46:28).

"And thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen" (Gen. 45:10).

"And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen" (Gen. 47:27).

Goshen was the best part of the land of Egypt. This is the declaration of Pharaoh. **"The land of Egypt is before thee; in the best of the land make thy father and brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell"** (Gen. 47:6). Egypt is a type of the world. Goshen as the best part of Egypt is typically the best part of the world. It is, typically speaking, the most favored land. The most favored land in fact must, logically, be the land which the Lord shall select for the true Joseph and His people. That land,

therefore, must be Palestine. And it is. It is the land that is always under the eyes of the Lord.

"But the land whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven: A land which the LORD thy God careth for: the eyes of the LORD thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year" (Deut. 11:11-12). Characteristically, Palestine is called *Joseph's land*.

This may be seen in the blessing which Jacob, before dying, gives to Joseph. **"And of Joseph he said, Blessed of the Lord be his land"** (Deut. 33:11-15). In this land God will indeed settle them that they may no more be plucked up forever (Ezekiel 37:21-28; Jer. 31:31, 40; Jer. 32:40-41; Jer. 33:7-26; Amos 9:14-15).

After Joseph and his brethren are settled in the land of Goshen, the Egyptians (that is to say, the Gentiles) on account of the famine, offer to sell themselves to him for bread, and through him become the bondmen of Pharaoh (Gen. 47:13-25).

Joseph buys their lands and themselves in exchange of corn and bread. Joseph buys them for Pharaoh, but they really belong to Joseph as the **"lord of all Egypt."** In belonging to Joseph they belong to Joseph's kindred. Thus the Gentiles in Egypt were practically the bondmen of the Jews. The Word of God foretells that this will be the condition of the Gentile world, when the Jew has been exalted to the place of power under the coming Messiah of Israel, the Christ.

"And the house of Israel shall possess them (the Gentiles) in the land of the LORD for servants and handmaids: and they shall take them captives, whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors" (Isa. 14:1-2).

"For the nation and kingdom that will not serve (Israel) shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted" (Isa. 60:12).

All Egypt at the last owns Joseph as the Saviour-Lord.

"And they said, thou hast saved our lives" (Gen. 47:25).

So the day is coming when the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the face of the deep; He will be owned and acknowledged by all the world as the alone Saviour and Lord (Ps. 72:10; Ps. 2:8; Phil. 2:9-11).

At the close of this story Jacob is seen giving forth his blessing to all (Genesis, forty-ninth chapter.)

Scripture teaches when the wanderings of Jacob are over; when the children of Israel are finally settled to their inheritance under their king, they will become the fruitful source of blessing to the whole earth; and then will be fully justified that saying of our Lord: **"Salvation is of the Jews"** (John 4:22).

"And the remnant of Jacob shall be

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in the midst of many people as a dew from the LORD, as the showers upon the grass" (Micah 5:7).

"And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising" (Isa. 60 :1-3).

Joseph's brethren at the last put him in the place of God, as the representative of God.

"And his brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said, Behold, we be thy servants. And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God?" (Gen. 50:18-19).

Yes, the time is coming when like Joseph's brethren all Israel will fall down before the Lord Jesus Christ in His glory and say: **"Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation"** (Isa. 25:6-9).

Like Thomas they will cry: **"My Lord, and My God."**

The name of Joseph signifies Addition. Addition is Increase. And "Increase" is the very word which describes the unfolding kingdom and glory of the infinite Joseph.

"Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever" (Isa. 9:7).

THE STORY OF JOSEPH IN THE CONCRETE

1. He is the son of Jacob's old age.
2. He is the well-beloved of the Father.
3. He wears a coat of many colors.
4. He has visions of coming rulership and walks in the light of it.
5. He is the called and sent of the Father.
6. He responds to the Father as one who delights to do His will.
7. He is sent by the Father to seek his wandering brethren.
8. His first manifestation is made to the shepherds.
9. He finds his brethren in the land of law and ceremony, in Dothan.
10. He becomes a wanderer in the "field."
11. His brethren hate him and take counsel to kill him.
12. They mock and despise him.
13. They reject him and sell him to the Ishmaelites.
14. He is cast into the pit without water.
15. He is taken out of the place of death alive.
16. He is taken into a "far country."
17. Judah finds his grave empty but does not know that he has risen from the place of death, that he has been raised.
18. In the far country he is exalted to

the throne of power.

19. While rejected by his brethren and an outcast from his native land, he gets a Gentile Bride.

20. While he is the despised and rejected one of his brethren, he becomes a Saviour unto the Gentile world.

21. He takes his Gentile Bride to the throne before the tribulation falls on his brethren.

22. The tribulation, the day of Jacob's trouble, comes in after Joseph has put his Gentile Bride on the throne.

23. When his brethren are in the midst of their affliction, and at the hour when Jacob says all these things are against him, Joseph makes himself known in delivering power to his brethren.

24. Joseph is only recognized and owned by his brethren "the second time."

25. He goes forth with the chariots of glory to meet Judah in the chosen land.

26. After Joseph appears in glory Jacob comes with all his remaining household into the land.

27. Joseph establishes his brethren in the chosen land.

28. After Joseph and his brethren are established in the chosen land the Gentiles become subject unto the Jew.

29. After he is established in the land, Jacob (Israel) becomes a fruitful center of blessing to all.

30. Joseph, at the end, is owned of his brethren as in the place of God, as God manifest in the flesh unto them.

31. The bowing down of Joseph's brethren is the climactic fulfillment of all the dreams and visions that had gone before on Joseph.

32. His name signifies an endless increase in glory.

To him who studies this "concrete" reverently, on bended knees, and with open Bible before him, each line will become a volume of prophetic revelation, and make manifest an Antitypical verification.



Believing Unto

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favor with God. Even in the days of the apostles there were false teachers who preached a so-called gospel of works. Added to these today are advocates of a so-called social gospel. Of all such the inspired apostle wrote: **"If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed"** (Gal. 1:9).

DEAD FAITH CANNOT SAVE

Baptists need never apologize for their testimony that **"To him (Christ) give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins"** (Acts 10:43). But it is also true that **"faith without works is dead"** (James 2:26). Certainly

a dead faith cannot save.

No doubt many people have been confused and have entertained false hopes because they have not given serious thought to what it means to believe in Christ. And no doubt a mere intellectual belief, a mere formal and outward assent to historical facts about Christ, fall short of saving faith.

Yet it must not be supposed that saving faith is something mysterious or even difficult to understand. In fact, it is so simple that a little child can understand enough to be saved. Only people who are wise in their own conceit are unable to understand or accept the simplicity of the gospel message.

QUALITY OF FAITH

Our English words "believe," "belief," "faith," may convey the idea of conviction, confidence, trust, or they may be used in a weaker sense to mean no more than that the "believer" thinks, supposes, or guesses something, or even that he is content for the moment to let it pass without gainsaying. This same difference of meaning of the same words appears in the Greek.

Thus we read in the Bible of certain persons who in some sense "believed," and yet possibly were not saved.

"Now when he (Jesus) was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit (trust) himself unto them, because he knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man" (John 2:23-25). It is interesting to note that "believed" and "did commit" in this quotation are from forms of the same Greek word.

"Then Simon (the sorcerer) himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done. . . And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, saying, Give me also this power. . . But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee. . . thy heart is not right in the sight of God. . . I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity" (Acts 8:13-23).

A HEART AFFAIR

Other passages of Scripture might be quoted to show that not all who believe in some sense of the word are truly saved. The explanation is simple: **"With the HEART man believeth unto righteousness"** (Rom. 10:10 Emphasis RB).

"Heart" in this connection, in Greek as in English, denotes something more than "mind." Of course we believe with our minds, but unless faith reaches the heart it will make little change in our fundamental drives and motives.

Again, a few quotations will help

to show the Bible meaning of the word "heart" used to denote the mind plus something more:

"Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matt. 6:21).

"Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matt. 12:34).

"From within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness" (Mark 7:21-22).

"They considered not the miracles of the loaves: for their heart was hardened" (Mark 6:52).

"Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?" (Luke 24:32).

"Let not your heart be troubled" "Sorrow hath filled your heart" "Your heart shall rejoice" (John 14:1; 16:6; 16:22).

Evidently to believe with the heart means more than mere mental assent, and this fact needs to be made clear in our day of intellectual pride and sophistication.

OBJECT OF FAITH

Nevertheless, it is not so important how we believe as what we believe. There is a popular delusion that faith in itself has some magical value; that "it doesn't matter what you believe, just so you are sincere." No statement could be more ridiculous or further from the truth. No sane person would seriously utter such nonsense except in the field of religion, where most people abandon their God-given intelligence.

Here is a scrap of paper that may be a \$10.00 bill or may be a clever counterfeit; either way, does it not matter what I believe about it? Here is a bottle containing either a deadly poison or a sure cure for some otherwise fatal disease. Whether I wish to be cured or commit suicide, does it not matter what I believe is in the bottle, and whether my belief accords with the fact?

The weakest faith in Jesus Christ can receive salvation from God; the strongest faith in anyone or anything else for salvation is doomed to disappointment. It is better to have a little faith in the truth than a great faith in a lie.

BELIEF ABOUT CHRIST

Sometimes it is said that it is not enough to believe the historical facts about Christ: that we must believe "in" or "on" Christ. Thus we all believe that there are and long have been such things going on as stealing, lying, murdering--but some of us do not believe in these crimes; that is, we do not want our lives given over to them.

However, to keep our feet on scriptural ground, we must admit that a genuine heart-faith in certain facts about Christ is saving faith.

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Believing Unto

(Continued from page 207) ♦

“Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God” (I John 5:1). “Christ” means “anointed.” To believe that Jesus is the “Christ” revealed in the Scriptures is to believe that God has anointed Him to be Prophet, Priest, and King to His people. Now, when a man takes this truth to heart, when he really believes that Jesus is “the Christ,” the Bible declares, translating correctly, that he **“has been born of God.”**

Satan and his ministers have given many people a distorted view of the character of Christ, so that multiplied millions, in the name of Christianity, worship and trust a figment of imagination instead of the Christ of the Bible. Greatly needed today is the faithful teaching of the facts about Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as revealed in the Bible.

“If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved” (Rom. 10:9). A mere agreement in theory will not do; a detached belief in the resurrection that matters to the believer no more than his belief in the historicity of a Caesar or a Napoleon, will not do; but when the fact of the resurrection of the Son of God, with its implications in the light of Scripture, gets into a man’s heart, this faith brings salvation.

BELIEF IN OR ON CHRIST

It is not surprising that we like to emphasize the idea of believing in or on Christ, since this form of expression is most common in the Scriptures. And, remembering that saving faith is not a mere mental exercise but involves confidence and trust, the meaning is so clear and beyond controversy that there seems to be no need to dwell further upon this point.

BELIEVING CHRIST

A more needed emphasis in our day is the simple fact that if we truly believe in Christ, we must necessarily believe Him--that is, believe what He says. This would seem to be obvious; yet countless religionists claim to believe in Him even while they dispute His words.

“And ye have not his (the Father’s) word abiding in you; for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not. . . Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?” (John 5:38-47).

These words of Jesus explain why the modernists, who started out to discredit the writings of Moses, end up disputing the plain teachings of Jesus Himself.

How absurd and hypocritical to pretend to the name Christian and deny the word of Christ! **“Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?”** (Luke 6:46).

Of course people who have built up their own religious systems must deny the word of the Lord, for He is the true and faithful Witness, and His words condemn their works. **“And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not”** (John 8:45).

Let there be no mistake about it: to believe in the Lord is to believe Him. We can have no confidence in a liar, but, thank God, Jesus is the Truth; we trust in a God that cannot lie: His every word is true for time and eternity.

TESTS OF FAITH

Our text suggests that there are some people who vainly profess faith and then draw back: **“We are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul”** (Heb. 10:39). How can we know that we have believed to the saving of the soul?

First, we must be sure that our faith is rightly directed. **“Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils (demons) also believe, and tremble”** (James 2:19). So far as I know, God has not promised to save demons, and their belief in His existence causes trembling instead of salvation. Neither has He promised to save any man through faith in monotheism (belief in one God) or any other “ism,” but only through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as revealed in the Bible and by His Spirit.

Second, our works are a practical test of our faith. **“Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only”** (James 2:24). The context shows that James is talking about justification before men, not before God. Before God we are justified by faith without works, because God knows our hearts; but before men our claim to faith is justified by our works, because men can see our works but cannot see our faith.

Third, if our faith is saving faith, it will stand the test of time. **“Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed”** (John 8:31). **“For whatsoever has been born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcame the world, even our faith”** (I John 5:4, corrected translation). There can be no doubt of the outcome if we have a true and living faith in Christ.

CONCLUSION

“Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Heb. 11:1). If we have a heartfaith in Jesus Christ, then our hopes for the world to come have a present reality: we enjoy their “substance” here and now. We endure **“as seeing him who is invisible”** (Heb. 11:27).

Believing in Him, we have committed or entrusted ourselves to Him for His everlasting salvation, and can say with Paul: **“I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day”** (II Tim. 1:12).



The Reign of Sin

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the reign of sin and who is a citizen of the kingdom of darkness. The Apostle Paul thus instructs those who have been made alive unto God in Christ, **“Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.”** Sin is no longer fitting for one who is under the rule of the Lord Jesus Christ. **“Only let your conversation [manner of life] be as it becometh the gospel of Christ”** (Phil. 1:27). We should think it strange if one who suddenly came into a fortune continued to wear the rags of his former poverty: it would not be suitable. One who is alive should not be adorned with the graveclothes of a corpse that is to be laid in the ground. It would be unbecoming of a citizen of the United States of America to, by his or her behavior, propagate the ideals and sentiments of one of this country’s enemies. Even more than all of these, it is no longer meet for a saint to live like a sinner, because the saint is now under the rule of God’s grace (Rom. 5:20, 21). Should we who are saved by the abounding grace of God continue to live in sin? The answer, as Paul states, is, **“God forbid!”**

The reign of sin began back in the garden of Eden, and it has continued throughout time over all of Adam’s race. If you are here today and have never been saved by the Lord Jesus Christ, you are under the ruling power of sin. Under the ruling power of sin, your mind is at enmity against God. Your mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. God is not at all in your thoughts, and the way of peace you have not known. Your mind is blinded by the god of this world, so that you cannot see the glory of God as revealed in His Son Jesus Christ. You have not believed in God’s Son, and therefore you are already condemned to an everlasting death in the lake of fire. You will never free yourself from the ruling power of sin. If you are unsaved and you deny that this is your case, you only evidence that you are under the reign of sin: **“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us”** (I John 1:8).

I. The Extent of Sin’s Reign.

The extent of sin’s reign is the size, length, and breadth of its kingdom. What are the boundaries of sin’s dominion, and over whom does sin reign? How far is the reach of sin’s ruling power? It was once said that the sun never set on the British Empire, because there were so many parts of the world over which Great Britain exercised ruling power. Sin has a vaster reign than that. The extent of sin’s reign is that it extends to every man, woman, boy, and girl ever born into this world of the seed of the first man Adam. The Scriptures state, **“There is no man that sinneth not”** (I Kings 8:46). Some whom the Apostle Paul encountered during his ministry thought they were better than others because they

were Jews and descended from Abraham and had received the law of God. Yet Paul states, **“What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one”** (Rom. 3:9,10). All are by nature under the ruling power of sin. They obey sin in the lusts of their own hearts and minds, they commit sin with their bodies, and they consent with others who sin.

(Rom. 3:19) The purpose of God’s law is to reveal sin. Paul said, **“I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet”** (Rom. 7:7). The verdict of the law is that all are guilty before God; and all are guilty because all are sinners, breakers of God’s law. **“Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law”** (I John 3:4). There is not one person who has not broken God’s law in thought and word and deed, because every single person is under the reign of sin. Sin rules over people, and they are subject to it and yield themselves to obey it. People today say they are going to be good enough to go to heaven, but you have no goodness in yourself because you are under the reign of sin. Sin does not care who you are or where you live, what you look like or when you were born. Age, education, wealth, social status, and ethnicity make no difference; except you be in Christ by the new birth you are under the reign of sin.

II. The Manifestation of Sin’s Reign.

That sin reigns is seen in those who commit sin. Jesus said, **“Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant [bond-servant] of sin”** (John 8:34). This type of servant is not someone who agreed to serve for wages, this servant is a slave in that he or she is bound and not free to leave the state of service in which he or she is in. When a person commits sin, that person is manifesting the ruling power of sin. Sin exercises authority over that person, and that person is not free, but is a bond-servant to sin. Those who commit sin are the subjects of sin’s kingdom; and they are bound by the power of sin, from which power they cannot loose themselves.

Paul spoke of the manifestation of sin’s reign when he wrote, **“Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body.”** This is where sin’s ruling power is manifested. How do we know that sin rules over a person? How do we know that a person is a citizen of the kingdom of sin? We know that a person is the citizen of a certain country because that person speaks the language of that country, recognizes the flag or banner of that country as his or her own, and acts within the liberties granted by the government of that country. We know those who are under the reign of sin because they speak the language of sin, they are loyal to sin’s banner, and they act within the liberties of sin’s government – they are always subject

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The Reign of Sin

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to sin and therefore they continually and habitually sin. God's Word states, "**Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin.**" The members of your body are the organs and appendages of which your body consists. When a person gives the members of his or her body over to work the works of sin, that person is manifesting the ruling power of sin. When a person's lips foam out shame and filthy communication such as slander, gossip, cursing, taking God's name in vain, lying, complaining, and speaking evil of others, that person has yielded that member as an instrument of unrighteousness. Sin is reigning in that person's mortal body.

Sin's reign is manifested whenever someone stretches forth his or her hand to smite another person in anger or with intent to do harm or to take that which is not his or her own. Sin's reign is manifested whenever someone's feet take him or her to an ungodly place. Sin's reign is manifested whenever someone's eyes look lustfully upon that which does not belong to him or her. No wonder there is a God-made change in a saved person, because if a saved person continued to live as he or she once did it would manifest, not the reign of Christ, but the reign of sin. (Eph. 4:17-32) We who are saved are to manifest that there is a new power that rules over us, and that power is the power of God in Christ.

III. Sin's Reign Begins at Birth.

When a person is born into this world, he or she is born into the kingdom of sin. The psalmist David said, "**Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me**" (Ps. 51:5). There is only one person who was ever born into this world who was not born in sin, and that was Jesus Christ Who was not born of the seed of Adam, but was born of a virgin. He did not partake of Adam's sinful nature, whereof we are all partakers by the natural birth. You did not need to agree to be under sin's reign, because you were already under the reign of sin and you were born with all your human faculties suited to serving sin. "**The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies**" (Ps. 58:3).

All who are born of parents of the United States are by default citizens of the United States. All who are born of Adam's race are by default partakers of Adam's fallen nature and are citizens of the kingdom of sin. That is why Jesus stated, "**Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God**" (John 3:5). You were born of the flesh, and the flesh is under sin and tendeth to corruption and death. To become a citizen of God's kingdom, you must be born again by the Spirit of God. Sin begins ruling over a person from the moment he or she is born, and will rule over that person until

the day he or she dies, unless God's grace rescues that person and frees them from the ruling power of sin.

IV. Sin's Reign Ends in Death.

The reign of sin ends in death. The first aspect of this is that sin's reign will bring you death. (Rom. 6:23; James 1:15) God stated the penalty for sin in the beginning when He gave commandment to Adam and Eve concerning the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil: "**in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die**" (Gen. 2:17). This is the outcome of sin's ruling power upon all who are under sin's dominion. Sin brings death. God states in His Word, "**Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die**" (Ezek. 18:4). This speaks of spiritual death, which is the outcome of sin's reign. Those over whom sin exercises ruling power are all partakers of this death. Those who remain under sin's ruling power will die in their sins and will taste of everlasting spiritual death, forever separated from God in the lake of fire (Rev. 20:11-15).

The second aspect of sin's reign ending in death is that death is the only thing that can cause sin's reign to cease. In order to be free from the ruling power of sin, a person must die to sin. This does not mean physical death, but this means that a person must die as far as sin is concerned, and thereby no longer be under the authority of sin's government. If a person dies in this country, that person can no longer pay taxes, no longer vote, and no longer own property. The laws of the government of the country in which that person lived no longer rule that person. Paul said of those who have trusted in Christ, "**Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin.**" The only way you will ever be free from the reign of sin is to die to sin through faith in Christ, by believing in His death for your sin, and that He rose again the third day to bring you newness of life toward God. I am no longer a citizen of the kingdom of sin because I have been liberated from that realm of darkness by He Who is the Light of life, Jesus Christ, Who died for my sin, was buried, and rose again that I might live unto God. Christ died, not just to keep me from hell, but to free me from under the power of sin that I should no longer serve sin.

V. Only Jesus Can Free People from the Reign of Sin.

You and I cannot overcome the ruling power of sin. The more that people try to improve themselves spiritually, the worse they become. Only Jesus can bring people out of sin and death and into freedom and life. No church, no religion, no preacher, and no prayer can cancel sin's power over a sinner. Jesus said, "**If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins**" (John 8:24). You cannot be reformed or educated

out of the kingdom of sin. Only by the grace of God which is manifest in Jesus Christ can you and I be liberated from the bond-service of sin. "**This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief**" (I Tim. 1:15).

(John 8:34-36) When Jesus frees a person, He gives that person liberty from the authority and dominion of sin. You that are saved do not have to live under the direction of sin any longer – indeed, you are compelled by the new life that you have in Christ to no longer serve sin, but to instead yield yourselves as servants of righteousness unto God! How do we who are saved cease from sin? Paul gives the answer: "**Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.**" I am dead to that wherein I was once held. I account myself as being dead so far as sin is concerned, and alive unto God before Whom I was once dead. If I am dead to sin, I am no longer bound by sin's ruling power, and I need no longer give myself as a servant to the lusts and desires of the flesh. Jesus has freed me from the reign of sin, and now He reigns over me!

If you will have Jesus in your heart and life, He will be your King. Jesus frees people from the reign of sin so that He may reign over them. If you come to Christ, you come to take Him as your King, as your Lord, and as the One who rules over you; otherwise, you have not truly come to Christ. Jesus does not share His throne with anyone. "**No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon**" (Matt. 6:24). Many in Jesus' day said within their hearts, "**We will not have this man to reign over us**" (Luke 19:14). If He does not reign over you, then you are none of His, and you are under the ruling power of sin; and you will die in your sins unless Jesus comes in and frees you from your present spiritual captivity in the kingdom of sin.



Sins of the Saints

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While this is true, yet the believer is responsible not to sin. The death of Christ annulled it. The Cross has freed us from the dominion of sin. Once we were its slaves, but now it has no right to control us. The Word of God forbids it: "**Awake to righteousness and sin not**" (I Cor. 15:34). "**As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation**" (I Pet. 1:15). The indwelling Holy Spirit condemns it. Our bodies are His temples, and it is our bounden duty to exclude everything which would in anywise defile them. The

grace of God repudiates it. The promise of our Lord is, "**My grace is sufficient for thee.**" The resources of Deity are held at our disposal. All power is ours if we will appropriate it. No believer is obliged to sin, and there is no legitimate excuse for the indulgence of it.

But the fact remains that all believers do sin. "**For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not**" (Eccl. 7:20). Every believer sins every day of his life, sins both negatively and positively. By this we do not mean that he violates the laws of the State, or that he deliberately breaks one of the ten commandments. We mean, that all come short of the standard of holiness revealed in God's Word. The thought of foolishness is sin (Prov. 24:9). Anxiety and worry are sinful, because forbidden by the Scripture. Covetousness is sinful, pride is sinful, sloth is sinful, yet who can plead guiltless? "**If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us**" (I John 1:8).

While it is true that every believer sins, sins daily, insomuch that he fails to measure up to the standard of holiness revealed in God's Word and fails to perfectly follow the "example" left us by the Lord Jesus Christ, yet, we would insist upon the fact that there is a fundamental difference in this respect between the believer and the unbeliever. The unbeliever is "**the servant (slave) of sin**" (John 8:34), but the believer has been "made free"---delivered from the power of sin (John 8:36). Furthermore, we read, "**Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil**" (I John 3:6-8). Now these verses do not teach that the daily walk of a believer is sinless, but they do teach that such an one will not practice sin. The tense of the verb in these verses must be carefully noted. It is the perfect which is here employed: "**he that committeth sin**"---commits and continues committing is the force of the word: He that makes a regular practice of committing sin. Observe it does not say, "He that sins is of the devil," but he that sins and goes on sinning. In the same way "**he that doeth (practiceth) righteousness is righteous.**" The Apostle is referring to the general course and tenor of our lives. He is speaking of that which is our habit. Let the Christian's life be summed up as a whole and though like David he may wander from the path of rectitude, yet shall he return thereto; though like Peter he may fail in the hour of testing, yet shall he repent of his failure: though like Paul he may sin with his lips (Acts 23:3-5), yet shall he confess his wrong-doing; and it will be seen that his complete record can

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. When Daniel Parker left the Baptist church and started the Primitive Baptist movement, from what church did he get the authority to start his new church? - OH

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Not knowing much about Daniel Parker or the events surrounding his leaving the Missionary Churches to form the non Missionary Baptist Churches, I wrote to the Primitive Baptist online website. I received little information from them but at the same time I learned all I needed to know. The answer was, no he did not get authority to start a Church.

Interestingly enough, by the standards of some Baptists of today Daniel Parker started a true Church. He did not need authority from another Church. He had Baptist baptism. I suppose like John Baptist He got authority straight from God. I wonder if He was avoiding being excluded from the Church he was a member of and so left to start His own. At least non Missionary Churches understand that like begets like. I'm certain there is a reason as to why Parker's situation is much different. I see none.

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The infamous Daniel Parker was the founder of what today is referred to as the "Hardshell or Primitive Baptists" who have historically been fiercely anti missionary, anti Sunday School, and Antinomian. He is famous for promoting the "Two Seed Doctrine." Its easier to find out what they were against than what they were for, which is always a tell tale sign of heresy.

In my research it appears that Daniel Parker led his church in LaMotte, Illinois of the Wabash Baptist Association to break fellowship with any churches in the association who were missionary. His influence was strong in Illinois, Indiana, and spread into Kentucky. There is no indication that he started a new church. Rather, he poisoned the one he already pastored and then spread his influence to other churches. He later

was excluded from the Lamotte church. It would appear that all Primitive and Hardshell societies who claim affinity with the movement started by Daniel Parker trace their authority to exist back to an excluded heretic.

I have copied and pasted some random quotes about Daniel Parker from the best Baptist History website that I know of http://www.geocities.com/baptist_documents/index.html

Edward Brand in his history of the Illinois Baptists commented on Daniel Parker's church:

Daniel Parker's Church in the Wabash Association was Lamotte, Crawford county. His teachings made a division, and then there were two Lamotte churches. The section opposed to him helped to organize the Palestine Association, in 1841. They were called "Effort Baptists" by those who did not like the effort. A few years after this the church disbanded, but the Liberty church, occupying nearly the same ground, is an active member of the Palestine Association.

This Association was organized in 1809; the Indiana churches were Bethel, Maria Creek, Patoka, Salem and Wabash. The Association seems to have gone on prosperously for several years; it is apparent that there is a good deal of the spirit of anti-missionism in these churches, especially those on the Illinois side of the Wabash river. On the eastern side there was the positive and intelligent direction of Elder Isaac McCoy, who was permeated -- we might say saturated -- with a desire and purpose to "proclaim the gospel to every creature." This purpose led him to establish a mission station at Raccoon Creek in 1818 -- the same year that Daniel Parker came into the Association, having joined the LaMotte, Illinois, church. Henceforth as long as Parker was in the Association there were discord and distrust, and the demoralization if not the destruction of all beautiful Christian fellowship, and all earnest endeavor to organize for the spread of the gospel in destitute parts of the earth. Both directly and indirectly Parker sought to discourage all mission and educational operations; and he possessed a certain power of leadership that was well adapted to accomplish its purpose in that part of the country at that time. Scores of churches and hundreds of members were drawn away after him.

And they went so far as to denounce missions, education, Sunday-schools and all such things. But finally those churches died as a natural result of their heinous heresy. Parker was finally excluded from his own church. But his baneful

influence was long felt in many of the Associations in south-eastern Illinois and southwestern Indiana. Matters became so strenuous in 1824 that a number of the Indiana churches of the Association asked for letters of dismissal and joined others in forming the Union Association, which stood positively and always for all the enterprises that contemplate the proclamation of the gospel. Here follow some extracts from the minutes of the Wabash District Association for 1827 which will give an insight into the condition of things where Elder Parker's influence prevailed.

The following was a description of Daniel Parker written by Dr. J.M. Peck one of his contemporaries:

"Mr. Parker is one of those singular and extraordinary beings whom divine Providence permits to arise as a scourge to his church, and a stumbling block in the way of religious effort. Raised on the frontier of Georgia, (by others he is spoken of as a native of Virginia), without education, uncouth in manner, slovenly in dress, diminutive [sic] in person, unprepossessing in appearance, with shrivelled [sic] features and a small piercing eye, few men for a series of years have exercised a wider influence on the lower and less educated class of frontier people. With a zeal and an enthusiasm bordering on insanity, firmness that amounted to obstinacy, and perseverance that would have done honor to a good cause, Daniel Parker exerted himself to the utmost to induce churches to declare non-fellowship with all Baptists who united themselves with any of the benevolent (or as he called them "new-fangled") societies.

"His mind we are told was of a singular and original sort. In doctrine he was antinomian. He believed himself inspired, and so persuaded others. Repeatedly we have heard him when his mind seemed to soar above his own powers, and he would discourse for a few moments on divine attributes or on some devotional subject, with such brilliancy of thought and correctness of language as would astonish men of education and talents. Then again it would seem as if he were perfectly bewildered in a maze of abstruse subtleties.

"Besides his itinerancy among the churches, Parker was a writer, and among other things published for a time a periodical called the "Church Advocate." How much a person of influence he was is shown by the fact that during four years, from 1822 to 1826, he was a member of the Illinois State Senate. His disastrous career in Illinois and Indiana came to a

close in 1833, when he removed to Texas.

"It is said of Daniel Parker, that at one time in his earlier career he applied for appointment as missionary, and when it was refused him, turned against mission societies and missionary effort of every kind. This was true at least of his coadjutor, Wilson Thompson. Just how far Parker was influenced by Taylor cannot be known; but Wilson Thompson, his coadjutor, admits to being greatly influenced by reading Taylor's pamphlet. Recent mission troubles in Texas may possibly be due in part to Parker's labors after reaching that State, although we can discover nothing of his life after he moved to Texas. The Parkerite heresy has not yet died out, for the census bulletin for 1893 reports the membership of this sect in the entire country at 9,932."

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The simplest and quickest answer is, "I don't know!" If he *had* any such authority, you would have to look for a source with a far more detailed record of church minutes than I have access to or the time to research.

We do not have a paper record of church perpetuity back to the first century. We cannot produce minutes and records of a business meeting when the church at Jerusalem formally voted to organize the churches in Samaria or Antioch. We cannot produce a baptismal certificate signed by John the Baptist. But we *can* trace the name *Baptist* to believers who believed, taught and practiced as true Baptists do today, separated and apart from the Roman and Protestant churches, throughout church history well before the 16th century.

That Baptists were there in those early years is verified in church history, mostly in the records of our enemies. Every name by which the Lord's churches have been known has been given to

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. Namely to what extent is the spouse of an excluded church member compelled to obey the commands to avoid (Rom. 16:17), not to keep company (1 Cor. 5:11), or to consider such a one "as an heathen man and a publican" (Matt. 18:17)? Is he/she permitted to disobey these commands? - Tennessee

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First, let me state that not all excluded church members fit into the categories or circumstances listed in the Scriptures cited above. Every case of church discipline is to be examined on its own merit.

Second, discipline from a New Testament church does not in any way dissolve the bonds or duties of the marriage covenant. The husband would still be required to love his wife and the wife would still be responsible to be in subjection to her husband as it is fit in the Lord (Eph. 5:22-33; Col. 3:18-19). There is no question that if one spouse were disciplined from the church it would place a strain on the marriage. However, marriage is to be viewed as a life long covenant entered into by husband and wife for better or worse, in sickness and in health (physically, emotionally, as well as spiritually).

Third, I don't like the tenor of the question. It appears as though the inquirer seeks to pit two truths of Scripture against one another. A disciplined member is barred from the privilege of partaking in the church's business meetings and the Lord's Supper. However, they are not barred from the marriage relationship they share with their spouse. Hence the spouse of the disciplined member would stand in agreement with the church in its disciplinary action. However, they would be under no obligation to separate from or divorce their spouse with regards to the marriage covenant.

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No!! God never gives two commands that conflict. All the commands of God harmonize with the other.

The verses cited in the question first must be understood as addressed to the

Churches. These verses all may seem to be different but they all say the same thing. How do we treat someone who is not a member of the Lord's Churches?

"But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or, an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat" (I Cor. 5:11). I suppose I would ask first of all, why is that person married to such an one? If they are, and they refuse to repent of sins toward God and have faith toward Jesus Christ our Lord and they are content to live with them, then good. **"But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy"** (I Cor. 7:12-14).

I fear as to the reason why a question was asked such as this. A husband and wife's bond is one flesh, even if one be a child of God and the other not. **"Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear"** (I Peter 3:1,2). **"So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh"** (Eph. 5:28-31). Never is the marriage of a child of God to a non believer condoned in God's Word.

I asked the question how do you treat a heathen or a publican? My answer is you treat them with respect. You treat them as you would want to be treated. You live a Godly life before them that compliments the Gospel you believe. You pray for their salvation. The things you do not do are, invite them to eat with you at the Lord's table. Allowing excluded people to vote, or make motions, or to hold offices. Excluded is not to be included in the operation of the church

Jesus built for His people that He died for. **"Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth"** (I Cor. 5:8).

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Matthew 21:23-24: **"And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority? And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things."**

I think this question reveals either an already unhealthy domestic situation or that there has been too much 'hyper-legal' pressure applied somewhere.

When the Jewish sharp shooters came to Jesus with a question of doubtful merit He answered by asking them a question that would force them to see the obvious and logical answer to their own question. I will answer this question by countering with a question.

Does the Bible condone divorce in anything but extreme circumstances? **"For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away..."** (Mal. 2:16) If the marriage in question is a proper marriage, do our Lord's words apply here? **"Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder"** (Matt. 19:6). Does God's love for the church, which we are told to emulate, separate the church from Christ when things don't go completely right? **"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church..."** (Eph. 5:25).

The practice of 'shunning' which unfortunately some Baptists seem to have fallen into, does not fit with Paul's instructions concerning church discipline and personal relationship. It should be especially noted that Paul gave these instructions in reference to an extreme situation.

"It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world" (I Cor. 5:1-10).

"Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. {punishment: or, censure} 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).

Perhaps Paul's instructions concerning marriage, in I Corinthians 7, can best answer this question. **"Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency...But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him"** (I Cor. 7:5, 12-13).

Personal comment: If my wife were put out of the church, she would still be my wife. Unless the sin involved had been something very drastic, our intimacy would not change. In any case, my love for her would issue in forgiving her.

RAY BENNETT



Forum #1

(Continued from page 210) ♦

us by our enemies, usually as a term of disparagement.

What is evident, however, is that the various local churches did not just spring up and function without authority. Though they assembled together, worshipped the Lord rightly, taught correct doctrine insofar as they had the Word of God, and may even have had an organizational structure, the pattern that is apparent in the churches at Samaria and Antioch, demonstrates that they sought and received their authority from a recognized and organized church, the church at Jerusalem. They didn't claim independent authority. Even the great Apostle Paul, who had been personally taught by the Lord (Galatians 1:15-2:2) checked his authority with the church which was at Jerusalem.

The believers at Samaria identified with Christ by baptism. They were no doubt baptized by Philip who was a deacon from Jerusalem, and were then recognized by the church at Jerusalem and separated as an independent church. (Acts 8:4-8; 12; 14-15) See the similar pattern at Antioch, Acts 11:19-30.

The point is that the Lord's churches don't just become authorized churches on their own but receive authority from an already established church. This practice is followed in order to keep the churches pure in doctrine and practice. No one has the authority, if they disagree with what is happening in the church or association they are attending, to just go out and start a new church and teach their own personal views. The function of mother church authority, church associations and general confessions of faith is to ensure that the independent daughter churches maintain purity of doctrine and practice. (See, for instance, the old Philadelphia Association and the First London Confession of 1644.)

RAY BENNETT



Sins of the Saints

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be characterized and summarized only as one that **"doeth righteousness."**

Ere proceeding to the details of our theme, we must in faithfulness state the issue clearly. Reader, if you love sin you are no child of God, for God is Holy. If you are living to please self and are enjoying the pleasures of sin, you are no Christian, for a Christian is one who denies himself, takes up his cross and follows Christ; a Christian is one who is subject to the Lordship of Christ, and no man can serve two masters. If when you succumb to temptation you are not cut to the heart, if the fact that you have offended against

the Lord God is not followed by genuine contrition and repentance, it is proof you have never been born again; for when a real believer sins he "grieves" the Spirit within him, and the Spirit will cause him to grieve over his wrong-doing. If you are not "fleeing youthful lusts" (II Tim. 2:22), if you are not buffeting your body to "keep it under" (I Cor. 9:27), if you are not "yielding yourself unto God" (Rom. 6:13), you have no ground for concluding that you are a member of the household of faith.

But what of the one who is **"overtaken in a fault"** (Gal. 6:1)? What of the one who really and daily endeavors with all his might to please God and glorify Christ, who actually does "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness" (Matt. 6:33), but who, nevertheless, is conscious that he offends in many things (James 3:2)---what are the consequences of such sins in the believer?

I. HE DOES NOT CEASE TO BE GOD'S CHILD

A child of God is one who has been begotten by the Holy Spirit and made a partaker of the Divine nature. The new birth is very much more than an external reformation, it is an internal regeneration. The new birth does not mean turning over a new leaf, but is the beginning of a new life. Now in the very nature of the case, one who has been born again cannot be unborn. We have been born again of **"incorruptible seed"** (I Pet. 1:23). Can that which is incorruptible die? Impossible, (Eph. 2:5). Can those who have been spiritually resurrected be destroyed? Impossible. The new birth is a new creation (II Cor. 5:17, R. V.). Can that which has been created be un-created? Impossible. **"I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it that men should fear before him"** (Eccl. 3:14).

II. HE DOES NOT FORFEIT ETERNAL LIFE

When the believer sins he does not forfeit eternal life, and why? Because it is a gift---a free gift from God. **"The free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord"** (Rom. 6:23, R.V.). He could do nothing to merit this gift (if he could, it would cease to be a gift: in such a case it would be a reward), consequently, he can do nothing to demerit it. Moreover, the gift which God bestows upon the believer is eternal life. This needs to be stressed. God gave to Adam a probationary life: it was his so long as he obeyed God's command and refused to eat of the forbidden fruit. God gave to Israel in Canaan a conditional life: their continued tenure of Palestine was made contingent upon their compliance with the Divine Decalogue and their abstinence from idolatry. But to the believer in Christ, God gives neither a probationary nor a conditional life, but

eternal life. And, **"The gifts and calling of God are without repentance"** (Rom. 11:29). To say that eternal life may end is a contradiction in terms.

III. HE DOES NOT LOSE THE HOLY SPIRIT

David prayed, **"Take not thy holy spirit from me"** (Ps. 51:11), but his was under the Dispensation of Law. In contrast thereto, the Dispensation of Grace, the promise of the Saviour is, **"And he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever"** (John 14:16). The believer may and does "grieve" the Holy Spirit, but he cannot drive Him away. And for this reason, the Holy Spirit takes up His abode in the believer not on account of any personal fitness He finds in him, but on the ground of the finished work of Christ, and nothing can disturb that. Therefore we read, **"And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption"** (Eph. 4:30), that is, until the day when we shall be glorified in spirit, and soul, and body.

A striking demonstration and confirmation of this fact is seen in the case of the Corinthian saints. Due allowance must be made for the fact that they had only just emerged from an idolatrous and licentious heathendom, yet when this is said, it remains that these Corinthians were guilty of the most awful sins. They were schismatics; brother went to law against brother; and what was worse, some had profaned the Table of the Lord, having turned the Supper into a drunken revel. And yet to this very Church, while admonishing the same, the Apostle says, **"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"** (I Cor. 3:16). In spite of their sins then, the Corinthian saints had not lost the Holy Spirit!

IV. HE DOES NOT BECOME UNFIT FOR HEAVEN

The moment we believe we are fitted and qualified to enter the presence of the thrice holy God. **"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light"** (Col. 1:12). This meetness or fitness is not in ourselves but in Christ. Consequently, this fitness is perfect and immutable: **"For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified"** (Heb. 10:14). Our fitness for heaven depends not in any wise on our service, our works, our obedience, or our faithfulness, but solely upon the finished work of the Lord Jesus for us. The Apostle Paul was as much ready for heaven the moment he was born again as he was at the close of his life of devoted allegiance to his Master. The fitness of the prodigal son to a seat at the Father's table consisted in the robe of righteousness with which he was, typically clothed. The saints which John saw in the heavenly temple of the King had washed their robes and made them

white in the Blood of the Lamb. It is the precious Blood, and that alone, which gives title to a mansion in the Father's House. In short, we partake of the incorruptible inheritance solely through grace, hence our personal unworthiness cannot unfit us for it. If sinning unfitted the believer for heaven, then none would ever get there. **"For in many things we all offend"** (James 3:2, R.V.). But let it not be supposed that a man may live as he pleases, live a life of open sin, and that even he may console himself that when he dies he shall go to heaven. If you are a child of God your daily walk will evidence it. If you are really a Christian your life will demonstrate it, and if your life does not so demonstrate it then you are not entitled to bear the name of a follower of the Lord Jesus. If you are one of His "sheep," you will follow the Shepherd, not the "desires of the flesh" or the ways of the world. You will "hear" (not disregard) the "voice" of Christ.

V. HE DOES NOT ETERNALLY PERISH

There is no need to argue this. From what has been said above, it follows, that no saint of God through sinning can finally be lost. Backslide he may, but perish he shall not. No backsliding saint of God ever perished. Noah was a backslider---he became intoxicated. Abraham was a backslider---he went down to Egypt in unbelief, and while there told a lie. Jacob was a backslider---he deliberately deceived his father. Moses was a backslider---in his anger, he disobeyed God. David was a backslider---he committed adultery. Peter was a backslider---he denied his Lord. *But not one of them perished.* Each was able to say with the Psalmist, **"He restoreth my soul."** Yes, mark they were "restored." They did not continue in their wickedness. No; they repented and turned to God.

There are those who teach that it is possible for a born again person to be eternally lost. But surely all such must fail to realize the corollaries of their teaching. The eternal security of the believer is something more than a theological quibble; it is a vital part of the saints. The final preservation of the saints is something more than a subject for religious controversy; it is a Divinely revealed truth for the establishing of the heart in grace. What we are now contending for is something more than a tenet of Calvinism; it is that which is bound up with the honor of God, the efficacy of the Blood of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit. We now desire to call attention to some of the fearful evils which are involved in the denial of this truth.

If, through sinning, a believer perished--What?

1. *Then the promises of God would be valueless.*

Again and again God has promised

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in His Word that whosoever believeth in His Son, shall not perish but have everlasting life. If then I have believed in the Lord Jesus and yet should perish, then what?

The Lord Jesus said, **"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out"** (John 6:37). Our Lord was not here giving an invitation to sinners, nor affirming that He never turns away one who comes to Him (which of course is true and taught elsewhere), but He is declaring that He never expels (casts out) any sinner whom He has received. The next verse but one proves this---**"And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day"** (John 6:39). If then the Father has given me to Christ, and in consequence I have "come" to Him, and He has promised that He will **"in no wise"** (under no circumstances) **"cast me out"** and that He will **"lose nothing"** of the **"all"** which the Father has given Him, and yet I should be eternally lost---then what? Of what value is His promise?

Again, we read, **"Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will finish it (marginal rendering) until the day of Jesus Christ"** (Phil. 1:6). If then God has begun a good work in me and that work is not "finished" and in consequence I am lost---then what? It is not sufficient to say that God is willing to do His part providing I do mine: that God is hindered from finishing His work through my sinful conduct. No such alternative as this was present before the Apostle's mind. He interposed no ifs or buts or perhapses, but declared **"being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."** If then God has promised to do this and He fails to fulfill it---then what? We reply, then, in such a case, God's Word would be like fallen man's---unreliable and untrustworthy; and in such an event, we should no longer have any sure foundation for our faith or anchorage for our souls. But perish such a thought. Let God be true and every man a liar.

If, through sinning, a believer perished---What?

2. *Then the whole plan of salvation would be overthrown.*

If, as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, my going to heaven is contingent upon my continued faithfulness and obedience (instead of my faithfulness and obedience being rendered out of love and gratitude because Christ has saved me); if through my failure to remain faithful and obedient I am eternally lost, then my salvation is made to depend upon

my works, which flatly contradicts Titus 3:5---**"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us."**

Further, if my ultimate salvation is determined by my obedience and faithfulness then I earn and merit it, and therefore salvation is a reward, a prize won by my endeavors. But that flatly contradicts Ephesians 2:8-9---**"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."**

Again, if my salvation is due in part to my obedience and good works, and heaven is a reward for my diligence, then God is robbed of at least a part of His glory, for in that case we could not cry, **"Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake"** (Ps. 115:1).

Once more, if my salvation turns upon me holding out faithful to the end and if through failure to do so I should be lost, then I cannot know for certain whether I shall spend eternity in heaven or hell until I come to die. I cannot now "rejoice" because my name is written in heaven (Luke 10:20) and thus salvation would be a future prospect instead of a present enjoyment.

Finally; to teach that a believer in Christ must hold out faithful to the end in order to be saved is to reduce the Gospel to nothing more than an offer to place the sinner on an extended probation; whereas the Lord Jesus said, **"I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst"** (John 6:35). No; the believer does not produce the fruit of the Spirit and bring forth good works in order to be saved, but he does do them because he is saved. If there is no fruit, no good works, no letting of our light shine to the glory of God, it shows that such a one is yet in his sins.

If, through sinning, a believer perished---What?

3. *Then the power of God is limited.*

If I had a thousand dollars in bills on my person I should be afraid to carry it around and in consequence would go to the bank and there deposit it for safekeeping. In like manner I am fully conscious of the fact that I am unable to save myself, so I have committed my soul into the keeping of God. Hence it is now solely a question of God's power. It is true that I am weak, but He is strong. It is true that the world, the flesh and the devil, are arrayed against me, but God is for me and **"If God be for us, who can be against us?"**

Noah was warned of God that a flood would be sent to destroy the wicked. An ark was provided as a shelter from the coming of Divine judgment. Into this ark Noah and his family entered. Having entered that ark, the responsibility of

their preservation devolved upon God Himself. Noah could not leave the ark for **"the Lord shut him in"** (Gen. 7:16). The fountains of the great deep were broken, the windows of heaven were opened and the rain descended---was the Lord able to preserve those in the ark? It was solely a matter of His power. The question has only to be asked to be answered. In like manner: every believer has **"fled for refuge to the hope set before him"** and it is now a question of God's power to keep---Is He able? The reply is: **"I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day"** (II Tim. 1:12). And again, **"Wherefore he is able also to save them for evermore (marginal rendering) that come unto God by him"** (Heb. 7:25). Deny the eternal security of the believer and you limit the keeping power of God. Teach that it is possible for one to be lost who has previously committed his soul into the hands of the Lord, and you deny the Omnipotency of the Most High.

If, through sinning, a believer perished---What?

4. *Then the intercession of Christ would be in vain.*

Not only did the Lord Jesus Christ die on the cross for sinners, but He now lives to make intercession for those who have fled to Him for refuge. After stating that **"He (God) is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him"** (Christ) the reason for this is given in the words that follow---**"seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them"** (Heb. 7:25). After writing, **"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not,"** the Apostle continues, **"And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous"** (I John 2:1). After declaring that **"It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth?"** the Apostle continues, **"It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us"** (Rom. 8:33-34). The question then resolves itself to this: Are the prayers of Christ on our behalf effectual? The Lord Jesus Himself answered this question when He said, **"Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I know that thou hearest me always"** (John 11:41-42).

An illustration of the value of Christ's intercession is seen in the case of Peter. Knowing that Satan desired to have him that he might sift him as wheat. He said to His follower, **"I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not"** (Luke 22:32). That His prayer prevailed was demonstrated in the sequel. Peter's self-confidence failed him, his courage failed him, but his faith did not. As soon as the Lord looked upon him after his denial, he went out and **"wept bitterly"** and a few weeks later we find him in the open

streets of Jerusalem boldly contending for the faith. If the **"effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much"** who can estimate the value of the intercession of the Righteous One?

Deny the eternal security of every believer and you repudiate the value of Christ's present intercession. Declare that through sinning a believer may perish and you discredit the advocacy of our blessed Mediator. Teach that it is possible for a saint of God to apostatize and you contradict the plain testimony of Scripture.

If, through sinning, a believer perished---What?

5. *Then already the believer is robbed of his assurance.*

As we have already said, if our ultimate salvation depends upon our continued faithfulness and obedience and through failure to render these we are lost, then salvation is a future prospect and none can know whether he shall spend eternity in heaven or hell until the hour of his death. Hence assurance of a perfect salvation based upon the promises of God becomes impossible. In such a case the believer in Christ must live in daily fear lest he fail to render unto God the required obedience. No longer can he say, **"we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose"** (Rom. 8:28), for he knows not but what he may commit some sin which shall cause all things to work together for his everlasting destruction. He is unable to say, **"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature (which includes Satan), shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord"** (Rom. 8:38-39), for some unfaithfulness on his part may separate him. In a word, he is robbed of all present peace and sense of security, and is in bondage to a servile fear. How different is this to the teaching of the Holy Scriptures!

Much more might be written in amplification of what we have said above, but we trust we have argued at sufficient length to show something of the fearful evils which are involved in and follow from a denial of the eternal security of the believer.

Were we to close here (as, unfortunately, some do when treating of this subject) we should fail to insist upon the believer's responsibility, we should be setting a premium upon sin, we should be encouraging loose living, and be in great danger of turning the grace of God into lasciviousness. What then are the consequences of a believer's sinning? Having considered the negative side, we turn to the positive.

(Continued in the next issue.)

THE BIBLE NEWS PAPER

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.

FEDERAL TAX DOLLARS FUND GAY-GENE STUDY

(EP News)--The search for a "gay gene" continues. New research is being conducted at Northwestern University in Chicago in hopes of discovering genetic evidence that homosexuality is something people are born with. And federal tax dollars are funding it.

Dr. Alan Sanders, lead researcher of the new study, said he suspects it's not just one gene, but a combination of genetic factors that determines one's sexual orientation.

Dr. Stanton Jones of Wheaton College is skeptical. "What we're likely to find is that there may be biological contributions for some, but it doesn't really change the moral picture for Christians who reflect on this much at all," he said.

Alan Chambers, president of Exodus International, said even if genetics are found to be instrumental, that doesn't negate personal responsibility. "Just because something's genetic or said to be genetic or have a biological component doesn't make it right," he said. "It doesn't make it optimal, and it doesn't mean that genetics were ever meant to be tyrannical."

Sanders is receiving government funding to conduct the research. But when Jones tried to get financial backing for his work on people who leave homosexuality, his search turned up empty-handed. "It's a good thing for research to be funded on biological causation," he said. "I just hope that the government and other funding sources are even-handed and maintain a spirit of scientific openness."

HOUSE SET TO VOTE ON SPECIAL RIGHTS FOR GAY EMPLOYEES

(EP News)--A U.S. House vote is just around the corner on the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) -- a bill that gives homosexuals special rights in the workplace. ENDA would add "sexual orientation" to a list of federally protected classes that includes race and religion.

"My race is being compromised, in that gays are saying that they need protected status just like someone who's of a race that they can't change," said Bishop Harry Jackson, president of the High Impact Leadership Coalition.

"This is not a Democrat or Republican issue, this is a moral values issue, and it's an issue of the integrity of the civil rights movement."

ENDA has an exemption for religious institutions, but Maureen Wiebe, spokeswoman for the American Association of Christian Schools, said it's too narrow. "It

would not seem that Christian schools would fall under the exemption for ENDA," she said. "So ENDA could seriously affect the hiring rights of a Christian school."

The House committee took up ENDA on Oct. 17. The bill would add special protections for "sexual orientation," but not "gender identity" -- or transgendered individuals. However, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, a California Democrat, has promised to add protection for "gender identity," as soon as she believes the votes are there.

Ashley Horne, federal policy analyst for Focus on the Family Action, said it's time to take action. "We are very concerned because lawmakers are telling us that they are simply not hearing from their constituents on ENDA," she said. "People need to be calling their representatives and saying, 'We do not support ENDA. Please vote "No" on ENDA.'"

ENDA SEEKS TO ENSHRINE SEXUAL ORIENTATION IN FEDERAL LAW

(EP News)--The Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) is making its way through the U.S. Congress.

In a voice vote with no dissenters, it was attached to a "must-pass" appropriations bill on Sept. 27. ENDA would prevent businesses and organizations from taking sexual orientation or gender identity into consideration when hiring, promoting or firing. That could spell trouble for Christian business owners, churches and faith-based groups. If the appropriations bill passes Congress with ENDA attached, President Bush has said he will veto the bill.

"The president is not going to agree to this social legislation on the Defense Authorization Bill," Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., told The Associated Press. "This bill will get vetoed."

The Democrat-controlled House passed similar legislation as a stand-alone bill earlier this year, and also fell short of the needed votes to override a veto.

In debate on the Senate floor, Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., again tried to tie hate crimes to terrorism: "This is about the morality of our country, our values of our country, and that is directly tied in to what our men and women are doing overseas in resisting terrorism and fighting for the values here at home."

Sen. Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., fought back: "What are we trying to accomplish here?" he asked. "Do we want to protect the Defense policy matters in this bill that actually matter to our forces in the field, or

do we want to debate political and social issues on this measure?"

An alternative amendment by Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, also passed. It calls for study of hate crimes.

COURT SAYS ABORTION CLINICS CAN SUE STATE FOR REIMBURSEMENT

(EP News)--The Georgia Supreme Court ruled Sept. 24 that abortion clinics can sue the state for not paying for abortion procedures deemed "medically necessary." A group of clinics sued the state Department of Community Health for not covering the abortion costs of impoverished, Medicaid-eligible women who are experiencing health problems. Though the state currently pays for abortions of rape or incest victims or those in danger of dying from a pregnancy, clinics argued that they should also receive reimbursement when a woman's health could be compromised by a pregnancy even if she is not in danger of dying. The court ruled that although clinics cannot normally sue a third party on behalf of their Medicaid patients, the U.S. Supreme Court has made exceptions. Justice Hugh Thompson wrote in his opinion that "virtually every state court considering the issue has similarly held that abortion providers have standing to raise the constitutional rights of their patients."

GENERAL STANDS BY BIBLICAL VIEW OF HOMOSEXUALITY

(EP News)--A week before his retirement, Marine Gen. Peter Pace said in a Senate hearing that homosexuality is immoral and should not be condoned by the military. The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff made the statement on Sept. 26 because he wanted to clarify statements he made in May to the "Chicago Tribune" that were inaccurately reported. Though the U.S. Military Code of Justice prohibits homosexual activity in the military, Pace said he would be willing to support changes to the policy, as long as it didn't violate his belief that sex should be between one man and one woman within marriage. "We need to be very precise then, about what I said wearing my stars and being very conscious of it," Pace told the Senate Appropriations Committee. "And that is, very simply, that we should respect those who want to serve the nation but not, through the law of the land, condone activity that, in my upbringing, is counter to God's law."

ARIZONA INMATES HAVE RIGHT TO ABORTION, COURT SAYS

(EP News)--The Arizona Supreme Court agreed with a lower court Sept. 25 that pregnant inmates have the right to an abortion, and county deputies must be accomplices by driving them to the clinic. Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio had refused to provide pregnant inmates transportation to get an abortion because it violated a state law that prohibits the use of taxpayer funds for abortions. The court ruled that although taxpayer funds would be used to take the women for abortions, state

law would not be violated because no funds would be spent on the abortions themselves. "I did the right thing, and I would do it over again," Arpaio told the *East Valley Tribune* of Arizona.

PLANNED PARENTHOOD MUST FOLLOW THE LAW IN MISSOURI

(EP News)--A federal judge ruled Sept. 24 that Planned Parenthood is not likely to succeed in having a Missouri law that holds abortion clinics to the same safety standards as other medical facilities ruled facially unconstitutional. Attorneys with the Alliance Defense Fund represent Missouri Director of Health and Senior Services Jane Drummond in a lawsuit Planned Parenthood filed against the new state law, which the court has put on hold while details are worked out. Under the law, abortion clinics would be designated as ambulatory surgical centers, and would have to meet safety standards. "Abortion clinics should not be exempt from common-sense regulations that protect the health and safety of Missouri patients," said ADF Senior Legal Counsel Dale Schowengerdt. "We're pleased that the court agreed with this and did not believe Planned Parenthood would succeed in its arguments that the law is facially unconstitutional."

THE FEW, THE PROUD, THE CENSORED

(EP News)--U.S. Marines were denied permission to tape a portion of a recruitment commercial on a San Francisco street, Fox News reports. The soldiers also were denied permits to shoot on the Golden Gate Bridge. Stefanie Coyote, executive director of the San Francisco Film Commission, claimed she denied the Marines Silent Drill Platoon request to film because of rush-hour traffic concerns. However, the production crew was given permission to film the city as long as no Marines were in the shoot. The mayor's office later said the Marines were not denied a permit. Capt. Greg Corrales of the San Francisco Police Department Traffic Bureau told ABC News that the Film Commission often allows filming and other events during rush hour, including anti-war protests, street demonstrations and a monthly city bike ride of thousands of cyclists. "This -- a slap in the face of every veteran and every parent of men and women who are doing their duty -- is shameful," Corrales told ABC.

NEW YORK REJECTS ABSTINENCE FUNDING

(EP News)--New York state officials have rejected millions of dollars in federal grants for abstinence-only sex education, claiming it to be a "failed" Bush policy based on "ideology rather than on sound scientific-based evidence." In deciding not to re-apply for its annual \$3.5 million in abstinence funding, New York joins at least 10 other states that have decided to forgo the funds. "We think it is a good thing that they are making efforts to close programs that were misinforming adolescents," said Galen Sherwin, director of

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the Reproductive Rights Project for the New York Civil Liberties Union.

N.J. COMMISSION EXPECTED TO PUSH FOR SAME-SEX "MARRIAGE"

(EP News)--Gay activists are complaining that New Jersey's civil union law is failing. Family groups say this is the next phase of getting what homosexuals want — full-marriage status. The Civil Union Review Commission has launched its first of three biweekly meetings to hear complaints that civil unions are a "failed experiment" and carry a "second-class status." The commission is expected to present its findings to lawmakers to justify a bill allowing same-sex marriage. John White with the Knights of Columbus said that was the plan all along. "They haven't been satisfied with domestic partnerships," he said. "That was supposed to be all they wanted. The next thing they wanted was civil unions, they got civil unions, and now that's not enough."

PLANNED PARENTHOOD OPENS NATION'S LARGEST ABORTION CLINIC

(EP News)--Hundreds of life advocates peacefully protested and prayed today outside the Aurora, Ill., Planned Parenthood abortion clinic, which was allowed to open after a 14-day delay. City officials determined Monday that Planned Parenthood's permit application did not violate any laws or city ordinances. Mayor Tom Weisner gave the green light for the \$7.5 million facility to open. The opening was delayed after Planned Parenthood was accused of committing fraud by applying for building permits under a front company. Just before the opening, Peter Breen, on behalf of the Thomas More Society in Chicago, filed an appeal with the Aurora Zoning Board of Appeals. "It won't be over until Planned Parenthood leaves Aurora," Eric Scheidler, a spokesman for the Pro-Life Action League, told The Associated Press.

SUPREME COURT LETS ALABAMA OBSCENITY BAN STAND

(EP News)--The U.S. Supreme Court on Oct. 1 declined to hear an appeal on Alabama's obscenity ban, leaving the 1998 law intact. Alabama Attorney General Troy King will request a federal judge lift an injunction preventing the law from being enforced. The ban directly will affect sexually oriented businesses, which will be prohibited from selling sex toys. Store owners plan to sue again. "The Supreme Court's decision to keep Alabama's law intact is a victory for families and citizens concerned about public decency," said Daniel Weiss, senior media and sexuality analyst for Focus on the Family Action. "The next step is to make sure sex shops are actually cleaning out their inventories. Upholding the law is one thing, but consistently enforcing it is an entirely different matter. The citizens of Alabama

will need to remain vigilant on this issue."

PLANNED PARENTHOOD WILL CLOSE FIVE MICHIGAN CLINICS

(EP News)--Planned Parenthood of West Michigan and Northern Michigan is facing a combined 40 percent cut in state and federal funding this year, prompting the closure of five clinics. Facilities in White Cloud and Hart closed Oct. 1. Centers in Grand Rapids, Muskegon and Mount Pleasant will close by the end of the year. "It is good news because Planned Parenthood is America's No. 1 abortion provider and promoter," said Pam Sherstad, director of public information for Right to Life of Michigan. "Women deserve better than Planned Parenthood." The reduction stems from changes in how the state allocates money. Under the new formula, funds are distributed according to the percentage of recipients below the poverty line. This year, Planned Parenthood will receive \$1 million in state and federal funds, down from \$1.7 million last year. Sherstad said there are more than 100 pregnancy and adoption centers in Michigan serving women — centers that are not run by Planned Parenthood. "We do have the resources in Michigan to help women who are faced with an unplanned pregnancy," she said.

CALIFORNIA COURT UPHOLDS PROPERTY-TAX LAW FOR GAY COUPLES

(EP News)--A California Appeals Court upheld a state law Oct. 2 that gives same-sex couples marriage-like rights in property inheritance. A group of county assessors filed the lawsuit. It challenged a state law that includes gay couples under a provision designed to protect spouses from paying steep taxes. The ruling could be appealed to the Supreme Court of California.

CENSUS DATA REVEAL STATE OF MARRIAGE

(EP News)--According to new Census Bureau figures, more than half of all couples throw in the towel before their 25th anniversary. The Census Bureau looked at couples that would have celebrated their 25th anniversaries since 2000. "Those who married in the (late) 1970s apparently have much more fragile marriages than we realized," said Mike McManus of Marriage Savers. "In my view, the church is doing a very poor job of helping couples prepare for a lifelong marriage or to enrich existing ones, or to save troubled ones."

BROWNBACK BILL WOULD REQUIRE ULTRASOUND BEFORE ABORTION

(EP News)--Sen. Sam Brownback, R-Kan., has introduced legislation that requires abortionists to offer every woman seeking an abortion a chance to see an ultrasound image of their preborn babies. The images are remarkably effective at reducing abortions. It's the first time the measure has been introduced in Congress, and there's hope it

will pass. The Ultrasound Informed Consent Act gives every abortion-minded woman the chance to see the life she is about to sacrifice. Douglas Johnson of the National Right to Life Committee said it's a good bill that puts the onus on the abortionist. "It requires that the ultrasound image be displayed by the abortionist," he said. Some studies suggest that as many as 88 percent of women who are at risk for abortion, who go into a pregnancy center for counseling and to see an ultrasound, indicate they end up changing their minds.

APPEALS COURT SAYS TEEN IS ENTITLED TO MORNING-AFTER PILL

(EP News)--The 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Philadelphia ruled Sept. 21 there's no need to notify parents before or after giving a teenager the morning-after pill, which may sometimes cause an abortion. Melissa Anspach, then 16, visited the city health clinic in January 2004 and spoke briefly with a social worker before a nurse gave her one dose at the clinic and a second dose to take 12 hours later. She experienced severe abdominal pains and vomiting after taking the medication. She told her parents about the drug, and they took her to a hospital, where she was treated and released. The Anspachs raised religious objections to the clinic's actions. Judge Theodore McKee wrote: "The Constitution does not impose an affirmative obligation on (the) defendants to ensure that children abide by their parents' wishes, values or religious beliefs." However, Randy Wenger, chief counsel for the Pennsylvania Family Institute, said Pennsylvania has a law requiring parental consent before a teenager has an abortion. "The court's decision basically bypasses even the minimal safeguards the Legislature put in place," he said.

ABORTION CLINICS OFTEN GO WITHOUT INSPECTION

(EP News)—When she discovered that an abortion clinic in Englewood, N.J., was shut down because a woman almost died from a botched abortion, Marie Tasy of New Jersey Right to Life asked that other clinics be looked into as well. "When they went in, they found all kinds of filthy and unsterile conditions," she said. "They found blood crusted on forceps and blood on the operating tables." The investigation into New Jersey abortion clinic injuries reveals that the facilities are not being inspected, as the law requires. The state has four clinics that perform late-term abortions. Three of the four have gone five or more years without a state health inspection. And the state's largest abortion clinic is still being ignored by state health inspectors. Experts speculate the problem is no better in other states. Alabama law requires clinic inspections, but Eric Johnston of the Southeast Law Institute said that doesn't guarantee timeliness. Denise Burke of Americans United for Life said inspected abortion clinics are the exception rather than the rule. "Despite the fact that 27 states have

some degree of abortion clinic regulation requiring some sort of state oversight and inspection," she said, "we are finding that a significant majority of states are not fulfilling their inspection duties."

IOWA PASTORS PUSH MARRIAGE AMENDMENT

(EP News)--More than a dozen Iowa pastors came together in late September to defend traditional marriage after a renegade judge struck down the state's Defense of Marriage Act in August. The case is headed for the Iowa Supreme Court. Church leaders plan to urge their congregations to talk to lawmakers about amending Iowa's constitution to define marriage as between a man and a woman, KCCITV reports. "God's word is clear to us that marriage is between one man and one woman. Therefore, we are here to stand in unity," said Keith Ratliff of Maple Street Missionary Baptist Church in Des Moines. "It is imperative that we work to pass this marriage amendment so that the voices of a few will not drown out the traditional values of our families, drown out the importance of the institution of marriage," said the Rev. Dan Berry of the evangelical Cornerstone Family Church in Ames. Nearly all states have defined marriage as being solely between a man and a woman, and 27 states have such wording in their constitutions, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures. Same-sex marriage is legal only in Massachusetts.

WASHINGTON COURT OKS GAY "MARRIAGES" FROM CANADA

(EP News)--The Washington state Court of Appeals said it's OK for the mayor of Seattle to recognize same-sex "marriages" from other countries. With Vancouver, a hub for homosexual unions, just a short drive to the north, the decision is expected to have a significant impact on the city and — possibly — the nation. In 2004, Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels issued an executive order forcing all city departments to give benefits to "married" homosexual employees. Gay "marriage" was and still is prohibited in Washington, but not in Canada. To get the benefits, Seattle gays traveled north of the border. Brian Raum of the Alliance Defense Fund said proponents of traditional marriage challenged the mayor's executive order, but lost in court. "The court in Washington suggests that the same-sex marriages recognized there are only for the purposes of benefits and somehow that's OK," he said. "I think that's a very dangerous position to take because the very essence of what they are trying to do there is gain marriage equality, and that's one of the tactics that those who support that are using." There's a similar battle brewing in New York. "The highest court in New York said there is no constitutional right to same-sex marriage," Raum said. "Yet those who support same-sex marriage are trying to circumvent the will of the people and get what they otherwise can't get in a legitimate matter." The Pacific Justice Institute is appealing the Seattle case to the

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Washington Supreme Court.

ACLU DEFEATED IN TEN COMMANDMENTS CASE

(EP News)-- A federal court dismissed a lawsuit filed by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) challenging a Harlan County, Ky., school display of historical documents that includes the Ten Commandments. The lawsuit later was attached to two cases involving the same display in two courthouses. A federal district court dismissed the Harlan County case. Liberty Counsel Founder Mat Staver said the dismissal is the latest defeat for the ACLU. "Since 2005, the ACLU has lost one Ten Commandments case after another," he said, "and I think it's only logical and consistent that as part of our American history we are able to display the Ten Commandments as a universal symbol of law in a court of law or other public places around America."

RESEARCH LINKS FAITH TO GOOD WORKS

(EP News)--Religion increases positive outcomes and decreases the negatives — for society and for individuals, according to research presented at a seminar in early October in Washington, D.C. Jennifer Marshall, director of domestic policy studies at The Heritage Foundation, which co-sponsored the event, said an increase in church attendance was connected with an increase in positive behaviors and a decrease in negative behaviors such as drug abuse and delinquency. "This is a very intriguing, emerging field," she said. "There are many sociologists, psychologists, even economists beginning to note the significance of religion in American life." Byron Johnson of the Baylor Institute for Studies of Religion, another co-sponsor, said it's not just the Church that benefits. "Not only are religious people more likely to participate in religious charities and activities, they are significantly more likely than secular folks to participate in secular volunteer activities," he said. "Religious people do the heavy lifting in this country in terms of civic engagement and volunteerism."

MORE COLLEGE STUDENTS FACING PSYCHOLOGICAL ISSUES

(EP News)--An increasing number of college kids reportedly have psychological problems requiring treatment. However, there's a general shortage of college counselors — and the advice many students are receiving isn't doing them much good.

Just about everyone in a survey of college counselors said the number of students with severe psychological problems is increasing and many report debilitating depression. Janice Crouse with Concerned Women for America said students often don't get a lot of help from secular campus counselors, many of whom aren't allowed to talk about

anything of real consequence. "We, as Christian parents, have to deal with our young people in a very different way than previous generations have had to," she said. "We have to be very straightforward and upfront with them."

APPEALS COURT HEARS LAS CRUCES CROSSES CASE

(EP News)--A Las Cruces, N.M., man told the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in early October that the three crosses in the city emblem are a violation of the U.S. Constitution and may make non-Christians feel excluded. The city argued that the crosses are not a religious endorsement, but rather an acknowledgement of the city's name -- Spanish for "the crosses." The judges have not ruled in the case. Bruce Hausknecht, judicial analyst for Focus on the Family Action, said if the case were to be taken seriously it could lead to name changes for cities across the U.S. "If images of crosses are an unconstitutional endorsement of religion, then 'religious' city names have to be equally unconstitutional," he said. "The logical outcome of the plaintiff's frivolous argument is that the town of Las Cruces and other cities like Corpus Christi, Los Angeles, San Diego and San Francisco would all have to change their names."

SCHOOL DISTRICT SAYS HOME- SCHOOLER CAN'T LEARN AT OWN PACE

(EP News)--The Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA) said a Florida school district tried to prevent a home-schooled student from advancing a grade level because she was "learning too fast." The girl was behind a grade, so she doubled up on course work and completed two grades in one year. When her parents submitted year-end evaluations, the Escambia County School District said it would only promote their daughter one grade level, even though she had successfully completed two. HSLDA Attorney Chris Klicka sent a response to the district on the student's behalf explaining that Florida statutes limit a school district's involvement with home-school evaluations, giving it no authority to refuse home-school grade promotions. He said that one of the advantages of home schooling is for students to proceed at their own pace.

SUPREME COURT UPHOLDS COMMUNITY VALUES

(EP News)--The U.S. Supreme Court has declined to review a lower-court ruling from Kentucky that said research from outside the community can be used against the sex industry. "I believe that the court, the U.S. Supreme Court, was more interested in upholding community standards than it was for the right of men to exploit women for profit," said Richard Nelson of the Family Foundation of Kentucky. The well-funded sex shops have kept the case in the courts for six years.

JUDGE RULES LESBIAN STUDENTS DO NOT HAVE SPECIAL RIGHTS

(EP News)--When a couple was caught kissing in the halls of California's Santiago High School, school administrators, following their rules, notified the parents. For their courtesy to Mom and Dad, the school district got sued. Why? The students self-identify as lesbians, and one of the girls was outed to her mom. The American Civil Liberties Union and the Gay Straight Alliance Network brought the federal suit, claiming the girls were disciplined because they were gay. Judge James Selna disagreed, saying the discipline, "was not motivated ... by sexual orientation." Kevin Snider of the Pacific Justice Institute said, "Schools have a right to set rules for public displays of affection, and they have a right to enforce these rules with appropriate discipline. If the student had won in this case, that would have undermined the Bill of Rights. It's not surprising in many ways that the ACLU once again shows its confusion over due process rights."

TEEN SUES HER SCHOOL FOR REJECTING PRO-LIFE CLUB

(EP News)--A Virginia teen is suing her school for prohibiting her from starting a pro-life student group. She claims her constitutional rights have been violated. In a letter to the student, Colonial Forge Principal Lisa Martin said the club "does not meet the standard of a direct curricular link." But David Cortman with the Alliance Defense Fund said other groups like SADD, Young Democrats and Young Republicans are allowed to meet, even though they don't appear to have a direct curriculum link. George Mason University Law Professor David Bernstein said he questioned the administration's reasoning. "It struck me that principals and other administration officials in high schools just tend to try to avoid any kind of controversy," he said. "They'd just rather suppress anything controversial, and certainly a pro-life organization within the school comes under that general heading."

CAPITOL OFFICIAL ALLOWS "GOD" ON FLAG CERTIFICATES

(EP News)--The architect of the Capitol, who oversees the U.S. Capitol complex, ruled Oct. 11 that the name of God may be included on certificates accompanying flags flown over the building. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., had previously defended the refusal to allow "God" on flag certificates. Following complaints from people across the country, acting Architect Stephen Ayers said the policy of banning political and religious statements on flag certificates has been inconsistently applied. "It is inappropriate and beyond the scope of this agency's responsibilities to censor messages from members," Ayers told Fox News. "The Architect's role is to certify that flags are appropriately flown over the U.S. Capitol, and any messages on the flag certificates are personal and between a member of Congress and his or her constituents." Rep. Michael Turner, R-Ohio, sent a letter to Pelosi signed

by more than 100 Republican supporters.

"There's been an outpouring of support throughout the country that I know has had a huge impact on the architect," he said. "We were very concerned that the architect had unilaterally taken the action to censor God, (and) we wanted to make a statement that Congress really does have a role in this."

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS SOAR IN CALIFORNIA

(EP News)--An estimated 1 million young Californians had a sexually transmitted infection (STI) in 2005, including one in every four to five 15- to 24-year-olds in Los Angeles County, researchers said Oct. 9. The study, reported in the Los Angeles Times, also found that the cost of treating the new infections is more than \$1 billion a year. Pro family advocates blame the disease rate on the fact that California has insisted on teaching contraceptive-based sex education in their schools, instead of abstinence education. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported in 2004 that 9.1 million new STIs occurred nationwide among 15- to 24-year-olds in 2000, with a direct medical cost of \$6.5 billion.

SCHWARZENEGGER SIGNS ANTI- FAMILY BILLS INTO LAW

(EP News)--Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has again held true to his word to veto any gay-marriage bills that come across his desk. On Oct. 12, he turned down AB 43, which would have lifted the state's ban on same-sex "marriage."

While this is a victory for traditional marriage, the governor also passed several bills detrimental to California families. Schwarzenegger signed a bill requiring all public school instruction and activities to promote and protect transsexual, bisexuality and homosexuality to children as young as 5 years old.

The bill, which goes into effect Jan. 1, will force teachers to present a one-sided message about homosexuality, bisexuality and transgender issues. Further, it will ban lessons that present marriage solely between one man and one woman.

The governor also approved bills to end local oversight of school discrimination policies; change rights for domestic partners; and add even more special protection for homosexuals to state laws.

Though Schwarzenegger is opposed to same-sex "marriage," he stated in his veto letter that he still supports domestic-partnership rights and will continue to defend and enforce those rights.

Ron Prentice, director of the California Family Council, said the governor is ignoring the people of California.

"It seems as if the governor has chosen to disregard traditional families and everything that they represent in our society and has gone with his own personal viewpoints," he said. "It appears as though Governor Schwarzenegger no longer needs the vote of traditional people in the state."

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The California Supreme Court likely will decide next year whether the state's current definition of marriage as being between a man and a woman is constitutional.

Mona Passignano, state issues analyst for Focus on the Family Action, said, "While we are very happy that Gov. Schwarzenegger kept his promise to veto gay marriage, the other four bills that he signed into law will likely have a devastating impact on churches and Christian families in the state for years to come. The one good decision certainly doesn't cancel out the bad. But it is important to remember that the only thing standing between California and gay marriage is Gov. Schwarzenegger, so we can be thankful for that."

DISNEY BOOTS GOD FROM TEN COMMANDMENTS MOVIE ADS

(EP News)--Radio Disney is refusing to air ads for the movie *The Ten Commandments* that describe Moses as "chosen by God," even though the network promotes other movies with references to mythical gods, Tiki gods, Navaho gods and animal gods. "We were told to delete the reference that Moses was 'chosen by God,'" said Frank Yablans, CEO of Promenade Pictures. "Who does Radio Disney think chose Moses — Tinkerbell?"

The movie opens Oct. 19 in theaters nationwide.

VERMONT HIGH SCHOOL DENIES CHRISTIAN CLUB

(EP News)--Attorneys with the Alliance Defense Fund (ADF) filed a lawsuit in mid-October against a Vermont school district for denying recognition to a Christian campus club. A student who attends Middlebury Union High School submitted a request to start a student-led group called "Youth Alive." School officials denied the request based on the religious nature of the club, which also was denied in previous years. The school recognizes other student groups such as the Gay/Straight Organization, the Student Coalition on Human Rights and the Arabic club. "School officials cannot deny the equal access rights of one group while throwing open the door for other kinds of clubs," said ADF Senior Legal Counsel David Cortman.

MARYLAND COURT SUPPORTS CONTROVERSIAL SEX-ED CURRICULUM

(EP News)--Thanks to a Montgomery County Circuit Court ruling, Maryland students soon will learn that homosexuality, bisexuality and transvestitism are normal sexual variations. The court rejected an appeal filed by pro-family groups, with help from the Thomas More Law Center. The pro-family groups oppose the program because it teaches students that homosexuality is "innate." It also teaches students that homosexuality is just another sexual option without warning students of long-term risks.

Another feature of the program is that it labels as "homophobic" children who hold traditional religious or moral beliefs about homosexuality. "The parents in Montgomery County should be commended for their persistence in trying to protect their children from political, pro-gay messages," said Candi Cushman, education analyst for Focus on the Family Action. "Even though this latest news is not very comforting, parents and students still have the power — and the legal right — to ask for equal access to be given to their viewpoints."

MAINE MIDDLE-SCHOOLERS TO GET BIRTH CONTROL

(EP News)-- Maine middle school will give students access to birth control pills and patches without parental consent after a local school board approved the plan Oct. 17. King Middle School in Portland is the first middle school in Maine to make contraceptives available through the school health center to students ranging in age from 11 to 13. Students must have permission from their parents to use the health center, but after permission is granted, a student's use of the facility is confidential. Diane Miller, a school nurse in another Maine school district, told *The Associated Press* the plan gives children an adult responsibility they are not ready for, and puts them at risk for sexually transmitted infections and emotional problems.

UTAH PARENTS TO VOTE ON STATEWIDE VOUCHER PROGRAM

(EP News)--On Nov. 6, Utahns will vote on a statewide school-choice program that would give students money to attend private schools. Utah families could receive \$500 to \$3,000 a year per child depending on income, *The Salt Lake Tribune* reported.

Parents for Choice in Education is leading the effort, which observers say has a good chance of succeeding. If the referendum passes, Utah would become the first state in the nation to have a statewide voucher program.

SCHOOL ACCUSES MOM OF NEGLECT OVER HOME SCHOOLING

(EP News)--A Missouri public school is pursuing a complaint against a mother for withdrawing her son and daughter from the school and teaching them at home, after an apparent threat to the daughter's life at the school. The case involves Moberly, Mo., mother Anita Nicoli, who withdrew her daughter and a son from Moberly Middle School recently after what she has described as a two-year campaign of intimidation by other students. Multiple telephone messages left with officials at the school district were not returned. But Nicoli told *World Net Daily* she is accused of "educational neglect" by social services, based on a complaint from the school. "Three days after I pulled my kids out, the school apparently wrote a letter to juvenile authorities (with a complaint)," she told *World Net Daily*. She was notified by juvenile authorities and went in to talk with them. She is being helped by the Home

School Legal Defense Association.

ILLINOIS PHARMACISTS WON'T BE FORCED TO DISPENSE PLAN B

(EP News)--Illinois agreed in October that pharmacists will no longer be forced to dispense Plan B against their religious convictions. In April 2005, Gov. Rod Blagojevich said the "right of conscience does not apply to pharmacists" and ordered them to distribute the "morning-after pill," a so-called emergency contraceptive that may sometimes cause an early abortion. Several pharmacists lost their jobs after refusing to follow the order. The American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ) filed suit against Walgreens, Wal-Mart and Blagojevich on behalf of seven pharmacists who said the governor's edict violated their constitutional and statutory rights. According to the ACLJ, the state now says the order "does not apply to individual pharmacists, and that the state will never apply it to individual pharmacists." The state is working to establish a procedure to accommodate pro-life pharmacists.

PENNSYLVANIA EXTENDS SAME-SEX BENEFITS TO EDUCATION EMPLOYEES

(EP News)--The Pennsylvania Board of Governors Oct. 11 voted in favor of extending health-care benefits to same-sex partners of faculty members in the state's higher education system. Gov. Ed Rendell also voted in favor of the scheme. Diane Gramley, the head of the American Family Association of Pennsylvania, told *OneNewsNow* that offering the same benefits that are given to spouses is a step toward redefining marriage.

Taxpayers and students will foot the bill. The plan may increase tuition.

SAME-SEX "DIVORCE" CASES HAVE "MARRIAGE" IN MIND

(EP News)--Lesbian couples in Rhode Island and Oklahoma hope the courts will recognize their relationships. Neither Rhode Island nor Oklahoma allows same-sex "marriage." Yet two lesbian couples are asking those states to grant them a same-sex "divorce." On Oct. 9, Rhode Island's Supreme Court heard arguments from Cassandra Ormiston and Margaret Chambers, who were married in 2004 in Massachusetts, where gay marriage is legal. Last year, the couple filed for divorce in Rhode Island, *The Associated Press* reported. "This is the new strategy on the part of homosexual activists," said Bruce Hausknecht, judicial analyst for Focus on the Family Action. "They have been unsuccessful, for the most part, in creating same-sex marriage via direct constitutional challenge. So, they are using the side-door method of bringing cases around the periphery of marriage, such as divorce cases. "By asking the courts to hear the case and grant the divorce, they are slowly trying to change the public policy of both of those states."

INTERNATIONAL BRIEFS SWEDISH CHURCH PUTS FATHER

OF THE BRIDE IN HIS PLACE

(EP News)--Swedish church authorities say brides' fathers no longer can walk their daughters down the aisle, calling the tradition foreign and sexist. Yvonne Hallin, a Lutheran Church vicar in Stockholm, told *Agence France-Presse* that Sweden has worked hard for equality and she will not allow the custom in her parish. Couples who marry "are equal when it comes to finances, politics, values ... but when they come to the church ... the woman suddenly turns into a man's property," Hallin said. Although the Swedish Lutheran Church has drawn a line at a father giving the bride away, the church had no theological problems with adopting a policy in 2006 that allows same-sex couples to have their unions blessed in any of its congregations throughout the country.

ONE IN FIVE PREGNANCIES WORLDWIDE ENDS IN ABORTION

(EP News)--Research collected by a pro-abortion group shows one in five pregnancies worldwide ends in abortion. The statistic reflects a 17 percent decrease in abortions, from 46 million to 42 million between 1995 and 2003. The study, led by the Guttmacher Institute and published by *The Lancet*, also showed "unsafe abortions" are on the rise, specifically in developing countries. "The pro-abortion group releasing this information describes some abortions as 'safe' and other as 'unsafe,'" said Carrie Gordon Earll, senior bioethics analyst for Focus on the Family Action. "It fails to point out that all abortion is unsafe for the preborn child and often unsafe for the mother, too. As women and preborn babies in the U.S. know, making abortion legal doesn't make it safe."



Mini-Edition

by Joseph Harris

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



Church Bones

There is one subject I have always wanted to preach on: bones. I have heard a few scattered thoughts on church bones over the years, but now offer my wisdom on this matter. There are lots of bones. There's chicken bones, ham bones, lazy bones and bones of contention. Then there's neck bones, jaw bones, nose bones, tail bones, wish bones, funny bones and knuckle bones. And don't forget "dem dry bones" of Ezekiel.

Brother Paul once told Brother Timothy that in every house, there are various vessels, some honorable and others that are not so honorable. Some are made of wood, some of clay, and some of gold or silver. Every church also

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Mini-Edition

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has many different kinds of bones. The following is a partial list of church bones, some of which are honorable, others not so honorable.

(1) In every church, there always seems to be some *Jaw Bones*. They are always a jawin' about something. With a tongue that runs faster than the Mississippi River, these jaw bones slander, hurt, tear down and destroy purt' near everthing the church tries to do for the Lord. Samson used the jawbone of an ass to slay the Philistines, and the devil sometimes uses the same to kill the character of good people, especially the character of Godly preachers.

(2) Then there are the *Funny Bones*. These bones are not a detriment, as the *Jaw Bones* but help to keep things together in the church. They are happy believers, full of the joy of the Lord. They spread joy and sunshine and make the bad bones bearable. These good folks always look on the "Sonny" side of life, refusing to be discouraged and encouraging those who are down, binding the wounded and lifting up the fallen.

(3) The *Tail Bones* are next, sometimes known as the *Lazy Bones*, cause they usually just sit on their tail and don't do nothin'. These bench warmers make great pew quarterbacks, always able to tell how things should be done, but with 'nary a bit of participation on their part. If left up to these goldbricks, the church would close its doors in a month from lack of workers, tithers, and participation.

(4) *Nose Bones* are found in every church. These snoopers can't keep their long noses out of other people's business. They are tale toters and busy bodies, volunteering their advice when not asked and always eager to hear and tell the latest bit of news, with no regard to truth. They traipse up and down the community and keep the phone lines hot with their malicious tales and hurtful innuendos (you didn't know I knew that big word, did you? I'm edumacated).

(5) Well, my Pappy taught me that it's always good to end on a positive note, if possible, so I have saved one of the good bones for last: the *Back Bones*. Just as you can't stand up without the support of your backbone, so churches must have the backbones for strength to carry on the Lord's work. These *Back Bones*, take a stand for God, show up faithfully, tithe, love, pray, forgive and win souls to Jesus. They go the extra mile, seldom complain (and repent when they do), sacrifice for the Lord's work and support their preacher. God bless these *Back Bones*.

Now which bone are you?

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Preparation For the

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of preaching, as of infinite consequence over its mechanics and dress. A great gulf is fixed between a preacher who has something which he must say, and one who puts words together that he may say something. But the man who has the most that is worth saying will make the severest preparation for its utterance. Robert Hall was asked, how many sermons a preacher could prepare in a week? He replied: "This depends upon his ability. If it is first-class in every respect, he might produce one by very hard work. A second-rate man could compose two with moderate ease; and a fool could turn out three, as easily as not." A feeble preacher does not know how weak his productions are; while a master workman feels conscious shame, because he deems his work inferior to the severe test of his own powers. But the spirit of the weaker often inspires bliss in his hearers, while the unthinking interpret the mortification of the strongest into realized failure. Whether right or wrong, men generally take them at their own estimate, because they judge by their spirit; and so, seeming gold passes for bullion, while the solid metal is not current at all. But still, any preacher, whatever his spirit, who thinks himself exempted from toilsome preparation, is an incurable failure from that moment.

The example of Thomas Shepherd gives in substance the whole spirit of pulpit preparation. In 1635, Archbishop Laud so persecuted him that he fled to America, and became pastor of First Church at Cambridge, Massachusetts. One says of him: "That he scarce ever preached a sermon, but some one or other of his congregation was struck with distress and cried out in agony, 'What must I do to be saved?' On his death-bed, he said to some young ministers: First, the study of every sermon cost him tears. Second, before he preached any sermon he got good by it himself. Thirdly, he always went up into the pulpit, as if he were to give up his accounts unto his Master." No minister could do these three things if he held back one power of his nature from pulpit preparation. What then, must be the spirit in which you address yourselves to this solemn and holy work? Those who attribute one man's power to his thought, another to his voice, and another to his rhetoric and elocution, may think it very old-fashioned if I say at the start:

I. *The most thorough preparation of all for preaching must be wrought in the very depths of the preacher's own heart.* If you knew, how, with intensity of soul, I hate all white-eyed cant and long-faced goodness, you could not think that this proposition is laid down as a maudlin platitude. For in the matter of your

personal salvation, you need no more piety than other folks. God will accept nothing of men who are not preachers, less than the love of all their heart, soul, and strength; and you can yield Him no more if you try. But when your personal salvation is secured, you do need an order of soul-consecration which runs in other channels, and leads to other purposes, than that of those who are not ministers. This special grace is promised to you, and you cannot be honest ministers without its acceptance. It vitally concerns your office-work; and must be added to that grace, which, after saving you, saves those who hear you. If you do your extraordinary duties as preachers as you do those ordinary acts which concern you as Christian men, your work will degenerate into a professional and perfunctory drudgery, which will make your ministry formal and mechanical. I am not speaking here of a devotion to God which means anything in general but nothing in particular. Do you need a head and a heart in order to preach? Not more than this special consecration, to illumine the head and hallow the heart.

Special consecration was vital to Christ's work; and can you turn from it with the wave of your hand? When He said: "**I sanctify myself;**" He spoke not of personal purification, for He was "**without sin;**" but of complete setting apart to His work. He breathed the very air of sanctity, "**rising a great while before it was day**" to pray, and continuing "**all night in prayer.**" His disciples felt the sacred atmosphere which He threw around them, and cried: "**Lord, teach us also to pray.**" Intercession with His Father seemed to be a part of His personal character, and His unwearied devotion was honored. "**I know that thou hearest me always.**" None came so near to God's throne as He. Even Renan says of Him: God does not "speak to him as some one out of himself; but God is in Him." In like manner, His Apostles gave themselves up to prayer. This was as imperative upon them as their study of God's Word. And why not? Had not Jesus spent the whole night in prayer for them, before the morning of their appointment? How true are the words of Massillon: "What a monster must a pastor be if he is not a man of prayer!"

Your sermons will do little good in the pulpit, unless all the integrities and energies of your soul have been penetrated by heart searching prayer in the study; and a sermon steeped in prayer on the study floor, like Gideon's fleece saturated with dew, will not lose its moisture between that and the pulpit. The first step towards doing anything in the pulpit as a thorough workman, must be to kiss the feet of the Crucified, as a worshipper, in the study.

What right have you to go forth as His ambassador without a new interview with Him before proceeding on every

new errand and message? The angels in heaven are ministers who do His pleasure. But what would you think of an angel who bore His message to you, after proudly refusing to prostrate himself at his Master's feet before departing to obey His mandate? His mission to you would be a moral one; and his prime qualification for it must be moral too, no matter what his intellectual capacity might be. So, if your message is to tell upon the eternal life of your hearers you must deliver it, "in power, and in the Holy Spirit." Therefore, pulpit preparation must lodge,

II. *In an indwelling plenitude of the Holy Spirit.* Your souls cannot be educated into spiritual things for your people, till the Spirit of God interpenetrates all your faculties. But your Lord knows better than you can, that He never gives His Spirit to bless any other message than that which He sends you to deliver. This is not the province of the Spirit in redemption. He is no more given to enforce miscellaneous truth, than He was to be crucified for men. His work is to apply the truth of the Crucified One when it is preached; and it is remarkable that the Bible nowhere sets forth stupidity in the ministry, as a sin of intellectual weakness; but as a radical defect of the heart. Much less then, is intellectual grasp the only power which a gospel preacher is to wield. This may be a sword of great finish, temper, and edge; but it is powerless as a feather, if a living heart behind a living hand does not send it home. He who preachers without a special unction from the Holy Spirit has no soul-tone which is adapted to the wants of his hearers.

If the Spirit alone can work moral renovation in our hearers, how can we be careless whether He holds them spell-bound by our preaching? Besides, it is not a question entirely outside of ourselves whether He attends our preaching or not. The verity of Christ is pledged that the Spirit shall be given to those who ask Him. If it is of little consequence whether we study under His influence, why should we be anxious to preach under His influence? Your composition may be all that the pen can make it; but if it comes from a cold and dull soul, how can you expect the Spirit's favour to attend its delivery? What you can compose without Him you can preach without Him. But can He own you in the pulpit after you have disowned Him in the study? These are universal truisms; but alas! good reason suggests that they may be stoutly violated by those who admit them. They are accepted as general conclusions, but they are not learned as personal discoveries. Yet God has nowhere promised His Spirit as a mere help or adjunct to the preacher's ability; but as his first and indispensable qualification.

The Spirit is to invest His sanctified

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intellect with clear, sacred thought; and then the preacher is to clothe it in words, as his soul has apprehended the truth. It amounts to nothing that we concede the doctrine, or that we wake up now and then in spasmodic reproachfulness for its experimental neglect. Unless we are filled with the Spirit, our preaching will fail. The great reason given by the Spirit Himself, why "much people was added to the Lord" under the preaching of Barnabas at Antioch, is, that he "was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit." To all human perception, there is an enormous waste of preaching so far as saving results are concerned; because the Spirit's energy is not possessed in the preacher's work. We are reminded of a man scattering good seed by the bushel, without manifesting the slightest expectation that it will grow; or the least distress if it fails. Would it be too much to say, that we might look for a hundred-fold more of fruit, if we availed ourselves of that primal element of power which our Lord has procured for us in our high calling as preachers! This only can give vital breath to our sermons, and success to their delivery. The first act of our Lord on His mediatorial throne, in fact the very object of His ascension was to place His Spirit within the bosom of His church; and it is appalling to see the pharisaical flippancy with which that prodigious undertaking is acknowledged and yet the slight dependence which is placed upon the marvelous provision. Honest preachers may well tremble when they find themselves all anxious to learn the secret of powerful preaching; and yet deliberately neglect that one supreme energy which the whole Godhead has provided, to give this very power unto men. If we sincerely want to bring preaching back to its primitive efficiency, our common, sluggish notions on this subject must be thrown to the winds; for that efficiency is located by Christ Himself in the Spirit, as the sole Agent and Administrator of the gospel; and it cannot be transferred to any other source whatever.

The worst feature which follows any slight put upon the Spirit's resources is a pernicious abuse of the doctrine of divine sovereignty. When we neglect the terms on which His energies may be possessed; and so "grieve" and "quench" Him that He withdraws from us, and leaves us to our own guilty apathy, we fall headlong into this abuse. It would be open blasphemy to say that we do not possess the Spirit at all times, because He is fickle, arbitrary, and capricious in bestowing His influences. But where is the material difference between saying this openly, and that heart infidelity which thinks Him arbitrary because He is sovereign?

Thomas W. Jenkyn forcibly illustrates this wrong doing. He supposes that the crops have failed year by year, although the farmers have plowed, and sowed, and cultivated the ground as usual. At last they awake to the inquiry whether some arbitrary influences have not modified the sun, and water, and air? For they solace themselves with the persuasion that they have done their duty at any rate. So they meet in convention to consider the whole subject and conclude that this is a sovereign act of God to punish them for their sins. Some of them, however, think that if the suspension of harvest were for their sins, the act could not be sovereign. The cause lodged in themselves. Remove the sin, and secure the harvest, they reasoned. They said: The regular returning seasons prove that seed-time and harvest are unaltered; and the questions arise, whether we have sown the right seed in the right soil? Whether we have slumbered while the birds of the air picked it up? Whether we sowed too late in the season? Whether we neglected its tillage when it was sown? Whether there was some un wisdom, some laziness, some fault of our own, which argued our reluctance to work with the laws of growth, and to pay the full price which God demands for a harvest? What right, then, have we, as ministers, to lay our failures at the divine door, by any sort of implication? Yet, how many preachers have we all known who practically conclude that the sovereign will of the Spirit leaves souls about them to perish, even though they have done all that they ought to do to save them?

I have heard such men tell the churches that "The Lord could not do many mighty works amongst them, because of their unbelief." By "mighty works," they actually meant the conversion of sinners; never stopping to consider that Jesus spoke here of miracles; and refused to work new miracles for those who rejected the evidence of the miracles which He had already wrought. And so they lay the blame of neglecting salvation upon others, as if sinners had no responsibility whatever in the matter; and as if a just and loving God would send one class of men, out of the church, to perdition, for the sin of another class, in the church; while the second sinning class is comfortably saved. What a shocking perversion of Christ's words! The truth is that when we see no saving fruit follow our preaching it is time to bow in lowly heart-searching before the Spirit; and to be careful how we charge our folly at the door of a holy God, and of His redeemed church. Honesty should compel us to say frankly, whether we have preached as we might and ought, or stubbornly refused to alter our whole course when it was clear that we must; and whether we have actually exhausted all the divine means appointed for procuring the power of the Holy Spirit in our ministry. Can we

vindicate our fidelity against the assumed neglect of the Spirit Himself, when we know that we have not complied with those terms on which He could clothe us with power, consistently with His own honour? When the Spirit of God has thus prepared you to form and preach a sermon, then:---

(Continued in the next issue.)



The Opolkas have remastered their former cassette tapes "My Eyes Are On Jesus" and "Trust In Him" to CD. The CD is 77 minutes of Christian music written and composed by Debbie and Karen Opolka with the exception of one song. The CD is available for \$12.50.

Also, they have a second CD called "Heaven's Road" with April Brewer on guitar. This CD is available for \$9.00. These can be ordered from our bookstore. Please add \$2.50 for S&H on one or both CDs

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Elder Tom Ross would like to announce that he is publishing a new book entitled *The Fruit of the Spirit*. The deadline for preordering is Nov 15th. The price of one book is \$10 plus \$4 shipping, for 25 copies the price is \$7 per book plus \$20 for shipping.

To order, or for more information contact Elder Tom Ross, 6339 County Rd. 15, South Point, OH 45680.

The Landmark Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, 2761 State Route 140, Wheelersburg, OH 45694 would like to announce that they will be having a meeting November 7-9, 2007.

Services will begin at 7:00 p.m. each night. The guest speaker will be Elder Tom Ross of South Point, OH.

For more information call Pastor Robert Asbury at (740) 776-7643.

BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 9-1-2007 to 9-30-2007

Beginning Balance.....	\$10,082.09
RECEIPTS:	
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY.....	100.00
Berea M. B. C., West Point, TN.....	50.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY.....	2,100.00
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS.....	225.00
.....	2,475.00
TOTAL.....	12,147.09
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio Time.....	410.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES.....	410.00

.....	\$12,147.09
Interest.....	+1.94
.....	\$12,149.03
Less Corbin, KY des.....	-2,131.52
ENDING BALANCE.....	\$10,017.51
CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT	
Beginning Balance.....	\$291.52
RECEIPTS:	
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY.....	2,000.00
.....	2,131.52
EXPENDITURES:	
WCTT.....	160.00
ENDING BALANCE.....	\$2,131.52

BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 9-1-2007 to 9-30-2007

Beginning Balance.....	\$6,480.83
RECEIPTS:	
B. C. of Brimfield, Brimfield, IL.....	28.05
Berea B. C., Mansfield, OH.....	50.00
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS.....	400.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL.....	60.00
Berea M. B. C., Westpoint, TN.....	150.00
Bethel M. B. C., Pasadena, TX.....	100.00
Bible Believers B. C., Naples, ID.....	50.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV.....	300.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY.....	150.00
Buffalo Valley B. C., Clay, WV.....	50.00
Cedar Grove B. C., Millport, AL.....	50.00
Chantal DeBERRY-Harkenrider, Scottsdale, AZ.....	3.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL.....	25.00
Faith M. B. C., Lynn, AR.....	25.00
Gail Knowles, Scarborough, ME.....	20.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY.....	100.00
Grace B. C., Winston-Salem, NC.....	50.00
Grace M. B. C., Marion, IL.....	50.00
Grace M. B. C., Tulsa, OK.....	35.00
Harol Flynn, Craigs ville, WV.....	150.00
Indore B. C., Indore, WV.....	100.00
Joseph Jurzec, Richmond, IL.....	50.00
L. H. Farrell, Des Allemands, LA.....	225.00
Leroy Bullard, Albuquerque, NM.....	100.00
Morris St. B. C., Hobbs, NM.....	500.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH.....	100.00
New Testament B. C., Bristol, TN.....	10.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN.....	100.00
Ocoonita M. B. C., Keokee, VA.....	40.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL.....	100.00
Southside B. C., Fulton, MS.....	25.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Columbus, MS.....	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL.....	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Wake Forest, NC.....	100.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA.....	25.00
Walnut Creek B. C., Grove City, OH.....	50.00
Subscriptions.....	221.00
Anon.....	230.00
Dividing Checks.....	150.00
Sub Total.....	\$4,122.05
TOTAL.....	\$10,602.88
EXPENDITURES:	
Printing.....	597.51
Postage.....	895.19
Supplies.....	176.35
Wages.....	2,000.00
FICA.....	162.19
Dividing Checks.....	153.00
Total Expenditures.....	3,984.24
ENDING BALANCE.....	\$6,618.64

IS THIS YOUR FINAL ISSUE?

Look at your mailing label on the front page of this month's paper. If you see above your name "Expires 11/2007" then this will be your last issue. So don't miss an issue! Renew now so you won't miss next month's Banner.



WORLD SCENE



By
Capt. G. Russell Evans USCG (Ret.)

Nancy Pelosi's Anti-Religion Agenda

Whatever in today's world comes down on the side of righteousness or moral stability for our nation, we can depend, in many cases, on the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) to sue, the Supreme Court to outlaw, and Big Media to ridicule and misrepresent.

The Supreme Court--Led by new justices Roberts and Alito---is our "last hope" to block Nancy Pelosi's anti-religion agenda!

As you know, liberals have taken "complete control" of the United States Congress. But what you may not know is that these liberals---led by leftist House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, are the most anti-religious freedom group of legislators in American history!

Nancy Pelosi's values were formed in "San Francisco." She wants to reverse every single gain that religious Americans made during the previous 12 years when conservatives ran congress. Take a look at a few of Nancy Pelosi's San Francisco "ideas" on the role of religion in America.

* Nancy Pelosi opposes prayer in schools.

* Nancy Pelosi opposes displaying the Ten Commandments in public.

* Nancy Pelosi opposes children praying in schools during the war on terrorism.

* Nancy Pelosi even opposes the Pledge of Allegiance Protection Act.

These liberals in congress, led by Nancy Pelosi, have made it clear that they intend to use their power to "ruthlessly drive public religious expression out of society!"

The liberals believe that "religious" Americans have been the ones who have kept them out of power for so long. And they are angry---VERY angry. Now that they have the power, they are determined to make Christian Americans pay a heavy price.

With liberals in complete control of Congress now, and with Nancy Pelosi pursuing her anti-religious agenda---we must convince the Supreme Court Justices Roberts and Alito to defend religious freedom in America!

The Supreme Court has been very closely divided on key religious issues in the last few years. In fact, the following issues were decided by just one or two votes:

1. Prayer at after-school sporting events,
 2. The question of homosexual marriage,
 3. Partial-birth abortion.
- The Supreme Court could soon decide

several other key issues, like keeping the words, "Under God," in our Pledge of Allegiance, and public display of the Ten Commandments. The role of religion in American society is literally residing in their hands.

The ACLU is on the march. San Francisco liberal Nancy Pelosi is controlling Congress, and liberal Senator Patrick Leahy---who marches in lockstep with the ACLU on religious issues, is now chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

John Roberts and Samuel Alito could be the deciding voices in whether religion is entirely and "permanently" removed from our society. Together, we will urge these two new conservative Supreme Court Justices to defend the religious rights of Christians in America from attacks by the liberal congress.

"It was leadership here at home that gave us strong American influence abroad and the collapse of Imperial Communism. Great nations have responsibilities to lead, and we should always be cautious of those who would lower our profile, because they might just wind up lowering our flag." --- Ronald Reagan

(Excerpts are from previous writings of Captain Evans.) (Faith and Action, Newsletter, Bob Schenck, President.)



Another Controversy Over the Pledge

By Kelly Boggs, Editor
Baptist Message

Alexandria, La. (BP) - "We didn't think it was fair for the whole school to have to listen to it. It's almost religious oppression," Emma Martens told the Associated Press. The senior at Boulder (Colo.) High School was so offended by the daily ritual that she and about 50 other students staged a walkout.

What was it that so incensed the

students in Colorado? It was the utterance of two words. The (allegedly) nefarious phrase "under God" found in the Pledge of Allegiance.

It should come as no surprise that the outraged students charge that being forced to listen to the words "under God" in the Pledge violates the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. It also should be noted that no student is forced to participate in Boulder High's daily recitation of The Pledge.

Of course, no one should be too hard on the students for their flawed reasoning and emotional overreaction. I am sure some of their parents have served as models for their behavior. If not, some of our esteemed Supreme Court justices certainly have.

In June 2000, the Supreme Court ruled 6-3 in a Texas case that public schools cannot allow student-led prayer before high school football games. The ruling came in Santa Fe Independent School District v. Doe, a case in which a Galveston, Tex. Area school district allowed student-initiated and led prayer to be broadcast over the public address system prior to games.

Justice John Paul Stevens, writing the majority opinion, asserted, "Even if we regard every high school student's decision to attend a home football game as purely voluntary, we are nevertheless persuaded that the delivery of a pre-game prayer has the improper effect of coercing those present to participate in an act of religious worship."

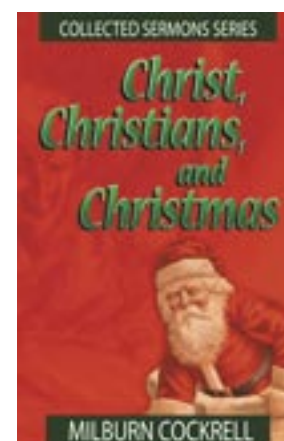
I don't really care how much legal training Justice Stevens and his cohorts have, equating "listening" to a prayer with "coercing those present to participate in an act of religious worship" is a gross abuse of logic.

If people were forced to recite a prayer or if people were required to bow their heads in a show of respect, the justice might be on to something. But as it stands, his conclusion is asinine.

The same is true for students at Boulder high who object to the phrase "under God" in The Pledge. If they were forced to recite the words and punished for refusing, they would have a case for "religious oppression."

Even if you believe, as Justice Stevens does, that being present when a prayer is

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being uttered has the effect of "coercing those present to participate in an act of religious worship," how does the activity constitute, in the words of the First Amendment, a "law respecting an establishment of religion"?

Those who object to the prayer might be offended. They might be angered. But there is no way that simply listening to a prayer, one that you may not like, rises to the level of a law that establishes anything.

Again, the same is true for the Boulder High situation. It is clear that a few students object to the phrase "under God." Some seemingly are outraged that they must hear it once a week. But please tell me what religion is being established by the phrase "under God?" Which specific religion is being forced upon the students?

It seems to me the problem at Boulder and other schools is that misguided adults have led kids to believe that the Constitution provides protection from being offended---particularly by religious expression---which is utterly false.

"If liberty means anything at all," observed George Orwell, "it means the right to tell people what they do not want to hear." The English writer's sentiment is a right given to the American people in the form of the First Amendment.

It is clear some people do not want to hear the phrase "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance and others do not want to hear prayers uttered in public. My advice to them is simple: Don't listen. (via Baptist Press, via Baptist Trumpet, Oct. 3, 2007)



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