

The Berea Baptist Banner

"Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth" Ps. 60:4

Then Shall the End Come

By Philip C. Parks
of Flint, Texas

Text: Matthew 24:9-14

BACKGROUND:

i. The first part of our Lord's Olivet Discourse was revealed (vv. 4-8). In these verses, our Lord describes:

(a) Global spiritual deception in Christ's Name (vv. 4, 5).

(b) Global political unrest and warfare (vv. 6, 7).

(c) Global natural calamities (vv. 7, 8).

ii. The time and people involved in these events cannot be fully determined but may involve any or all of the following:

(a) The Jewish nation in Judea until the temple's and Jerusalem's destruction.

(b) All of God's people during the church age.

(c) The Christian and Jewish



persecution during the seven-year tribulation period.

(d) An intermingling of all the above. An inclusion of any or all of the above may be credibly argued.

iii. My own loose interpretive timeline for this chapter is as follows:

(a) vv. 4-6 = from Christ's Olivet Discourse with His disciples until the destruction of the temple.

(b) vv. 7-14 = the perils of the whole church age.

(c) vv. 14b-22 = the seven year tribulation period (esp. the second 3 ½ years).

(d) vv. 23-26 = a general description of the current "spirit of antichrist" (I

◊ (Continued on page 422)

Alive or Dead?

By Milburn Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)



"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1).

Death to many is an unsurveyed land, an unsailed sea, a river of no return. Poets draw near death for a moment and withdraw in terror. History concedes it to be a universal fact but gives no light to shine in its dark valley. Philosophy finds it among the mysteries of being, the one great mystery of being not. Even among religious folks there is a vagueness and uncertainty about mortal death.

With these problems surrounding the meaning of physical death, it is no wonder that even the religious world knows but little about what spiritual death really is! Many religionists think man is sick and is in need of help. Liberals and arminians

have made the Bible word "death" to have a very weak meaning. Very few are willing to concede the age-old Bible truth that man is truly "dead in trespasses and sins." The teaching

of the Scriptures is that the man not quickened by the Spirit of Christ is blind, deaf, dumb and dead to the spiritual world!

In the spiritual realm there is no such thing as dead, deader, and deadeast. There is no middle state of the half dead. A man is either alive or dead. These two states include all people who live on earth. You are this day among the living or dead.

◊ (Continued on page 425)

What Is The Gift of the Holy Spirit?

By Timothy Hille
of Ashland, Illinois

Acts 19:1-7

I think in this day and time in which we are living, that many religious people are in the same condition as these twelve men whom Paul encountered during his third missionary journey. These said, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Spirit." Many today do not know who the Holy Spirit is. They do not know who the Holy Spirit is, nor what is His office work in the world and in the lives of saved children of God, because they do not know Him who ministers the Holy Spirit to saved people, the Lord Jesus Christ. You cannot have the Holy Spirit dwelling in you unless you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God and your own personal Substitute upon the cross. People are not going to rightly understand the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the manifestations of the Spirit, or evidence the fruits of the Spirit



until they know as their Savior the One who gives the Holy Spirit to believers, the Lord Jesus Christ. Part of the office work of Jesus is that He, as our Great High Priest, ministers to us who

are saved and washed from our sins in His blood, the Spirit of God. You cannot be saved without believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. Neither can you be saved without the Holy Spirit. That's why Paul inquired of these disciples at Ephesus, "Have ye received the Holy Spirit since ye believed?" In other words, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" This is the meaning of the text. Every one who believes receives the Holy Spirit.

Now this passage of Scripture which is before us as our text is perhaps one of the

◊ (Continued on page 423)

God's Pardoning Prerogative

By George Phillips
(1800's)

"But thou art a God ready to pardon" (Neh. 9:17).

That God is willing to pardon sin is a fact made known to us by revelation alone. The ponderous volume of nature, whilst revealing His wisdom, power, and goodness, says nothing of His forgiving mercy. Providence, or the preserving care of God over us, does not solve the problem. There are numerous instances of His tender dealings from the cradle to the tomb, yet the present being a state of probation ending in the bloom of death, no assurance can accrue there from of pardon for the guilty.

But in opening the Holy Bible we learn the heart-cheering truth, that there is forgiveness with God; that He is ready to pardon; it is His prerogative--a work that He will not entrust to another. He often employs His servants to execute His will in other things, but not in this. An angel was sent to destroy

the first-born in Egypt and the army of Sennacherib, but no angel is entrusted with the honour of pardoning. God does it Himself. Against God sin is committed; hence He is the proper Being to pardon. Pardon or forgiveness is the effect of the plan of redemption---it is a fruitful tree that can grow only in the fertile soil of mercy. The refreshing stream of pardon originates in the heart of God, flows from the ocean of His love, through the wounded Emmanuel into the heart of the penitent believer. We observe---

I. GOD'S POSITION IN PARDONING THE GUILTY. As the Supreme Being, He pardons on His throne---a throne being the official seat of a sovereign, where the honour of the king and his government are upheld and vindicated, is a place of exalted dignity and grandeur. The throne of Solomon was made of pure ivory, overlaid with the best gold, ornamented with carved lions each side the flight of steps ascending, so that Solomon seated on his throne was

◊ (Continued on page 427)

*Maranatha! we are waiting for the first bright golden ray.
Maranatha: we are watching for the dawning of the day.
In our hearts, the day-star springing is the glory now begun;
For redemption's song we're singing, and the prize will soon be won.*

James Smith

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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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Then the End Shall

(Continued from page 421) ♦

John 4:3; see also I John 2:18; II John v. 7).

(e) vv. 27-31 = Christ's 2nd coming and Armageddon.

iv. Regardless of the specific people or time, the time of the end will be fierce, dangerous, and savage as stated by Apostle Paul (II Tim. 3:1): **"in the last days perilous times shall come."**

READ Matthew 24:1-14 (esp. 14b).

INTRODUCTION:

i. Two main emphases are recorded in verses 9-14:

(a) The world will reject the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, and

(b) God's people will be subjected to a worldwide persecution.

ii. The first phase of global apostasy (vv. 4-8) ends with our Lord's ominous words (v. 8): **"All these are the beginning of sorrows."** The word **"beginning"** means that these initial sorrows are just the first of a series of sorrows that will increase in frequency and intensity.

iii. These sorrows become personal to the Christians for our Lord stated (v. 9): **"Then shall they deliver you up."**

TRANSITION: These verses describe earthly events that precede the beginning of the seven year tribulation. Dissecting these sorrows described herein will prove profitable to the exegete.

I. THE WORLD SYSTEM WILL CONDUCT A GLOBAL PERSECUTION OF GOD'S PEOPLE (read v. 9).

(1) THE WORLD'S METHODS OF PERSECUTION ARE DESCRIBED.

(A) First, God's people will be hunted, arrested, and treated as criminals: **"Then shall they deliver you up."** The word **"deliver"** has a sinister connotation attached to it. Contextually, it speaks of being treacherously betrayed by a hypocrite posing as a close friend and confidant.

(B) Next, those who are betrayed will **"be afflicted."** The word **"afflicted"** is synonymous with persecution, tribulation, and torture. Literally it is defined as being subjected to intense pressure. Think of implements of torture such as the vise or rack.

(C) Additionally, we are told that when their brutal pleasure is gratified, they **"shall kill you."** Our Lord often warned of the coming persecution. One such record is found in John 16:2: **"yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service."** This time began when those who stoned Stephen **"laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul"** (Acts 7:58). Other details of Saul ratching up his persecution against the church may be researched in the Book of Acts.

This persecution has continued

unabated even to our present day. While the uncaring news media may not report such atrocities, Carle E. Cairns provided the following estimates regarding Christian martyrs: ten million Christians have been martyred since 1950; 300,000 were martyred in 1992 with an estimated 150,000 who suffered martyrdom each year following 1992 (See Carle E. Cairns, *Christianity Through the Centuries*, 3rd ed., Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996, p. 445).

(2) THE MOTIVE OF THEIR PERSECUTION IS PURE HATRED: **"ye shall be hated."** The word **"hated"** means an intense loathing that usually results in outward hostility. When hatred is unrestrained, it will involve acts of pursuit and violence upon the object hatred. The caveat of this phrase is **"for my (Lord Jesus Christ's) name's sake."** Anyone who preaches and witnesses for Christ is, and will always be, subject to the world's aggressive and hostile hatred.

(3) THE COMING GLOBAL PERSECUTION WILL LEAVE ALL SAINTS WITH NO EARTHLY REFUGE: **"ye shall be hated of all nations."** Saul of Tarsus began his persecution in Jerusalem with intentions to take it to Damascus. When the Lord converted Saul on that road, he became the object of persecution wherever he went throughout the known world. Persecution is now a global situation. Even in our present western hemisphere, hatred against the Lord's Name and Person is starting to show its brutal motives.

(4) IN OUR LORD'S DAY, THE PERSECUTION BEGAN IMMEDIATELY. The following are just a few Scriptural examples:

(A) Jesus was persecuted (John 5:16) and crucified.

(B) The apostles were arrested, imprisoned, beaten (Acts 4, 5, and etc.).

(C) Stephen was stoned (Acts 7:59).

(D) James was killed with a sword (Acts 12:2).

(E) Paul was persecuted (II Cor. 11:23-27).

II. A GLOBAL UNREST BETWEEN ALL INDIVIDUALS WILL ACCOMPANY THE CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION (read v. 10).

(1) NOMINAL CHRISTIANS WILL FORSAKE THEIR CHRISTIAN PROFESSION: **"Then shall many be offended."**

The word **"offended"** literally means to be caused to stumble over an impediment. Contextually, nominal Christians become distrustful of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, their profession of Him as their Lord, then forsaking their testimony due to persecution or the fear of persecution. Persecution will prompt the simple professor of Christ to apostatize. Our Lord made this clear when speaking of the seed (the gospel) that falls on "stony" ground (the nominal Christian):

"Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth (continues) for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended" (Matt. 13:21). The word **"offended"** found in this verse and in Matthew 24:10 is translated from the same Greek root word.

(2) UNREST WILL CAUSE NOMINAL CHRISTIANS TO BETRAY OTHER PROFESSORS: **". . . and shall betray one another."**

The same Greek root word is translated into the English words **"deliver"** (v. 9) and **"betray"** (v. 10). One betrays another out of hatred and to secure their own safety. Our Lord prophesied this: **"ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death"** (Luke 21:16).

(3) HATRED BETWEEN ONE ANOTHER WILL COME FROM THE MOST UNLIKELY SOURCES: **"many. . . shall hate one another."**

Again, our Lord makes this exquisitely clear: **"I am come to set a man at variance (cut into two parts) against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law"** (Matt. 10:35).

III. THE END WILL BE MARKED BY GLOBAL APOSTASY (read vv. 11, 12).

(1) FALSE RELIGIONS AND DOCTRINES SHALL ABOUND (v. 11): **"many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many."**

The word **"many"** describes the number of both false prophets and the deceived. It implies a very large number and the great majority.

The phrase, **"false prophets,"** differentiates these from God's true prophets. Their pseudo-message is extra-Scriptural because they proclaim a salvation other than that which God gives through the Name and Person of our Lord Jesus Christ (see II Cor. 11:13-15).

(2) FALSE PROPHETS WILL GENERATE UNGODLINESS (v. 12): **"And because iniquity shall abound. . ."**

Iniquity is lawlessness entailing contempt for, and an inclination for, breaking the law. This lawlessness will **"abound,"** meaning it will increase and multiply.

(3) CHRISTIAN LOVE WILL BECOME SCARCE (v. 12): **"the love of many shall wax (grow; become) cold (ineffective; frozen)."**

The word **"many"** in this phrase refers to those who profess Christian love in the Name of Jesus Christ but are deceived by the multiplied false prophets of verse eleven. True to their nature, they fall into loveless iniquity. Because they are false Christians with an empty faith, they do not possess the ability to love sacrificially as Christ loved the church and **"gave**

♦ (Continued on page 423)

Then the End Shall

(Continued from page 422) ◊

himself for it" (Eph. 5:25b). Lovelessness results in lawless iniquity.

John described both the false prophets and those whose love has grown cold (I John 2:19): **"They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."**

IV. "THE END" WILL ALSO BE MARKED BY A GLOBAL PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL (read vv. 13, 14).

(1) THIS PERIOD WILL DEMAND MORE THAN MERELY PROFESSING CHRIST (v. 13): **"But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."**

The true Christian will be required to **"endure"** under the most extreme circumstances by remaining true to Christ regardless of being the object and recipients of afflictions, hatred, and martyrdom (see v. 9).

Only those who endure **"shall be saved,"** meaning they will obtain their ultimate salvation and glorification. This phrase does not mean they will obtain their salvation through good works. Far too many Scriptural passages refute this false assumption. It does mean that God will give true Christians the grace required to persevere.

(2) THIS PERIOD WILL BE USED TO PREACH THE GOSPEL (v. 14): **"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations."**

(A) The global spreading of the gospel began immediately after our Lord gave the Great Commission (see Matthew 28:18-20 and Mark 16:15) and empowered His church through the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (see Acts 2). Saul's persecution scattered many saints from Jerusalem into foreign countries. These **"went every where preaching the word"** (Acts 8:4).

(B) Apostle Paul's preaching during his missionary journeys, and the preaching of those converted through Paul, was so effective that Paul proclaimed under inspiration that the gospel **"was preached to every creature which is under heaven"** (Col. 1:23). Compare this phrase with similar phrases recorded in Romans 1:8; 10:18; 15:19; and 16:26.

(3) THE BOOK OF REVELATION CONFIRMS THE GOSPEL'S GLOBAL PROCLAMATION.

(A) During the tribulation period, the 144,000 will reach those who are subsequently martyred. These martyred are described as **"a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and**

before the Lamb" (Rev. 7:9).

(B) The prophecies of the two witnesses of Revelation, chapter eleven, will also have a global effect. When they are ultimately martyred, the **"nations"** will celebrate their deaths (see vv. 9, 10), implying they heard but rejected the gospel globally.

(4) ANOTHER INTERPRETATION OF MATTHEW 24:14 IS IMPLIED IN REVELATION 14:6, 7.

An angel has **"the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people"** (v. 6).

This "gospel" should not be understood to mean the gospel that saves (see Romans 1:16 and Ephesians 1:13) for God has ordained this gospel solely for human preachers. The gospel preached by the angel in Revelation fourteen is a global message of condemnation and judgment awaiting the rebellious. In its context, the angel's message is good news to all the saints that Babylon has fallen ushering in Christ's eternal kingdom upon the earth (vv. 7 ff).

CLOSE: Our Lord's words, **"then shall the end come"** (v. 14b), poses an ominous condemnation to the rejecters of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is also a wonderful promise prompting great and confident rejoicing for those who **"love his appearing"** (II Tim. 4:8).

Consider the seriousness of our Lord's words when He addressed both parties: **"fear not them (the persecutors) which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him (our vengeful Christ) which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell"** (Matt. 10:28).



What Is the Gift of

(Continued from page 421) ◊

most misunderstood and misinterpreted in all of the Bible. Nevertheless, just because some corrupt the Word of God should not keep you and me from believing and obeying all that God has revealed. Never get upset or become discouraged from following the Word of God because of someone or some group who corrupts or perverts the teachings of the Bible. You believe God, or else you will be wrong with God yourself. Some declare the false doctrine that these verses teach "the second blessing." Many people, most going by the name Pentecostal, or Assembly of God, believe that after a person is saved he or she needs to receive "the second blessing." What they mean is that a person is a believer, but that the believer is not or cannot know that he or she is truly saved until they speak in tongues or prophesy. And so these people go about in their religion seeking to have an experience that mimics what we read here in Acts chapter nineteen, as far as outward appearance is concerned;

yet, they do not seek it in a scriptural manner, nor do they have any warrant from the Scriptures to believe that they shall have such an experience.

Now you don't only need the second blessing if you're here and saved today. You also need the third, the fourth, the fifth, and the thirty-fifth. You do not need to have the Holy Spirit come down upon you, but you need to have Him fill you, and that over and over again, so that you will be what God wants you to be. If you're not saved, you don't need to be baptized with the Holy Spirit – and you're not going to be – you need to be born of the Spirit (John 3:3-7). You need to be born of the Word and the Spirit of God, or else you are not saved and you are not a child of God.

What really happened here in Acts chapter nineteen? What was the spiritual event that took place? Here in verses one through three we see twelve men who had been baptized, but who had never believed and were unsaved. In verses four and five we see these believe on the Lord Jesus Christ to the saving of their souls, and follow the Lord Jesus Christ who saved their souls in scriptural baptism. In verses six and seven we see these baptized believers – which all believers should be – now saved by grace through faith, receive, not "the second blessing," and not salvation or the confirmation of salvation, but rather, the gift of the Holy Spirit. If you are ever going to understand the Scriptures, you are going to have to understand them scripturally. When Paul first encountered these men, they were called "disciples," but they were nothing more than baptized, lost sinners. Did you know that the majority of religious people today are lost and on the road to hell? They have been baptized, have their names on a church roll, and are religious, but they have not trusted in the One who died for sinners upon the cross and have not been born of the Spirit of God and the Word of God. Paul detected some defect in these twelve men. They were called "disciples," but something was wrong, spiritually speaking. If your religion that you follow does not agree with the teachings and sayings of this Book, then you have no right to think that you are a child of God or that you are on the road to Heaven. It does not matter what you feel: it matters whether or not you have saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that you have been made alive by the Holy Spirit who dwells in every true believer.

These twelve men whom Paul encountered had never been born again. They had never believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. They had been baptized. They had heard about John the Baptist, and they had been baptized in a mimicking of John's baptism; but they had not believed on the One whom John believed on, and whom John preached was the only Savior of men, women, boys, and girls, the Lord

Jesus Christ. **"And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus."** The only way you are going to be saved is that you repent of your sins and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. 3:1-17; John 1:6-8, 19-34). You may have been baptized, and you may attend church, and you may be very good in your own eyes and in the eyes of your family and friends; but unless you have confessed your sins to God and received Jesus Christ His Son as your Sin-bearer, Law-keeper, and only Savior, then you are in your sins and guilty before God. You do not need to seek an emotional or hysterical experience; but rather you need to seek the Lord and believe on His only begotten Son.

Now we note that these twelve men were saved, and then they were baptized – and that is always the proper order, first saved by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and then baptism by the hand of a proper administrator – and then we find that Paul laid his hands on them, and **"the Holy Spirit came on them."** I thank God that it does not say, "The Holy Spirit came into them." Now some will become excited, and others will become doubtful, because the verse here reads, **"and they spake with tongues, and prophesied."** Why should you be excited or doubtful, when it is a certainty that it happened? They did speak with tongues, which means not gibberish or foolishness, or some unknown tongue, but with languages they themselves had never studied or learned. Never think that when the Bible talks of speaking in tongues that it means gibberish or foolishness. No, the word **"tongues"** means languages; and these twelve men spake in languages they had not learned in school or in any other way. This is the same thing which occurred on the Day of Pentecost in Acts chapter two (Acts 2:1-11). It also says that they prophesied, and that word always means the telling forth of the Word of God. These twelve men were enabled by the Holy Spirit to speak and tell forth part of the wisdom and knowledge of God's will that had not yet been revealed. The Bible was not written all at once. No, beloved, over a course of several thousand years the Bible came to us, God moving holy men of old to speak and write by the Holy Spirit. These men spake in languages they had not studied, and spoke forth the counsel of God. Now that we have the completed Bible, these things are no longer necessary, and God says in His Word that they no longer exist (I Cor. 13:8-13).

Now none of you ever received the gift of the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands, and you never shall. Yet,

◊ (Continued on page 424)

What Is the Gift of

(Continued from page 423) ♦

you may ask, "Why did this happen here, by the laying on of Paul's hands?" This was an extraordinary case. This was the first time that men had to be baptized again. This was the first anabaptism, or rebaptism. Some of you who are here today have been rebaptized. You were baptized falsely in some false religion, or sprinkled in infancy; but God by His grace called you to eternal life in His Son, and gave you faith to believe the gospel, and you followed the Lord Jesus Christ in true Bible baptism by immersion after that you had believed. There are three other extraordinary cases. I have already read one to you in Acts chapter two. On that day, Jesus baptized His church as an institution in the Holy Spirit, to empower His church to carry out the Great Commission, the job of going and preaching the gospel to all the world, baptizing the saved, and teaching those who are saved and baptized all the commandments of God. The first church could not do anything to fulfill the gospel commission without the Holy Spirit, and neither can this church. The second case that is similar to this one is recorded in Acts chapter eight (Acts 8:5-8, 14-17). Once again, this was an extraordinary case. Samaritans were being added to the Lord's kind of church. These people were half-breed Jews. They had no place in the Jewish religion. Yet, by the grace of God, they were saved from their sins by the hearing and believing of the gospel; and after believing and being baptized, they received the gift of the Holy Spirit. The third extraordinary case is found in Acts chapter ten (Acts 10:24-28, 34-48). Here we note that these were Gentiles, or non-Jews, like you and me; and they were the first Gentiles to be saved, and to be added by baptism into a New Testament church. Peter had not wanted to go and preach to Gentiles. He was prejudiced against the Gentiles, as a Jew; but God showed Peter that every man whom God saves is clean, whether Jew or Gentile, white, black, yellow, or red; and that God gives the gift of the Holy Spirit to those

who are saved by faith in Jesus Christ, and adds them to His kind of church.

Now all these four occasions which we have noted were extraordinary occasions. They were the first of something; and the first of something is always different in its beginning than the rest of that kind of thing. The first man Adam was formed of the dust of the earth by God, and God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; but every man since then has been born from his mother's womb. The first church which Jesus organized during His earthly ministry was organized and authorized directly by Him; but every true gospel church since then has come from another true gospel church which existed before it. These four cases were all the first of something. Acts chapter two was the firstfruits of the church which Jesus built carrying out the Great Commission. Acts chapter eight was the first time the Samaritans were added to the kind of church which Jesus built. Acts chapter ten was the first time Gentiles were added to a New Testament church. And Acts chapter nineteen was the first time that persons were rebaptized and thus added to the work of the Lord. In each case the gift of the Holy Spirit was manifest in an outstanding way. Now someone will want to say, "What if something happens for the first time again?" How can something happen for the first time again? God tells you that to be saved you must repent of your sins and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. He tells you that after you have believed, you ought to be baptized by a true gospel church like the one Jesus founded during His earthly ministry, which was in doctrine and practice a Baptist church. God tells you that those who believe and are baptized receive the gift of the Holy Spirit; and it is this gift that I want you to note in the remainder of the message.

In Acts 2:32-47 we do not read of a single person speaking with tongues or prophesying. We do not read of anyone performing any miracles of healing. Yet, we do read of the preaching of the gospel and the command of God to repent and turn to Jesus Christ. We do read of many believing and being saved and baptized and added to the church

at Jerusalem. This is still true today, and this is true in every case, that when someone is saved, he or she is to follow the Lord in Bible baptism, and to join the Lord's kind of church where that person can serve and worship God by the enabling of the Holy Spirit. Now the apostles on the day of Pentecost were empowered to proclaim the Word of God in other languages by the Holy Spirit. That was a special manifestation of the Spirit. Yet we find that Peter stated in the message of God which he preached, "**Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for (because of) the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit**" (Acts 2:38). This is still the gospel message. Repent, or else you cannot be saved. Turn from your sins, and turn to God. Forsake your own way, and trust in the Lord and seek His mercy. Be baptized. Everyone who repents should be baptized. Baptism does not take away sins. If Jesus has taken away your sins and granted you repentance from sins, then your conscience which has experienced the forgiveness, or the remission, of sins, should now answer back to God by obeying the scriptures and the example of Jesus and being baptized in much water. Those who are saved through repentance and faith today, and who obey God in baptism, still "**receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.**" Now this does not mean the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. You do not have to be baptized to receive the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. No Old Testament saint was ever baptized in the New Testament order, but they all had the Holy Spirit dwelling in them. You cannot be saved without having the Holy Spirit take up His abode in you (Num. 27:18). Joshua had the Holy Spirit dwelling in him, and filling him, which made him able to take the place of leader of the people once Moses was gone. Some people have said that the Holy Spirit did not permanently dwell in Old Testament saints. They are wrong. You do not receive the indwelling Holy Spirit by baptism, or by laying on of hands, but you receive the indwelling Holy Spirit when you believe (Gal. 3:2).

What is this gift of the Holy Spirit? This is what Jesus obtained of His Heavenly Father when He ascended up to Heaven. This is the promise, of which He spoke to the apostles prior to His ascension, which He said they were to tarry at Jerusalem in order to receive (Acts 1:1-9). This is that which Jesus spoke of during His earthly ministry prior to His crucifixion, burial, and resurrection (John 7:37-39). In that the Holy Spirit was not yet given does not mean that saved people did not have the Spirit of God in them. We have already showed that Old Testament saints had the Spirit in them. How can there be life without the Spirit? There was no life in the creation until the Spirit moved upon the face of the waters. There

is no life in the new creation until the Spirit quickens a dead sinner and makes that person alive. The Spirit imparts life. You do not have spiritual life without the Spirit of God. Yet, Jesus has, in this New Testament age, given to those who are the members of His kind of church, New Testament missionary Baptist churches, the gift of the Holy Spirit. He gave it to the first church. He gave it to those who were saved on the day of Pentecost and added to the first church. He gave it to everyone who was saved, baptized, and added to one of His churches throughout the New Testament, and He still does so today. The gift of the Holy Spirit is the special unction or anointing of the Holy Spirit upon a believer that enables that person to serve God in and through His kind of church. The gift of the Holy Spirit is that special pouring out of the Spirit which has occurred in these New Testament times, so that the Lord's churches can be fully equipped to carry out the Great Commission, to preach the gospel to every creature, to baptize the saved, to edify the body of Christ – the local church, and to earnestly contend for the faith which has once and for all been delivered to the saints. For a very limited period of time, before the end of the first century, the gift of the Holy Spirit sometimes was manifested by speaking in other languages and prophesying, by healing miracles and other signs and wonders. These were necessary in the plan of God for a very short period of time. Did you know that before the end of the first century the Bible was complete? Once the full revelation of God, Genesis to Revelation was complete, we did not need those special manifestations of the Holy Spirit. But we still need the Holy Spirit and His office work in order to do anything in the work of God.

The Holy Spirit enables saved people to understand the Bible (John 16:13; I John 2:20, 27). The Holy Spirit enables pastors and evangelists to preach the Word of God (Eph. 4:7-16). No church will ever be what it ought to be without the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit leads every one of God's churches in doing scriptural mission work (Acts 13:1-3). The Holy Spirit enables church members to worship God in the right way (Eph. 5:17-20). These things – understanding the teachings of the Bible, preaching the Word of God and the gospel, carrying out gospel mission work, and worshipping God aright in the church – would all be impossible without the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Now you need to answer two questions of yourself. The first question is, "Do you have the Spirit of Jesus Christ dwelling in you?" The Bible says, "**Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his,**" (Rom. 8:9). "**For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God**" (Rom. 8:14).

♦ (Continued on page 425)

Tune in to the Berea Baptist Broadcast

STATION	TIME	DIAL	WATTS
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
WFAM, Augusta, GA	Sunday 4:00 - 4:30 p.m.	1050	5,000 AM
WFTA, Tupelo, MS	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.	101.9	3,000 FM
WIJD, Mobile, AL	Sunday 8:00 - 8:30 p.m.	1270	5,000 AM
KARI, Blaine, WA	Saturday 10:30 - 11:00 a.m.	.550	5,000 AM
KXKS, Albuquerque, NM	Saturday 2:15 - 2:45 p.m.	1190	10,000 AM
DXUM, Davao City, Philippines	Sunday 2:30 - 3:00 p.m.	819 Khz	10,000 AM
DXDS, Digos City, Philippines	Sunday 12:00 - 12:30 p.m.	1161 Khz	1,000 AM

Spiritual Pride

“For they loved the praise of men, more than the praise of God” (John 12:43).

See where the Pharisee inflated stands,
And sounds his praise abroad to distant lands;
Himself his trumpeter, he blows, not faint,
That all may hear, and own him for a saint:
His lengthen'd notes in sonorous accents say,
“I do---I think---I give---I fast---I pray!”
No bankrupt he, for lo! To feel his pride,
See bale on bale, close pack'd, stand by his side.
The beggar comes, worn down with grief, and old;
He's soon discharged, for Pride has little gold.
He doles his pittance into misery's hat,
And loud applause he asks, in full for that.
The gaudy peacock strutting in the rear,
Is but a figure of this trumpeter;
It struts, and swells, and spreads its plumes abroad:
So he, absorb'd in self, forgets his God.

This engraving represents a man who appears to be on very respectable terms with himself. He is sounding a trumpet before him; he is very anxious that every body should know when he performs what he conceives to be a good action. A poor man is asking charity; he never refuses a trifle, provided he has his trumpet with him. Up it goes, and with a long blast, he calls the distant passengers to behold him. At the side of the trumpeter are seen several bales of goods; these are his stock in trade. Behind, is seen the peacock, strutting, swelling, and displaying his brilliant train. A proper emblem of this proud trumpeter.

The above cut is an emblem of Spiritual Pride. The trumpeter, giving a little small change to the beggar, and apprising every body of the fact, denotes one who loves to make a parade of his religious performances. Does he give to benevolent objects? It is that he may receive the praise of men. Does he fast, or pray, or worship? It is that he “may be seen of men.” On the house-top, through the newspapers, and other sources of circulation, he proclaims his good deeds. He conjugates all his verbs in the first person only: “I visited,” “I preached,” “I prayed,” “I gave,” etc. Thus the praise of worms becomes necessary to his existence; on this food he grows



fat. Deprive him of it, and he will pine away, and die of atrophy. He sacrifices to his own net; he burns incense to his own drag. Self is the god he adores. The “bales of goods” denote that he is well-stocked with self-righteousness. In his own opinion, he is “rich and increased in goods, and has need of nothing.” The peacock, after all, has just as much religion as he has.

The hypocritical Pharisees of the Savior's time were men of this stamp. They sounded a trumpet before them under pretense of calling the poor together; but in reality it was to say, “Look at me.” They had “their reward.” In the East the practice varies. It is said that the dervishes, a kind of religious beggars, carry with them a horn, which, when receiving alms, they blow in honor of the giver.

All pride is pretty much alike in its nature and effects. It is produced in some persons by noble birth, and great natural

abilities. In others, by wealth and learning. In others again, by certain ecclesiastical endowments, such as an office in the church, the gift of praying, or of preaching, etc. These things are all alike good in themselves, but the hearts of the possessors, being unsanctified, the gifts are abused, and the Giver neglected.

He who possesses true religion will be truly humble. Humility is the only proper antidote for pride. When humility enters, pride departs, as flies the darkness from the sun. To slay pride, and teach man humility by example, the blessed Savior took upon Him the form of a servant. He made Himself of no reputation; He humbled Himself unto death, yea, even unto the death of the cross. O, wonderful humility! O, boundless grace!

Pride renders its possessor truly miserable in this life. The Father of spirits alone can fill an immortal spirit. The man of pride rejects the blessed God, and depends for happiness on the applause of man. This is uncertain, unsatisfying, and transitory. Witness the case of Haman, who, notwithstanding “the glory of his riches,” “the multitude of his children,” and His princely preferments, was truly wretched. “All this availed him nothing,” so long as his voracious pride went without its accustomed fee---so long as one man refused to bring his tribute of homage. But pride will render its possessor miserable to all eternity. “How can ye be saved who seek honor one of another, and not the honor that cometh from God only?”



What Is the Gift of Alive or Dead?

(Continued from page 424) ♦

You are not saved if you have not been born of the Spirit, born again. You do not belong to Jesus Christ if God the Holy Spirit does not dwell in you. You receive the indwelling Holy Spirit only by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins. The second question which you need to ask is, “If I'm saved, am I submitting to the Holy Spirit of God?” Are you following the Holy Spirit? Are you being filled with the Holy Spirit? Are you quenching the Spirit, and putting out His influence in your life? Are you grieving the Holy Spirit, by continuing in sin, even though Jesus has died to save you from sin and from sinning? Are you serving God in and through the gift of the Holy Spirit? May God bless this feeble message.



(Continued from page 421) ♦

You are quickened or you are not. God says of every living person who is not a true Christian, be he high or low, rich or poor, young or old, he is dead! Not dead in a mental sense, but dead in a spiritual sense.

A Living Corpse

According to the Bible, the unsaved man is alive physically but dead spiritually. I Timothy 5:6 declares: “**But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.**” The woman in this verse is alive in the physical sense, for she lives in a pleasure-mad state in the kingdom of nature; she has no real life in the spiritual kingdom. To all the realities of the world she is dead. She lives not, she moves not, she thinks not, in the spiritual kingdom of grace. Her relation to the heavenly world is like a dead woman to the natural world.

Much Scripture speaks of how the sinner is in a state of spiritual deadness. The text said: “**And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins**” (Eph. 2:1). “**For this my son was dead, and is alive again**” (Luke 15:24, 32). “**Wherefore, as by one man sin entered the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned**” (Rom. 5:12). “**For the wages of sin is death**” (Rom. 6:23). “**...if one died for all, then were all dead**” (II Cor. 5:14). By natural generation man enters the world dead in sin. By regeneration alone he can pass from death unto life (John 5:24; I John 3:14).

The state of most people in the world around us is this state of spiritual deadness. The tragic thing about death is that it renders a thing useless; it is that it makes a thing totally inactive. Sin has murdered the spirit of man, for it is totally incapacitated. It can bring no

glory to God. It is unfit to obey God's spiritual laws. It is incapable of any active communion with God. The Bible is expressly true when it says that man is dead!

The spiritually dead sinner may appear respectable. He may be decent in his outward conduct before men. He may exhibit moral virtue in the course of his actions before the world. He may seem to be religious and profess to be a Christian in some church. He may very well deceive his fellow creatures, but he cannot escape the all-seeing eye of God who knows the hearts of all men. The Omniscient One pronounces him according to his true condition-“dead.”

“Yes! When a man's heart is cold and unconcerned about religion, when his hands are never employed in doing God's ways, when his tongue is seldom or never used in prayer and praise, when his ears are deaf to the voice of Christ in

♦ (Continued on page 426)

Alive or Dead?

(Continued from page 425) ◊

the gospel, when his eyes are blind to the beauty of the kingdom of heaven, when these marks are to be found in a man, the word of the Bible is the right word to use about him, and that word is 'dead'" (Home Truths by J.C. Ryle, pp.13-14, 1855 edition).

So long as a man does not serve God with body, soul, and spirit, he is not spiritually alive. So long as he puts first things last and last things first, that long he remains in God's sight dead. So long as he struggles not against the burden of sin within and the blight of the world without, he is a corpse in the kingdom of grace. The sinner is dead, he is lost, he is undone and except a power from without himself quicken him, he is only preparing for the second death.

Oh, my friend, not all the dead are in funeral parlors or the graveyards of the country side. There are many in the pews and the pulpits of our churches! There is scarcely a house any place which does not have some dead ones in it. Many a household has a dead son, or a dead daughter. Others have a dead wife or a dead husband in them. Why is it that we weep when a member of our family dies a physical death, yet we do not weep over the dead souls of our family and friends. God have mercy on us! We seem to care more for the physical than the spiritual, the temporal than the eternal! Sin and Satan have blinded our eyes!

Many a preacher, like Ezekiel of old, preaches to dead people every Lord's Day (Ezek. 37:1-14). A minister stands between the living and the dead. He must not amuse people, or give flattering titles unto people, knowing that life and death are at stake. My greatest fear as a gospel preacher is that many of my hearers shall die in their sins, die unrenewed, unprepared, unsaved, and impenitent! It is my honest prayer as I preach that the gospel may be to sinners **"the savour of life unto life"** rather than **"the savour of death unto death"** (II Cor. 2:16).

Death is a state of separation. A dead man has been cut off from the source and power of life. Death separates a man from his family and friends. It separates a man from water, air, and sunshine so necessary for the living. Spiritual death means severance from the sustaining presence of the Lord of Life and the glory of His power. The dead sinner is **"without Christ"** and **"without God in the world"** (Eph. 2:12). The Apostle Paul says the sinner is **"alienated from the life of God"** (Eph. 4:18). He cannot understand spiritual things. He has no fitness to enjoy heavenly things.

Death is a state of insensibility. A dead man is neither charmed nor alarmed by anything said or done in his presence. He has no tears or fears concerning his

sins and a burning Hell. The law does not convict him, and the gospel does not convert him. He sees no beauty in Christ that he should desire Him. He feels no desire to live forever in Heaven with God. Why does he not believe the gospel? Why does he not forsake the world and flee to Christ? Why is his self-will not mortified and the cross taken up? Why does he ignore the Bible and prayer? The answer is simple. He is dead in trespasses and sins, and the dead are insensible to all things.

Death is a state of helplessness. A dead man cannot help others or himself. We cannot expect any actions from a dead man. He can only lie still and stiff in his coffin. He lays there as a lifeless lump of clay. Even so, the spiritually dead sinner can do nothing, nothing by way of imparting life into his heart. He cannot repent or believe, because he is **"without strength"** (Rom. 5:6). Jesus said: **"Severed from me ye can do nothing"** (John 15:5 margin rendering).

A SPIRITUAL RESURRECTION

Life is the only remedy for death. There are no substitutes for life. Man may come with his forms and garnishing, but they are nothing more than beautiful grave clothes. Baptism, catechism, confirmation, holy sacraments, morality, or other things are worse than useless in imparting life to a dead sinner. God's method of saving from sin is quickening. **"You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins."** The change from death to life is the mightiest change of all. And no change short of this will ever avail to fit man's soul for Heaven.

"Yes! It is not a little mending and alteration, a little cleansing and purifying, a little painting and patching, a little turning over a new leaf, and putting on a new outside that is wanted. It is the bringing in of something altogether new, the planting within us a new nature, a new nature, a new being, a new principle, a new heart; this alone, and nothing less than this, will ever meet the necessities of man's soul" (op. Cit., pp.17-18).

Our Saviour said **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live"** (John 5:24-25).

A number of truths are seen in these two verses. First, sinners are spiritually dead, destitute of spiritual sense and strength, and utterly helpless to make themselves alive unto God. Second, the regeneration of the spirit in man is a spiritual resurrection---a passing from death unto life. Then the quickened person begins to live unto God, to breathe unto Him, and to move toward Him. Third, it is by the voice of the Son

of God that men are raised to spiritual life. The dead shall be made to hear, to understand, to receive, to believe, the voice of the Son of God. Fourth, the voice of Christ is the gospel in the hands of the Holy Spirit which is a voice of light, life, and liberty. Sinners may be said to hear it when it comes not in word only, but in the power of the Holy Spirit. Fifth, those who hear the voice of Christ will live. They will live a life of faith in Christ and of communion with Christ. They shall live with Him both here and hereafter.

We are all naturally dead and must be made alive. Nothing less than a new birth from above, a resurrection of human nature, a quickening of the dead, can suffice. There must be the imparting of a new life by the direct energy of the Almighty Spirit of God. Dead men must be made alive unto God. All other language is weak, poor, beggarly, unscriptural, and short of truth.

In regeneration a great change takes place in man. His old stony heart must be replaced with a new heart. Pride must give place to humility---hatred to love---careless to seriousness---self-righteousness to self-abasement---sinfulness to holiness---unbelief of faith. The mind must be enlightened---sins must be forgiven---Satan's kingdom must be destroyed and God's kingdom set up. Self must be crucified and Christ must reign. Until this happens he is dead.

The new-born soul differs greatly from his former self. Indeed, he is a new man, created in righteousness and holiness (Eph. 4:24). He feels like a new man. He now loves the things he once hated, and hates the things he once loved. His principle is new, his pattern is new, his practices are new, his projects are new--all is new. He has new habits and hopes, new commandments and companions, new pleasures and plans, new ways and works, new opinions and opportunities, new sorrows and services. He is no longer the man he once was. He is **"alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord"** (Rom. 6:11).

Once he considered himself a moderate transgressor. He fancied himself as not as bad as others (Luke 18:11-12). He looked lightly upon sin. But now that he is alive from the dead he often speaks of sin as an abominable thing which he hates (Ps. 97:10). Now sin is the sorrow and burden of his life. He feels he is the chiefest of sinners. He groans and cries for relief from this body of sin and death. He can truly say with Whitefield, "I want to go where I shall neither sin myself, nor see others sin any more."

Once, he could see no beauty in Christ that he should desire Him. He wondered why so many spoke so often of the Savior. Christ to him was nothing but a historical character or a byword. But when free grace gave him life, he came to see that only the blood of Christ could wash away the stain upon his soul. He trusted Christ

for the whole of salvation. Now he speaks of Christ as the Rose of Sharon, the Lily of the Valley, the chiefest among ten thousand. Christ has become his all in all. Now he takes pleasure in witnessing and working for His Redeemer.

ALIVE FROM THE DEAD

Has God quickened you? Are you alive or dead? You may reply, "I am alive. I have eternal life. Christ is my life." Then see to it that you live like a person who has been made alive from the dead. See that your actions prove that you have spiritual life. Be a consistent witness for Christ. Let your words and works prove that you have spiritual life. Be a consistent witness for Christ. Let your words and works prove that you know the grace of God in truth. Let your light shine before men. Leave no doubt in the mind of the world as to whom you serve. Let your conduct be becoming to the gospel, adorn the doctrine of God.

Death separates from God; life separates from the things of the dead. When Lazarus got life he soon got out of the place of the dead. He put off the grave clothes. No one who has been made alive from the dead will dwell among the tombs. When the light dawns, he will arise from the dead and **"walk in newness of life"** (Rom. 6:4). A true believer **"lives unto God"** (Gal. 2:19). **"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again"** (II Cor. 5:14-15).

Those who are alive from the dead must put off the grave clothes and put on the Lord Jesus Christ. **"That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness"** (Eph. 4:22-24). **"But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof"** (Rom. 13:14). **"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ"** (Gal. 3:27).

Are you alive or dead? If you say you are alive, then prove it by spiritual growth. Don't remain a newborn babe (I Pet. 2:2). Add to your faith virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and charity (II Pet. 1:5-7). If you are really saved by grace then be sure to **"grow in grace"** (II Pet. 3:18) and **"go on unto perfection"** (Heb. 6:1). Keep on growing until you reach **"a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ"** (Eph. 4:13). Please remember that the only people who do not grow are dead people.

CONCLUSION

Dear friend, one thing is certain: you

◊ (Continued on page 427)

A Dose of Reality

"Common Sense Comments"

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A Society of Delegation and Replacement

We have become a society of delegation and replacement. We delegate that which is our responsibility and that delegation then turns into replacement. Let me explain what I mean. Delegation has its place. Good leaders delegate responsibilities and tasks to workers under their authority. Delegation gives the boss ability to do other things. Delegation can be effective. But some things can't be delegated. In some areas, certain responsibilities should not be passed down to others.

As a whole we have delegated, even relegated certain responsibilities which has resulted in disaster for the family, church, society and the nation. Notice some of the delegations below:

(1) Mothers have delegated nurturing, by substituting "mothercare" with daycare.

(2) Parents have delegated their children's education to institutions (public and private) by not teaching their children at home first, if not completely, through home education. For most, all education and instruction is done outside the home.

(3) We have delegated all spiritual and moral instruction to the church, but this responsibility belongs primarily to the parents.

(4) We have delegated our government to elected representatives, but then have not held them accountable. Representatives are supposed to vote the mind of their constituents, but when the voters do not hold them accountable, this delegation becomes a signed blank check.

Through passage of time, delegation becomes relegation (abandonment), which then turns into abdication (resignation, relinquishment of power). This natural course then leads to replacement. Is it any wonder then, that society has turned upside down over the past 50 years and black has become white and white has become black? The Old Testament prophet said, "**Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight**" (Isa. 5:20-21). Notice the replacement that has

resulted in many areas of life:

We have replaced this Republic with a Democracy.

We have replaced the Constitution with the Supreme Court.

We have replaced God with government.

We have replaced civil rights with discriminating quotas.

We have replaced the right of life for the innocent with the right of the woman to choose death.

We have replaced empirical science with a theory called evolution.

We have replaced education with schooling.

We have replaced love with sex.

We have replaced abstinence with safe sex.

We have replaced that which is normal (heterosexuality) with abnormal perversion (homosexuality).

We have replaced salvation with church membership.

We have replaced absolutes with relativism.

We have replaced common sense with irrational thinking.

We have replaced peace with pacifism.

We have replaced benevolence with welfare.

We have replaced our diverse heritage with multiculturalism.

We have replaced the authorized version of Scripture with a myriad of incomplete, inferior versions.

May God open our eyes and bolster us with the courage to replace the replacements with that which we already know to be the tried-and-true foundation. Contrary to popular opinion, seeking the old paths is not always bad.



Alive or Dead?

(Continued from page 426) ◊

cannot regenerate yourself. You have no strength, power, or will to do so. You can change your sins, but you cannot change your heart. You may go a new way, but you cannot make yourself a new nature. You can reform yourself, but you cannot resurrect your dead soul. It is not possible to bring something out of nothing. The Ethiopian cannot change his skin, nor the leopard his spots; no more can you put life into your dead spirit (Jer. 13:23).

No living man on earth---be he priest, preacher, or pope---can give you spiritual life. Ministers may desire to see you saved. They may preach to you and pray for you. They may baptize you and give you the sacraments, but they cannot bestow spiritual life. They have no power to do this. Paul could plant, Apollos could water, but God alone could give the increase (I Cor. 3:6).

No creature can make a dead soul alive. God alone has the power of life and

death. He who created the world must make man a new creature in Christ. He who has power to raise the physical dead must raise the spiritual dead. He who gives natural life to all must be the Giver of eternal life. Those who look to other sources for spiritual life will be disappointed.

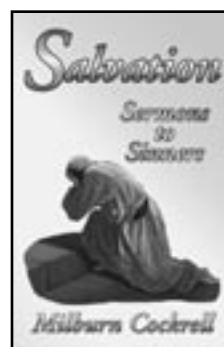
Millions think they are alive unto God when they are still in a state of spiritual deadness. The craze for numbers has driven many a minister to be content with making church members instead of Christians. Some are more interested in getting names on the church roll than making sure their converts have their names in the Lamb's book of life. They are more concerned with building them an earthly kingdom of false professors than seeing men really translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Such men are blind leaders of the blind. Such false teachers are destined to meet their converts in the fire of Hell.

Dear church member, are you alive or dead? Do your works prove your faith? Has your justification made you a just man? Have you truly been regenerated? Born again? Made your passage from death of life? Or, could it be you are like the church at Sardis who had a name to live when she was dead (Rev. 3:1). There is a vast difference between life and death, between profession and possession, between Christianity and churchanity! I fear that many of you are still dead! You still have on the grave clothes and you wander among the tombs. Oh, may God be merciful to your deceived soul and grant you spiritual life.

I commend you to God and to the Word of His grace. May it please the Holy Spirit to quicken you. May you be numbered among God's children. And if He be pleased to give you eternal life, then live unto the Lord so that when you die you may die the death of the righteous. **"He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath no life"** (I John 5:12).



This 96 page book contains eleven sermons dealing with salvation and is an excellent book to give to the lost.



For the month of October these can be purchased for \$3 each of five or more for \$2 each.

Please see shipping chart on page 439 for postage and handling.

God's Pardoning

(Continued from page 421) ◊

glorious to behold.

But when compared to the throne of God it would not be worthy to be a footstool. The brightness of the noonday sun is but mere shade in comparison to the light and glory which surround the throne of the Eternal God. No mortal tongue can describe the splendour of that throne on which Jehovah is seated in dispensing pardon. We can, however, advert to its character, as being

1. *A throne of mercy.* Nothing but mercy could have caused God to notice sinful man. Man merited condemnation and banishment; God also, being infinitely glorious in Himself and independent of man; hence sovereign mercy alone, with love and free grace, are displayed in forgiveness. Pardon is the result of the scheme of redemption through the death of Christ. Pardon is dispensed---

2. *From a throne of justice.* There is no infringement on justice in granting pardon to the guilty, in that it is communicated through the merit of our Surety, Who died to atone for our transgressions.

When man for sin was expelled from Paradise, cherubims with flaming swords were placed to guard the tree of life, whilst the moral law, like a great mountain, intervened and obstructed man's return. It was too high to scale, too deep to undermine, and too broad to circumvent; but in this hopeless state our help was laid on One that was mighty; Jesus came down with pity in His eye, love in His heart, and power in His arm, and through His holy and obedient life, His intense agony and suffering, atoning and triumphant death and joyful resurrection, He opened a passage---"**a new and living way**" (Heb. 10:20)---through the fiery mount, without breaking a single precept. At His sight the flaming sword turned into a scepter of mercy, whilst Justice stood at the entrance with a streaming banner of welcome to the guilty to "**life more abundantly**," (John 10:10) through the blood of the Lamb.

Jesus, who had power to lay down His life, received the infliction of the law voluntarily and vicariously, the innocent for the guilty; hence pardon is extended in accordance with the highest rectitude and the strictest justice. God is as just as He is merciful in forgiving the guilty.

3. *God pardons on the throne of His power.* Redemption is the highest display of His might. The heavens are the work of His fingers, salvation the work of His arm. He might have shown His sovereign power in preventing sin to enter this once paradisiacal world, yet doubtless greater power is displayed in conquering sin, having entered, and saving the sinner.

Had our Saviour prevented the illness

◊ (Continued on page 428)

God's Pardoning

(Continued from page 427) ♦

of His friend Lazarus, or restored him to health during the different stages of the disease, His divine power would have been displayed; but when Lazarus had been dead four days, buried and beginning to decompose, with a stone placed on the door of the sepulcher, to raise him from the bed of corruption and death to life again would be a far higher display of divine power. Through the death of Christ in the fullness of time, God raises millions from the death of sin to a life of holiness and happiness, to obtain pardon and eternal life, and thus displays greater power than in creating, preventing, or destroying. The throne, on which He pardons the guilty, exhibits His almighty power. In a word, all His attributes unite and concentrate together, justice and mercy meet together, righteousness and peace embrace each other. The attributes of God, like the different colors forming the rainbow, blend in beauty and luster, whilst they encircle the exalted and glorious throne on which Jehovah pardons.

*"Here the whole Deity is known,
Nor dares a creature guess
Which of the glories brightest shone,
The justice or the grace."*

II. THE MANNER IN WHICH GOD PARDONS. The Lord pardons worthy of Himself.

1. *He pardons freely*, without money and without price. It is not merited on man's part, by works of righteousness, tears of penitence, prayers or sacrifices; all fail to merit pardon. God pardons through the merits of His Son, bestowed on us free as the atmosphere we breathe, the water we drink, or the rays of the sun that shines alike on the cottage of the peasant as on the mansion of the monarch.

2. *He pardons fully*. It is a blotting out, canceling, burying, "casting our sins behind his back;" (II Chron. 13:13) and how beautiful the figures! To have our sins blotted out as a cloud, and our iniquities as a thick cloud. We have seen the cloud climb the mountain top and spread across the heavens, and the bright sun strike on the dark cloud, causing the rain-drops to fall, and soon the cloud is no more, the sun has melted it, absorbed and driven it away, and the birds to sing and nature to rejoice. So the sun of God's forgiving love shines down through the darkened firmament of the sinner's heart, causes the dark clouds of sin to melt in tears of penitence, so that they are blotted out, and the heart "**rejoices with joy unspeakable and full of glory**" (I Pet. 1:8).

He blots them out also as the tradesman cancels his ledger when his bills are settled. An old divine says, "God blots out the black lines of our sins with the red lines of the Redeemer's

blood." God is said to remember our sins no more. Man often forgives without forgetting. God giveth liberally and upbraideth not. Inscribed on the walls of His sanctuary are to be seen---not, "**thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting;**" (Dan. 5:27) but, "your sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb. 8:12).

He buries them, not in the shallows, but in the "depth" of the sea; so deep that Satan, with all his skill, power, instruments, and diving-bells, cannot find them.

God pardons fully, finally, and for ever. "There is no condemnation, and all the bonds are abrogated."

Let the law urge its claims, let conscience come with its lashes, let Satan tempt to dispose by reason of the black catalogue of sins, I see a way to meet them all, for underneath I find clearly written, "**the blood of Jesus Christ His son cleanseth from all sin,**" in characters that the ocean's tide cannot wash away, the fires of the last conflagration obliterate, or eternally erase.

*"The terrors of law and of God
With me can have nothing to do,
My Saviour's obedience and blood
Hide all my transgressions from view."*

3. *God pardons cheerfully*. It is His delight to forgive. Judgment is His strange work. When He is about to punish, He is slow to anger; as seen in the case of the antediluvian world, a hundred and twenty years' warning is given. Every plank in constructing the ark was a sermon from the preacher of righteousness to the impenitent. When the cities of the plain are to be destroyed, the Lord, as it were, takes a circuitous journey, calls upon His tried friend Abraham, who pleads in favor of the cities, the Lord listens with an ear of mercy to the intercessions.

The barren tree, crying year after year for destruction, is left; God seems to whet His sword; His language to rebellious Ephraim is, "**What shall I do now unto thee,**" (Gen. 27:37) etc. He seems unwilling to destroy, but He is plenteous in mercy. He is always ready to pardon. His immediate language to the penitent is, "**Thy sins are forgiven thee, go in peace;**" (Luke 7:47, 50) to Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for this day is salvation come to thine house; to the malefactor, "**Today shalt thou be with me in paradise**" (Luke 23:43); while the prodigal is yet a great way off, his father runs to meet him and embrace him, and great was the joy at his reception. God is ever ready and waiting to be gracious. Etheldred II---one of the Saxon kings---was surnamed the "unready," in that he was never ready for any public act, for war or peace; it was the imperfection of his character. The Monarch of the skies is unready to destroy His rebellious subjects; it is the glory of His character to us-ward, but He is ever ready to pardon the penitent. However great the sinner

He will save to the uttermost.

III. THE PERSONS WHOM GOD PARDONS. They are those who seek pardon.

1. *The true penitent*. With heart-felt sorrow for sin, drawn by God's spirit to the throne of grace, with the cords of a man and the banks of love; falling at the feet of Jesus like the woman who was a sinner, the publican, and the prodigal---those are the characters who shall receive.

2. *The believing supplicant*. Exercising faith in the blood of Christ. The petitioner, who trusts his case to the hands of our Elder Brother, surety, and intercessor, will surely prevail in obtaining pardon rich and free.

3. *Those who thus seek in time*. God, though rich in mercy, yet has not only a medium for its communication, but also a limited period. How many delay till it is too late for ever! When Alexander encamped before a city he set up a light to warn. While the light lasted, if

the inhabitants resorted to him, they obtained quarter; if otherwise no mercy was expected. God has repeatedly set up light after light before us in nature, conscience, and the cross of Christ, warning, inviting, showing that He is "**a God ready to pardon**" (Neh. 9:17) the true penitent; but they can only be continued at farthest while fleeting life lasts; they will be extinguished by the cold stream of death. How important, then, without delay, to obtain pardon, acceptance, and full salvation, ere it is too late!

*"Life is the time to serve the Lord,
The time to insure the great reward!
And while the lamp holds out to burn,
The vilest sinner may return.
There are no acts of pardon past
In the cold grave to which we haste;
But darkness, death, and long despair,
Reign in eternal silence there."*



From the Pen of a Country Preacher

Milburn R. Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)



The Doctrine of Sanctification

(Continued from the last issue.)

THE EVIDENCES OF IT

There are many evidences of sanctification. These need to be examined from a number of standpoints.

WITH RESPECT TO GOD THE FATHER

First, a holy reverence and fear of God is an evidence of sanctification. When it came to being a burdensome ruler in Jerusalem Nehemiah said: "**. . . but so did not I, because of the fear of God**" (Neh. 5:15). Because this fear is in our hearts (Jer. 32:40) we "**fear God and keep his commandments**" (Eccl. 12:13). Saints are people who serve the Lord "**with reverence and godly fear**" (Heb. 12:28). The unsanctified man has no fear of God before his eyes (Rom. 3:18).

Second, a love for God and a delight in Him is proof of sanctification. In regeneration the Lord circumcises the heart so that a person loves God with all his heart and with all his soul (Deut. 30:6; Matt. 22:37). This love for God prompts obedience (John 14:15,21,23; 15:10,14; I John 5:3). An unsanctified man does not love a holy God, for the carnal mind is enmity against God (Rom. 8:7). He has no affections for God nor pleasure in the things of God (Job 27:10).

Third, a submission to God's will is an attestation of sanctification. The essence of sin consists in the conflict of the creature's will with the will of the

Creator. Since the fall of man his will in its natural state is in rebellious collision with the will of God. Regeneration rectifies man's will, and by sanctification man's will is more and more conformed to the will of God. As the Spirit sanctifies a person he becomes more and more willing to resign himself to the Divine will even under severe rebukes of providence.

The Scriptures give many examples of this. When Aaron's two sons were killed for offering strange fire on the altar the Bible says that "**Aaron held his peace**" (Lev. 10:3). When Samuel told Eli that God would destroy his family Eli said: "**It is the LORD: let him do what seemeth him good**" (I Sam. 3:18). When Job had lost nearly all his possessions and family he said: "**The LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD**" (Job 1:21). Upon being told by the Prophet Isaiah that his possessions and sons would be taken away to Babylon Hezekiah said: "**Good is the word of the LORD which thou hast spoken**" (Isa. 39:8). Having been told by the Prophet Agabus that he would be taken prisoner if he went to Jerusalem, Paul said that he was willing to be a prisoner or to die at Jerusalem for Christ. Then his friends said: "**The will of the Lord be done**" (Acts 21:14).

♦ (Continued on page 429)

Funnybone

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

After Sunday service little Susie Mist was listening very intently to two men who were discussing the political candidates. Upon hearing that one of them had the nomination she quickly ran to her mother and asked, "O, mother, do people ever die from having the nomination?"

Pastor Brown was busy one evening preparing his sermon for Sunday. As he sat there he would jot down his thoughts, and occasionally stop to review what he had written, and erase, and marked out things he didn't like.

His little daughter, who had been watching for a while came over to ask, "Father? Does God tell you what to preach on Sundays?"

Pastor Brown replied, "Well, of course He does my little one."

To which his daughter asked, "Then why do you scratch out and erase parts then?"

Deacon Jones was filling in for the youngsters' class on Sunday and began by asking a serious question, "Class, where do the wicked finally go?"

Little Jimmy answered, "Well, I hear they get to practice law fer a spell, but then they get to go to congress."

One afternoon two ladies of Possum



Trot were discussing the new preacher who visited.

"Well," says Sister Brown, "What did you think of the young man since you had him over to supper?"

Sister Jones replied, "I'm not to sure. He looked at my washing machine and said every man needed to learn how to use one of those washing-women to do his laundry, but first said he needed to finish learning how to boil taters in cold water for his supper."

Late one evening a priest was walking home and noticed a farmer sitting under a tree reading a Bible.

The priest came over and said, "Don't you know that the Bible is for men like us priests to read? It's not for the unlearned farmers like you."

The quiet farmer replied, "But its

good reading for me and my young children."

"You don't have the knowledge it takes to understand the book," sharply replied the priest.

"Ah," replied the farmer, "But what I read and don't understand won't do me any harm, but what I do read and understand does me a heap of good."

"Well then," the priest replied, "You must come to the church and the church will teach and give you the milk of the word."

"Ah well," said the farmer, "If the church gets its milk from the Bible, then I would rather have the cow myself."

One day after a long Sunday service a lady came up to Pastor Brown to ask him a question.

"Pastor Brown, how is it that you are a Baptist preacher, and your brother is a Methodist minister?"

Pastor Brown answered, "Well, when me and my brother were younger each of my parents would take one of us to church since they couldn't agree on which one to attend. My brother would always go with my father to the Methodist church, but I didn't like to because he never carried anything in his pockets for the intervals between services. On the other hand, my mother would always wrap some bread and cheese in a napkin and take it with her to the Baptist church: so I went with the bread and cheese!"



of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee: Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:5-6). When Isaiah saw "the LORD... high and lifted up" (Isa. 6:1) he said: "Woe is me! for I am undone" (Isa. 6:5). Paul referred to himself as "the least of all saints" (Eph. 3:8) and as the chiefest of sinners (I Tim. 1:15). Never did these men make such progress in sanctification as when they contrasted Divine purity with human imperfection!

Second, a person sanctified by the Holy Spirit has an increasing hatred of sin: "Ye that love the LORD, hate evil" (Ps. 97:10). God cannot make us holy without making us hate sin. Sanctification by the Spirit makes sin to become "exceeding sinful" (Rom. 7:13). The Holy Spirit convicts of sin and then causes a person to hate sin. This is the essence of repentance. As the Spirit carries on the sanctifying process this hatred becomes more intense. The believer hates sin as much as he loves holiness, and no more. When temptation comes the principle within him argues this: "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God" (Gen. 39:9)?

Third, another evidence is delight in God's law. In regeneration the moral law is written upon a man's soul. In Hebrews 8:10 God says: "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts." The sanctifying operation of the Holy Spirit causes us to delight in the moral law of God: "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man" (Rom. 7:22). It is said of the blessed man: "But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night" (Ps. 1:2). The psalmist wrote: "I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved" (Ps. 119:47). Again he exclaimed: "O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day" (Ps. 119:97).

Fourth, there is in a sanctified person an increasing love of heavenly things: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col. 3:1-2). Those who have risen with Christ to a new spiritual life will seek heavenly things. They will think of their heavenly citizenship and their heavenly treasures. They rejoice because they know that their names are written in Heaven. They long for Christ to come from Heaven and take them to Heaven (John 14:1-3). They look "for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11:10).

THE MEANS OF SANCTIFICATION

What means are used to sanctify men? What things are employed by God to make men holy and conform them into the likeness of Christ? Many of the

♦ (Continued on page 432)

Sanctification

(Continued from page 428) ♦

Fourth, seeking the glory of God in all things is confirmation of sanctification: "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (I Cor. 10:31). A sanctified soul wants God only to get the glory, and he does not care to make a show of his religion before men. An unsanctified person makes a show of his religion. He in no way seeks to glorify God. All he does is to be seen of men (Matt. 6:1-2).

WITH RESPECT TO CHRIST

First, the sanctified person receives Christ as His Prophet, Priest, and King (John 1:12). Christ is his Prophet to teach and instruct him in the ways of holiness. Christ is his Priest to make intercession for his sins (I John 2:1). Christ is his King, and he cheerfully submits to His laws and ordinances. His cry is: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6). Or, it is: "Speak, LORD; for thy servant heareth" (I Sam. 3:9).

Second, a sanctified person desires to know more and more of Christ: "That I may know him, and the power of his

resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death" (Phil. 3:10). He desires this ever-increasing knowledge of Christ that he may walk more like Christ each day of his life on earth (I John 2:6). A sanctified soul earnestly wants to "follow his steps" (I Pet. 2:21). He seeks to have the mind of Christ (Phil. 2:5).

This, a sanctified person goes to Christ for daily cleansing from his sins. He knows that only the blood of Christ can cleanse from sin (I John 1:7). So he confesses his sins so that he may be cleansed "from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9). The psalmist prayed: "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin" (Ps. 51:2).

WITH RESPECT TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

As has been earlier pointed out, the Holy Spirit has a greater concern in sanctification than any other member of the trinity. First, a saint minds the things of the Spirit: "For they that after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit" (Rom. 8:5). A sanctified man relishes what the Spirit

reveals and recommends (I Cor. 2:10). He is led by the Spirit (Rom. 8:14) and taught by the Spirit (John 14:26; 16:13; I John 2:20, 27). He is what the Scriptures call a spiritual man (I Cor. 2:15; 3:1; Gal. 6:1).

Second, a sanctified person walks after the Spirit: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. 8:1). Galatians 5:16 tells us: "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." The sanctified soul walks in the Spirit that he "shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh" (Gal. 5:16). He is fully conscious of the indwelling Spirit (I Cor. 6:19-20) and is careful not to grieve Him (Eph. 4:30). Any grieving of the Spirit interrupts his joy (Rom. 14:17) and retards his spiritual growth.

WITH RESPECT TO THE SAINT HIMSELF

First, a truly sanctified person feels a deep sense of unworthiness. As he views the Divine character, he is overtaken by a sense of his nothingness. The Bible abounds in many examples of this. Job said: "I have heard of thee by the hearing

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. Does your church use the one loaf and one cup in their observance of the Lord's Supper? Why or why not? - Kentucky

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Parkway Landmark Baptist Church uses one loaf for the Lord's Supper. The reason we use the one loaf is, **"For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread"** (1 Cor. 10:17).

PLBC uses one cup per person of fermented wine. **"After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me"** (1 Cor. 11:25) These verses are the reasons we, as an assembly, do what we do.

There was a time when we, as a church, were convinced that we had to drink out of one cup, and we did for some years. Then we were convinced by the Scriptures that this was not the right thing to do. I will try to explain.

Our emphasis in the observance of the Lord's Supper is the remembrance of the death of our Saviour, whose body was broken and blood shed for the ratification of the New Testament. It's not about the cup! It's about the blood! The emphasis is not about the cup; it's about the observance and the reason why we are observing the Lord's Supper. We use fermented wine because there is no leaven in it, just as the bread has no leaven. We consider this to be consistent, if one is void of leaven then of necessity, the other must also.

The wine is a type, the bread is a type. The Supper is designed to show the death of Christ for His elect that are members of His New Testament Church only, till He comes again at the pre-tribulation rapture.

One more thing, I remember a good preacher friend of mine instructed me to figure out how big a cup the Jerusalem church had to have just with about 3,000 members. I did, Let's say the Jerusalem Church used one cup. Figure an average swallow is a tablespoon. 3,000 tablespoons is roughly 12 gallons, that's a big cup! I am not done, now, listen to this, what if about half the members of the Jerusalem Church drank only half a tablespoon? That's roughly 6 gallons left over. The Lord said **"..Drink ye all of it;"** (Matt. 26:27) who is going to drink the

rest?

May God give us wisdom to fulfill our part in service to Him.

MIKE DEWITT

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The question above, I believe, is seeking to understand why some churches observe the LORD's Supper differently than others. Another similar question would be: "How often does your church observe the LORD's Supper?" Well, to be honest, the answer is: "It is up to the individual church to determine what is necessary," because the Scriptures are silent. One cannot dogmatically appoint a monthly observance (as some churches observe) or a quarterly observance (as other churches might do) or an annual celebration of this ordinance. Again, what one church does cannot mandate to others to do the same. Not without a clear "Thus saith the LORD"!

Whether your church uses one cup that they pass around for all the members to consecutively use, or whether (like Big Creek BC), we separate beforehand, and also in the presence of the members, the wine from the one cup into individual cups for each member, is going to have to be up to the church you are a member of to decide. And whichever way she decides, it will not be wrong. Some churches have a regular church worship service before, some meet just to have the Supper and then go home. Some have it on Sunday night only; some on a midweek, or Saturday evening. Again, none of these are incorrect, but each church should have a GODLY reason or SCRIPTURAL purpose behind their peculiar observances.

Now, before anyone claims that Bro. Matthew doesn't care how you celebrate the Supper, just so long as you do, let me say that there are three essential elements in the LORD's Supper. Without the inclusion of any one of these three, the church has not properly or even successfully observed the LORD's Supper. When Scripture is CLEAR concerning this Second Ordinance of the church, we are NOT at liberty to variegate.

1) Unleavened bread MUST be the element representing the Body of Christ! No leaven can be allowed. A church that arbitrarily substitutes anything else

is not offering up a service that will be acceptable in God's eyes. **"Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed. And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat"** (Luke 22:7-8).

2) Pure, fermented wine MUST be the element representing the Blood of Christ! Again, not only the absence of leaven is a must, but also the presences of the life-giving, medicinal, heady and intoxicating qualities of the wine are prerequisites. A church that uses grape juice has never observed the LORD's Supper (cf: Passover elements in Luke 22 above with I Cor. 11:21, 25, Eph. 5:18, I Tim. 5:23, Rev. 14:10).

3) The Supper MUST be a closed celebration of the members of the observing church ONLY. Any open or semi-open communion is an impossibility for this ordinance of discipline. The warnings of the apostle Paul to the Corinthian church for introspection and solemn self-judgment make this very clear. **"For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body"** (I Cor. 11:29) [emphasis TMS].

If at all possible, the pastor should serve the Supper, but even a church temporarily without a pastor may observe the LORD's Supper. It is a church ordinance. Just appoint a male teacher or deacon to serve. It would be appropriate for a hymn to be sung at the conclusion (Matt. 26:30), but I can't think of anything else that might be questioned in the matter. May God bless these words.

MATTHEW STEPP

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Pastor
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The Mount Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church of Chesapeake, Ohio uses one round loaf of unleavened bread that one of our members bakes. Just prior to passing it I break it into smaller pieces as I explain the significance of the bread symbolizing the undefiled body of Jesus Christ which was given for us.

Brother Joe Pemberton, a faithful deacon, prepares the ordinance prior to our service. One of our members makes the wine. Brother Joe pours the wine from the bottle into smaller glass cups. After a short devotional message on some aspect of the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, I break the bread, pray, and we meditate. Then we eat the bread. Then I explain the significance of the wine as a symbol of the precious and

undefiled blood of Christ that was shed for His people. We then sing Amazing Grace, have prayer, and dismiss.

I believe the observance of the Lord's Supper should be focused on remembering the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. We use the elements of the unleavened bread and wine as symbols representing His body and blood. Whether we drink out of one or several cups, it is the wine in the cup that reminds us of the precious blood that was shed.

TOM ROSS

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Missionary of
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To answer the first part of the question, "Does your church use the one loaf and one cup in their observance of the Lord's Supper?", the Big Creek Baptist Church, in Wayne, WV, where I am a member, does observe the Lord's Supper using the one loaf and the one cup.

Why? To be honest I have never discussed it with my pastor, Elder Matthew Stepp, who also is a writer for BBB Forum. So I guess it will be interesting to see how he will answer this question as well. But I have confidence we will agree, I hope! If not, I will stand corrected.

"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26:26-28).

"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me" (I Cor. 11:23-25).

I believe we are to do as Christ has done. So with that said, we see in Matthew's gospel Christ shows how He observed the first Supper. He took bread, one loaf, blessed it, and then broke it, and gave to His disciples. He did the same with the cup; He gave thanks, and gave it to them and told them to drink it all. I believe we should never deviate from the instructions of our Lord or from the Word of God.

◊ (Continued on page 432)

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. Does Hebrews 3 teach us that it is possible that only Joshua and Caleb (save Moses) was saved of those who came out of Egypt of the adults? If not then, please explain the other ones dying in the wilderness in unbelief and not entering into God's rest.- Kentucky

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The children of Israel had been delivered by the blood of the Passover Lamb from the destroyer that killed the firstborn in every house that did not have the blood on the side and upper door posts (Ex. 12). As they were fleeing Egypt they came as far as the Red Sea. Pharaoh and his chariots of war approached seeking to enslave Israel once again. God miraculously intervened by rolling back the waters of the Red Sea allowing the chosen nation to go over dryshod. The Almighty had delivered them from the bondage of Pharaoh. Once they were on the other side they witnessed the power of God destroy and judge their enemies. Both of these accounts represent the deliverance experienced in salvation.

Saved people who have been delivered by the blood of the Lamb and the bondage of Satan may make poor decisions due to unbelief. They fail to take God at His Word and apply His principles in their lives. Consequently, they wander in the proverbial wilderness living defeated lives. These folks are not unlike those who died in the wilderness. Joshua and Caleb represent believers who have entered into the promised land of victory and rest in Christ. The promised land represents victorious Christian living rather than the glories of Heaven. Once Joshua and Caleb crossed the Jordan by faith they led the children of Israel in several battles as they waged warfare purging the land of its heathen inhabitants. Thus entering into the promised land represents the rest and victory believers enjoy in the experience of progressive sanctification more so than the experience of glorification. Progressive sanctification is a deliverance from sin's power, whereas glorification is the final and ultimate deliverance from the very presence of sin in complete conformity to the blessed image of Jesus Christ.

May God grant us grace to daily experience the rest afforded in the finished work of our Saviour as we walk this uneven journey of life. Oh that unbelief would be purged from our heart so that we could effectively wage spiritual warfare against the flesh, the world, and the devil. Victory and rest are bound up

in our blessed Lord, His Word, and the leadership of the indwelling Holy Spirit. Oh that we would be encouraged daily to walk by faith and not by sight resigning ourselves fully to God's leadership and care (Prov. 3:5-6). First John 5:4-5 declares: **"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"**

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"And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom" (Luke 16:23).

Any one that has done any serious reading of the Bible knows the story of the rich man and the beggar Lazarus as Luke tells it in chapter 16. We want to note two things; 1) The rich man was in Hell (Hades, the realm of the dead, according to The Amplified Bible), 2) Lazarus was in Abraham's bosom; this tells us where they went after they both had died. We won't take the time to elaborate but these were real living men, not a parable as some teach, and they must have lived in the days of Moses according to verse 29.

Now the first part of the question is "Does Hebrews 3 teach us it is possible that only Joshua and Caleb (save Moses) were saved of those who came out of Egypt of the adults?" I believe the answer is "No." Why? If only Joshua and Caleb (save Moses) were saved then all the rest would be in Hell as stated in Luke 16:23. So if that was so, let me ask the reader this question, "Where did Aaron and Miriam go? Where did all the Levites go?" Are they in Hell awaiting The Great White Throne Judgment or did they go into Abraham's bosom, the place of rest, until Christ would take them onto glory, the final resting place for all? I am not saying that the "Promised Land" was not a place of rest but it was to me a different kind of rest, it was a labouring type a rest, **"Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief"** (Heb. 4:11). It is

not a slumbering rest because it is hard work to labour for the Lord physically, but spiritually it is peaceful, restful and a joy to labour for (in) the Lord. For their unbelief they could not enter into that labouring rest, the "Promised Land."

Now if the questioner is implying that the "Promise Land" is the place of salvation (rest) then the answer would be yes, only Joshua and Caleb (save Moses) were saved of those who came out of Egypt of the adults, but I doubt and do not believe that is the case.

As for the second part of this question, "If not then, please explain the other ones dying in the wilderness in unbelief and not entering into God's rest." I won't take the time here but I would encourage the reader to study 1 Corinthians 10. You will find that Paul is reminding "Christians" of these things for an example, for our benefit. None of God's elect will perish, but we can fall into the trap of disbelief and disobedience. We can also see this from those of the Protestant belief. There are many Protestants who are saved but refuse to enter into the rest of the true Church, (which I believe is a place of rest until the Lord comes back). They do not believe in the Local New Testament Church therefore they are in unbelief, and at the same time they are disobedient and rebellious. Some teach they are going to go to Hell because they are not in the Lord's true Church, but I don't believe that.

So I believe many were saved that were in the wilderness and entered into Abraham's bosom as stated above and those that God destroyed would have gone to Hell, the place of torment, **"Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the LORD'S side? let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him. And he said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour. And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses: and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men"** (Ex. 32:26-28). The three thousand were destroyed but not all of Israel. Also a careful reading of Numbers 16 will reveal to the reader that over fourteen thousand (v. 49) died but not all of Israel. Pay close attention to verses 32 and 35. God took care of them, but not all of Israel. We have to remember, too, that when one in Israel sinned, all of Israel suffered.

I will close with this thought to the questioner and reader. When we are talking about entering into God's rest, consider Ezekiel 31, especially verses 15-18; chapter 32, and 37; Matthew 27:52-53, and Romans chapter 9 to name a few, what about all of these folks? What

about all those in the Holocaust, were some saved who died in that awful time in our history? **"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance"** (II Pet. 3:9). God's elect people will be saved. Just because you and I don't know who they are doesn't change the fact that God's elect will be saved and will enter into His rest. God Bless!

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The questioner is correct, in that the context of chapters 3 & 4 are the two rests contrasted. Many folk have the concept of Canaan, the Promised Land, as a picture of Heaven. In my view, this is misleading. Canaan is not the final resting place of God's people, but merely a place of service, much like the Garden of Eden was supposed to be. To understand the position of those that died in unbelief in the wilderness, we must first understand the two rests.

The first rest (that Canaan is a symbolic picture of in this passage) is the rest spoken of by Christ in Matthew 11:28-30, **"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, ...and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."** Compare this passage with Hebrews 4:8-9, 11, **"For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. ...Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief."** Two different rests!

Jesus promises rest to those under the conviction of the Holy Spirit. This first rest is a reconciliation unto God and a rest from our constant warfare with Him - PEACE = rest. But if you read the rest of the passage from Matthew, without this understanding it might well be confusing, **"my yoke is easy, and my burden is light!"** This is NOT a lay down and rest, rest. It is a wondrous burden being lifted, Opportunity to work, rest! And that is what Canaan was to be to God's people. A place to **"...occupy till I come..."** A **"land flowing with milk and honey"** to sustain our labors for the LORD. A rest or salvation from the penalty and power of sin.

However the second rest is the glorification of our bodies that will come

◊ (Continued on page 432)

Forum #1

(Continued from page 430) ♦

In his first letter to the Corinthians as we have shown above, Paul instructs the church how to observe the Lord's Supper as he received it from the Lord. Notice he doesn't change the order or how it was done, as we like to say a perfect match. To deviate is to be contrary to the Word of God, do it the way it says, not how you think it should be done, "**There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death**" (Prov. 16:25).

Our pastor will wait and break the bread right before it is given to the congregation. As for the wine he will have already, with the help of the deacons, poured from the one container into small individual cups right before the Supper begins and always puts that container (one cup) on the table and finishes pouring from that container during the observance of the Supper right before it is given to the congregation, so all can see that it is coming from the one container (one cup).

Also, and I will make this brief, the one loaf represents (symbolizes) the body of Christ, to be sure, but also the unity of one body, the church. The one cup, represents (symbolizes) again Christ's Blood, to be sure, but also the One Lamb, the One Suffering. For more on this I would encourage the reader to get a copy from the Berea Baptist Church Bookstore and read "What Is It To Eat and Drink Unworthily?" by J.R. Graves and "A Systematic Study Of Bible Doctrines" by T.P. Simmons. God Bless!

ROGER REED



Forum #2

(Continued from page 431) ♦

at the end of our earthly journey. Either at our physical death or at the Rapture of the Saints. This then is the rest of salvation from the very presence of sin! That second rest will be eternal and will be in the New Heaven and the New Earth of Revelation 21 & 22.

This distinction is further evidenced by Hebrews 3:12-13, "**Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.**" The wording of this passage indicates that many believing (unto salvation/first rest) Israelites did not fully trust and follow after the LORD (as Caleb is credited with doing in Deut. 14:24). After all, the usage of the words "**brethren**" and "**lest any of you**" is clearly a warning to saved individuals. Here is where the

sin of unbelief came into their lives and they as a generation were rejected and deprived of a promised land of service. Unable to "**labour therefore**" perfectly into that SECOND rest. "**Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief**" (Heb. 4:11).

To finally answer the question, all the Levites and those under 20 years of ages were spared this judgment of the national disbelief. But we must understand that a judgment is exactly what has occurred. An unbelief in the power and authority of God and His Word caused them to miss out on entering into God's Rest-Canaan, the Promised Land of Service!

So what is the Promised Land of Service or God's Rest today? Hebrews 4:3, "**For we which have believed do enter into rest...**" I don't believe it is any coincidence that the Levites were exempted from this judgment. I believe they in particular are a picture of the elect within the elect of the Old Testament; a picture of the Churches of Jesus Christ in the Kingdom of God, today. Whereas Canaan was the Promised Land of Rest in the OT, the church is the Promised Land of Rest in the NT! Not all today join (or are added to) the LORD's churches. Why? Because of unbelief! A refusal to submit to God's power and authority—just like the children of Israel at Kadesh-Barnea!

Thousands, if not millions of truly born again Christians are dying in the wilderness of Protestantism of unbelief today and not entering into God's Rest of Independent New Testament Baptist Churches! Beloved reader, the preaching of the Apostle Peter is yet relevant! "**Repent, and be baptized...!**" May God bless these words.

MATTHEW STEPP

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Hebrews 3 does not teach loss of salvation, period, it does however warn us of unbelief, "**Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God**" (Heb. 3:12), It would be irresponsible to emphatically say no others were saved in the wilderness. Many of the Hebrews redeemed out of Egypt, not all, were saved. The adults that fell in the wilderness were held back from crossing Jordan because of unbelief just like Moses and Aaron was. "**And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring**

this congregation into the land which I have given them" (Num. 20:12). I challenge anyone to prove to me that there was a difference in what Moses and Aaron did compared to what the others that fell in the wilderness. Remember Aaron and Moses' carcasses both fell in the wilderness.

We come now to why. Obey, is what God wants His people to do. Read that chapter again, was it all that Moses brought out of Egypt? No. So why was only a few that crossed over of the adults? Because they obeyed God "**..for they have wholly followed the LORD**" (Num. 32:12).

May we, dear brothers and sisters, be obedient and wholly follow our Redeemer, for faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, and our lives are to express that in every motion we make.

MIKE DEWITT



Sanctification

(Continued from page 429) ♦

things that we call the "means of grace" likewise are the means of sanctification. I will list a few.

First and foremost, it must be said that the Holy Spirit of God is the member of the Godhead Who is especially active in the work of sanctification. This is true in two aspects. On the one hand, the Spirit helps the Christian overcome the evil propensities: "**For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live**" (Rom. 8:13). No man can overcome the corruptions of his old nature but by the influence of the Spirit of God. While the Spirit enables us to mortify the deeds of the body, it is said in Romans 8:13 to be our own act as aided by the Spirit.

On the other hand, all Christian virtues are traced to the Spirit as to their source: "**But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law**" (Gal. 5:22-23). These things are really the qualities and actions of a sanctified man. It is the Christian who loves and is joyous. These are personal characteristics, yet they are the effects of the Spirit's influence.

Second, faith is a means of sanctification. Our Lord spoke to Paul and referred to some who "**are sanctified by faith that is in me**" (Acts 26:18). On the human side, faith is the instrument by which we are sanctified. The faith which sanctifies is the reception of Christ Himself Who is made unto us sanctification (I Cor. 1:30). Faith is the hand that appropriates the holiness of Christ. Only as the believer daily by faith takes the holiness of Christ for his need can Christ become unto him

sanctification in the progressive sense. Jesus said: "**According to your faith be it unto you**" (Matt. 9:29). The degree of our sanctification is in proportion to our appropriation of Christ from moment to moment.

Third, the Word of God and obedience thereto is a means of sanctification. Jesus Christ said in John 17:17: "**Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.**" Again He said: "**Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you**" (John 15:3). Speaking of the church, Paul declared: "**That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word**" (Eph. 5:26). Every Christian emotion, desire, purpose, and action is called into being by the perception of the truth of the written Word of God. Our sanctification is limited by our limitation in the knowledge and our lack of obedience to the Bible. Our advances in sanctification are in proportion to the Bible truth we understand and put into practice.

Fourth, Divine chastisement is a means of our sanctification. Hebrews 12:6-11 deals with the topic of Divine chastisement because of disobedience. Verse 10 tells us that God chastens us for our spiritual profit "**that we might be partakers of his holiness.**" This does not mean the essential holiness of God which is incommunicable. But the Spirit does under chastisement impart to us a communicative holiness which resembles the Divine nature. In this sense the saints are styled "the people of God's holiness" (Isa. 63:18).

Fifth, the church is a means of sanctification. Church life is designed to promote sanctification in the believer. God has called and set ministers in the churches for "**the perfecting of the saints**" (Eph. 4:11-12). This implies that the saints in churches have some deficiencies which need correcting (Eph. 5:26-27). Ministers are not to be social planners or social promoters. Rather, they are to be instruments for advancing the members of the body of Christ in complete holiness. This work must continue until Christians reach spiritual maturity (Eph. 4:13-14).

THE CAUSES OF SANCTIFICATION

More than anything else, sanctification is caused by the grace and good will of God. We are regenerated by His good will (John 1:12-13; Jas. 1:18). Even so, it is by this same good will that God sanctifies us. I Thessalonians 4:3 says: "**For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication.**" The will of God in this verse is not only His will of precept but His will of pleasure. The state and condition of Christians before their sanctification (I Cor. 6:9-11) clearly shows that no merit or motive in them had any part in God purposing to make them holy.

♦ (Continued on page 433)

Sanctification

(Continued from page 432) ♦

Second, sanctification is the consequence of God's elective purpose: **"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love"** (Eph. 1:4). From eternity God elected a people that they **"should be holy,"** not because He foresaw that they would be holy. All chosen to happiness as the end are chosen to holiness as the means. All of the elect are made partakers of the **"sanctification of the Spirit"** (II Thess. 2:13) and of God's holiness (Heb. 12:10). The doctrine of election does not mean that men may live in sin as they please and yet enter Heaven. A holy God cannot choose men to be anything but holy. Election is unto holiness. So long as a soul loves sin and hates holiness, he has no reason to believe he is one of God's elect.

THE NECESSITY OF SANCTIFICATION

First, sanctification is necessary to seeing God in the future state: **"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord"** (Heb. 12:14). **"To follow"** means to pursue, as Saul of Tarsus pursued and followed after the early Christians. The Greek word for **"follow"** signifies **"an earnest pursuit."** All possible exertion of a man's powers must be used to attain holiness. You cannot be a saint in your sleep. The lazy man will never be a sanctified man.

Some take this command in Hebrews 12:14 to mean be contentious, censorious, and faultfinding. Thus they occupy the seat of the scornful and become legalistic fanatics. Their holiness consists of negatives, protests, and opposition for opposition's sake. They seem to always be engaged in controversies and holy crusades. But you do not have to be savage to be sanctified, for holiness and peace go together: **"Follow peace with all men, and holiness. . ."**

It is equally wrong to refer **"holiness"** in Hebrews 12:14 to imputed holiness and go off on antinomian heresy. We cannot follow after positional holiness. That comes instantaneously and once for all at the time of our justification. Hebrews 12:14 is a command to follow after personal and practical holiness. We must go to Christ with the eager desire that the Spirit would sanctify us more and more and enable us to **"be in behaviour as becometh holiness"** (Tit. 2:3). Our goal should be to serve God **"in holiness and righteousness"** all the days of our life on earth (Luke 1:74-75). Although holiness is incomplete in this life, we must earnestly pursue it till our departure from this world.

Sanctification is not some optional grace. The words of Hebrews 12:14 are

emphatic: **". . . without which no man shall see the Lord."** God is infinitely holy and only holy characters will see Him and live with Him forever. Jesus said: **"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God"** (Matt. 5:8). It is **"in righteousness"** that we shall behold His face (Ps. 17:15). Without holiness no man, no matter how orthodox his beliefs, no matter how liberal may be his offerings to the church, no matter how zealous may be his performance of spiritual duties, shall see the Lord!

Second, sanctification is necessary to church membership. Psalm 93:5 declares: **"Holiness becometh thine house, O LORD, for ever"** (cf. Ps. 15:1-5). Members of New Testament churches were described as **"holy brethren"** (Heb. 3:1), **"saints"** (Rom. 1:7; I Cor. 1:2; 14:33; Eph. 5:3; Phil. 1:1) and **"faithful brethren."** Note Colosians 1:2 which reads: **"To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ. . ."** None are to be admitted to membership in the church who are not saints and faithful brethren, for there can be no fellowship between righteousness and unrighteousness (II Cor. 6:14-16).

CONCLUSION

Many impurities and imperfections cleave to the best of us. The holiness of the holiest man on earth comes short of the holiness of God. What wretched men and women we are! Death will remove us from this body of sin and admit our souls to His holy presence. O come Death and deliver my soul from the relics of sin and take me to the One glorious in holiness. Let my impurities and imperfections go with my body to the graveyard! Then I can shout to the top of my voice: **"Farewell vain world! I am going home. My Savior bid me come and I must go."**

A friend of Archbishop Usher frequently urged him to write his thoughts on sanctification, which at length he engaged to do; but a considerable time elapsing, the performance of his promise was importunately demanded. The bishop replied to this purpose: **"I have not written, and yet I cannot charge myself with a breach of promise; for I began to write, but when I came to treat of the new creature which God formed by His own Spirit in every regenerate soul, I found so little of it wrought in myself, that I could speak of it only as parrots, or by rote, but without the knowledge of what I might have expressed, and therefore I do not presume to proceed any further upon it."**

Upon this, his friend stood amazed to hear so humble a confession from so grave, holy, and eminent a man. The bishop then added: **"I must tell you, we do not well understand what sanctification and the new creature are. It is no less than for a man to be brought to an entire resignation of his will to the will of God; and to live in the offering up of his soul continually in the flames of love, as a whole burnt offering to Christ; and oh!**

how many who profess Christianity are unacquainted experimentally with His work upon their souls!"

I conclude my message with the words of Paul to the church at Rome: **"But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof"** (Rom. 13:14).



Faith in God Expressed in the Declaration of Independence

By Bill James and Tom Ross

Author's Note: I heard Bro. Bill James preach an outstanding message on "The Names of God in the Declaration of Independence" at Steer Run Baptist Church in West Virginia where Bro. Mark Minney is pastor back in August of 2009. At that time I asked Bro. James to put it into printed form. Bro. Mark Minney transcribed the message and printed it in the "Voice of the Wilderness" periodical. It was originally a five page document. I asked Bro. James if I could take his original thoughts and add to them. He graciously allowed me to expand on his original article and it turned into a 13 page article, the contents of which were preached at Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church during the month of July, 2010 on Sunday Mornings.

"The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me. He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain" (II Sam. 23: 3-4).

There are four references to God in The Declaration of Independence which was drafted by Thomas Jefferson and signed by fifty-six men from the thirteen colonies. The founders of our great country expressed their belief in God Almighty as the Creator and providential Director of the affairs of men. They believed that those who rule over men **"must be just, ruling in the fear of God."** Such leaders are like a clear, cloudless morning with bright sunshine. They are as refreshing as showers and sunshine on tender grass. **"When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn"** (Pro. 29:2).

The people of the colonies were mourning the "long train of abuses and usurpations" perpetrated by the British government. In the Declaration there are approximately twenty-seven indictments brought against the King of England for intolerable acts committed against the people of the colonies and these atrocities had been patiently borne for a long time. Thus their case is fairly stated "to a candid world" as they appeal

to Jehovah, the True and Living God, the Only Lawgiver, the Supreme Judge of all, to providentially sustain their effort for genuine freedom.

THE FAITH OF THE FOUNDERS

The four references to God appear in the early and latter sentences of this unanimous Declaration of Independence. They are: Nature's God, Creator, Supreme Judge of the world, and Divine Providence. These designations of God certainly refute the errors of those who constantly insist that our nation did not begin and continue as a Christian nation. Our forefathers believed in and called on God for His intervention. They sought His providential care which is something a Deist would not do. Deists believe in a God who created the world but has since remained indifferent and uninvolved in the affairs of the world He created. Even a casual study of the opinions and writings of the founders prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that they were men who believed in the Living God.

W. Cleon Skousen wrote an excellent book entitled *The 5000 Year Leap* in which he highlights the writings and opinions of the founding fathers of America proving that they were indeed men who believed in God. What follows are some excerpts from the writings of the founders:

President George Washington in his Farewell Address said:

"Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports...And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion... Reason and experience both forbid us to expect the national morality can prevail to the exclusion of religious principle. It is substantially true that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government." (*The 5000 Year Leap*, p. 76).

Benjamin Franklin in a letter to Ezra Stiles, president of Yale University wrote:

"Here is my creed: I believe in one God, the Creator of the universe. That he governs it by his providence. That he ought to be worshipped. That the most acceptable service we render to him is in doing good to his other children. That the soul of man is immortal, and will be treated with justice in another life respecting its conduct in this. These I take to be the fundamental points in all sound religion" (*The 5000 Year Leap*, pp. 77-78).

Skousen summarized Franklin's creed in the following way:

1. There exists a Creator who made all things, and mankind should recognize and worship Him.

2. The Creator has revealed a moral code of behavior for happy living which distinguishes right from wrong.

3. The Creator holds mankind

♦ (Continued on page 434)

Faith in God

(Continued from page 433) ◊

responsible for the way they treat each other.

4. All mankind live beyond this life.

5. In the next life mankind are judged for their conduct in this one. (*The 5000 Year Leap*, p. 78)

Samuel Adams said that this group of basic beliefs which constitute "the religion

of America is the religion of all mankind." (*The 5000 Year Leap*, p. 78).

John Adams called these tenets the "general principles" on which the American civilization had been founded in a letter to Thomas Jefferson. (*The 5000 Year Leap*, p. 79).

Thomas Jefferson called these basic beliefs the principles "in which God has united us all." (p. 79)

For those who seek to malign the character of our forefathers, let me say, without hesitation, that they do not hold a candle to these men who pledged their "Lives, Fortunes, and Sacred Honor" to give us the precious liberties we have today. There has been a movement afoot among progressives/secular humanists to discredit our founding fathers as rich, white, racists. For the past one hundred years they have infiltrated every facet of society and are attempting to rewrite history and purge God from the American conscience. They have hijacked our schools, universities, and textbooks.

Mike Riddle, in an excellent article entitled "Do You Know What Your Children Are Being Taught in School?" revealed how the tide has turned in America. He cites John Dewey, an atheist and socialist, father of the modern public school, and contributor to Humanist Manifesto I as being instrumental:

"So why is secular run education so opposed to biblical principles? In the 1930's people like John Dewey led the modern scheme to usher in a 'new social order' in the United States through teacher training institutions. By the 1950's fully 20% of all American school superintendents and 40% of all teacher college heads had received degrees under Dewey at Columbia. As an atheist and socialist, Dewey co-authored the revolutionary, anti-God *Humanist Manifesto I* in 1934." (*Answers Magazine*, Vol. 2, No. 3, July-Sept. 2007, pp. 42, 51).

These people today who want to revise our history and our written documents are enemies of our beloved America. I am personally getting a little tired of those who swear, on the Bible, to uphold the Constitution and then turn around and deliberately work against it. It is also evident that they have little use or respect for the Bible they place their deceitful hands on. I would love to take a poll of all the current office holders and

politicians in the Executive, Judicial, and Legislative branches of our government who actually believe the first verse of the Bible they place their right hand on. I would venture to say that an overwhelming majority don't believe that God is the Creator or that the Bible is Divinely inspired. Their solemn oath to defend the Constitution is a lie when they say "so help me God" because they deny His real existence, His office as Creator, and the authority of His Word.

AMERICA FOUNDED AS A CHRISTIAN NATION

In a trip overseas, that many called President Barack Obama's "Apology Tour" he made a statement that shocked and alarmed many people. President Obama declared that America is not a "Christian Nation." There is an element of truth in what he said, but he should have said that America is no longer a Christian nation. After 100 years of the state religion of progressive secular humanism that demonizes genuine Christianity and the Judeo-Christian world view, America is by and large a nation that dismisses the notion of God. The teacher/priests of progressive secular humanism are found in our schools, universities, media, and government. They have wormed their way into positions of influence and have poisoned our political system, our culture, and even our churches. A little leaven leavens the whole lump.

Such was not always the case in our beloved America. America was founded as a "Christian Nation" and continued on with that designation until the 1960's. The following quotes make this statement abundantly clear:

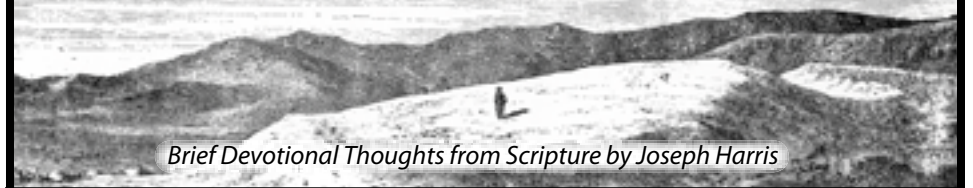
Alexis de Tocqueville, the French jurist who visited America in 1831 wrote a book entitled *Democracy in America*. Here are some of his observations:

"On my arrival in the United States the religious aspect of the country was the first thing that struck my attention; and the longer I stayed there, the more I perceived the great political consequences resulting from this new state of things."

"Religion in America takes no direct part in the government of society, but it must be regarded as the first of their political institutions...I do not know whether all Americans have a sincere faith in their religion-for who can search the human heart?-but I am certain that they hold it to be indispensable to the maintenance of republican institutions. This opinion is not peculiar to a class of citizens or to a party, but it belongs to the whole nation and to every rank of society."

"The sects (different denominations) that exist in the United States are innumerable. They all differ in respect to the worship which is due to the Creator; but they all agree in respect to the duties which are due from man to man. Each sect adores the Deity in its own peculiar manner, but all sects preach the same

The Backside of the Desert



Brief Devotional Thoughts from Scripture by Joseph Harris

All This From A Gallon of Milk

"Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" (James 4:14).

Nothing brings me back to reality like going into the grocery store and buying a gallon of milk. I never buy milk without first looking at the date. Occasionally, the date jumps off the label and hits me in the face, especially this time of year. It shocks me into the realization that the year is over half gone. This thought then leads me to think about three things: My age, my accomplishments and future plans.

The words of James become more meaningful as each year passes. I am reminded that my life is probably over half way lived, unless I live to 102 years of age. As a child, life was eternal. As a teenager, 30 was old. In youth, the years dragged by. Then, the years passed, I matured, settled down and accepted the responsibilities of life. Now the years fly by. Life seems to pass more quickly as I grow older, because I now have something to measure time with, something I did not have as a child: more yesterdays. (Why in the world do I keep buying

milk?)

I then think of my accomplishments. What have I done with my life? What have I really accomplished for God? (We have to be careful and not measure ourselves by others and their achievements). My success as a Christian will be determined by fulfilling God's will for my life and not by doing all the things I think good Christians should do. What specific calling do you have on your life? (I hate milk).

What can I accomplish with the time I have left? If the Lord wills, I still have a few years left on this earth to serve Him. I am now 51. What if I was 61 or 71? Winston Churchill didn't shake the world until he was a senior citizen. Chaucer did not write the Canterbury Tales until he was 60 and Moses did not begin his ministry of deliverance until he was 80. There is still opportunity. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow stated: "For age is opportunity no less, than youth itself, though in another dress." (I vow from this day henceforth to never buy milk again).

Now when I go to the grocery store, I stay away from the dairy section, unless I am ready for a reality check and some heavy thinking.



moral law in the name of God...All the sects of the United States are comprised within the great unity of Christianity, and Christian morality is everywhere the same...There is no country in the world where the Christian religion retains a greater influence over the souls of men than in America."

"The revolutionists of America are obliged to profess an ostensible respect for Christian morality and equity, which does not permit them to violate wantonly the laws that oppose their designs...Thus, while the law permits the Americans to do what they please, religion prevents them from conceiving, and forbids them to commit, what is rash or unjust."

"I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her commodious harbors and her ample rivers, and it was not there; in her fertile fields and boundless prairies, and it was not there; in her rich mines and her vast world commerce, and it was not there. Not until I went to the churches of America and heard her pulpits aflame with righteousness did I

understand the secret of her genius and power. America is great because she is good, and if America ever ceases to be good, America will cease to be great." (*The 5000 Year Leap*, pp. 80-82).

Since the religion of statist progressive secular humanism has poisoned our society we have lost our way. America's greatness will soon be a thing of the past unless we turn back to the very thing that made us great, namely a Judeo Christian ethic.

Our country was founded on the idea that God is real, alive, and active in the course of human events. Our founders and leaders have consistently called upon the nation to seek God, especially during times of great crisis. All the examples of declarations calling for days of Prayer and Fasting pleading with the Almighty to undertake for us in our history clearly reveal this.

Gary DeMar wrote:

"If Deism was so prevalent in the founding of America, then why don't the

◊ (Continued on page 435)

Faith in God

(Continued from page 434) ♦

official documents reflect deistic beliefs? Congress proclaimed days of fasting and thanksgiving annually throughout the period when the War for Independence was fought. On March 16, 1776, Congress called for a 'day of Humiliation, Fasting and Prayer' throughout the colonies. The Proclamation stated that it is the 'indispensable duty of these hitherto free and happy colonies, with true penitence of heart, and the most reverent devotion, publicly to acknowledge the overruling providence of God; to confess and deplore our offences against him; and to supplicate his interposition for averting the threatened danger, and prospering our strenuous efforts in the cause of freedom, virtue, and posterity...' The people were called on to bewail their manifold sins and transgressions, and. By a sincere repentance and amendment of life, appease his righteous displeasure, and through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, obtain his pardon and forgiveness; humbly imploring his assistance to frustrate the cruel purposes of our unnatural enemies." (*America's Christian History, The Untold Story*, p 251).

Interestingly enough, Abraham Lincoln who liberals and progressives view as an icon, publically called upon America to pray, and believed in a personal God who punishes nations for their collective sins. April 30, 1863 was proclaimed "as a day of national humiliation, fasting and prayer."

DeMar writes:

"In the proclamation Lincoln requested all the people to abstain on that day from their ordinary secular pursuits, and to unite in their several places of public worship and at their respective homes in keeping the day holy to the Lord and devoted to the humble discharge of the religious duties proper to the solemn occasion. All this being done in sincerity and truth, let us then rest humbly in the hope, authorized by the Divine teachings, that the united cry of the nation will be heard on high, and answered with blessings no less than the pardon of our national sins, and restoration of our now divided and suffering country to its former happy condition of unity and peace." (*America's Christian History, The Untold Story*, p. 183).

One other quote made by former Chief Justice Earl Warren must be cited to prove that our leaders in the past have acknowledged that America was indeed founded upon Christian principles that enabled her to be great. Warren addressed the annual prayer breakfast of the International Council of Christian Leadership in 1954 where he said:

"I believe no one can read the history of our country without realizing that

the Good Book and the spirit of the Savior have from the beginning been our guiding geniuses...Whether we look to the first charter of Virginia...or to the Charter of New England...or to the Charter of Massachusetts Bay... or to the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut... the same objective is present: A Christian land governed by Christian principles...

I believe the entire Bill of Rights came into being because of the knowledge our forefathers had of the Bible and their belief in it: freedom of belief, of expression, of assembly, of petition, the dignity of the individual, the sanctity of the home, equal justice under law, and reservation of powers to the people...

I like to believe we are living today in the spirit of the Christian religion. I like also to believe that as long as we do so, no great harm can come to our country." (cited in *America's Christian History, The Untold Story*, introduction).

THE FOUNDERS RECOGNIZED GOD AS SOVEREIGN CREATOR AND SUPREME LAWGIVER

The beginning of the Declaration reads thus: "When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary, for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitles them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."

The Declaration signers recognized God as Creator and rightful Lawgiver. They believed that God, not government or anyone else, gave them these unalienable rights. By "unalienable rights" is meant that these rights are not to be sold or transferred. These rights have their foundation in the "Laws of Nature." The Laws of Nature and Nature's God are terms that have been a bit mysterious to me in the past. That is because I was not accustomed to using these exact terms, but Englishmen at that time were. Sir William Blackstone, eminent English jurist, whose writings trained early American lawyers back then explains the terms. "Man....must necessarily be subject to the laws of his Creator... this will of his Maker is called the law of nature.... This law of nature... is of course superior to any other....No human laws are of any validity, contrary to this: and such of them as are valid derive all their force.... from the original." (quoted from *Our Ageless Constitution*, edited by W. David

Stedman and LaVaughn G. Lewis)

Blackstone wrote *Commentaries on the Laws of England* which expressed the tenets of Judeo-Christian theism. Interestingly enough, Blackstone's *Commentaries* sold more copies in early America than in England.

Historian Daniel Boorstin wrote:

"In the first century of American independence, the *Commentaries* were not merely an approach to the study of the law; for most lawyers they constituted all there was of the law." (As cited in *Faith of our Founding Fathers* by Tim LaHaye, p. 87).

Tim LaHaye made some interesting comments regarding Blackstone and his writings:

"Blackstone, a Christian, believed that the fear of the Lord was the beginning of wisdom. Thus he opened his *Commentaries* with a careful analysis of the law of God as revealed in the Bible. He defined law as a rule of action, which is prescribed by some superior, and which the inferior is bound to obey.

To illustrate this definition Blackstone expressed the presuppositional base for law as he saw it: "The doctrines thus delivered we call the revealed or divine law, and they are to be found only in the holy Scriptures. Upon these two foundations the law of nature and the law of revelation, depend all human laws; that is to say, no human laws should be suffered to contradict these."

Blackstone took it as self-evident that God is the source of all laws, whether they were found in the Holy Scriptures or were observable in nature. His presuppositions were thoroughly Christian, founded upon the belief that there existed a personal, omnipotent God who worked in and governed the affairs of men. In consequence, man was bound by those laws, which were in turn a system of absolutes. Why? Because man is a derivative being.

Blackstone wrote: "Man, considered as a creature, must necessarily be subject to the laws of his Creator, for he is entirely a dependent being...And, consequently, as man depends absolutely upon his Maker for everything, it is necessary that he should in all points conform to his Maker's will." (*Faith of our Founding Fathers* by Tim LaHaye, p. 87).

The Founders also studied the writings of John Locke who wrote the famous *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. Locke was a firm believer that God was the Creator and sovereign sustainer of the universe.

Skousen commented on Locke's writings:

"...Locke pointed out that it defies the most elementary aspects of reason and experience to presuppose that everything in existence developed as a result of fortuitous circumstance. The mind, for example, will not accept the proposition that the forces of nature, churning about

among themselves, would ever produce a watch, or even a lead pencil, let alone the marvelous intricacies of the human eye, the ear, or even the simplest of the organisms found in nature. All these are the product of intelligent design and high precision engineering...Lock felt that a person who calls himself an 'atheist' is merely confessing that he has never dealt with the issue of the Creator's existence. Therefore, to Locke an atheist would be to that extent 'irrational,' and out of touch with reality; in fact, out of touch with the most important and fundamental reality...The American founding Fathers agreed with Locke. They considered the existence of the Creator as the most fundamental premise underlying ALL self-evident truth. It will be noted as we proceed through this study that every single self-evident truth enunciated by the Founders is rooted in the presupposition of a Divine Creator." (*The 5000 Year Leap*, pp. 95-97).

No one can honestly discount the influence that Blackstone and Locke had on the thinking of the founding fathers as expressed in the Declaration of Independence and later in the Constitution of the United States.

Alexis de Tocqueville made an interesting observation:

"While I was in America, a witness who happened to be called at the Sessions of the county of Chester (state of New York) declared that he did not believe in the existence of God or in the immortality of the soul. The judge refused to admit the evidence, on the ground that the witness had destroyed beforehand all the confidence of the court in what he was about to say...The New York Spectator of August 23, 1831, related the fact in the following terms: "...The presiding judge remarked that he had not before been aware that there was a man living who did not believe in the existence of God; that this belief constituted the sanction (in law, that which gives binding force) of all testimony in a court of justice; and that he knew of no case in a Christian country where a witness had been permitted to testify without such belief." (*The 5000 Year Leap*, p. 101).

Not only did the Founders believe that God was the Creator, they also acknowledged His Providence and protection as evidenced from their own statements as follows:

George Washington, in his first inaugural address said: "No people can be bound to acknowledge and adore the invisible hand which conducts the affairs of men more than the people of the United States. Every step, by which they have advanced to the character of an independent nation, seems to have been distinguished by some token of providential agency." (*The 5000 Year Leap*, pp. 99-100).

James Madison was equally emphatic

♦ (Continued on page 436)

Faith in God

(Continued from page 435) ♦

on this point when he contemplated the work of the Constitutional Convention and saw the guiding influence of God just as Washington had seen it on the battlefield. Said he: "The real wonder is that so many difficulties should have been surmounted...with a unanimity almost as unprecedented as it must have been unexpected. It is impossible for any man of candor to reflect on this circumstance without partaking of the astonishment. It is impossible for the man of pious reflection not to perceive in it a finger of that Almighty hand which has been so frequently and signally extended to our relief in the critical stages of the revolution." (*The 5000 Year Leap*, p. 100).

Based on the facts of history it is thus indisputable that our Founders acknowledged the True and Living God as the Supreme Lawgiver. The Bible says, "There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy" (Ja. 4.12). The Founder's therefore believed in Accountability to God. The Bible says, "Every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Rom. 14.12). They believed in a Government much higher than the one they envisioned. They sought independence from Great Britain through the power of the One Who is Sovereign and Independent. They knew that moral absolutes were

necessary to keep depraved and restless men from constantly changing things to suit himself in defiance of His Creator and detrimental to the common good.

John Adams, signer of the Declaration and second President of the United States said, "We have no government armed with power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion. Our Constitution was made for a moral and religious people; it is wholly inadequate for any other."

French writer and statesman, Alexis de Tocqueville, who traveled across America in the 1830's talking with people and observing the American way said, "Religion in America takes no direct part in the government of society, but it must be regarded as the first of their political institutions; for if it does not impart a taste for freedom, it facilitates the use of it. I do not know whether all Americans have a sincere faith in their religion...but I am certain that they hold it to be indispensable to the maintenance of republican institutions. This opinion is not peculiar to a class of citizens or a party, but it belongs to the whole nation and to every rank of society."

(Continued in the next issue.)



THE

BIBLE NEWSPAPER

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.

FISCAL CONSERVATIVES "CELEBRATE" COST OF GOVERNMENT DAY

(EP News)--As of Aug. 19, average Americans have earned enough gross income to pay their share of the spending and regulatory burden imposed by federal, state and local governments. In other words, it takes 231 days -- or 63 percent of the national income -- goes toward funding the government and all the regulations it imposes. To commemorate the auspicious occasion, Americans for Tax Reform (ATR) released its "Cost of Government Day" report. ATR's report showed that the number of days required to carry the tax burden has increased by 32 days in less than two years, as a direct result of the economic "recovery" and "stimulus" packages rushed through by Congress. On a state-by-state analysis, Connecticut ranked the highest in

costs. Residents worked 260 days -- 29 days beyond the national average -- toward tax burdens. In contrast, Alaska had the lowest governmental burden, requiring only 209 days.

LEGAL GROUP SUES TO PROTECT WISCONSIN MARRIAGE AMENDMENT FROM ATTACK

(EP News)--Marriage supporters in Wisconsin have filed suit to protect the state marriage amendment from being undercut by an everything-but-marriage domestic-partner law. Gov. Doyle signed into law in June 2009 a domestic partnership registry, as part of his 2010-11 budget -- openly defying existing state law, according to pro-family activists. Wisconsin's strongly worded marriage amendment prohibits same-sex marriage, as well as any "legal status identical or substantially similar to marriage" -- thus,

including domestic partnership registries. Wisconsin Family Action (WEA) President Julaine Appling, lead plaintiff in *Appling v. Doyle*, said the governor's actions were "an egregious violation" of the voters' trust. Appling said that there are 12 other states with marriage amendments similar to Wisconsin's: Ark., Ga., Idaho, Ky., La., Mich., Neb., N.D., Ohio, S.D., Texas and Utah. "Every state needs to be on the lookout for ways that people who are determined to redefine marriage will use to get their way," she said.

LOUISIANA ULTRASOUND LAW GOES INTO EFFECT FOLLOWING FAILED LAWSUIT

(EP News)--Abortionists agreed in August to drop a suit challenging Louisiana's new ultrasound law. A federal judge has cleared the way for the law to go into effect. Louisiana is one of more than 20 states that allow women to see an ultrasound before an abortion. Abortionists are still challenging another part of the new law that precludes them from receiving medical malpractice coverage for the abortions they perform. Gene Mills, president of the Louisiana Family Forum, said the lawsuit was frivolous and the abortionists were right to drop the challenge. "Who can defend withholding from young women information that will help them make informed decisions?" Mills said.

NUMBER OF TEXAS FAMILIES TEACHING AT HOME GROWS 20 PERCENT IN FIVE YEARS

(EP News)--More than 300,000 children in Texas are forgoing the first day of school. Instead, their families have opted to school them at home. Since 2005, Texas has witnessed a steady increase of families -- up 20 percent to an estimated 120,000 -- opting to take control of their children's education and instilling them with traditional values. Tim Lambert, president of Texas Home School Coalition, said the economy also played a role in the shift. "We've talked to a number of folks who have their kids in a private school," Lambert said, "and it's just not possible to pay those types of tuition fees anymore and they do not want to put their kids in a public school." A recent U.S. Department of Education survey found that the top two reasons families choose to home school are religious values and morals. "We continue to see that the No. 1 reason that people chose to home school," said Lambert, "is that they want to integrate their faith or pass on their values in the education of their children."

MONTANA SCHOOL BOARD INVITES PRO-FAMILY EXPERT TO SPEAK ON SEX ED

(EP News)--The debate over offering explicit sex education to students, as early as kindergarten, continues in Helena, Mont. At a recent meeting, parents prevailed in getting the Helena School District to invite renowned author and psychiatrist, Dr. Miriam Grossman to speak at the Sept. 1

meeting. A board-certified child, adolescent and adult psychiatrist, Grossman recently wrote, "You're Teaching My Child What?" which addresses the common myths in sex education and the harm they cause. She is also the author of "Unprotected" -- a searing look at the dangers of the "hook-up" culture on college campuses. The proposed curriculum in Helena would start teaching children in kindergarten about alternate family structures, and by 5th grade is shockingly explicit.

U.S. INSPECTOR GENERAL AUDITS REVEAL FRAUDULENT BILLING BY PLANNED PARENTHOOD

(EP News)--New Jersey Right to Life (NJRTL), released in August three separate audits conducted by the U.S. Inspector General for the Department of Health and Human Services, which show that state Planned Parenthood providers have over-billed the federal government of millions. The audits, conducted between 2001 and 2005, found that nearly \$3 million should have been refunded to the government. NJRTL's report comes just a few weeks after New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie vetoed an effort by abortion-backed elected officials from restoring \$7.5 million in tax dollars to family planning clinics. Len Deo, executive director for the New Jersey Family Policy Council, said it's up to the government to decide where our money is best spent. "These types of abuses in billing serve to underscore the increased scrutiny that these clinics should be subject to," he said.

CALIFORNIA SIXTH GRADER WINS FREE SPEECH VICTORY

(EP News)--A federal court ruled Aug. 12 that officials with McSwain Union Elementary School, in Merced, Calif., violated the rights of Tiffany Amador when they barred her from wearing a pro-life T-shirt in April 2008. Amador wore a pro-life T-shirt, as part of a National Pro-Life T-Shirt Day. The shirt displayed the word "ABORTION" over a series of panels, two displaying pictures of a developing preborn child and the third panel was black. The caption read, "Growing ... growing ... gone." As a result, the attorney said that Amador was taken to the office and told she couldn't wear the shirt. Her attorney argued that the incident violated her right of expression (First Amendment), her freedom from unreasonable search and seizure (Fourth Amendment) and her right of equal protection (14th Amendment). "School officials felt that the pictures (of a preborn child) were too graphic in nature," said Amador's attorney, William Becker. "But, they could never explain what they meant by 'graphic.'" He called the decision a victory for the right to speak out against abortion.

CALIFORNIA SUPREME COURT DECLINED REQUEST TO ORDER OFFICIALS TO DEFEND MARRIAGE

(EP News)--The California Supreme Court ♦ (Continued on page 437)

Bible & the Newspaper

(Continued from page 436) ♦

Court on Sept. 8 denied a request by the Pacific Justice Institute (PJI) to order Attorney General Jerry Brown and Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger to defend marriage. Now the fate of Proposition 8 – the 2008 voter-approved ballot measure defining marriage as being between one man and one woman – rests solely with the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. Brad Dacus, president of the PJI, said that regardless of where you stand on marriage, “People on the left and right should both be mourning the fact that the attorney general and the governor are renegeing on their oaths of office.” “That’s like having a football team and saying it’s your strategy to not show up for the game. That’s not strategy, that’s surrender,” he added.

TEXAS APPEALS COURT REVERSED LOWER COURT, ‘NO’ TO SAME-SEX DIVORCE

(EP News)--A Texas appeals court reversed a lower court ruling on Aug. 31 – and the hopes of gay activists – when it ruled that a same-sex couple, who married in Massachusetts, could not obtain a divorce in the state. The 5th District Court of Appeals in Dallas wrote that, in light of the 2006 constitutional amendment protecting marriage, “We hold that Texas district courts do not have subject-matter jurisdiction to hear a same-sex divorce case.” The decision further stated that the state – either through a legislative or a ballot-driven action – would have to first recognize the marriage, in order to grant the divorce. Kelly Shackelford, president of Liberty Institute, called the unanimous reversal a strong and very well-written decision, which could have a bearing on several cases pending at the federal level – including California’s marriage amendment challenge. “The very kinds of arguments that were used in California were used here,” Shackelford said, “and were appropriately and completely rejected as being invalid.”

FCC APPEALS (AGAIN) A FEDERAL COURT RULING ON ‘FLEETING EXPLETIVES’

(EP News)--The ongoing battle over the limits of free speech continued on Aug. 26, when the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) filed an appeal after a federal court struck down its “fleeting expletives” policy. The 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, which ruled the policy unconstitutional, has left the broadcasting industry without the necessary federal guidelines to restrict profanity and nudity. Parents Television Council praised the FCC for appealing the three-judge panel’s ruling. “The airwaves have become a battleground for networks to out-cuss, out-sex and out-gore each other, and sadly it is children and families who are in the crossfire,” PTC President Tim Winter said. “Our justice system must move quickly to correct the 2nd Circuit ruling and reaffirm the FCC’s

statutory authority.”

FEDERAL JUDGE TELLS CHRISTIAN STUDENT TO ATTEND “SENSITIVITY” CLASSES OR BE EXPELLED

(EP News)--U.S. District Judge Randal Hall denied a request to issue a stay in the case of Jennifer Keeton, a graduate student in counseling who was forced to take remedial courses or face expulsion for voicing her beliefs against homosexuality. Keeton had requested a court order that would have kept her from having to submit to “sensitivity” training while her case is being considered. Hall said the Augusta State University could expel Keeton if she failed to attend the remediation plan designed to “address issues of multicultural competence and develop understanding and empathy.” The judge denied favoring one side over the other. “This is not a case pitting Christianity against homosexuality, [but] the right of a public university to enforce reasonable academic standards,” the judge said. Adam Kissel, an attorney with the Foundation for Individual Rights and Education, said, “This is by no means the end of the case. The judge still has to think about what the ethical code means in this context, and the degree to which the remediation plan really is a curricular requirement or an invasion of a student’s private beliefs.”

UNIONS, MARXIST GROUPS JOIN FORCES IN GET-OUT-THE-VOTE EFFORTS

(EP News)--With a little more than two months to go before the Nov. 2 elections, organized labor unions have pledged more than \$100 million to defend pro-union candidates, most of whom are liberal Democrats. The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) plans to kick in about \$50 million. Former rivals, the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) and the AFL-CIO have united and committed a combined \$88 million to defend eight Senate and 34 House seats, located in 26 states. The SEIU, which richly benefited from President Obama’s health care reform bill, identified 15 top-priority Democrat House members to defend, including: Reps. John Boccieri of Ohio, Bill Foster of Illinois, Betsy Markey of Colorado, Tom Perriello of Virginia, Gary Peters of Michigan and Dina Titus of Nevada.

N.Y. CITY COUNCIL VOTES TO PROMOTE SAME-SEX MARRIAGES OUT OF STATE

(EP News)--Although New York’s legislative session has long since ended, the push for same-sex marriage continues. New York City’s powerful council approved a measure on Aug. 25, by a vote of 47-1, to require the City Clerk’s office to provide same-sex New York couples seeking domestic partnerships about nearby states where same-sex marriage is legally recognized. To date, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont recognize same-sex marriage. New

York Governor David Paterson had issued an executive order in 2009, requiring the state to recognize same-sex marriages performed elsewhere. City Council Speaker Christine Quinn said, “Our vote today sends another message to the New York State Senate that we in the City of New York have gone as far as we can go.” The state Senate has narrowly defeated several attempts to pass same-sex marriage. The Rev. Jason McGuire, executive director of New Yorkers for Constitutional Freedom, said, “It’s time that the rest of New Yorkers send a message November 2nd that we’ve taken about as much as we’re going to take as well. In state Senate races, state assembly races and even at the federal races, we are seeing time and again that the social values, whether it be same-sex marriage or pro-life values, are percolating to the top. Social values do matter.”

TWO REPUBLICAN GOVERNORS REJECT NEW SEX ED PROGRAM, APPLY FOR ABSTINENCE FUNDS

(EP News)--Republican Govs. Bob McDonnell of Virginia and Tim Pawlenty of Minnesota applied for abstinence-education funding on Aug. 30 – just meeting U. S. Department of Health and Human Services’ deadline. The U.S. Congress and the administration had canceled all abstinence-centered program grants for the FY2010 budget, putting at risk more than 2 million students who are expected to attend 176 abstinence programs this fall. However, pro-family organizations alerted people that the administration had refused to release a pivotal abstinence study. After protest, HHS posted the study online. Chad Hills is sexual health and abstinence policy analyst for CitizenLink, the public policy arm of Focus on the Family. He said Americans deserve answers from President Obama and his administration about its lack of transparency of the survey results.

NEW KENNEDY BILL COULD REMOVE RELIGIOUS HIRING RIGHTS PROTECTIONS

(EP News)--Rep. Patrick Kennedy, D-R.I., recently sponsored a bill that attempts to amend the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) for the first time in 46 years – and remove religious exemptions for faith-based organizations that receive federal funds.

According to the bill, it would affect “licensed professional counselors, marriage and family therapists, pastoral counselors, psychosocial rehabilitation specialists, and any other individual determined to be appropriate by the Secretary.” Steve McFarland, chief legal officer for World Vision, said this bill has huge implications for religious organizations across the country. Faith-based groups are worried that when Congress returns in mid-September, the Democrats may attempt to, through a simple budget resolution, implement the dangerous language throughout all levels of government.

LIFEWAY SURVEY: MILLENNIALS DIVIDED OVER SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

(EP News)--LifeWay Research released its latest survey on Millennials – Americans born between 1980 and 1991 – and found that 61 percent either “strongly agreed” or “somewhat agreed” with same-sex marriage. The research findings will be highlighted in a new book – “The Millennials: Connecting to America’s Largest Generation” – by the president of LifeWay Christian Resources, Thom Ranier, and his son Jess. According to LifeWay Research: “Two-thirds of those with no religious preference agree strongly there is nothing wrong with same-sex marriage, while only 1 in 7 of those who say they trust Christ as Savior agree strongly. Further, 46 percent of those who say they trust Christ as Savior strongly disagree and in fact find fault with marriage between members of the same gender.”

“And he said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be: for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith” (Deut. 32:20).

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS REJECTS ABSTINENCE, TELLS MEMBERS TO PROMOTE ‘SAFE-SEX’

(EP News)--Days after the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services bowed to public pressure and posted the results of a favorable abstinence survey, the American Academy of Pediatrics released a policy statement Aug. 31, stating it was “unwise” to promote abstinence-only education. In its policy statement, “Sexuality, Contraception and the Media,” AAP’s Council on Communications and Media, indicated: “It is unwise to promote ‘abstinence-only’ sex education when it has been shown to be ineffective and when the media have become such an important source of information about ‘non-abstinence.’” Melissa Henson, director of communications and public education at Parents Television Council, said, “Sexual relationships that are adulterous or that take place outside of the context of marriage are always presented in a favorable light,” Henson said. “The only kind of sexual relationships that really aren’t addressed on television are sexual relationships within the context of a loving and committed marriage.”

ACLU SAYS “RIGHT TO LIFE MOST FUNDAMENTAL OF ALL RIGHTS’-BUT ONLY IF YOU’RE A TERRORIST, NOT A BABY

(EP News)--Seriously. The ardently pro-abortion organization declares in its Aug. 30 lawsuit against the Obama Administration that the CIA’s plan for targeted killings of terrorists violates the terrorists’ rights.

“The right to life is the most fundamental of all rights,” says ACLU lawyer Arthur Spitzer in the complaint, filed in U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C.

While this tack might annoy the folks in

♦ (Continued on page 438)

Bible & the Newspaper

(Continued from page 437) ♦

the ACLU's Reproductive Freedom Project, it's got to be music to the ears of Anwar al-Awlaki, the American-born, al-Qaeda-linked Muslim cleric hiding in Yemen. Al-Awlaki has been tied to at least two of the 9/11 hijackers and to the Fort Hood shooter, Maj. Nidal Hasan, before Hasan slaughtered 13 of his fellow soldiers and an unborn baby on Nov. 5, 2009. After the incident, al-Awlaki pronounced Hasan a "hero."

The CIA put out a "kill" order on al-Awlaki in early 2010, according to the suit, which was filed by the Center for Constitutional Rights and the ACLU. It asks U.S. District Judge John Bates to order the government to stop any plot to kill al-Awlaki. That might delay the fond wish of Hasan, who told al-Awlaki in one of the captured e-mails, "I can't wait to join you in the afterlife." Of course, Hasan himself is still in this life, too, facing murder charges.

"U.S. citizens have a right to know what conduct may subject them to execution at the hands of their own government," Mr. Spitzer wrote. "Due process requires, at a minimum, that citizens be put on notice of what may cause them to be put to death by the state.... Both the Constitution and international law prohibit targeted killing except as a last resort to protect against concrete, specific, and imminent threats." Given al-Awlaki's colorful past, one would think he would qualify under "concrete, specific, and imminent."

Justice Department spokesman Matthew Miller said in a statement, "The U.S. is careful to ensure that all its operations used to prosecute the armed conflict against those forces, including lethal operations, comply with all applicable laws, including the laws of war."

By the way, the ACLU's Reproductive Freedom Project page, which celebrates *Roe v. Wade*, excoriates abstinence-based sex education, and hails Obama's expansion of taxpayer-funded complicity in abortions, does not display the "right to life" phrase. It does have a "Tweet to close Gitmo!" button.

Perhaps the ACLU would look more kindly on taking out terrorists if the CIA renamed the operation the "Selective Retroactive Abortion Project."

"He that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall be surely put to death" (Ex. 21:12).

ONLY \$5.7 MILLION TO CREATE ONE \$45,000/YEAR JOB!

(New American) In July, Neil Barofsky, the special inspector general over the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP), reported that the government's bailout and stimulus spending has soared to an astronomical \$3.7 trillion.

In the August 15th issue of *Money and Markets*, Dr. Martin D. Weiss notes that this gargantuan government spending has thus far generated a total of 654,000 jobs.

"So," say Dr. Weiss, "let's do the math: Just divide \$3.7 trillion spent on the 654,000

jobs that were created, and you'll see that every one of those new jobs cost a staggering \$5,657,492 to create!"

Dr. Weiss continues: "That's more than an outrage; it's patently idiotic: the median income for full-time American workers is only about \$45,000. At that rate, it will take nearly 126 long years for each new job to generate paychecks worth over \$5.6 million.

And with an average tax rate of 25 percent, it will take the government about five hundred years to recoup the money from income taxes."

CONTROVERSY COMMENTS ABOUT 9/11

(New American) Faisal Abul Rauf, the leading cleric at the center of the plan to build a mosque near 9/11's ground zero, made this comment during an appearance on *60 Minutes*: "I wouldn't say that the United States deserved what happened, but the United States policies were an accessory to the crime that happened."

He was later sent on a paid State Department tour of the Middle East.

L.A. \$111M IN STIMULUS SAVED JUST 55 JOBS

(FOX News) More than a year after Congress approved \$800 billion in stimulus funds, the Los Angeles city controller has released a 40-page report on how the city spent its share, and the results are not living up to expectations. The city's controller stated, "I'm disappointed that we've only created or retained 55 jobs after receiving \$111 million."

According to the audit, "the Los Angeles Department of Public Works spent \$70 million in stimulus funds -- in return, it created seven private sector jobs and saved seven workers from layoffs. Taxpayer cost per job: \$1.5 million.

The Los Angeles Department of Transportation created even fewer jobs per dollar, spending \$40 million but netting just nine jobs. Taxpayer cost per job: \$4.4 million.

INTERNATIONAL BRIEFS

USAID USES TAXPAYER FUNDS TO PUSH ABORTION IN PHILIPPINES

(EP News)--The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is using taxpayer dollars to marketing contraceptives and "family planning" services to the Philippines. With the assistance of the Philippine government, USAID will launch a marketing campaign that focuses on "increasing modern contraceptive use through demand generation," and "repackaging or selling the concept of family planning as a lifestyle that contributes to better quality of life." Unfortunately, the predominately Catholic nation does not have laws, regulations or policies limiting the selling of contraceptives or abortion services. Human Life International's Country director for the Philippines, Dr. Rene Bullecer, said, "The US government, through USAID, finds it now very easy to push their anti-life agenda

to the Philippines with minimal pressure for the reason that the current Filipino administration under President Aquino is a known ally of President Obama, and a pro-choice advocate himself."

GERMANS CLOSE MOSQUE IN HAMBURG

(New American) German Intelligence officials expressed concern over the activities of young Germans who were being turned into religious fanatics by the Taiba mosque. Hamburg officials closed the mosque. This same mosque is where several of the 9/11 hijackers met.



The American Home, What Happened?

By Eldon Joslin
of Birmingham, AL



Today, as we look about us, we realize that truly we are in the last days. Someone said, "As the home goes so goes the country." I would like to change that statement a little and write on

the home. Have you been wondering why our country is in such a sinful and spiritually awful state, or why our churches are not having revivals that would cause our country to be a spiritual atmosphere? As the home goes so goes the church, and as the church goes so goes the country, which means that the problems we are facing rest upon the home.

As we look at the American home, we see nothing but chaos and confusion. The home has become a meeting place where the family shuts out the lights and goes to sleep. The rest of the time, the home has some small resemblance of a home; but we notice that most of the time the parents are both working (an unfortunate economic state of affairs) to pay the expenses to keep in operation. The family eats cafeteria style; there is seldom time for the members of such a family to gather for the purpose of communication. The members are either busy watching TV., playing video games, listening to their stereo (that we now see hanging on their ears; and I guess if you need their attention you must leave them a note and set up an appointment), and spending all available time on sports or some hobby. Family members see about as much of each other as they do the checker at the grocery store.

It is no wonder that about half of

these homes are experiencing divorce. If they are not having this problem, they are having major problems with children trying to hide from reality by turning to everything from drugs to running away. If I have described the American home wrong, I apologize, but this is what I see all around me. I wish I had a quick ready solution. Someone said the family that prays together stays together. This may be somewhat true, but families that attend church are experiencing divorce, possibly at a slower rate; but it is still a major problem. One large Baptist church here had almost one hundred divorce cases in their church. We as pastors feel like we should be able to keep our families in the church together through proper spiritual teaching. For reasons that seem to be growing stronger than the church, our society is teaching that there are many good reasons for the home to be torn apart. There is something quite wrong when children are being reared in a society, which is teaching through the broken home, that people have such a right as to put their own personal happiness before the home. I believe this falls back on our society that children are, by the example set before them, learning that the home does not require all that are in it to be committed to it.

I believe that the key word here is commitment. This word is defined as a promise or a pledge. The concept then of commitment means that a person should determine what their goals are for their life and always be striving in that direction. When it seems right to choose a person to spend the rest of your life with, one should look for one that will help them reach the goals that had previously been set. When one has made this a commitment, they can take that partner for better or for worse until death do them part. Today the commitment is not there so they take one for better or else, and as long as nothing rocks the boat, they are fine. The problem is that many children are being reared and no one has ever told them, "No." So when they marry and problems arise, they act like a spoiled little brat; and they are, and they cannot find a way to solve the problem; so they throw in the towel. I also believe that if young people of today would do as many have done in years gone by and make a commitment to God, read the Bible, and see what God said about marriage and the home, they might find a way to be committed to try to make things work.

The problem is still around the corner when our society is teaching just the opposite. For example, the most popular TV. programs are showing people that are married, cheating on one another; couples just living together, separated couples trying to rear families without the completeness of a working home. A house can be four walls or a mansion, but it takes a lot of living in a house to make

♦ (Continued on page 439)

The American Home

(Continued from page 438) ♦

it a home.

The only way that the American home will change is for people to see the need. Oh, how close the need is to us. We can see it in the children of these broken homes. The sorrow that surrounds them is awesome. The loneliness they experience and face is terrible. Statistics show that children of broken homes will be makers of broken homes. We have seen in the past, when hard times drove people together, but this is not always the solution. Folks, there is no easy way to keep the home together. It takes a commitment, first of all to God, saying I want to please God in the way I live and I want to do what is right. Then a commitment to each other that will cause one to work for happiness and the joy that can come to the heart of those who have settled their differences and have peace knowing the reward of reaching those goals. Where is the American home going? I do not know, but it could become a thing of the past. God destroyed the world in the days of Noah because of these sins we have been talking about. He destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah when they, too, made light of the proper use of marriage. Yes, these must be the last days, but I hope that you will not float down the river like a dead fish and go with the flow, but make a commitment to serve God and set an example that will be of help to others. Who knows, maybe God will spare a Nation for a few righteous. Pray that God will bless us all. (*Scripture Notes*, March 1984).



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BOOKS BY J. R. GRAVES

- Act of Christian Baptism** \$0.75
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- Christian Baptism: Profession of Faith** \$0.99
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An exposition of the parables of Jesus, many of which deal with prophetic matters. The author writes that Christ designed to teach and illustrate by His parables the great fundamental facts that underline the covenant of redemption, and His dispensational work in the administration of His government, and His dealings with sin, until He has consummated His work in righteousness at the end of the coming or Millennial Age.

The First Baptist Church in America
S. Adlam & J. R. Graves \$5.95
Documents the establishment of the first Baptist church on American soil and also gives much early American Baptist history.

The Lord's Supper: A Church Ordinance \$1.25
A perceptive discussion on the nature and purpose of the Lord's Supper and that it is a local church ordinance originally given to New Testament churches by Jesus.

The Relation of Baptism to Salvation \$0.75
Answers the question: does baptism have any relation to salvation? and other questions on baptism.

What Is Conscience? \$0.60
A study of the question of baptism in the life of the believer. It answers the question of what constitutes a clear conscience.

What Is It to Eat and Drink Unworthily? \$0.60
The author answers this question clearly in a discussion of its symbolism.

TABERNACLE

(Continued)

Jewish Tabernacle, The
Newton, Richard 25.00
Newton presents the person and work of Jesus Christ in all its fullness and beauty as displayed in the God-ordained ritual of the OT Tabernacle.

Tabernacle of the Old Testament, The
Sparks, Bobby L. 7.00
This book is very well written. Every item in the tabernacle is described in detail. It has a sixteen page section of colored pictures of an authentic scale model.

God's Sanctuary - Meditations on the Tabernacle
Raven, C. H. 14.99

God's Sanctuary is the result of many years interest in the study of the Tabernacle. The result is a most interesting book, not written in a heavy theological style, but rather in an easily read chatty manner. It is most suitable for all who seek to have an insight into the great truths and teaching of the Tabernacle in the wilderness.

Outline Studies of the Tabernacle
Habershon, Ada R. 8.99
A thorough, outlined study of the construction and service of the tabernacle.

Tabernacle Model
Dowley, Tim 14.99
A full color cardboard scale model to build of the Tabernacle.

Tabernacle, The
Levy, David M. 24.99
The author provides a resource equally helpful for those with little Bible knowledge and those with many years of personal Bible study, promising to challenge the reader with the significance of the Tabernacle.

Tabernacle - Its Priests and Its Services, The
Brown, William 16.99

Brown repeatedly points out the significance of the tabernacle for the modern believer. His careful study and faithful interpretation show that the study of the tabernacle, its rites, and the meanings behind them clearly points to Jesus Christ as the final attainment of all the tabernacle's aspirations.



Strange Tales from Humble Life
By John Ashworth

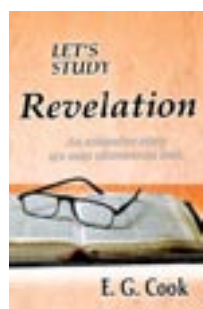
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In these five different volumes the author narrates many of his own true experiences which he had as a minister of the Gospel. These stories are a testimony to the saving grace of God. The author was known as "the preacher to the poor."

A Systematic Study of Bible Doctrine

by Thomas Paul Simmons
\$32.00

(We have a limited quantity available.)



Let's Study Revelation
by
E. G. Cook
\$11.00

This book was originally published in 1970. It has been out of print for many years.

The book is paper back and consists of 197 pages. Also, included in this reprint is a short biography of Bro. Cook by the late Elder Milburn Cockrell.

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\$75.00-99.99	\$8.00
\$100.00 and Up	FREE

BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 8-1-2010 to 8-30-2010

Beginning Balance	\$10,212.48
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	225.00
Berea B. C., Westpoint, TN.....	50.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	100.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
.....	475.00
TOTAL	10,687.48
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio Time	1,710.00
Tape Production	195.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	1,905.00
.....	\$8,782.48
Interest	+ .45
.....	8,782.93
Less Corbin, KY des.	-1,403.72
ENDING BALANCE	\$7,378.76

CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT

Beginning Balance	\$1,563.72
RECEIPTS:	
TOTAL	1,563.72
EXPENDITURES:	
WCTT	160.00
ENDING BALANCE	\$1,403.72



BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 8-1-2010 to 8-30-2010

Beginning Balance	\$1,962.71
RECEIPTS:	
Amazing Grace B. C., Stockdale, TX.....	25.00
B. C. of Brimfield, Brimfield, IL	18.12
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	501.42
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL.....	60.00
Berea M. B. C., West Point, TN	150.00
Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX	100.00
Bible Believer's B. C., Naples, ID	50.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV	300.00
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Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL.....	25.00
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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
Harold McSwain, Mansfield, LA	10.00
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Sovereign Grace B. C., Columbus, MS	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL.....	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C. Silsbee, TX.....	30.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Wake Forest, NC.....	100.00
Steve Cooper, Kansas City, KS	25.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA	25.00
Subscriptions	44.00
Dividing checks	150.00
Anonymous	1,241.00
Sub Total	\$3,932.25
TOTAL	\$5,932.25
EXPENDITURES:	
Printing.....	581.00
Postage	721.01
Supplies	111.49
Wages	2,300.00
Wages*	280.00
FICA	193.10
Dividing checks	150.00
Total Expenditures	4,208.26
.....	1,595.65
Bank Charge	-13.00
ENDING BALANCE	\$1,582.65

*Extra wages were for extra help on several projects we are working on. These funds reimbursed by Berea Baptist Church.

Calling All Sinners!

By Rosco Brong
(1908 - 1985)

ONLY SINNERS ARE CALLED TO SALVATION—GOOD PEOPLE ARE NOT EVEN INVITED

“They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance” (Mark 2:17).

Christians fail to represent Christ if they fail to attract sinners. The context here informs us that **“many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed him.”** True, Jesus was not always a popular preacher. Sometimes the crowds left Him, and even professed disciples rejected some of His teaching and **“walked no more with him”** (John 6:60-66). A time came when His closest disciples forsook Him, and when the multitude howled for His blood (Mark 14:50; 15:11-14).

ATTRACTING SINNERS

So His true followers may sometimes have to stand alone with God, and through the centuries millions of true believers have died for their testimony to Him Who laid down His life to redeem them. But as Jesus lifted up on the cross **“will draw all”** to Himself (John 12:32), so the blood of His martyrs has persuaded sinners of the truth of His testimony where milder means have failed.

Yet it remains true, generally speaking, that there was something about the life and teaching of Jesus that attracted sinners, so that **“the common people heard him gladly”** (Mark 12:37). And as it is wrong for a disciple to lack courage to stand alone when duty demands it, it is wrong also to lack the love and compassion that may attract sinners, not merely to us, but to our testimony and to the Savior Who has made us what we are—so far as we partake of His divine nature (II Peter 1:4).

If sinners in our generation are attracted or distracted to all kinds of false religion rather than to the testimony of Jesus Christ, can we be sure that the fault is all theirs? Is it not possible that we may be partly to blame, because we are such poor examples of the life and love that come from above?

NOT ONE RIGHTEOUS

“The righteous” of our text do not in fact exist upon earth. Of course, there are many people who think they are righteous, but God has declared of the human race, **“There is none righteous, no, not one”** (Rom. 3:10).

Be assured, if you are disposed to think of yourself as righteous, that Jesus calls only sinners to repentance. If you are all right, there is no need to change. But if, as



Jesus taught, God is right and you are wrong, then He calls you to repentance—to a change of mind—to a complete change in your way of thinking about self, about sin, and about

God.

Jesus came “not to call righteous persons, but sinners to repentance.” Note that there is no definite article here in the Greek or in correct translation. Jesus was not suggesting that there are some righteous persons in the world. He simply stated that the kind of people He came to call to repentance are not righteous, but sinners.

Plenty of people in the world are righteous in their own eyes but sinners in the sight of God, while others (not too many) are sinners in their own eyes but (for Christ’s sake) accounted righteous in the sight of God. Nevertheless, the judgment of God’s holy Word upon a world of sinners still stands: **“There is none righteous, no, not one.”**

GOD COMMANDS REPENTANCE

Jesus’ call to sinners to repentance is therefore as far-reaching as the command of God the Father, Who **“now commandeth ALL MEN EVERYWHERE to repent”** (Acts 17:30)(Emph. RB). What the Son invites as a matter of mercy, the Father commands as a matter of judgment.

Sinners who despise the loving invitation of Jesus while He offers them, mercy will one day fall under His wrath in judgment, since it is in Him that God **“will judge the world in righteousness”** in that appointed day (Acts 17:31).

You may think what and how you will and no doubt you think pretty well of yourself; yet in the judgment of God, **“My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith**

the LORD” (Isa. 55:8).

As a matter of simple fact, our natural minds share in the sinful corruption of Adam’s fallen race, and our thinking needs to be corrected by the Spirit of our Creator and Redeemer. This correction in our thinking, this revolutionary change of mind, is New Testament repentance, and this is God’s command now to all men everywhere.

REPENTANCE UNTO LIFE

Repentance is not an end in itself, but a means to an end. There is not necessarily any virtue in experiencing a change of mind—especially if the change is from good to bad, from bad to worse, or from one error to another. The repentance to which Jesus calls and which God commands of all men is toward God (Acts 20:21), from sin (Rev. 9:21), from dead works (Heb. 6:1), and from unbelief to faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ (Mark 1:15).

Even gospel repentance is not an end but a beginning of eternal life and salvation, as appears in Acts 11:18: “Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.”

We may well be reminded of Ephesians 2:8: “By grace ye have been saved through faith, and this thing” (that is, the whole experience of being saved by grace through faith) “not from yourselves: the gift is from God.”

So repentance, which is completed in faith is impossible, is “granted” or given from God. He not only commands it: He grants it; and apart from His gracious provision none would repent. But it remains a human responsibility, and **“except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish”** (Luke 13:3, 5).

JESUS CALLS YOU

Our text informs us that Jesus came to call sinners to repentance. Since you are a sinner, He came to call, and does call, you. For the very reason that He knows your soul’s sickness, the great Physician invites you to put your case into His hands, with the assurance that He never loses a case so committed to His care.

“God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8).

Because you recognize yourself

a sinner, because you need a Savior, **“Repent ye, and believe the gospel”** that **“Christ died for our sins”**--for your sins—**“according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures”** (I Cor. 15:1-4).

“Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely” (Rev. 22:17). If you will, this means you. Jesus invites, Jesus calls you to repentance.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Grace Missionary Baptist Church of Marion, IL, and Pastor Raymond Ellis would like to announce a special meeting October 7th-9th. Elder Tom Ross will be speaking.

Service times are Thursday and Friday at 7:00 p.m., and Saturday at 10:00 a.m. with a luncheon following.

All are invited to attend. For more information contact Pastor Ellis at 618-983-8697.

The Grace Missionary Baptist Church, 2750 S 53rd West Ave, Tulsa, OK and Pastor David O’Neal would like to announce a Bible Conference being held October 15th thru 17th.

Scheduled speakers are: Elders Ted Tweet, Nathaniel Hille, Tom Horn, Leroy Pack, and Vernon Buttress.

For more information, contact Pastor David O’Neal, (918) 585-2418 or dwo.gmchurch@yahoo.com

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Silsbee, TX and Pastor Jose’ Serrano would like to announce their upcoming 25th Annual Bible Conference to be held, our precious Lord willing, October 15th thru 17th, 2010 starting at 7 p.m. A light dinner will be served starting at 5 p.m.

The Faith Missionary Baptist Church of Clarksville, TN has called Elder Shawn Berry as pastor. Please remember this church and pastor in your prayers.

The New Testament Baptist Church of Burton, OH has called Elder Billy Holbrook as pastor. Please remember this church and pastor in your prayers.

The Grace Baptist Church in Fredericktown, OH has called Elder Justin Meier as pastor. Please remember this church and pastor in your prayers.

The Bethel Bible Baptist Church, PO Box 85, Mansfield, LA is in need of a pastor.

Any interested Elder should call Connie McMellon at 318-872-1647.

The Landmark Baptist Church of Collinsville, IL is in need of a pastor.

Any interested Elders may call (618) 288-4236 for more information.

ARTICLE INDEX

A Dose of Reality	p. 427
Alive or Dead? by Milburn Cockrell	p. 421
The American Home, What Happened? by Eldon Joslin	p. 438
The Backside of the Desert	p. 434
Bible and the Newspaper	p. 436
Calling All Sinners! by Rosco Brong	p. 440
The Doctrine of Sanctification by Milburn Cockrell - Part 2	p. 428
Faith in God Expressed in the Declaration of Independence by Bill James & Tom Ross	p. 433
Forum	pp. 430-431
Funnybone	p. 429
God’s Pardoning Prerogative by George Phillips	p. 421
Spiritual Pride	p. 425
Then Shall the End Come by Philip C. Parks	p. 421
What Is the Gift of the Holy Spirit? by Timothy Hille	p. 421