

# The Berea Baptist Banner

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

## Personal Witnessing

By Elder Andy Proctor  
of Winston-Salem, North Carolina

"The Great Commission or the Great Omission?" series  
Part 5

"When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,) He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee. And he must needs go through Samaria. Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.) Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest



the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw. Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no

◊ (Continued on page 2)

## Who is God?

By Wm. Doyal Thomas  
(1932 - 2018)

It seems sad that such a question would ever be asked. Yet, there are multiplied millions of people who do not know who God is. And they make no pretense about knowing, and seem to be unconcerned and uncaring.

There are other millions who imagine a god, and then seek to be identified with their imagined god. The number of these imagined gods is unknown, for it seems that everywhere you look there is a new god who suddenly appears on the scene to lead the unknowing into another false way.



But Who "is" God?

Is God the imagined god of men? And if so, which of the many is the authentic? It is obvious that all the many cannot be the real - for there are many, and each is thought to be the real by someone. Everyone most surely is thinking that his is the real.

The imagined god of man cannot be God. Whichever god comes into man's depraved and darkened mind cannot be God.

◊ (Continued on page 5)

## Down—But Not Out!

By Roger Reed  
of Mansfield, Ohio

"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia: Grace be to you and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as



the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation

and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation. And our hope of you is steadfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation. For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of

◊ (Continued on page 8)



**October 5, 2023**  
**Volume XXXXIII, Number 10**

Whole Number 531

Staff: Sharon Cockrell and Marsha Kiser  
THE BEREA BAPTIST BANNER (UPS 546470) is published monthly for \$6.00 per year by the authority of the Berea Baptist Church, 3881 Highway 363, Mantachie, Mississippi 38855. Periodical Publication postage paid at Mantachie, Mississippi.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE BEREA BAPTIST BANNER, P. O. Box 39, Mantachie, Mississippi 38855-0039.

LOCATION OF PUBLISHING CHURCH: Our church is located on state highway 363 about one mile south of Mantachie, Mississippi. Readers are always welcome to visit our services.

CHURCH PHONE: 1-662-282-7794.

PUBLICATION POLICIES: All matter for publication should be sent to the editor. All manuscripts are to be typed and double spaced. All such material becomes the property of BBB and will not be returned unless requested by the writer. We reserve the right to edit and condense all materials sent to us for publication.

The publication of an article does not necessarily mean the editor is in complete agreement with the writer, nor does it mean he endorses all this person may have written on other subjects.

COPYING PRIVILEGES: Unless otherwise stated any article published in this paper may be copied by other publications, provided they give proper credit line stating that such was copied from this publication, and the date of publication; provided that such materials are not published for profit. If we are not on an exchange list with the publication copying, it is requested that a copy of the issue containing the

article be sent to our address. All copyrighted materials may not be copied without written consent.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY with paid circulation in most states in the U.S.A. and some foreign countries.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES - U.S.

One year.....\$6.00  
Two years.....\$10.00  
Five years.....\$24.00

SUBSCRIPTION RATES - FOREIGN One Year \$45  
PLANNING TO MOVE? Notify us three weeks in advance. The post office will only forward periodical mail for 90 days. They charge us \$.70 for each "change of address" they have to send us. Please save us this expense and the post office time.

BUNDLES TO ONE ADDRESS: These are sent for \$4 per paper for a year. An example: 10 papers for one year at \$40 or 20 papers for one year at \$80.00.

A PAPER WITHOUT SUBSCRIPTION: Some times people write to us and say that they did not subscribe for the BBB. They are receiving our paper because someone else has paid for their subscription.

We trust the BBB will be received as an outstretched hand to you. Take what you find helpful and discard what you cannot use. If you do not want to receive such a gift subscription, please write to us. We are happy to cancel such a subscription. We do not want to go where we are not wanted.

DISCLAIMER: The Editor assumes that the articles submitted for publication in the BBB are written by the person whose name they bear, unless otherwise indicated by a quote from another writer. However, the Editor cannot personally guarantee that this is the case in all articles which appear in the BBB.

The purpose of the Berea Baptist Banner is as follows:

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

## Personal Witness...

(Continued from page 1) ◊

**husband: For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly. The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he. And upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman: yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her? The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? Then they went out of the city, and came unto him" (John 4:1-30).**

Carrying out the Great Commission involves much more than simply evangelizing at home, for we are to start at Jerusalem, as it were, and then, go out into all the world. **"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea,**

**and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).**

We must be reminded that this is a command to the entire church, not just a few members. **"Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word" (Acts 8:4).** Preaching here means simply to bring glad or good tidings that can be used in terms of public preaching or personal witnessing, so is applicable to those who are called or gifted to preach publicly and/or those who simply share the gospel with an individual.

It is part of what Paul said in Philippians 1:5 **"For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;"** that is, not only initially, but continually on a personal level of fellowship in the gospel, in living it and sharing it.

Note that before they were called to be apostles they could not help but share Christ with others: **"Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou? He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour. One of the two which heard John [speak], and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon (siblings witnessing, home missions and personal witnessing), and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld**

◊ (Continued on page 3)

### Tune in to the Berea Baptist Broadcast

| STATION                | TIME                          | DIAL        | WATTS     |     |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----|
| WCNA, Myrtle, MS.....  | Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m. ....  | 95.9 .....  | 3 , 0 0 0 | F M |
| WCTT, Corbin, KY ..... | Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m. ....  | 680 .....   | 5 , 0 0 0 | A M |
| WFTA, Tupelo, MS ..... | Sunday 9:30 - 10:00 a.m. .... | 101.9 ..... | 3 , 0 0 0 | F M |

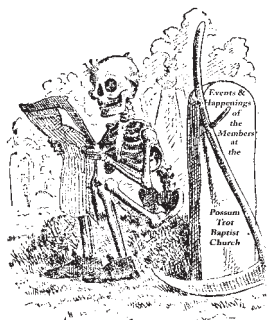
Berea Baptist Banner  
PO Box 39  
Mantachie, Mississippi  
38855

(662) 282 - 7794

[www.bereabaptistchurch.org](http://www.bereabaptistchurch.org)

[request@bereabaptistchurch.org](mailto:request@bereabaptistchurch.org)  
[office@bereabaptistchurch.org](mailto:office@bereabaptistchurch.org)

### Perishing Subscription?



Can't remember if you renewed? Look at your mailing label on the front page of this month's paper. If you see above your name "Expires 10/2023" then this will be your last issue. So renew now, otherwise you will not be reading the next issue of the *Banner*.

### Planning a move?

Please let us know your new address. The post office charges us \$.79 for each returned wrong address.

## Personal Witness...

(Continued from page 2) ◊

him, he said, **Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone. The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me. Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel**" (John 1:35-49).

To be in proper position, let us recall at the beginning when it was brought out that we must have a Heart for God, a Heart for Souls and a Heart to Work. There are many helps and tools today that the early church did not have, abundance of bibles, literature, tracts, media outlets, etc...

Even with the greater amount of such ways and means to reach people, it seems less and less of the true gospel is being spread by individuals. I can probably count on one hand the people who have personally related the genuine gospel to me before I was converted and even afterwards, to seek to win me to Christ as one that winneth souls is wise.

It is a heart issue that is so often neglected and it is no

wonder that the God Who looks on the heart does not bless our efforts otherwise as He did during the days of the early churches.

In our text we have an example of personal witnessing given by our Lord Jesus Christ.

We are called to **"Go into all the world..."** because typically the world does not come to us knowingly, especially these days.

Our Lord's example is an example of others coming to us, but, the Samaritan woman did not start the conversation, but Jesus did with the intent on witnessing to her. However, this is akin to the passage in I Peter 3:15 **"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear."**

We should always be ready for witnessing opportunities, looking for them, praying for such opportunities, seeking God's direction in our witnessing.

In examining The Great Commission or the Great Omission 5: Personal Witnessing, we will examine, first, Personal Witnessing with our Life; second, Personal Witnessing with our Lips; and third and last, Personal Witnessing with our Love.

**Personal Witnessing with our Life**

How we live is of necessity that we live in harmony with the Word of God because if we say one thing and do the very opposite, no one likes or heeds to the hypocrite. Paul said in I Corinthians 9:27 **"But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."**

**"Only let your conversation (conduct) be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving**

**together for the faith of the gospel"** (Phil. 1:27).

**"For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation (conduct) in Christ"** (I Pet. 3:10-16).

On the negative side, those who do not live in accordance with the Word of the gospel, it is stated in Titus 1:16 **"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate."**

We should have the posture and heart of humility, to be approachable, not demanding our "rights," of which we have none, except by God's mercy through Christ, is the approach we should take in witnessing, as is implied in I Corinthians 9:12 **"If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ. "**

The Word is powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, however, the Spirit-filled, Bible-based life is part of the package of our witness for Christ

as per Matthew 5:14-16 **"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."**

**Personal Witnessing with our Lips**

It is interesting to note that one of Jesus' methods of teaching He used is not often used today. This method is the asking of questions. However, here, in our text in John 4, our Lord, expressed His desire for a drink and the woman at the well asked all the questions and Jesus did not ask a single question.

Both are approaches that can be used and we need to ask God for wisdom and direction as to how to approach a potential person we anticipate witnessing to.

Every witnessing opportunity is different, and may be approached differently. Our text shows Jesus strikes up a conversation about wanting some water to drink.

Christ's willingness to speak to what the Jews considered to be a worthless Samaritan caught the attention of this woman.

Caring enough to speak to people where they are, in a world where so many are glued to their cell phones, or in their own world with their headphones on, or too busy to take the time to talk, is a love language, especially when it is about the love of Christ our Creator and Saviour.

Jesus does not start off denouncing her because she was a Samaritan, but began with a well-known subject of water and thirst, and smoothly transitioned the conversation to Himself, the Living Water.

We should not use some rote,

◊ (Continued on page 4)

## Personal Witness...

(Continued from page 3) ◊

robotic approach that has no heart in it, but, act normal and natural, and carry on a relatable conversation that can transition into a conversation about Christ and His salvation.

Make no mistake about it, this approach does not mean Jesus never addresses sin. In fact, we see how He does do just that: **"Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly"** (John 4:16-18). The need for a Saviour is absent when sin is not addressed.

This woman of Samaria, apparently in her culture, knew sin's consequences; otherwise, should we see no need of the Messiah as later expressed.

We must address the gospel: **"Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water...Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life...The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he"** (John 4:10, 12-14, 25-26).

We are to use the Scriptures to share Christ with others: **"And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself"** (Luke 24:27).

**"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord"** (Rom. 6:23).

**"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise"** (Eph. 1:13). The gospel, being **"...the power of God unto salvation"** (Rom. 1:16) is crucial to share. This message, the good news, the gospel of our salvation, the ordained means to save sinners, the message of our deliverance from our sins and the awful consequences of eternal hell, through Christ, and His death, burial, resurrection, and endless life in the place of sinners.

**"But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel"** (II Tim. 1:10).

**Personal Witnessing with our Love**

**"Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans"** (John 4:9). Notice how that Jesus spoke to a woman, who was the gender that often was prejudiced against. But, notice again, Jesus spoke not only to a woman, but a Samaritan woman, hopeless half-breeds as the Jews saw them, and were disdained and disenfranchised as destined for hell. This all shows us that we need to realize that God so loved people from every nation, kindred and tongue.

In fact, in heaven they

celebrate this holy diversity: **"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth"** (Rev. 5:9).

God's elect are comprised from young, old, male, female, rich, poor, every skin tone, every people group.

We ought to, therefore, show our love to all people, even our enemies, by sharing Christ with them, not roughly to start a fight, but with genuine love, as Jesus addressed this woman.

Jesus did not engage in a series of rantings and railings about her being a two-bit whore, good-for-nothing, dime-a-dozen harlot, but simply addressed her sin without all the drama.

**"So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us"** (I Thess. 2:8). Is that evident in our lives towards others as we would share Christ with them, that they are dear unto us as a fellow human beings and fellow sinners who need salvation?

We are to obey: **"But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ"** (Eph. 4:15). It is more than just spouting off Scriptures, Hebrew and Greek meanings, etc...true maturity is when we speak the truth in love.

May God help our facial expressions, body language, tone of voice, and all about is expressive of the love of God from one sinner to another sinner.

It is out of love to God first, and to those we witness to, that we witness with our love: **"And Jesus answered him, The first**

**of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these"** (Mark 12:29-31).

As we consider these points, we must understand that all must be adhered to. One by itself does not carry out the Great Commission.

There are many reasons why personal, one-on-one witnessing or evangelizing is preferable: **"And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain"** (Gal. 2:2). Pride and worrying about what others may think can deter people as to their receptivity, though we know God will save His people whenever He chooses, He does call us to wisdom and to seek Him, the God of all wisdom, to acknowledge Him in all our ways (Prov. 3:5-7), as to which approach we should use, not if we should use an approach.

Sometimes, due to persecution, or in God's providence, where we are in a remote area or an area with little traffic, and no opportunity to reach a larger audience, it may be best to evangelize on a more personable, individual basis.

Either way, publicly like Stephen, who was not a preacher, or individually, let us care enough to share the gospel: II Timothy 1:8 **"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the**

◊ (Continued on page 5)

## Personal Witness...

(Continued from page 4) ◊

**power of God.** I believe that fear of persecution is one of the main reasons people shrink back from sharing the gospel and especially these days. Let us go forth to a lost and hurting and dying world to tell them of the Saviour Jesus Christ, trusting God's power and grace will be sufficient for us as we labor in the fields white unto harvest.

Oftentimes, there are requests for prayer for the physical needs of people, saved and unsaved. How often are there prayer requests for those we have witnessed to that God would see fit to save them? Where is your heart, where is my heart? May we ask God to do some exploratory surgery to show us what is in our hearts, what may need to be cut out, and what may need to be repaired and restored. Either way, let us be faithful to do our duty and rejoice in our responsibility to carry the gospel in all places we go, by word, deed, and truth.

Remember, you do not have to be a theologian, preacher or Bible school teacher to share the gospel. We may only be able to do what the demoniac of the Gadarenes could do Mark 5:19-20 **"Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all [men] did marvel"** (Mark 5:19-20). Maybe the best we can do at times is to tell what great things the Lord Jesus has done for us, in saving our sinful, hell-deserving soul through His gospel.

I remember that when I was first converted, before I was called to preach, being taught from the Word that we should share the

gospel, we would hit the streets of Atlanta, Georgia to pass out tracts and I did not know much theology, but, I did know what great things the Lord had done for me.

May God get the glory as we go forth on our jobs, in the marketplace, in our neighborhoods, or wherever the Lord may put us to be ready to share the greatest news to ever come to this world.



## Who is God?

(Continued from page 1) ◊

All the gods of man's imagination cannot be God, for they all are weak and deficient. Weak in ability and deficient in wisdom. They cannot be God.

The One God has this complaint against man, **"... thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself..."** (Psa. 50:21). Of course, God is here speaking to Israel as representative people. And here is God's assessment of the situation: **"Thou thoughtest"**. That is awesome. That man thought (imagined) that the true God was just another like himself states the case correctly. But regardless of man's rationalizations about God and about himself, God has plainly declared the truth. Let man therefore take note, and quibble not at God's evaluation.

Man imagines a god. And man's god is like himself - initially. And then this imagined god takes on other forms in descending order until this god becomes in the mind of man something to hold in utter contempt. Not at all to be feared or held in high esteem. Laughable in weakness and scorned for lack of knowledge and wisdom.

Is it any wonder that man acts as he does? His god can do nothing for him, nor hold him in any way accountable. His god is not to be

worshipped and praised. His god is to be ruled over and put to open shame. Is it any wonder that man continues on in his sin?

Have you ever heard someone refer to God as "the man upstairs"? Have you? Come now - have you not? Shame upon you, and upon me, for our blasphemous thoughts and declarations concerning God and His Being.

Please turn to the book of Romans and read chapters 1, 2, and 3. Here, you will find a sweeping indictment that God has pronounced against sinful, fallen man. Read it in awe. Read it in great fear and trembling. Read again and again chapter 1, verse 21 thru 23. **"Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things."**

How awful are the imaginations of sinful man. How dark is the darkness of the foolish heart of fallen man. How degrading and dishonoring are the evil thoughts of the totally depraved mind and heart against the Very God. **"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"** (Jer. 17:9).

An examination of Romans 1:21-23 will reveal the wickedness of the thoughts of fallen man toward and about God.

First, sinful man changes (in his own mind) the glory of the uncorruptible God, and begins to make images of what he thinks God to be. And his first effort produces an image of his supposed god to be "like himself".

Man places his god on a level with himself so that he can now deal with his god on the basis of

their equality. Eyeball-to-eyeball, using human language. And that is bad! That is awful! That is, to be sure, exceeding sinful!

Next, not being satisfied with such a god, man makes an image of his god like the fowl of the air. The fowl of the air being a level of created being lower than man, man now ascends to a position above his god. Here, as before, his god is just another creature, like himself, and not the Creator at all. And the case worsens. There is an increasing contempt on the part of man toward God.

Then, man sinks lower in his imaginations and makes unto himself an image of his god like the four-footed beasts. Lower than man. Lower than the fowl of the air. Now man's god is more and more disregarded. Man now has less reason in his depraved mind to heed his god than before. And he loves to have it so. He gloats of his position of supremacy over his god. He is now superior to his god. And who serves whom in this case?

Finally, man makes unto himself an image of his god like the creeping things. The creeping things are less honorable than the created beings above their level. The creeping things are generally held in utter contempt and are to be trodden under the foot of man at will. To be shunned without shame and disregard in entirety. This is depravity at work! For now, the god of man is walked over with no thought whatsoever.

As you read again Romans, chapters 1, 2, and 3, you will find in chapter 3 a detailed account of God's indictment against the descendants of Adam. Read chapter 3, verses 10-23. Take note of this pronouncement - **"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God..."**

Who "is" God?

Let us look to Holy Writ. Let us hear God as He declares Himself to be God Alone. **"Hear,**

◊ (Continued on page 6)

# Who is God?

(Continued from page 5) ◊

**O my people, and I will speak; O Israel, and I will testify against thee: I am God, even thy God”** (Psa. 50:7).

**“I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else”** (Isa. 45:5-6).

**“Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me. Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure”** (Isa. 46:9-10).

**“And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you”** (Ex. 3:14).

Now, after all these clear declarations, by God Himself as to who He is, how can anyone fail in knowing Him?

The answer: Except God “open the heart,” none can find out God. He reveals Himself to whomsoever He pleases, as in the case of Lydia (Acts 16:14).

Because his heart is darkened by sin, man cannot know God, nor can he discern spiritual things. Man’s **“foolish heart was darkened”** (Rom. 1:21), so that he cannot know God. Sin has ruined man so that he cannot know the God who created him. He is separated from his Creator. Thus a state of spiritual death exists. **“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned”** (I Cor. 2:14).

Who “is” God?

He is the Maker and Creator of all things, and by Him all things consist. There is nothing that is made that was not made by Him. Think of it. Consider the implications.

And when He created, who was there to counsel with Him as to “reasonable procedure to follow”? Who was there to counsel with Him as to the advisability of even making a vast creation? Of celestial bodies and bodies terrestrial? Of the vast gradations of created beings? Of man? Who was there?

**“Where was thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou has understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who has stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof?”** (Job 38:4-6). Please read all of Job 38, and pay particular attention to the times when God challenges His creatures to **“declare if thou knowest”**.

In this vast creation that God has fashioned, is it not evident that He has determined all things that ever shall be? Is it not evident? Is it not?

Do the celestial orbs follow random wanderings? Or do they not traverse the vast reaches of unknown space in precise, exact, and predictable movements? Is there chaotic and senseless turmoil in their revolutions about other bodies that collectively form the universe? Does each follow its own will or purpose, apart from the exactness of Omniscient Wisdom’s prescription? Does not the path of each meld into the perfectness of the whole? Declare - if thou knowest!

And what about those creatures that God has placed upon this one celestial body, His created earth?

Are all His creatures the same

as all others? Is there not here also the clearly manifested evidence that God has purposed and willed to bring into existence multiplied missions of creatures, each species being created uniquely different from the others?

Cats there are many. Variations abound as to breeds, colors, sizes, etc., within the species. Yet, cats are not rats, nor are they dogs, nor are they fowl of the air, nor fish of the sea. They are cats, and they will continue to be cats according to God’s promise, each producing **“after his own kind”**, and it will not change by evolutionary process - regardless of the lies of Satan and man. **“And GOD SAID, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and everything that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good”** (Gen. 1:24-25) (emph. DT).

And what about the times and seasons? Are they not all under the direct supervision of the Absolute Sovereign? Does day follow night? Are there seed times and times of harvest? Is there a time to be born and a time to die? Is there?

**“To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; A time to rend, and a time to sew;**

**a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace”** (Eccl. 3:1-8).

Surely, there must be an Originator of all these times. And just as surely, there must be a Regulator of these same times.

Can a mere creature presume to be in control of events and times? Can collective creatureship regulate any or all things? Is man the master of his own destiny? Is man wielding the sceptre of rulership? If so, please state one Biblical declaration of such. Where is example? Where is proof? Where is the evidence? Does history give an example? Name one such case that does. **“The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD”** (Prov. 16:33). **“There are many devices in a man’s heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand”** (Prov. 19:21).

Did the Creator see fit to create all men equal? To claim that He did is to state clearly the position of utter ignorance that all of Adam’s race must take before Infinite Omniscience. If you imagine that all men are created equal, then you are in a state of ignorance on this matter.

Are all men of equal height? weight? strength? intelligence? talent? temperament? color? comeliness? modesty? ability? standing before God?

In some ways men are alike. They are all sinners (Christ Jesus alone excepted). They are all destitute of means to alter their position - the position of a guilty sinner before a Holy and offended God. They all stand in desperate need. They all are unworthy of the least of His mercies. They are all undeserving and undesiring of God and the things of God. They are unwilling to come to God - for they are unwilling to forsake their sins. They are all dead in trespasses and in sins. They are

◊ (Continued on page 7)

# Who is God?

(Continued from page 6) ◊

all under the wrath of God. And there is much more.

All men are not the same, for He has said, to some men, **"... Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee"** (Jer. 31:3). And to some others, He said, **"...I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity"** (Matt. 7:23). What did God mean by these two expressions? What He said, or something else? What else?

Some of mankind are permitted to live out long and eventful lives. Others are taken out at an earlier age. In fact, I believe that the history of man during these approximate 6,000 literal years of man's existence will verify that a majority of those born pass into eternity in the time of their infancy.

Why is this? Is it because some are more worthy of immediate ushering into God's presence than others? Is it because some are deemed more suitable to mortal life than others? Why is this? Answer: It is the sovereign prerogative of God alone to do with His own as seemeth Him good!

God is sovereign. He is sovereign in all His many appointments and in all His Divine operations. He does as He will. In all circumstances that He sovereignly brings about, He rules and overrules according to His own wise counsel and choice.

It was God who confronted Pharaoh with such circumstances that he hardened his heart and refused to let God's people go. God had commanded, by Moses' utterance to Pharaoh, **"Let my people go."** But God had also told Moses, **"I will harden his heart, that he shall not let my people go"** (Ex. 4:21).

God hardened Pharaoh's

heart by forcing upon him the requirement that he accept the word of God whom Pharaoh "did not know." And Pharaoh, being a sinner, acted according to his own nature and rebelled. Pharaoh is responsible because he was a sinner who refused to bow before God in obedience. He is a sinner and totally responsible for his own actions. He is responsible.

**"And afterward Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness. And Pharaoh said, who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go. I KNOW NOT THE LORD, neither will I let Israel go"** (Ex. 5:1-2) (emph. DT).

**"I KNOW NOT THE LORD"** (emph. DT) is Pharaoh's truthful acknowledgment. Had he known God, he would have obeyed the command of God. Had he "known" God, he would have "obeyed" God! But, he knew not God. He is a sinner, and he knows not God. The same goes for all sinners. They know not God!

But read further into the case. Read Romans 9:14-18. **"What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared through all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth."**

Pharaoh is a fallen sinner. His heart is deceitful above all things

and is desperately wicked. He is in a state of total depravity and all his faculties are impotent to do anything

acceptable and pleasing to God, who he "knows not." Depravity cannot search out God - even if it wanted to.

Dear reader, when Scripture speaks of God, He is seen on His Throne, and at the Helm, steering according to His own good pleasure. Please read Ephesians 1:11; Proverbs 21:1; Daniel 4:35.

The Doctrine of God is the foundation doctrine. And upon this doctrine all other doctrines must be built. Any doctrine, whatever it may be, must stand or fall upon its relation to the foundation doctrine. And that doctrine is hereby stated: God "is" God!

The imagined god of so-called "modern man" is completely lacking in power. Men imagine their god to be filled with the best of good intentions toward them, but somehow Satan and the "freewill" of man is preventing him making good on his intentions. This imagined god is very puny indeed - is he not? And who among us can rest assured in these good intentions - when there is no power to execute?

We also declare that the imagined god of so-called "modern man" is completely lacking in wisdom and discernment. So-called "modern man" has convinced himself that God loves everybody. Now, were this the case, then God would be lacking in wisdom. Time and eternity makes known that everybody does not come to be saved. Did God not know?

The God of the Bible is so very much different from the god of so-called "modern man." Human enlightenment has not brought man to see and to know God. Rather, human enlightenment has deepened the belief among man that he is a god unto himself. Humanism is steeped within this

so-called "modern man." And he "knows not God"!

Who "is" God? Let Scripture answer: **"Knowye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture"** (Psa. 100:3).

I am persuaded that if God's people are properly and scripturally taught who God is; they will no longer rebel at the grand doctrines of the Bible. Rather, they will relish these precious truths, and rejoice in them. And they will strive to live to please such a God as is their God. **"...but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits"** (Dan. 11:32). May God be pleased to reveal Himself in this way to all His people as He uses men to declare His Word.

I pray that God, in great mercy, will make Himself known more fully to me - and to each of His children everywhere. I want to know Him better so that I will love Him more, so that I will serve Him more, and worship Him more acceptably. I pray that God will bless us with knowledge of Himself.

I want the church that I pastor to be actively seeking to know Him more fully. I want all of us to live close to Him and to have our lives reflect His perfect love in our hearts. I want us - all of us - to put our time and energies and our very lives completely at His disposal. To be used of Him is our grand aim and goal.

God's people must be taught the truth. They must be indoctrinated and established in the truth. And the truth must be taught in love. Love that is of God leads us to Him and then teaches us of Him. And His love being shed abroad in our hearts leads us to teach His Word, faithfully, to those He sends us to.



## Down—But Not...

(Continued from page 1) ◊

**our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life: But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us; Ye also helping together by prayer for us, that for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons thanks may be given by many on our behalf**" (II Cor. 1:1-11).

"I am the subject of depressions of spirit so fearful that I hope none of you ever get to such extremes of wretchedness as I go to." Those words were spoken in a sermon by Charles Haddon Spurgeon whose marvelous ministry in London made him perhaps the greatest preacher England ever produced. I have read that Mr. Spurgeon was so depressed at times he would have to have others help him get out of bed.

I wonder many times what Mr. Spurgeon, and many of our pastor Brethren that the Lord has taken home, would think of our world today, and how much disappointment they would feel about many of the preachers and church members today that have caused so much depressions and discouragement in others.

I have been a Baptist for more than fifty years, and have pastored now for almost thirty-five years. And I would have never believed it possible how I would have been treated by my pastor brothers and certain church members, it is no wonder why many of us suffer from depression and discouragement. I can tell you from experience, when other preachers (who I thought were

my friends) turned on me, it was the worst and most devastating thing I ever experienced! And when I think of all the years, I preached the truth and kept the faith with the ones God gave me to pastor, and they threw me away like an old pair of dirty socks. It just about destroyed me, **"But God!"** **"A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother"** (Prov. 18:24). We only have one true friend, and that friend is Jesus, He will never leave us nor forsake us. **"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee"** (Heb. 13:5).

Discouragement is no respecter of persons. In fact, discouragement seems to attack the successful far more than the unsuccessful; for the higher we



climb, the farther down we can fall. We are not surprised then when we read that the great Apostle Paul was **"pressed out of measure"** and **"despaired even of life"** (II Cor. 1:8). Great as he was in character and ministry, Paul was human just like the rest of us.

Paul could have escaped these burdens except that he had a call from God (II Cor. 1:1) and a concern to help people. He had founded the church at Corinth and had ministered there for a year and a half (Acts 18:1-18). When serious problems arose in the church after his departure, he sent Timothy to deal with them (I Cor. 4:17) and then wrote the

letter that we call I Corinthians.

Unfortunately, matters grew worse and Paul had to make a "painful visit" to Corinth to confront the troublemakers (II Cor. 2:1ff). Still, with no solution. He then wrote "a severe letter" which was delivered by his associate, Titus (II Cor. 2:4-9; 7:8-12). After a great deal of distress, Paul finally met Titus and got the good report that the problem had been solved. It was then that he wrote the letter we call "II Corinthians."

One of the key words in this letter is **"comfort"** or encouragement. The Greek word means "called to one's side to help." The verb is used eighteen times in this letter and the noun eleven times. In spite of all the trials he experienced, Paul was able (by the grace of God) to write a letter saturated with encouragement.

What was Paul's secret of victory when he was experiencing

pressures and trials? His secret was God. When you find yourself discouraged and ready to quit, get your attention off of yourself and focus it on God. Out of his own difficult experience, Paul tells us how we can find encouragement in God. He gives us four simple reminders.

First, remember what God is to you (II Cor. 1:3). Paul began his letter with a doxology. He certainly could not sing about his circumstances, but he could sing about the God who is in control of all circumstances. Paul had learned that praise is an important factor in achieving victory over discouragement and depression.

"Praise changes us" just as much as "prayer changes us." By God's Divine will and His permissive will, we can overcome.

Second, praise Him because He is God! You find this phrase **"blessed be the God"** in two other places in the New Testament, in Ephesians 1:3 and I Peter 1:3. In Ephesians 1:3 Paul praised God for what He did in the past, when He **"chose us in (Christ)"** (Eph. 1:4) and blessed us **"with all spiritual blessings"**. In I Peter 1:3 Peter praised God for future blessings and **"a lively hope"**. But in II Corinthians Paul praised God for present blessings, for what God was accomplishing then and there.

Thirdly, praise Him because He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! It is because of Jesus Christ that we can call God **"Father"** and even approach Him as His children. God sees us in His Son and loves us as He loves His Son (John 17:23). We are **"beloved of God"** (Rom. 1:7) because we are **"accepted in the beloved"** (Eph. 1:6). Whatever the Father did for Jesus when He was ministering on earth, He is able to do for us today. We are dear to the Father because His Son is dear to Him and we are citizens of **"the kingdom of His dear Son"** (the Son of His love) (Col. 1:13). We are precious to the Father, and He will see to it that the pressures of life will not destroy us.

Fourth, praise Him because He is the Father of mercies! To the Jewish people, the phrase *father of* means "originator of." Satan is the father of lies (John 8:44) because lies originated with him. According to Genesis 4:21, Jubal was the father of musical instruments because he originated the pipe and the harp. God is the Father of mercies because all mercy originates with Him and can be secured only from Him. God in His grace gives us what we do not deserve, and

◊ (Continued on page 9)



## Down—But Not...

(Continued from page 8) ◊

in His mercy, He does not give us what we do deserve. **“It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed”** (Lam. 3:22).

Lastly, praise Him because He is the God of all comfort! The words comfort or consolation (same root word in the Greek) is repeated ten times in II Corinthians 1:1-11. We must not think of comfort in terms of “sympathy,” because sympathy can weaken us instead of strengthen us. God does not pat us on the head and give us a piece of candy or a toy to distract our attention from our troubles. He puts strength into our hearts so we can face our trials and triumph over them.

Our English word comfort comes from two Latin words meaning “with strength.” The Greek word means “to come alongside and help.” It is the same word used for the Holy Spirit (“**the Comforter**”) in John 14-16. God can encourage us by His Word and through His Spirit, but sometimes He uses other believers to give us the encouragement we need (II Cor. 2:7-8; 7:6-7).

How wonderful it would be if all of us had the nickname **“Barnabas—son of encouragement”!** (Acts 4:36). When you find yourself discouraged because of difficult circumstances, it is easy to look at yourself and your feelings, or to focus on the problems around you. But the first step we must take is to look by faith to the Lord and realize all that God is to us. **“I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth”** (Psa. 121:1-2). Amen, and Amen! God Bless!



# Heavenly Hymns

“...Be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Ephesians 5:18-20). [This hymn was printed with permission from the Olmstead Baptist Church and written by Mary A. Lathbury in 1877. You may access their free-domain hymnal by going to [www.olmsteadbaptistchurch.org/hymnal.pdf](http://www.olmsteadbaptistchurch.org/hymnal.pdf)]

26

## CHANNELS ONLY

1. How I praise Thee, pre-cious Saviour, That Thy love laid hold of me;  
 2. Emp-tied that Thou should-est fill me, A clean ves - sel in Thy hand;  
 3. Wit - ness-ing Thy power to save me, Set - ting free from self and sin;  
 4. Je - sus, fill now with Thy Spir - it Hearts that full sur-ren - der know;

Thou hast saved and cleansed and filled me That I might Thy channel be.  
 With no power but as Thou giv - est Gra-cious - ly with each command.  
 Thou who bought-est to pos - sess me, In Thy full-ness, Lord, come in.  
 That the streams of liv - ing wa - ter From our in - ner man may flow.

CHORUS

Chan-nels on - ly, bless-ed Mas - ter, But with all Thy won-drous pow'r

Flow-ing thro' us, Thou canst use us Ev - 'ry day and ev - 'ry hour.

## The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1) What is the significance of the blood and water that came from Jesus' side at the crucifixion?

Tom Ross  
6339 County Rd. 15  
South Point, OH  
45680

Pastor  
Mt. Pleasant  
Baptist Church  
6939 County Rd. 15  
Chesapeake, OH  
45619



John 19:33-37 states: **"But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced."**

I John 5:5-9 declares: **"Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? This is he that came by water, and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son."**

John the beloved apostle was

the only New Testament writer inspired by the Holy Spirit to write about the water and the blood that came out of the pierced side of Jesus during His crucifixion.

The context of John 19 reveals that the common practice of the Roman soldiers was to break the legs of those sentenced to death by crucifixion while they were hanging on the cross in order to hasten their death. The soldiers saw that Jesus had already died and there was no reason to break his legs. Instead one of the soldiers pierced the side of Jesus and water and blood flowed out. His body did not flinch or move, confirming that He had already died. The soldiers thought that was all there was to it. However, their actions constituted the precise fulfillment of Messianic prophecy regarding the death and crucifixion of Christ. As the fulfillment of the Passover type, the ultimate Lamb of God was not to have any of his bones broken (Exodus 12:46 and Numbers 9:12). Furthermore Psalm 34:20 prophesied of the Messiah: **"He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken."**

Another prophecy is also alluded to in the text regarding the piercing of the side of the Saviour. Zechariah 12:10 declares: **"And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn."** Two things should be pointed out from the

text. First the fulfillment of this prophecy will occur when God regenerates elect Israel, signified by the pouring out of the Spirit upon them, enabling them to look upon Him, the Christ, the only Saviour whom they had pierced by insisting on His crucifixion, in saving faith. Second, this is an affirmation of the Divinity of Christ as God manifest in the flesh, sent to die for His people. God in Christ literally says they will look upon **"Me"** whom they have pierced. Revelation 1:7 affirms this interpretation: **"Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."** The actions of the soldiers affirmed that Christ had died on the one hand, and that God had precisely fulfilled intimate details regarding the death of the Lord Jesus Christ for His people.

The fact that the Holy Spirit inspired John to write about this event in his epistle also confirms that the flow of the water and the blood had some miraculous and spiritual significance. When the soldier pierced the side of Jesus a miracle occurred. Blood and water flowed unmingled from the riven side of Christ. John was an eyewitness to this miracle and would later write about this event in I John 5:6-12 to affirm that eternal life is obtained only through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The blood that flowed from the side of Christ symbolized that our sins had been cleansed through His personal sufferings, death, and substitutionary sacrifice. Faith in the blood of Jesus results in complete justification. Perhaps the water that flowed from the Saviour's side symbolized that His work on the cross is the foundation of our sanctification. Water often symbolizes the cleansing of sanctification (Eph.

5:26).

Furthermore, John includes this in his inspired statement regarding the harmony and Trinity of the Godhead, signifying that the Father, Son (Word), and Spirit were in complete agreement regarding the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ as the only means of communicating eternal life to the elect of God. I believe the Holy Spirit opened the spiritual understanding of John by revealing the significance of the prophecy stated by Zechariah (12:10) and its later fulfillment in Revelation 1:7.

We all should marvel as we observe the precise manner in which God fulfills the prophetic word as He executes the Divine, immutable purpose. God leaves nothing that He hath purposed undone. Every minute detail recorded in the prophetic word will indeed come to pass fulfilling the truth of Isaiah 46:9-12: **"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me. Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it."**

Matthew Stepp  
286 Big Creek Road  
Wayne, WV 25570

Pastor  
Big Creek  
Baptist Church  
286 Big Creek Road  
Wayne, WV 25570



**"But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water"** (John 19:34). And again another scripture saith, "...

◇ (Continued on page 12)

# The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2) Please explain the body, soul, and spirit of man.

Roger Reed  
20 Ledgewood Dr.  
Mansfield, Ohio 44905



Pastor  
West Jefferson  
Missionary Baptist  
Church  
47 S. Heath Lane,  
West Jefferson, Ohio  
43162

**“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ”** (I Thess. 5:23).

As many other parts of the Bible, body, soul, and spirit of man is one of them. On one side you have the dichotomists theory, that soul and spirit are the same, and on the other side you have the trichotomists theory, which is the theory I hold to and believe. I will not debate the two theories here, but just try to simply explain the body, soul and spirit. If you want to read more on this I would suggest “Death and the Hereafter” by the late Elder Milburn Cockrell, it is an excellent book, and is one of my favorites.

**“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul”** (Gen. 2:7). The body was formed from the dust of the earth and it will return to the earth and be dust again **“In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return”** (Gen. 3:19). When we die our bodies will be placed in the ground until the day they will be called out of the grave

and be changed to be like Jesus **“In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed”** (I Cor. 15:52); **“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first”** (I Thess. 4:16). This is not our soul, nor our spirit.

Our body is what Yahweh has given us to be able to move around while we are alive. The body contains all our organs that keep us alive: when our organs wear out, we die. Our body is what we use to sin against a Holy and Sovereign God! (Romans 7:24-25 KJV) **“O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.”**

The soul is what gives us life **“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul”** (Gen. 2:7). The soul also is found in animals as well as men. It gives us our intellect and moral faculties. It makes us who we are; it allows us to have emotions: to be able to hate, love, and fear. In other words, our soul makes us who we are as individuals. Our soul allows us to feel pain, hunger, and thirst. Our soul is our mind **“When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul”** (Prov. 2:10). **“Also, that the soul be without knowledge, it is**

**not good; and he that hasteth with his feet sinneth”** (Prov. 19:2). **“He that getteth wisdom loveth his own soul: he that keepeth understanding shall find good”** (Prov. 19:8). **“My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me”** (Lam. 3:20).

Lastly, we come to the spirit: you either have a dead spirit which is all the unregenerate, or you have a living spirit that is alive in Christ Jesus! Elder Cockrell put it best, “In the fall Adam’s spirit lost its hold on God, and so the soul rebelled against the spirit and the body against the soul.” He also said, “Ever since the day Adam sinned, every man born into the world has a living body and soul (that is why it can sin), but a dead and dormant spirit. Man’s soul and body are totally depraved by sin, but his spirit is lifeless.”

There is much more about this subject we could say, but I will leave that up to you, dear reader, to study. But, let me close with this. God is three persons in one: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. We call that the Trinity. Of all the creation, only man was created like God, a trinity. Plants have only a body. Animals have a body and a soul. Man is a trinity who has a body, soul, and spirit **“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ”** (I Thess. 5:23).

We must remember, however, that God is a spirit **“God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth”** (John 4:24). It is in His spiritual image that Adam was created, and not His physical image. God has infinite intellect, sensibilities, and volition, and these attributes were bestowed upon Adam in Creation, but in a lesser degree. God Bless!

Tom Ross  
6339 County Rd. 15  
South Point, OH  
45680

Pastor  
Mt. Pleasant  
Baptist Church  
6939 County Rd. 15  
Chesapeake, OH  
45619



I believe man was originally created as a trichotomous being consisting of body (material), soul (immaterial), and spirit (spiritual). When Adam sinned against God, his spirit and spiritual connection with God died just as God had warned. Adam’s body and soul did not die when he sinned, only his spirit died which in effect separated him from God and His fellowship. Adam was immediately separated from God spiritually. The death of his body would come many years later. Due to inherent human depravity all men are now spiritually dead to God (Rom. 5:12; Eph. 2:1-3). They are said to be in the flesh as opposed to the spirit. As such they can produce no spiritual affections or exercise any spiritual discernment (I Cor. 2:14). In this spiritually dead and fleshly condition they are entirely incapable of pleasing God in any way. Romans 8:8 states: **“So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.”** Unless God intervenes in the new birth, the spiritually dead man will experience physical death followed by the second death which is eternal separation from God in the Lake of Fire. The unsaved man’s body and soul will be punished in the Lake of Fire throughout the infinity of eternity. The unsaved, natural, unbelieving lost man has never and will never have a spiritual connection with God.

The soul is the immaterial part of man housed in his body, which in effect is his personal identity consisting of his intellect,

## Forum Question #1

(Continued from page 10) ♦

**they shall look on him whom they pierced**" (John 19:37).

A multitude of Scriptures were being fulfilled on Mount Calvary the fateful day that Jesus died for my sins, and many pictures were being colored in by the precious blood of our Saviour! This piercing of Christ's side by a Roman spear at the behest of the Jewish cries to "Crucify Him!" was a fulfillment of Zechariah 12:10/13:6 **"And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn."** **"And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends."** Selah! Think about it!

But what is the significance of the blood and water coming from the Redeemer's side? Many have considered natural causes for this confluence of the bodily fluids, and according to Albert Barnes: "...the spear reached the heart, and if Jesus had not before been dead, this would have closed his life. The heart is surrounded by a membrane called the pericardium. This membrane contains a serous matter or liquor resembling water, which prevents the surface of the heart from becoming dry by its continual motion (Webster). It was this which was pierced and from which the water flowed. The point of the spear also reached one of the ventricles of the heart, and the blood, yet warm, rushed forth, either mingled with or followed by the water of the pericardium, so as to appear to John to be blood

and water flowing together. This was a natural effect, and would follow in any other case."

But the Bible has much more to say concerning this event. Jesus had prophesied on several occasions that His body was a source of living water, and what an eloquent fulfillment, so that those that witnessed the crucifixion would see that it was indeed the truth! **"Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water"** (John 4:10). **"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water"** (John 7:37-38). How poignantly the Lord turned these words into a prophecy fulfilled picturesquely on Calvary, when the unknown soldier pierced His side to reveal those **"rivers of living water"**...! Hallelujah! Selah! Praise the Lord!

But certainly this was a picture that had been long foretold in the testament of God! **"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters..."** (Isa. 55:1). **"And the LORD said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and ...Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink..."** (Ex. 17:5-6). Smite the Rock of our salvation and it will accomplish the absolution of the nations! Augustus Toplady sang it so well: "Rock of Ages, cleft for me, Let me hide myself in Thee; Let the water and the blood, From Thy wounded side which flowed, Be of sin the double cure, Save from wrath and make me pure."

And what is that "double cure"...? **"This is he that came**

**by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood"** (I John 5:6). As Matthew Henry writes: "They signified the two great benefits which all believers partake of through Christ- justification and sanctification; blood for remission, water for regeneration; blood for atonement, water for purification." Come to this broken body of the Saviour, to receive the healing benefits of this everlasting fountain of blood and water!

One more picture, at least. Why did the Lord allow this rough "Gentile" to pierce His hallowed side, even unto His precious heart? It was certainly to assure all that were present that He was indeed dead, because death was a necessity as payment in full for Adam and for me- but why the side? Did not God (gently the first time!) open the side (rib in the Greek!) of the First Adam to create for him a beautiful Bride? So, too, was the side/rib of the second Adam opened to create the access for the marveling Gentile Bride of the Lord's New Testament Baptist Church! **"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, ...Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood"** (Rev. 1:5) **"...to feed the (Gentile) church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood"** (Acts 20:28). Selah! Think about it!

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>Roger Reed<br/>20 Ledgewood Dr.<br/>Mansfield, Ohio 44905</p> <p>Pastor<br/>West Jefferson<br/>Missionary Baptist<br/>Church<br/>47 S. Heath Lane,<br/>West Jefferson, Ohio<br/>43162</p> |  |
|--|---|

**"But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water"** (John 19:34).

"But one of soldiers pierced

His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out" (John 19:34 NASB).

I will never forget the first time I heard a message on this verse of Scripture. I can hear my first pastor (Elder O. B. Mink) clearly say as I heard him say it back then in the 70's, "there is only one place in the human body where blood and water can flow, and that is right under the heart!" There is a sack of fluid (water) that surrounds the human heart.

But, the question here before me is, "What is the significance of the blood and water?" Before I answer the question, some are going to criticize my quoting the NASB. But the word for **"forthwith"** in the KJV should be translated **"immediately,"** and when speaking of Jesus or God, the word He and Him should be capitalized to show His Deity and I believe it should be out of respect for who He is and the KJV does not do that. I do not apologize for that. If you do not like it, do not read my answer.

It is interesting to note that the Apostle John is the only writer that makes mention of this event, I believe it was to emphasize that Jesus was unquestionably dead. Jesus had to die or everything He did and does would have been null and void.

A. W. Pink comments on the previous verse **"But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs"** (John 19:33). Pink says here, "This affords further evidence of the uniqueness of Christ's death." Pink also says, "...the fact that the Saviour was "dead already" when the soldiers came to Him, though the two thieves still lived, we have further demonstration that His life was not "taken from him," but that He "laid it down of himself!"

I will let A. W. Pink conclude the answer to the question, since he does a far better job than I

♦ (Continued on page 13)

## Forum Question #1

(Continued from page 12) ♦

could ever do, and I quote, "The water and the blood came forth to bear witness, that God has given us eternal life, and that this life is in His Son (I John 5:8-12)." God Bless!



## Forum Question #2

(Continued from page 11) ♦

will, affections and emotions. The soul of man is that part of him, that once conceived in the womb of his mother, lives on throughout eternity either with the Lord Jesus Christ or in the Lake of Fire. Jesus made it clear that the soul of man is worth more than all the world in Matthew 16:26: **"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"**

Only those who are born of the Spirit in the work of regeneration have a spiritual nature that corresponds with God's holy nature (II Pet. 1:3-4). The spiritual nature or the new man is a direct creation of the Holy Spirit in God's elect that enables them to love and worship God. Ephesians 2:10 declares: **"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."** Ephesians 4:22-24 states: **"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."** It is in this spiritual nature that God the Holy Spirit dwells and produces fruit that honors God: **"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,**

**Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit"** (Gal. 5:22-25). All men have a body and soul. Only God's elect have a newly created spiritual nature that enables them to fellowship and communicate with God. One day all three parts of man will be glorified to dwell with God throughout eternity: **"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it"** (I Thess. 5:23-24).



Matthew Stepp  
286 Big Creek Road  
Wayne, WV 25570

Pastor  
Big Creek  
Baptist Church  
286 Big Creek Road  
Wayne, WV 25570

**"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ"** (I Thess. 5:23).

The doctrine of the Trinity of God and the Trichotomy of Man are linked by God's primal statement on the creation of man- **"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: ...So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them"** (Gen. 1:26-27). The spirit, soul and body of man in our text, displays a depth of creation that parallels the depth of our God's nature. Father, Son and Holy Spirit! (3-in-1). Selah! Think about it!

The marvelous gift of impossibly complex life of the previous day and earlier in day 6 of Genesis 1 is sublimely surpassed

when God goes a step further, with the extraordinary pinnacle of His creation. This one, He says, will be in "My image"! This one began with the same clay as the cattle, but God took it one step further in making it a trichotomous creature! **"And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul"** (Gen. 2:7). This first birth of man is as unique as the second birth of man! And it does the same thing! It turns a dichotomous creature into a trichotomous marvel- in the image of God! Glory to our Creator! Selah! Think about it!

To differentiate between the soul and spirit according to Scripture, we state that our spirit of life enables us to communicate with God. Unlike with all of the other created beings on the fifth/sixth days of Genesis 1, God did not stop with a dichotomous soul and body creation, but "breathed" the "breath of life" into this already animated creature made of clay and soul, and he became a "living soul"! Not like the previous souls! Add an adjective (living) for a soul with additional life- eternal communion with his spiritual God!

The soul, without a lively spirit has no "spiritual life" inherent, and after the grievous fall of man destroyed that perfection of trichotomy, eventually all of the mutated dichotomous (soul/body man-creatures) will be cast into the garbage heap of an eternal Gehenna. The soul is just as eternal as the spirit, but is referred to as "the carnal mind," without the Spirit's genuinely uplifting nature. The body also is just as eternal as the first law of thermodynamics assures us matter cannot be destroyed! The eternity of Hell's everlasting death is evidence of a soul and body that will be tormented, but never die, or cease to be. **"And in those days shall men seek death,**

**and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them"** (Rev. 9:6). **"And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched"** (Mark 9:43-44). Fire, darkness, memories and worms are just a few of the unending torments for the "separated" abomination of a sinner and mutated rebel against God's order and beauty.

What was made in God's image glorifies God without parallel. The symbology of the trichotomous man to the Trinity (in the image of God) is: 1) God the Father = soul or seat of the will and being. 2) God the Son = body of flesh, blood and bones. 3) God the Holy Spirit = spirit of man that can communicate with God and other spiritual beings/angelic creations. These departments of our lives are in relation to these intrinsic attributes of our persona. The soul is the mind; the spirit our heart. Not the beating muscle of our circulatory system, any more than the soul is limited to the brain function of the nervous system. I used to ask my children where they were, and as they pointed to themselves, I would incorrigibly answer, "No, that is your arm, or belly, etc... Where are 'you'?" Eventually, it would dawn upon them, that they were "more" than just a physical being, and that within the shell of their "tabernacle" (II Pet. 1:13-14) was an eternal worth (Matt. 16:25-26) that I was able to teach them- called a "soul". From there, I could further teach them that God had made them a "spirit" of even more tangible worth, if they would repent and believe the Gospel of the Creator and Saviour, in the Person of Jesus Christ! Selah! Now that is worth thinking about!





## From the Pen of a Country Preacher

Joseph M. Sidders  
of Tulsa, OK



### Unconditional Election

“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together...And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom [This same ‘them who are the called’] He did foreknow, [This same ‘them who are the called’] he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified” (Rom. 8:14-17, 28-30).

The world tells us that this great doctrine of Election is controversial. What, though, does it contradict except for man’s own heart? It does not contradict the Scriptures. The Scriptures give examples of Election in nearly every book! Before we give credence to the ones calling us hyper-Calvinists let us consider what the Bible has to say on the matter. The world is likely to quote John 3:16 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only

begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

This is a sacrifice they are willing to believe: “God loved me and if killing His son was the price for Him to love me, well that is just fine by me.” What if we read this verse in context however and attempt to understand why Jesus had to die. “Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever

believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God” (John 3:5-21).

First let us consider how God’s election is unconditional. With our state of depravity (total) there is nothing that we can do for ourselves or others to earn salvation that would be acceptable before God. “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast” (Eph. 2:8-9). That means no good deeds. No amount of service. No “degrees of separation” from other born-again believers (not even preachers/pastors). And certainly, no sacrificial/sacramental atonements. Therefore either no one is saved ever or, if one can be saved, they are saved not by means of his/her own actions or deeds or merits, thus making it unconditional! “Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be

called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son. And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil [Recall what is says in Romans 5:12 “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned”]), that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) -- It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth” (Rom. 9:6-18).

I am convinced that most who object to this precious doctrine do so because they deem it to be unfair. My being elected by God as the object of His affection does not cast a shadow on a non-elect person. I am just as guilty as any other sinner and deserve the eternal punishment that is God’s wrath. A non-elect person does not fall because I stand. There

◊ (Continued on page 15)

# Unconditional...

(Continued from page 14) ♦

will be sheep on the one side and goats on the other. The sheep were chosen and herded (“called”) to that right side unconditionally **“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God”** (Rom. 3:23).

Now let us consider what election is. Election is a choice made by the One with the power to do so. We can see who has that power by understanding what these are being chosen for. In this case, the chosen are to be objects of God’s saving love, His mercy. For those He chose, He called... those God elected He exercised a special power to bring to Him. This was required for none had a desire for Him and none were righteous, and none would come. Therefore, it is God who has done the choosing. We conclude then that Election is sovereign in its very nature.

Could you imagine God going around knocking and asking for us to “choose Him” or “Elect Him.” A God waiting on His creation to allow Him to rule is no God at all! **“For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed”** (Acts 13:47-48).

Perhaps even others are upset that they did not have a part in this doctrine of unconditional election. God’s election was performed before the foundation of the world (another reason that we say it is both sovereign and unconditional). And since He is immutable His decisions are too, thus making this Election eternal (praise God!). **“...Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he**

**that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me [All that were given....not ‘all’ as in everyone in the world]; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day”** (John 6:35-40). All that come

were given to the Son by the Father before the foundation of the world and they were drawn to the Father! The Doctrine of Election itself does not save... Jesus is the instrument of our salvation!

Election is not the complete work of Salvation but it is God’s personal choosing of whom He will show His mercy upon! Ephesians 1:3-12 **“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: 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: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption**

**through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times [Divine order of time] he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.”** **“Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ”** (I Pet. 1:2).

Now let us consider what were children of the King elected to. The answer is the **“sure mercies of David”** which is everlasting life. Acts 13:34 **“And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David”** (Acts 13:34). **“For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption”** (Psa. 16:10).

Our text adds to this by saying that the elect are **“to be conformed to the image of his Son.”** **“But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect [restored], stablish, strengthen, settle you. To him be glory and dominion for ever**

**and ever. Amen”** (I Pet. 5:10-11). **“How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance”** (Heb. 9:14-15).

These who are elected (predestinated and called) are also justified and glorified (from Romans 8:30 which is our opening text) “Justified” is a beautiful biblical term that speaks to a necessary work performed on the saints of God that they might be drawn near to Him: **“Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses”** (Acts 13:38-39). ‘Glorified’ is used to depict how the Lord clothed the Elect with splendor in that through the death of Jesus Christ, His dignity and divinity was manifest in the salvation of lost sinners.

Eternal life, what was impossible for us, was made possible through the death, burial and resurrection of the Lamb of God “toward” those He chose before the foundation of the world. **“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified”** (Rom. 8:29-30).



# Baptist History



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

## A NEGLECTED GRAVE ON A LONELY HILL

Scripture: Deuteronomy 34

Some years ago my attention was called to a hill not far from the Shenandoah River where a small family graveyard was located. Upon investigation, I discovered it overgrown with weeds and saplings and overrun with cattle. Not only was it sad that a family burying place should be so neglected, but the crude stone hand-chiseled memorial to the life and final resting place of the body of John Koontz was gone. This pioneer colonial Baptist preacher's mortal remains were laid to rest here after he went to his eternal reward April 25, 1832. Places such as this should be sacred memorials instead of neglected, forgotten, overrun briar patches.

John Koontz was the first Baptist preacher to proclaim the gospel message of salvation by grace through faith in the area of Page County, which was then Shenandoah County, Virginia. His ministry was blessed with much success but also the enemies of the truth which he proclaimed. Koontz's zeal for the pure gospel message was not quenched by the violence perpetuated upon him.

On one occasion, Koontz attended a meeting near Smith's Creek where he was met by a gang of ruffians who forbade his preaching. A respected man, Captain Learhorn, insisted that he should preach and prevailed. The persecutors threatened Koontz with a beating if he ever came that

way again. Not being one deterred by threats, he returned to preach and found that his enemies had paid money to a "son of Belial" to beat him. The hooligan proceeded to beat him with the butt end of a large cane, requiring Koontz to promise never to return. This Koontz refused to do, and the man continued the beating until he almost disabled the preacher.

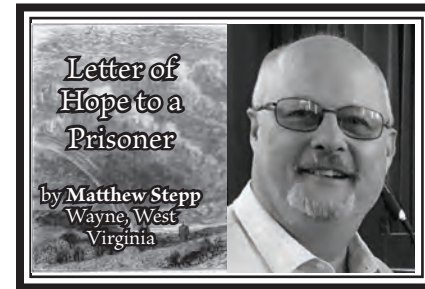
Sometime later, while he and a companion, Martin Kaufman, were sitting in a house awaiting the time to preach, Koontz heard a man asking about him. Suspecting some mischief, he got up and stepped out of sight into an adjoining room. The man, supposing Martin Kaufman to be John Koontz, fell upon Kaufman and beat him severely with a stick. Kaufman received many blows before he could convince the man that he was not Koontz.

On another occasion, Koontz was taken to be imprisoned. Just a short distance away, a man coming to hear him preach attempted to rescue him but was beaten off. After continuing a ways further, Koontz warned them to take heed what they did, because if he were a man of God, they would be fighting against God. Immediately one of the men was alarmed and relented, soon to be followed by the others. The man who became alarmed first and two or three of the others afterwards became Baptists.

West of Luray, Virginia, on U. S. Route 211 is the "White House Bridge." It is named for a white house which can be seen a few

hundred yards downriver. John Koontz and the early Baptists met in this house and ultimately planted the Mill Creek Baptist Church in 1772. In a nearby graveside beside the highway lies the body of John Koontz's companion in the gospel, Martin Kaufman.

May the memory of these faithful men of God challenge, encourage, and sustain us in the day of our adversity.



Dear Prisoner...

I know that several of you are getting the Baptist papers that our church supports. As I was communicating with one of you, I thought that I would write this to all of those that I may not have an address for, but that God knew was incarcerated and would send this paper into your hands. If you that are reading this are living in the Land of the Free, please join me in praying that God will direct this open letter for those whom He has foreordained a study into His Holy Word and the great hopes that lie therein for those that are held captive by sin in this world... To God be the Glory, Amen.

I hope that things are going okay for you, but we know that they are going okay according to God's will for us. So many verses in the Bible come to mind concerning God's sovereign control of our world. How could He be OmniScient (all-knowing) and Prophetic if He did not already know our futures and the future of the whole destiny of mankind? Even the greatest

king of his time found out that "only" God can ever really be in control, because "none" can wrest that authority and sovereignty from Him to work out their own wills. **"All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar. At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon. The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty? While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee. And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws. And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom,**

◊ (Continued on page 17)



## Letter of Hope...

(Continued from page 16) ♦

mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me. Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase" (Dan. 4:28-37).

I do not know the condition of your heart, searching Prisoner, but it is our prayer that God will connect with you personally by His Sovereign Grace and show you that our sins are what separate us from God. **"Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness. None calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth: they trust in vanity, and speak lies; they conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity"** (Isa. 59:1-4). This chapter is a good one to see how helpless and hopeless we are without a Saviour and a Redeemer from our death penalty. It ends with Christ Himself making an appearance. **"Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey: and the LORD saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgment. And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him. For he put on righteousness as a breastplate,**

**and an helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloke. According to their deeds, accordingly he will repay, fury to his adversaries, recompence to his enemies; to the islands he will repay recompence. So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him. And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD"** (Isa. 59:15-20). This passage just has echoes of the Marshall of an Old West town, belting on his holster, checking the cartridges, putting on his white hat and pinning on his breast- the tin star of justice! He is coming out and evil-doers beware! Selah! Think about it!

As many of our lives will testify, the salvation of lost souls is very simple: Trust in the Lord Jesus to take away our sins. But it is not easy, is it? Simplicity does not equate to easy in this awful case of sin. Not even God could just swat away our sins and declare them gone. Sometimes we just want it easy, and to have a verse like **"And God said, Let there be light: and there was light"** (Gen. 1:3). Let them be clean and holy! Let the sin be gone! But the Holiness of God will not allow for any injustice. If it is wrong for a teacher (Judge) to give a kid an "F" when through hard work, he had really earned an "A," then it is equally as wrong for a teacher to pick another kid (at random or even by election) and give them an "A," when he had really earned (by his works) an "F." That would "cheapen" the efforts and works of the Holy Ones that had earned their "A's," and no one could know what true holiness is, anymore. Or the priceless worth

of right and righteousness versus evil, rebellion and sin.

The Apostle Paul covers some of those thoughts of Justification in Romans 9:10-14, **"And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid."** Is it okay for God to love Jacob and hate Esau? Actually most people start off on the wrong foot when they read this passage. When Paul says, **"Is there unrighteousness with God?";** he is not actually defending the hatred of Esau. He is actually defending the love of Jacob in the remainder of the chapter! Wow! It took me awhile to see that. But logically, the hatred of rebellious Esau is understandable in light of the Holiness of God and Scripture. **"For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee. The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity. Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the LORD will abhor the bloody and deceitful man"** (Ps. 5:4-6). There is no reason for God to love Esau or any of us, if we continually break His Ten Commandments plus a million more! None of us do any good in His Perfect and Holy Sight! **"But we are all as an unclean thing, and (even) all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast**

**consumed us, because of our iniquities"** (Isa. 64:6-7). If we are honest, even our "good works" are selfishly motivated to get people to notice them and give us praise. If you do not believe me, I can tell you that if I do something good and nobody notices it, I will make sure they find out about it! Praise me!

And that is sin. That is all we have ever since Adam fell. That is why we suffer, that is why we mess up time after time (end up in prison?), and that is ultimately why we die... both physically, but also spiritually. **"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good. The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one"** (Ps. 14:1-3).

And that brings us back to Paul's defense of Jacob being loved, back in Romans 9. Not the hatred of Esau needed defending. That hatred of sin and ultimately sinners is only too real and to be expected. Everything Esau (and I) ever did on our own, only merits death. Forever being separated from God and His blessings, including love. **"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord"** (Rom. 6:23). This is the clearest verse in the Bible concerning our condition. No hope, except through the "gift" of God's sovereign grace! If God took an equally sinful Jacob (sinful, with no more hope than his twin brother Esau) and gave him an unmerited "A," then the Apostle is going to have to explain that to me (and the Pharisees, etc). Why? Why would He show grace upon Jacob?

Where did that justification

♦ (Continued on page 18)

## BEREA BAPTIST BANNER

## Financial Report

8-1-2023 to 8-31-2023

Beginning Balance.....\$11,403.36

## RECEIPTS:

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS .....               | 750.00 |
| Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL .....           | 25.00  |
| West Jefferson B. C., West Jefferson, OH. .... | 100.00 |
| The Lord's B. C., Goose Creek, SC .....        | 100.00 |
| Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH .....       | 100.00 |
| Philadelphian B. C., Decatur, AL .....         | 100.00 |
| S. G. B. C., Wellington, KS .....              | 200.00 |
| Beauty Mtn. B. C., Edmond WV .....             | 50.00  |
| Indore B.C., Indore, WV .....                  | 300.00 |
| Berea B.C., Stonington, IL.....                | 60.00  |
| Big Creek B.C., Wayne, WV .....                | 200.00 |
| Victory B. C., Courtland VA .....              | 25.00  |
| Grace B. C., Corbin KY .....                   | 100.00 |
| New Testament B. C., Goshen IN .....           | 100.00 |
| Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX.....                | 50.00  |
| Michael Sherman, Ashland, KY.....              | 50.00  |
| Briar Creek, Williamsburg, KY .....            | 150.00 |
| S. G. M. B. C., Texarkana, TX .....            | 100.00 |
| Bible Believers B.C., Naples, ID .....         | 300.00 |
| Grace M. B. C., Tulsa, OK .....                | 50.00  |
| Southside B. C., Fulton, MS .....              | 50.00  |
| Tim/Carol Willett Cottonwood Shores, TX.....   | 125.00 |
| Portland B.C., Plumerville, AR.....            | 50.00  |
| Parkway Landmark C., Springfield, OR.....      | 100.00 |
| Faith B.C., Lynn, AR.....                      | 12.50  |
| Don Coppedge, Glen Carbon, IL .....            | 44.00  |

|                     |             |
|---------------------|-------------|
| Subscriptions ..... | 30.00       |
| Anonymous .....     | 125.00      |
| Div. Cks. ....      | 150.00      |
| Sub Total .....     | \$3,596.50  |
| TOTAL.....          | \$14,999.86 |

## EXPENDITURES:

|                         |             |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| Postage: .....          | 890.68      |
| Printing .....          | 417.12      |
| Supplies .....          | 163.70      |
| Wages.....              | 2,000.00    |
| FICA.....               | 153.00      |
| Div. Cks. ....          | 150.00      |
| Total Expenditures..... | \$3,774.50  |
| ENDING BALANCE .....    | \$11,225.36 |



## BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST

## Financial Report

8-1-2023 to 8-31-2023

Beginning Balance.....\$5,932.90

## RECEIPTS:

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS .....          | 150.00   |
| Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY ..... | 100.00   |
| Grace B. C., Corbin, KY .....             | 100.00   |
| .....                                     | 350.00   |
| TOTAL.....                                | 6,282.90 |

## EXPENDITURES:

|                          |            |
|--------------------------|------------|
| Radio time .....         | 403.98     |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURES ..... | 403.98     |
| Interest .....           | +0.48      |
| ENDING BALANCE .....     | \$5,879.40 |

## Letter of Hope...

(Continued from page 17) ◊

and reconciliation come from? How can God justify loving Jacob or Noah? Let us examine this grace that overruled the condemnation of sin in the time of the great flood. **“And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them”** (Gen. 6:5-7). The Lord equates this time of Noah with the same environment at the time of Jesus’ return, **“But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be”** (Matt. 24:37-39). It was (and is) times of darkness, iniquity and depravity! And Genesis chapter six, verse 8, as it follows the above text, should properly read, “And so He did destroy everything He had created.” But it does not say that! It says, **“But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD”** (Gen. 6:8). What? Why Noah? What was so special about him? Selah! Think about it!

Actually, nothing! Nothing about Noah was special, nothing different from all the other sinners in his time! Remember? **“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God”** (Rom. 3:23). It is profoundly significant that this

word grace is used concerning Noah (and ultimately Jacob). It does not say Noah found “merit” in the eyes of the Lord. There were no good works found in Noah- only filthy rags of pride and self-righteousness! If this keynote verse had said “works,” then we too, (and Esau!) could change our own destinies and make a decision for Christ! But it does not. Noah never chose God- but by grace, God chose him. Loved him from before the foundation of the world! **“According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world...”** (Eph. 1:4-7). But “how” is that “justified”? Jacob, and not Esau? Noah, and not Cain’s grandson, Irad? Because something else was decreed before the foundation of the world. And that something was the Election of Jesus Christ unto the Cross of Calvary to take our penalties, suffer our Hell, and make Jacob, Noah, and each of us that find the grace of God “holy,” **“..that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his (Sovereign!) grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.”**

This, too, is the hope of Jeremiah! **“The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. ...Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations”** (Jer. 31:3/1:5). None have ever deserved or earned the grace of God, oh sinner, but the grace of God has purchased our

salvation in eternal life! **“For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous”** (Rom. 5:19). What did Jesus say? **“I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance”** (Luke 5:32).

Are you Esau or Jacob? Are you depending upon your own righteousnesses, or only upon the righteousness of Jesus Christ? **“Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints”** (Rev. 19:7-8).

If the Holy Spirit of God is convicting you of your sins, then that would be the grace of God being extended to you. Does not have to! God is perfectly just in leaving Esau and the multitudes of “Christ-rejectors” in their own sin, in their own “Free Will,” as it were. But if your heart is being pricked by the Word of God- repent and believe. **“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest”** (Matt. 11:28). **“Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call”** (Acts 2:37-39).

We are praying for you at Big Creek Baptist Church, my friend! I hope and trust the Lord will give you peace, even in the darkest parts of this prison you find yourself in. The Apostle Paul and many saints like John

◊ (Continued on page 19)

# Letter of Hope...

(Continued from page 18) ◊

Bunyan have found themselves in prisons, also. Times of affliction are sure in a world where Satan is cut loose. But God has purposes for us. Bunyan wrote "Pilgrim's Progress" while imprisoned. The Apostle to the Gentiles wrote the Books of Philippians, Colossians, Philemon, and Ephesians while in jail, and the Book of Acts records multiple times of incarceration. But it was not a time of giving up (on God, forbid!), but rather Scripture records in Acts 16:22-25, "And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them. And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks. And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them."

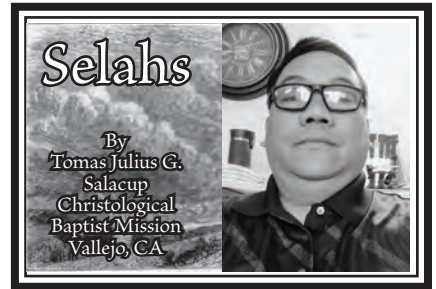
And lest you reply that the Apostle Paul and other martyrs gone on before were in prisons for the sake of Jesus Christ, I will agree, but also note that the "thief on the cross" was there for his own vile sins of breaking the Law of both God and Man! Yet, for him (like you?) was prepared the opportunity of a lifetime! To find Jesus there in the midst of two lost, condemned sinners! Listen to the changed tune that grace gave him... First the rejection and reviling of the ignorant tongue: "Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have

him: for he said, I am the Son of God. The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth" (Matt. 27:41-44). But then sovereign grace touched this one's heart, and God honored the sacrifice and work of His only begotten Son. "And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, to day shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:39-43).

However long the Lord has ordained for you to be behind bars, I do not know, but I do know those days are numbered (according to His Grace!). At the proper time, Joseph will come forth into the Courts of Pharaoh! And so will each of us reach the end of our incarceration in these earthly bodies. "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound" (Isa. 61:1). But until He releases us, we have a job to do. Honor Him. Reverence His Name. Obey His Commandments. Worship His Holy Person. Trust "only" in Jesus Christ to cover your many sins with His Holy Blood! Repent (turn away) from your past, and embrace the forgiveness and the Lordship of the Sovereign Master of Life!

That God may continue to give us the grace to do so is my prayer. May God bless His Word

to you.  
In His Sovereign and Merciful Grip (Always),  
Pastor Matthew



**Fallen, But Not Destroyed**  
"Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand" (Psa.37:24).

Most of those who do not believe in the eternal security of the saints of God, will try to ignore this verse. But this verse clearly states "though they fall" God cannot utterly cast them down, for it is Him that upholds them.

Let us put it this way: Think of a father walking along with his young son by his side. There are two ways father and son might hold hands. The young boy may reach up with his tiny hand to grasp his father's huge hand. That works until the child stumbles and he is forced to let go of his father's hand. But if the father places his huge hand around his son's tiny hand, the boy is safe no matter what happens because his father's hand holds him up. He may stumble but the father's hand "upholds" him.

Thus it is with His saints, His precious children. We are not holding on to Him, He is!

Sinner, do you have that assurance? If not, throw yourself in His loving arms, repent of your sins, and rest alone into the finished work of His dear Son, Jesus Christ. Selah!



UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation (All Periodicals Publications Except Requester Publications)

**The Berea Baptist Banner**

Frequency: Monthly  
Issue Date: 10-5-2023  
Number of Issues Published Annually: 12  
Annual Subscription Price: \$6.00  
Mailing Office: Berea Baptist Church, Inc., P.O. Box 39, Berea, Ohio 44004  
Publication Title: The Berea Baptist Banner  
Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: 10-5-2023

1. Title and Issue Information

| Publication Title  | Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months | No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date |
|--|--|---|
| a. Total (Include all Copies, net of office use)   | 1500   | 1500  |
| b. Paid or Requester Paid (Include Paid Through the USPS, Paid Through Carriers, Paid Through Retail Sales, Paid Through the Internet, Paid Through Newsstands, Paid Through Subscriptions, Paid Through Other Means)  | 1161   | 1151  |
| c. Free or Nominal Rate (Include Free or Nominal Rate Through the USPS, Free or Nominal Rate Through Carriers, Free or Nominal Rate Through Retail Sales, Free or Nominal Rate Through Newsstands, Free or Nominal Rate Through Subscriptions, Free or Nominal Rate Through Other Means)       | 339  | 349   |
| d. Total Free or Nominal Rate (Include Free or Nominal Rate Through the USPS, Free or Nominal Rate Through Carriers, Free or Nominal Rate Through Retail Sales, Free or Nominal Rate Through Newsstands, Free or Nominal Rate Through Subscriptions, Free or Nominal Rate Through Other Means) | 339  | 349   |
| e. Total Paid or Requester Paid (Include Paid Through the USPS, Paid Through Carriers, Paid Through Retail Sales, Paid Through the Internet, Paid Through Newsstands, Paid Through Subscriptions, Paid Through Other Means)  | 1161   | 1151  |
| f. Total (Include all Copies, net of office use)   | 1500   | 1500  |

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation (All Periodicals Publications Except Requester Publications)

**Clark Banner, Editor**

Frequency: Monthly  
Issue Date: 9-17-23  
Number of Issues Published Annually: 12  
Annual Subscription Price: \$6.00  
Mailing Office: Berea Baptist Church, Inc., P.O. Box 39, Berea, Ohio 44004  
Publication Title: Clark Banner, Editor  
Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: 9-17-23

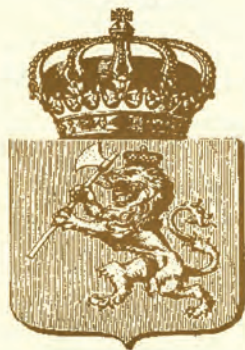
1. Title and Issue Information

| Publication Title  | Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months | No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date |
|--|--|---|
| a. Total (Include all Copies, net of office use)   | 1500   | 1500  |
| b. Paid or Requester Paid (Include Paid Through the USPS, Paid Through Carriers, Paid Through Retail Sales, Paid Through the Internet, Paid Through Newsstands, Paid Through Subscriptions, Paid Through Other Means)  | 1161   | 1151  |
| c. Free or Nominal Rate (Include Free or Nominal Rate Through the USPS, Free or Nominal Rate Through Carriers, Free or Nominal Rate Through Retail Sales, Free or Nominal Rate Through Newsstands, Free or Nominal Rate Through Subscriptions, Free or Nominal Rate Through Other Means)       | 339  | 349   |
| d. Total Free or Nominal Rate (Include Free or Nominal Rate Through the USPS, Free or Nominal Rate Through Carriers, Free or Nominal Rate Through Retail Sales, Free or Nominal Rate Through Newsstands, Free or Nominal Rate Through Subscriptions, Free or Nominal Rate Through Other Means) | 339  | 349   |
| e. Total Paid or Requester Paid (Include Paid Through the USPS, Paid Through Carriers, Paid Through Retail Sales, Paid Through the Internet, Paid Through Newsstands, Paid Through Subscriptions, Paid Through Other Means)  | 1161   | 1151  |
| f. Total (Include all Copies, net of office use)   | 1500   | 1500  |

## The Golden Age

A Treatise on the One Thousand Year  
Reign of Christ on Earth

By  
Arthur W. Pink  
and  
Luther C. Peak



\$3.00

**\$3.00**

## Salvation

(Sermons to Sinners)



Milburn Cockrell

**\$6.95**

Find these titles and more at the  
Berea Baptist Bookstore:  
<http://bereabookstore.com> or (662) 282-7794

Postage & Shipping Chart

| Order Value     | Add    |
|-----------------|--------|
| Minimum         | \$5.00 |
| \$25.00-49.99   | \$6.00 |
| \$50.00-74.99   | \$7.00 |
| \$75.00-99.99   | \$8.00 |
| \$100.00 and Up | FREE   |

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Grace Landmark Baptist Church of Buckhannon, WV, is seeking a pastor. The church is Sovereign Grace and Landmark in doctrine and practice. Any interested called pastor of like faith may contact Brother Brad Butcher at (304) 669-4738 or (304) 745-6226.

\*\*\*\*\*

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

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

\*\*\*\*\*

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

\*\*\*\*\*

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

\*\*\*\*\*

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

\*\*\*\*\*

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

\*\*\*\*\*

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

\*\*\*\*\*

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

\*\*\*\*\*

The Philadelphia Baptist Church of Decatur, AL by God's grace is seeking a pastor. The church is Sovereign Grace, Landmark, Independent, Missionary, KJV Bible in faith and practice. If you desire a copy of our Articles of Faith please let us know. Any interested Elder of like faith may contact: Glenn Gilbreath (256) 476-1033 or Mike Gibson (256) 303-7747.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Berea Baptist Church of Mantachie, MS is in search of a Pastor. Any interested Elder, of like faith and order, my contact us at 662-282-7794, or [office@bereabaptistchurch.org](mailto:office@bereabaptistchurch.org) for a pastoral questionnaire.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church in Brownsburg, Indiana is in need of a pastor. The church firmly believes in the Sovereignty of God, the doctrines of Grace and the perpetuity of the New Testament Church. Interested brethren should contact Chris Rainey at 317-727-4755.



### COLLECTED SERMONS SERIES

## IN SEARCH OF THE UNIVERSAL INVISIBLE CHURCH

**\$3.95**
**MILBURN COCKRELL**

## ARTICLE INDEX

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| Personal Witnessing by Andy Proctor .....                     | p. 1     |
| Who is God? by Wm. Doyal Thomas .....                         | p. 1     |
| Down—But Not Out! by Roger Reed .....                         | p. 1     |
| Heavenly Hymns .....  | p. 9     |
| Forums .....  | p. 10-13 |
| Unconditional Election by Joeseeph Sidders .....              | p. 14    |
| Baptist History by David L. Cummins & E. Wayne Thompson ..... | p. 16    |
| Letter of Hope to a Prisoner by Matthew Stepp .....           | p. 16    |
| Selahs by Julius Salacup .....                                | p. 19    |