

The Baptist Examiner

"To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. 8:20).⁸⁷

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The Great Commission And The Church⁸⁰

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(Being half of the first chapter of a hitherto unpublished book entitled: "Christian Union and The Great Commission.")⁷⁵

"And Jesus came to them and spoke to them, saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth;⁸⁷ go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age"—Matt. 28:18-20.¹⁸⁹⁵

The Duke of Wellington called this the marching orders of the ministry; but it would be more correct to call it the marching orders of the churches, for this commission was not given to ministers, but to churches.⁷⁴

Some Patent Points.

I. The author of this commission is Jesus Christ, the only Lord and lawgiver of his churches.⁹⁰

Men may establish their own churches, and give to them man-made laws;⁶ but they have no right to make laws for the blood-bought churches of Christ.¹¹⁷ "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you," said Christ.⁶⁷

II. The commission was given to an organized body of believers, known as His church, which He had already constituted.¹³

The following points are not only self-evident, but preeminently scriptural:⁴⁴

1. The commission was not given to the apostles as such, for in that case the commission would have ceased at the death of the last apostle; the apostles having no successors.¹⁴⁰

2. The commission was not given to preachers as such, for that would keep it out of the churches [and would make preachers the pillar and ground of the truth instead of the church].¹³⁴

3. The commission was not given to individual disciples, for in that case the churches would not be the custodians of the gospel; and would have no authority to execute any part of the commission. This would leave the churches without a mission in the world.²¹⁸

4. The commission was not given to Christ's enemies, for they would not carry out his will among men.⁷⁸

As stated above, this article comprises half of the first chapter of a hitherto unpublished book. In response to our request that he furnish something for publication in this paper the author of this book kindly sent us the first chapters. We begin the publication of the book in this issue with the intention of continuing it in succeeding issues. The book deals instructively with some very timely and interesting questions. Other chapters deal with the relation between the commission and alien immersion, open communion, pulpit affiliation, union meetings, a basis of union, missions, Christian education.

Unionism is the order of the day in so-called Christendom. Therefore, we covet for this book a wide reading and close study.

Also the contention of this first chapter that the commission was given to the church is significant in view of modern mission methods that leave nothing for the church to do, except to foot the bills.

*Wherever the author is known, he is acknowledged to be an eminent Bible teacher and preacher. Verily, he is "mighty in the scriptures."—Editorial Note.*⁹²⁵

5. The commission was not given to those who profess to love Christ, but are fundamentally wrong in doctrine, for this would send down through the centuries the very opposite of what Christ wanted.¹⁶¹

6. The commission was not given to a false church, for such an institution would divert, invert, and pervert the whole system of salvation and service.⁷²¹

Then to whom was the commission given? It was given to the church Christ had already constituted.⁹⁹

III. Jesus Christ constituted His own church during His personal ministry on earth, and, as an institution, he called it "my church," saying: "Upon this rock I will build my church."¹³⁸

Let the following be well considered:³¹

I. What does the word "church" mean? Some would have us believe it means a religious denomination, as the Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church, the Christian Church, the Episcopal Church, the Lutheran Church, the Catholic Church, etc. Others teach that it is all the saved considered together, including the saints of the past and present upon the earth and those in heaven. Still there are others who think it means a kind of

"trunk," out of which all religious sects grow as branches. Yet others would have us believe that it is invisible, and is known only to the eye of God. Finally, some think it is a state church, such as the Church of France, the Church of England, etc. But such designations are foreign to the scriptures, as we shall see.⁵¹⁵

Light is thrown upon the meaning of the word "church" from two sources:³⁷⁶

(1) **The meaning of the word in the original language.** How did the Greeks use the word *ekklesia*, which is translated church in our Bibles? How did Jesus and the apostles use it? From what source did the term enter the New Testament? Were different writers in the first century uniform in their use of the word? If we could approach these matters without denominational bias, it would not be difficult for us to get a satisfactory answer; but most of us have formed our opinions from the customs about us until the desire for individual and independent research has about left us. Will the reader come to this question as if it were entirely new to him and impartially weigh the arguments advanced herein? Note the testimony of scholars: ⁵⁴³

Prof. Royal, one time professor in Wake Forest College, said he knew of no place where unassembled or unassembling people were called an *ekklesia*, or church. Hence, people who do not assemble cannot be scripturally called a church. ⁵⁷

Dr. W. A. Jarrell wrote the professors of Greek in the leading universities and seminaries in many countries, and asked them the following question: "What Greek lexicons are standard for classis and New Testament Greek?" The almost unanimous answer was: "Liddell and Scott (late edition) for Greek in general, and Thayer for New Testament Greek." Therefore, here we may expect to get the best and only worthwhile definition of the Greek word *ekklesia*. Liddell and Scott define the word thus: "An assembly of people called together." This is its general use. Thayer gives the word as meaning a congregation, or an assembly. Robinson gives the same rendering in his lexicon. Bishop Trench says: "*Ekklesia*, as all know, was the lawful assembly in a free Greek city of all persons possessed of the rights of citizenship for the transaction of public affairs. Baptists accept the primary meaning of this word, and therefore, believe that 'a church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ, governed by his law, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by his word' (N. H. confession). That which cannot assemble in some particular place is not an assembly, and that which cannot congregate is not a congregation; hence all Christians do not constitute the church. ⁹⁷⁵

(2) **The meaning of the word in the New Testament.** The first church was constituted by Jesus Christ while he was here, in the flesh. Before this church was founded a man was sent, as a forerunner to prepare the material for it. As David prepared the material out of which Solomon built the temple (1 Chron. 29:19), so John the Baptist prepared the material out of which Christ formed His church. See Mark 1:2, 3; Luke 1:7; 6:12, 13. This church was not formed on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ, as some claim, but before Christ died. Savage, in his "Time and Place Harmony," shows that Jesus constituted His church "on the Pentecostal morning, Saturday, June 4, 32 A. D.," and cites Luke 6:12, 13 as proof. Jesus called out the twelve, assembled them and ordained them, that they might be with him as a kind of traveling church. Paul says: "God set some in the church, first apostles" (1 Cor. 12:28). The apostles were the charter members of the church, and were "set in" by the Lord Himself. These men had been previously baptized by John the Baptist. How do we know this? We know that some of them were John's disciples (John 1:35-37). We also know that none became identified with him, except through repentance, faith, and baptism (Matt. 3: Acts 19:4). In selecting a successor of Judas, it was necessary that one be chosen who had been identified with John in his baptism (Acts 1:21, 22). (That first church was careful in the selection of officers.) John said: "I baptize you with water, . . . he shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 3:11). So the apostles, who were baptized in the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, had already been baptized in water by John. John says so. He

baptized them in water, and Christ baptized them in the Holy Spirit. John won men, baptized them, and had them ready for Christ when he came. He was glad to say to his disciples: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). ¹⁴¹⁰

That the church was constituted while Christ was here in the flesh is clear from the fact that while he was in the world his church was formed and had within its membership "apostles," "prophets," and "teachers" (1 Cor. 12:28). Also it had the gospel committed to it, with an ordained ministry to proclaim it (Luke 6:12, 13; Mark 1:1; Matt. 24:14; Matt. 10:7). This church baptized, had the Lord's supper, and was in possession of a law of church discipline before Christ died (John 4:2; Matt. 26:26-30; Matt. 18:15-17). Besides this, this church had a treasurer to handle its finances, and possessed the keys of the kingdom before Jesus died (John 13:29; Matt. 16:19). Before the first Pentecost after the death of Jesus, the church had enrolled one hundred and twenty members; and had the commission to evangelize, baptize, and teach in all the world (Matt. 28:18-20). It also had a method of voting, and elected an officer by a majority vote (Acts 1:15-18). To this church were added three thousand members at Pentecost. And, inasmuch as something cannot be added to nothing, the church had to be in existence to receive these new members. ⁹⁷

That the church was constituted on Pentecost is not only unscriptural, but is also anti-scriptural. There is no scriptural foundation for such a theory. If, as the Campbellites claim, John's baptism was not Christian, and it takes Christian baptism to save, and the apostles were put in as the charter members of the church on Pentecost, then it follows that Christ constituted his church of children of the devil; for the apostles had none other than the baptism administered by John. ⁹⁷

(To be continued in the next issue)

THE INVISIBLE, UNIVERSAL CHURCH

"I have heard something about and read something of an invisible, universal church. The churches that Christ establishes are visible and organized. The invisible, universal church does not exist, except in the imagination of some people. I impeach the invisible, universal church theory as—⁹⁷⁵

"An immense, immaterial, imaginary inference; an immodest, impracticable imbecile; an impetuous, implacable, imperious impertinence; an impossible, improbable, imperiling imposter; an incredulous, inconsistent, insane impossibility; an indefinite, indudicious, inscrutable insanity; an invidious, invalid invention, spreading out into shallowness, enlarging into littleness, and increasing into nothingness."—A. T. Howell. ⁹⁷

"STING AND STAB"

"You are not going to save men's souls with blurred uncertainties, foggy ambiguities, and clumsy evasions. Many clergymen of the Church of England are talented little gentlemen who deliver tepid little sermons about rites and sacraments and the authority of the Church. And when you hear them you know why the power of the pulpit has declined and why the church has lost its confident stride and is now a diminishing factor in the community. **Their sermons never sting and stab.** You would get a far more vivid and stimulating talk from a Salvation Army Captain at some street corner. Imagine that one day when you are extremely hungry you go into a restaurant and discover that all it has to offer you is a lecture on cookery. You know how you would feel. Well, that is how I feel when I come out from some churches today."—British Weekly. ⁷⁷

The Eternal Gospel¹⁶

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"And I saw another angel flying in mid-heaven, having the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people; saying with a great voice, Fear God and give glory to him, because the hour of his judgment is come; and worship him who made the heaven, and the earth, and sea and fountains of water."²¹⁹
—Rev. 14:6.

It is not our purpose to attempt an exegesis of this entire passage, but only to note what is here meant by the "eternal gospel." However, we might note by way of introduction that Rev. 14:6-13 gives the proclamation of the three angels. The first angel, which is mentioned in our text, is set forth as bringing a worldwide diffusion of the gospel. This preaching of the gospel is to be the means of the saint's victory over Satan, "the Holy Roman Empire," and the counterfeit church. From our text comes our great missionary hymn, "Fly Abroad Thou Mighty Gospel." The gospel that is thus to be diffused among earth's inhabitants is said to be an "eternal gospel." These are the words we desire to study in this article.^{558 128}

The word "aionion," which is the word used in the original for everlasting in this passage, has three meanings according to Thayer's lexicon. They are: "1. without beginning or end, that which always has been and always will be"—examples of this meaning of the word are found in "the eternal God" (Rom. 16:26), and in "the eternal Spirit" (Heb. 9:14); "2. without beginning"—see Rom. 16:25; 2 Tim. 2:1-9; Titus 1:2; "3 without end, never to cease, everlasting." We believe the gospel of the grace of God is eternal in all the meanings of the word given. For that reason we prefer to use the word eternal rather than the word everlasting. Not only is the gospel of endless duration as to future time, but its subject matter is from eternity; i. e., the saving purpose of God was adopted from eternity. Therefore, it is more than the "everlasting gospel;" it is the "eternal gospel." We come now to ask, In what sense is the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ the "eternal gospel?" We answer:^{71 118}

1. It is eternal as to its substance.²⁷

That which goes to make up the gospel was settled from all eternity in the counsel and covenant of peace. Just as the downward tumble of man was no surprise to God, so the gospel and its contents were not adopted because the Lord God found himself in a perplexing situation after man's fall. Before man was made, the Son of God stood as a lamb slain for the sins of lost and depraved creatures. See Rev. 13:8. In 1 Pet. 1:20 we read that Christ "was foreordained before the foundation of the world" as "a lamb without blemish and without spot." For that reason the enemies of the Lord Jesus, in all their hatred and malice, could do no more than was determined before to be done. See Acts 4:28. And in the crucifixion of the Lord of Glory, the enemies of the Lord were only carrying out the foreordained and predetermined counsel of God; yet, because of the wicked motive that prompted them, they stand guilty of murder of the worst kind. See Acts 4:23.¹⁰¹

While noting that the substance of the gospel is eternal, we might do well just here to note what the substance of the gospel really is. There are many things said to be the gospel that have no connection with God's eternal gospel. Paul says that the gospel is "how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried,

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In this article some vital doctrines are touched. It will delight those who love strong doctrine and rejoice in the glorious gospel of the blessed Son of God.—Editorial Note.²⁷

and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:3, 4). Then the gospel has as its central and only theme, the atoning work of the Lord Jesus. The gospel speaks to us of the vicarious, substitutionary work of him who "knew no sin," but was made "to be sin for us . . . that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. 5:21). Baptism is no part of the gospel. See 1 Cor. 1:17. God's eternal gospel is not only glad tidings; it is glad tidings of eternal redemption provided by the work of the cross. The gospel takes in three great facts; and weaves them together so that the justice of God is satisfied, and mercy is made exultant in the release of lost men. These three great facts are sin, Christ, and calvary.⁷²⁸

The eternal nature of the gospel of God distinguishes it from all counterfeits. New gospels are no gospels, but are rather delusions and snares of Satan. All new religions, new gospels, and new teachings that endeavor to lead men to God are worthless and empty because they are modern and not eternal. The gospel that truly saves was ordained of God in eternity.²⁷⁵

This eternal gospel was first made known, in some degree at least, to Old Testament saints. They knew of the coming Messiah, and rejoiced in Him. Specifically does the New Testament say that the gospel was preached to Abraham. See Gal. 3:8. In sundry ways this eternal gospel was prefigured and foreshadowed in the Old Testament, looking to the time when God would in these last days speak unto us by his Son. Heb. 1:2. David knew of this eternal gospel; and, while rejoicing in forgiveness of sins as a joyful reality, was made to say: "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered" (Psa. 32:1). O thou blessed gospel of the grace of God, thou dost hail from eternity. Myraids of saints in all ages have rejoiced in thy riches. Thou hast been through bitter wars in time gone by, when sinful men would have corrupted thee; but today thou art the same eternal, unchangeable gospel of the happy God!⁷⁷

2. It is eternal as to its ground and basis.³²

The ground and basis of the gospel, like its substance, are from eternity; and are in themselves everlasting. Had it not been for the eternal work of divine sovereignty in the eons past, we would have no eternal gospel! Let us note three things that form a part of the ground and basis of the gospel, which in themselves are eternal:²⁶⁴

(1) Election. In Eph. 1:4 we read: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." And in 2 Thess. 2:13 we read: "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation." Eternal election makes possible, yea, makes certain, an eternal gospel. Election in time, as some would have it, gnaws at the very vitals of the gospel and makes the gospel a thing of time and not of eternity. It would be impossible for the gospel to be eternal if God's choice of the beneficiaries of the gospel were made in time. Eternal

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JUSTIFICATION

James P. Boyce says: "No doctrine of scripture is more important than that of justification. It involves the whole method of the salvation of sinners. It is vitally connected with all other fundamental doctrines. A correct conception of it cannot exist when other truths are ignored, or only partially received. The opinions held upon this point control in a great part other theological views of Christian individuals and parties. The importance of a correct knowledge of what God has taught on this subject cannot, therefore, be exaggerated."

In considering this subject we shall first attempt to give a definition of it, and then we shall endeavor to discuss the definition. Justification is that instantaneous, everlasting, gracious, free, judicial act of God, whereby, on account of the merit of Christ's blood and righteousness, a repentant, believing sinner is freed from the penalty of the law, restored to God's favor, and considered as possessing the righteousness of Christ; by virtue of all of which he receives adoption as a son. In studying this definition we will notice:

I. The Author of Justification

The author of justification is neither man, nor the Son of Man, but God the Father. Man has nothing to do with his own justification, except to exercise the repentance and faith that gives him and enables him to exercise, and to receive the benefits thereof. The Scriptures declare: "It is God that justifieth" (Rom. 8:23). Again we read: "Being justified freely by his (God's) grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 3:24). Christ may be said to justify us only in the sense that he paid the redemptive price and purchased our salvation for us. The sinner is called into court, where God is the judge. Christ appears there as the sinner's advocate, pleading his own merit as the sinner's substitute. Then God, the judge, on the ground of the finished work of Christ, and in consequence of the faith of the sinner, exonerates, acquits, and fully justifies the sinner.

II. The Nature of Justification

1. **It is instantaneous.** It is an act, and not a process. It occurs, and is complete, the moment the individual believes. It admits of no degrees nor stages. Here is where Romanists and others go far astray. The Publican is said to have gone down to his house justified. He was justified completely the moment he put his faith in the propitiatory work of Christ. The scripture gives not the slightest hint of a process in justification; and, from a logical standpoint, nothing could be more absurd than the thought of a man being partly justified and partly condemned. The justification of the believer is always put in the past tense.

2. **It is everlasting.** When one is justified, he is justified for all eternity. Justification can never be undone or reversed. It is once for all time. The believer is not only justified from his past offences at the time he believes, but from those in

the future as well. For that reason, God asks: "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect" (Rom. 8:33). Christ paid a full ransom, and made a complete atonement for all believers; otherwise Christ would have to die again, or else the believer would come into condemnation for his future sins. But we read that Christ's offering was **once for all** (Heb. 10:10), and that the believer "**shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life**" (John 5:24). So far as the believer's standing and destiny are concerned, he has already passed the judgment. He has stood trial, and has been fully and everlastingly acquitted. That Paul taught an everlasting, unchangeable justification is shown by the fact that he felt it necessary to defend his doctrine against those who would contend that it gave license for sin. This is the same indictment that is brought today against the doctrine we are now setting forth. Lastly we read that the words of Paul to the Hebrews: "**For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified**" (Heb. 10:14). While it is the sanctified that are under consideration in this quotation, yet this scripture is applicable to the matter in hand, because the sanctified and justified are one. If the sanctified are perfected forever, so are the justified.

3. **It is gracious and free.** The sinner deserves nothing at the hands of God, except condemnation. Therefore, justification is wholly and purely of grace. Paul says: "**Not by works of righteousness which we did, but according to his mercy he saved us**" (Titus 3:5). And while justification is on the basis of Christ's meritorious and atoning work, yet it is a free and unconstrained act on the part of God, inasmuch as God was under no obligation or necessity of accepting Christ as our substitute. The individual's faith has nothing in it to merit justification. Faith makes up no part of the ground of justification.

4. **It is judicial and declarative only.** Justification is a forensic or law term. It is an act of the court of heaven. It does not of itself make the believer inwardly righteous or holy. It makes him righteous only as to his standing. Justification is judicial and declarative rather than efficient. A court cannot make the accused personally or inwardly righteous, but it can give him justification as to his standing. Justification does not of itself produce or infuse righteousness or holiness in the believer. Sanctification, considered experimentally and progressively, does this. Many endlessly confuse sanctification and justification. But that they are not to be confused is shown by the fact that justification is presented as the opposite of condemnation, while sanctification, as spoken of above, is the opposite of a sinful nature. See Rom. 5:18.

III. The Ground of Justification

The ground of justification is the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ. It is wholly apart from anything in the individual. God requires perfection. Man, because of his depravity, cannot render perfection. Hence justification must find its ground outside of man. The following scriptures show that justification is not based on anything in man: Rom. 3:20; Gal. 3:10; Titus 3:5.

There is no contradiction between James and Paul on the matter of the basis or ground of justification. Paul used the word in one sense (the primary one), and James used it in another (the secondary one). Paul used the word to mean "to declare righteous," and James used it to mean "to evince or prove to be righteous." The word carries both meanings. We find in Matt. 11:9 and in 1 Tim. 3:16 the same use of "dikaio" (the Greek word for justify) that James makes. Taken together, the sum total of the teachings of Paul and James on justification is as follows: Paul teaches that we are given a righteous standing before God through faith; James teaches that we prove our justification by our works. It is in this sense, and in this sense only, that works justify. Commenting upon James' treatment of justification, James P. Boyce says: "The apostle's object is to deny the living character of any

faith which has not wrought with works, and has not been perfected by works. It is thus evident that works occupy the position of subsequent, not antecedent, accompaniments of justification. They manifest that justification has taken place, because they are invariable consequents. They do this, however, not before man only, but God also; and consequently he, as well as man, perceives them, and because of them the believer is justified before God. But such justification is not that actual justification which takes place in connection with faith, which is the judicial act of God declaring the relation of the believer to the law; but that declarative or manifesting justification, which cannot exist except as the result of actual justification, and which is so inseparably connected with the latter that by its presence or absence the existence or non-existence of justification is distinctly established." So we may say that Paul used the word in the more exact, fundamental, and primary sense to show that actual justification, which gives us our standing, is through faith in the blood of Jesus Christ; while James used the word in a looser and secondary sense that the faith which justifies is a living, active faith, and that works are its inseparable consequents. Thus works manifest justification. The fact that the believer's justification is always put in the past tense, excludes the idea of continued good works from a place in justification in the actual and primary sense.

If there is still thought to be any difficulty in reconciling Paul and James, let it be remembered that the same difficulty remains in reconciling James with himself, for he affirms that "Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness" or justification—(Jas. 2:23).

There is another point in connection with the ground of justification that needs stressing. It is that the basis or ground of justification includes not only the blood of Christ, but his righteousness as well. In Rom. 5:19 we read: "As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Some would interpret this latter clause as referring to sanctification instead of justification. In other words, they take it that we are made personally righteous by the obedience of Christ. This cannot be, for personal righteousness is the result of the operation of the Holy Spirit in us. There is no conceivable way in which the obedience of Christ could make us personally righteous. It is quite evident that "made righteous" is in the forensic sense. And this passage shows that the obedience of Christ has a place in our justification. By obedience here I understand what is theologically termed "active obedience," or obedience to the revealed law of God, rather than what is termed "passive obedience," or his obedience in death. I understand it in this sense because the obedience of Christ here contrasted with Adam's disobedience, and Adam's disobedience was active disobedience. The blood of Christ frees us from the penalty of sin, and absolves us from guilt, but it is Christ's obedience that gives us positive standing before God. His blood makes us guiltless; his obedience makes us righteous. The blood justifies negatively; his obedience justifies us positively.

IV. The Means of Justification

Faith is the means of justification. Faith brings about a union and oneness between the sinner and his substitute. It is for this reason alone that faith justifies us. It has no merit in and of itself. It is not something that is accepted in lieu of our obedience. Nor does it bring about a lowering of God's standard so that we may win the favor of God by our obedience.

V. The Benefits of Justification

The benefits of justification may be divided into four parts:

1. **Freedom from the penalty of the law.** In Rom. 10:4 we read: "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." And Gal. 3:13 says: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." This means that to the believer the law is no longer an

instrument of condemnation. Christ extracted its fangs for the believer. Mt. Sinai gathered herself in awful fury and hurled her deadly arrows of condemnation at Christ. He received those arrows in his own body on the tree, consumed their force, and robbed them of their power to condemn the believer. For that reason the believer shall never come into condemnation (John 5:24; Rom. 8:1). Christ's death was the believer's death; hence the believer is to the law as one already dead.

2. **Restoration to the favor of God.** Justification does more than merely free a man of the penalty of the law; it makes him in God's sight as one that had never broken the law. It makes the believer as innocent as Adam was before the fall.

3. **The possession of the righteousness of Jesus Christ.** Again I wish to quote from Rom. 10:4: "Christ is become the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Above we emphasized the fact that Christ became the end of the law for believers; here we desire to emphasize that he became the end of the law for righteousness. Rom. 3:22 tells us what righteousness it is that we receive in justification. It is: "Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe." And in Rom. 4:3, 5, 6 we read: "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. . . . To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works." Again we read: "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. 5:21). These scriptures mean that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us through faith. Therefore, so far as the believer's standing and destiny are concerned, he is reckoned as being as righteous as Christ. His standing before God is the same as if he had lived a perfectly righteous life. In this connection, the immortal Bunyan wrote: "The believer in Christ is now, by grace, shrouded under so complete and blessed a righteousness that the law from Mt. Sinai can neither find fault nor diminution therein. This is that which is called the righteousness of God by faith."

4. **Adoption as a son.** We read: "God sent forth his Son. . . . to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Gal. 4:4, 5). Adoption is the climax of justification. Christ took our place; therefore, when we believe on him, we take his place. And thus it is that we receive the right to become sons. That adoption is a part of justification is shown from the passage quoted above from Galatians. We were redeemed in order that we might become sons. Redemption here, of course, is, according to the nature of the case, redemption applied or made effective. Justification is a forensic word. So is adoption. Adoption is in order that we may have a legal right to the inheritance which is "incorruptible and undefiled, and fadeth not away, reserved in heaven" (1 Pet. 1:4). Thus it is that we become "heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ" (Rom. 8:17). We become sons experimentally by regeneration; but legally by adoption.

Dear believer in Christ, what effect does this glorious doctrine of a free, perfect, and everlasting justification have upon you? It should fill your heart with happiness and put the song of joy upon your lips. Some day you and I shall mingle our voices with the heavenly choir as we sing: "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, 10). Then let us sing here of our matchless, merciful Master, our living, loving Lord, and our sinless, suffering Savior. But let us do more than sing; let us dedicate

our lives, our talents, our strength, our money in selfless, sacrificial service for him who "was wounded for our transgressions," and "bruised for our iniquities." When the battle is sore and pressing, the body faint and faltering, and the price we have to pay is staggering, may we be enabled by divine grace to press on; "for the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor. 5:14, 15).

THE ETERNAL GOSPEL / 6

(Continued from Page Three)

election means that before the worlds were made, God, according to his own good pleasure, chose out of a hell-deserving race a remnant for Himself, and foreordained them to eternal life through the Lord Jesus. God exercised this sovereign choice because it pleased him to do it, and not because of anything foreseen in the sinner to merit this election or choice. 6 4/5

"Tis not that I didst choose thee,
For, Lord that could not be.
This heart would still refuse thee;
But thou has chosen me." 104

(2) **God's love.** The love that caused God to give the Lord Jesus for our salvation, and that caused Him to choose us for salvation, is an eternal love. Jer. 31:3 says: "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore, with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." The love of God that provided salvation full and free is not temporal and changeable, but eternal and absolute. That matchless, eternal love makes certain the eternal gospel. 336

(3) **The new covenant.** From Heb. 13:20, 21 we read: "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect 151 . . ." This everlasting, or eternal, covenant was made, not between God and man, but between God and His Son. In this covenant, the Son freely and voluntarily gave himself to die for lost men; and the Father gave him a seed, which the Father engaged to draw to Christ for salvation and to preserve forever. [See Isa. 53:7, 10; John 6:37, 44; 17:11.—Ed.] This covenant is very aptly set forth in Psa. 89:19-37. This mutual agreement was entered into before man was made, and before "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy" (Job 38:7). 387

3. It is eternal in that it reveals an eternal righteousness. 46

The gospel is a revelation of the righteousness of God, and that righteousness is eternal. Speaking of the gospel in Rom. 1:17, Paul says: "Therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, The just shall live by faith." Paul does not mean that the gospel reveals the righteousness of God as one of His attributes, for that would not be good news to the sinner; the righteousness spoken of is that which God imputes to believers. [See Rom. 3:22.—Ed.] Since the righteousness here spoken of is God's righteousness, it must be eternal; and for that reason the gospel is eternal. 446

Here we may well note that the eternal gospel, which reveals an eternal righteousness, and apostasy are wholly incompatible. Imagine an eternal gospel, with subject matter that is older than worlds, and with eternal election; eternal love; and an eternal covenant as its basis, bringing a temporary righteousness. We are persuaded that there is no greater enemy of the gospel on the earth than the heretical idea of apostasy. It is a slander upon the eternal gospel of God; which speaks of eternal righteousness. Pendleton says of this eternal gospel: "Its blessed effects will be eternal." This eternal righteousness is based on the redemptive work of Christ; and, since believ-

ers are in Him, who is their righteousness, there will never be a time when God will not see believers righteous and holy in his sight. "My righteousness is near; my salvation is gone forth, and mine arm shall judge the people; the isles shall wait upon me and in mine arm shall they trust. Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath; for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner; but MY SALVATION shall be forever, and MY RIGHTEOUSNESS shall not be abolished For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool; but MY RIGHTEOUSNESS shall be forever, and MY SALVATION from generation to generation" (Isa. 51:5, 6, 8). 1157

"Complete atonement Christ has made,
And to the utmost farthing paid
Whate'er His people owed.
How then can wrath on me take place
If sheltered in his righteousness,
And sprinkled with his blood?" 161

News Notes 9

The West End Baptist Church of Paducah is enjoying a refreshing from the Lord. Their recent Bible institute terminated in a revival. During the institute the tide of spiritual power was constantly high, and during the institute the son of the pastor, T. G. Shelton, who had lived a worldly life, confessed his worldliness and publicly surrendered to a call to preach and to go as a missionary to Brazil. Then on the closing day of the institute there were six professions of faith and seven additions to the church. To date (at the time this goes to the printer), if we remember correctly, there have been twelve professions of faith and thirteen additions to the church. We have much confidence in a revival that comes about through the plain, hard preaching of the truth, such as was done in the institute that preceded this meeting. Such revivals are real and lasting. They don't stop with the departure of the evangelist as do those that are worked up by the manipulations of men. 791

Mrs. Freda Bradford, a rural member of the First Baptist Church of Marion, is conducting a correspondence Bible study course among a number of women. She sends lesson outlines to them each week, and after each five lessons she sends them examination questions to answer and return to her. What a fine work this is. She is providentially hindered from attending services herself, but instead of sitting down and holding her hands, she is diligently working for her Lord. In a letter she refers to the fact that the members of the church at Jerusalem went everywhere preaching the word. What a blessed thing it would be if every rural and non-resident member of our churches were thus diligent in finding something to do for the Lord. 576

Paster John R. Gilpin of the First Baptist Church of Russell, Ky., has recently assisted Brother S. L. Branham in a meeting at the Second Baptist Church of Ashland. As a result of the meeting, there were more than thirty additions to the church. We trust it will prove that the laborers wrought well in this meeting, and that the results will be lasting and honoring to the Lord in days to come. 312

THE GREAT EDITOR 14

"The great editor, if any, is the one who tells the truth so plainly that a fairly large percentage of the reading public indignantly stops the paper, but borrows it of the neighbors every day and keeps it at least half an hour."—Ohio State Journal. 199

The Empty Tomb Of Jesus

PASTOR GLENN E. WILSON, EAST SIDE BAPTIST CHURCH
Lorain, Ohio

There was no small stir in Jerusalem on the third morning after Christ's crucifixion. Mystery permeated the air. Here and there stood groups of elders and priests, speaking in lowered tones. A strange report had been brought by the Roman soldiers from the sepulcher of Jesus. The body of Jesus gone! Could it be true? Was Jesus indeed risen? And were their worst fears realized? What could they do about the matter? Bow their proud hearts to such an unwelcome fact? Risen? No, never! But his body was missing from the tomb. What could be said?

With the arch-deceiver on their side, foiled and disappointed even as they, an explanation was soon arrived at. The soldiers must be bribed, their lives protected, and a report set afloat through the city as a fitting answer to all enquirers.

Now let us remember that eternal issues are here at stake. Therefore, let us calmly and carefully consider what their report was worth. For, **"If Christ be not raised . . . ye are yet in your sins"** (1 Cor. 15:17). Here is the report they adopted as an explanation of the empty tomb: **"His disciples came by night and stole him away while we slept"** (Matt. 27:13).

Had this report been true, none would have known so well as the disciples that Jesus was still dead and that he was a dead deceiver. All of their hopes as to his Messiahship would have been dashed to pieces, and their confidence in his truthfulness would have been violated. Would not this feeble few have scattered, utterly vanquished by his deception? Would disciples, thus deluded, come and boldly steal away a dead deceiver? No. The truth of the matter is that never before the cross did the Lord have such bold and persistent followers as he had afterward. We find them prepared to go joyfully to prison and death for Him. And for whom? A dead imposter?

"His disciples came by night and stole him away." Yet, Pilate had granted a special guard of soldiers to watch the tomb, and had added: **"Make it as sure as ye can."** This they certainly did. And we can well imagine their self-satisfied faces as they look again and again at the huge stone, and the official seal. Who would dare tamper with it? Surrounded, as it was, with their military watch, who could tamper with it? All that was now left, they thought, was to wait quietly until the third day, and then open the sepulchre to reveal the dead body of Jesus. This would be the crowning day for their hatred and pride. Had these precautions not been taken, there might have been at first, perhaps, some appearance of truth in this concocted story. But as things stood, it was manifestly false.

But let us look at the rest of the story. **"While we slept."**

The writer of this article is another northern Baptist pastor that stands aloof from the apostate Northern Baptist Convention. He and his church affiliate with The Ohio Association of Independent Baptist Churches. One of the prerequisites of membership in this association is that a church belong to no other association or convention. The Articles of Faith of this association affirm a belief in the verbal inspiration of the Bible, reject evolution, and indorse the miraculous virgin birth and deity of Christ. Its article on Grace in The New Creation is very scriptural, and represents repentance and faith as fruits and evidences of regeneration. We would that this confession spoke more clearly on some things, but as far as it goes we find no heresy in it; and it is about as good as the confession of faith adopted by Southern Baptists a few years ago. For that much we rejoice.

In this article Brother Wilson unsheathes his sword in defense of the resurrection, which is a chief point of attack of Modernists and other infidels.

It is a well known fact that for a man in the Roman army to fall asleep while on guard was to incur the penalty of death. Therefore, it was a rare occurrence for any Roman soldier on watch to fall asleep. But here was a number of them, with a much more than an ordinary charge of vigilance. And shall we believe that they all went fast to sleep? The report represented them as sleeping so soundly that the seal was broken, the ponderous stone rolled away, and a dead body carried safely out without their being awakened. And yet they could actually tell who it was that came and stole away the body! Was a more clumsy, threadbare lie ever told? Yet this was the only answer the Lord's enemies could give in explanation of the empty tomb.

No wonder, then, that all the enemies of Christ were astir in Jerusalem, as miracle after miracle was performed in the name and power of the risen Lord!

But, could they not in some way stamp out this new doctrine. Well, at any rate, they determined to try. A fervent zealot was soon found in the person of a young man of promise and energy by the name of Saul of Tarsus.

Being exceedingly angry at the poor followers of the despised Nazarene, he set forth to work in dead earnest. He superintended the stoning of Stephen; and, having made havoc of the disciples in Jerusalem, he determined to do the same in Damascus. Little did he know what was in store for him on the road to Damascus.

The boldest enemy of the truth of the resurrection was to become one of its warmest and staunchest advocates. As he journeyed on the road, he was suddenly arrested by the voice of the ascended Jesus. Jesus spoke to him, saying: **"I am Jesus whom thou persecutest."** Thus the champion persecutor was turned into a willing servant, and **"Jesus and the resurrection"** became his lifelong theme.

Writing to the Corinthians afterwards of the various witnesses of the resurrection, he said: **"He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve; after that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all, he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time"** (1 Cor. 15:5-8). Who shall dare gainsay this witness?

Had Paul remained the fierce persecutor of the humble followers of the Nazarene, the learned, the religious, and the respectable in Jerusalem would have honored and applauded him; but because he became a bold witness of Jesus and the resurrection, he was imprisoned here, half murdered there, and hated everywhere. Read 2 Cor. 11:23-28, and you will see the recompense Paul received at the hands of men for bear-

ing testimony to a risen Savior.

God has taken great care that there should be an abundance of evidence to substantiate the truth of the resurrection of Christ. Angels and men, friend and foe alike, are called in to give their testimony. Those who denied the resurrection at the beginning and those who still wilfully deny it, are divested of every tittle of justification for their unbelief.

Words of Cheer And Encouragement

Every Day Brings Subscriptions And Expressions Of Appreciation

We praise the Lord for the response we have received from the first issue of this paper. The launching of the paper is being demonstrated as being of the Lord. We are looking wholly to him to cause it to prosper. The paper has been out scarcely a week, and yet we have received a number of subscriptions and expressions of appreciation. We want to pass on to our readers some of the messages we have received.

From Pastor Dewey H. Jones of Benton, Ky., comes this message: "Please permit me to be one of the first to congratulate you upon the splendid issue of your new paper. It has a good name, is attractive in appearance, contains good and wholesome matter, and, last but not least, has an editorial force that ought to be able to keep it as good as it is at its beginning. I liked the policy and program of the paper as you outlined in the first issue. I especially liked the article on 'Why Not Observe Easter,' and Brother Cole's article on 'History Repeating Itself.'"

"I feel that there is real need for a paper such as you are preparing to put out. I am for it, and am willing to be of any assistance I may in anyway."

Brother A. J. Sisk of Providence, Ky., writes: "I received a copy of your Baptist Examiner, and sure like it. I am inclosing check for one dollar for one year's subscription. The best reason I can give for liking your paper is because it tastes of the Word of God, and every true soldier of the cross knows how that tastes. Brother Cole's discourse on 'History Repeating Itself' is very sound also I very much like the policy and program of the paper."

Pastor Peter McL. Clasper of Lapeer, Michigan, sends us this cheering word: "The sample copies of the B. E. received this afternoon, and have gone over it, as well as handed out some of the samples. I am sure that the board was good for the first meal, and certainly it was 'without money and without price.' I have also noted the policy and program of the paper, and feel that such a paper ought to have large publicity, prayer, and patronage from those of the patriots of Baptist lineage who still stand in the faith of the Baptist Book."

"Now I am hoping that somehow we can finance from our church income a subscription for six months in advance for enough of the 'Baptist Examiner' to reach every family in the church."

"I am in agreement with the purpose of the paper and its editorial policy; and surely it will be refreshing to know that the reader will be able to sit down in comfort and read articles from the hearts and hands of men who have no axe to grind, no scheme to put over, and having only the Christ of God at heart, and the churches of God in mind. Your paper ought easily to have a 'large army' of many thousands in a short time."

"I am inclosing a check for \$2.00 now, and you can enroll my name for one year; then send me more sample copies for the other \$1.00. In the meantime I will urge all the saints within the camp, and all whom I can reach without to enroll."

"Who knows but that, under God, this paper has come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

From Russell, Ky., the following expression comes from Brother John R. Gilpin: "Thanks a hundred times for the fine lot of papers you mailed me. I am hurrying my check to you this morning to assure you of my support. I hope to

secure a number of subscriptions for you during the summer. As soon as you have some extra copies, send me at least 100. Will push your paper to the limit, as it sounds good to me."

Mrs. Olla Wilson of Collinwood, Tenn., says: "Brother Gilpin's and Brother Cole's articles were good, and your cupboard of good things makes my mouth water. I think the name you selected most suitable. May it cause each reader to make a more thorough examination of God's word, as well as our own lives."

We received the following good message from Elder S. J. Cox of Gilbertsville, Ky.: "I received a copy of your paper last week, which appealed to the inward man that is created in righteousness and true holiness. Eph. 4:24. I wish we had more fool, narrow, fighting Baptists, for what churches need is to put on the whole armor of God and fight against the heresies of Satan that are so popular in the world today."

Pastor C. W. Denny of Granada, Colo., writes: "I thank you very much for the paper you sent me. I think it is good, and I hope it will prove a blessing this paper will make nine or ten papers that come to my desk, and it is by no means the least welcomed."

From Pastor L. W. Beckley of Fostoria, Ohio, editor of "Faith and Works," a monthly Bible study periodical, comes this word: "Your paper is good indeed. I might not stand quite so Baptistically straight as you do, but I have no quarrel. I certainly appreciate your position on the Easter question."

Then, last of all, we have the following message from Pastor C. C. Williams of Brampton, N. D.: "I am in receipt of The Baptist Examiner, and am delighted with same. I like the 'appetizing viands' contained therein; of which you say this is only a foretaste of what we are to have. Therefore, I want to eat with you regularly, and herewith enclose one dollar (\$1.00) for a whole year's board. So 'put my name in the pot.'"

These expressions show a number of things. And not least among that number is the fact they show this paper to be beginning to realize its purpose to be a unifying tie between real Baptists all over this continent. In this we anticipate a heavenly fellowship. For "The fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above." Note that in this issue we carry an article from a pastor in Ohio, one from a pastor in Kentucky, and one from a pastor in Georgia. In this we are carrying out our purpose.

Someone said: "If you keep up as you have started, you will have a fine paper." We answered: "We gave our policy and program in the first issue. As the Lord enables us, we expect to stick to it."

We are more convinced now than before that there is a place for this paper. We are being constantly impressed with the evidences of the hand of the Lord in its affairs. The Lord is leading, and blessing, and supplying our needs. Therefore, we urge our friends and fellowhelpers to continue their good work in behalf of the paper. And here, we want to acknowledge the good work of our old friend, George Jarboe of Fordsville, Ky., who has sent us seven subscriptions. We greatly appreciate such cooperation on the part of our friends. Then Brother P. R. Whitfield of White Plains, Ky., has notified us that he has several subscriptions to hand to us when we shall see him soon, the Lord willing. We need more fellowhelpers like these. Not that we may reap a personal benefit, for we are not engaged in this work for any selfish purpose; but in order that we may be used of the Lord in extending the truth, and edifying the hearts of believers. We do not know that we will ever reap any personal gain from this work, although we are giving practically all our time to it; and expect, the Lord willing, to do so throughout the remainder of our days on this earth. We believe the Lord has called us to this work, therefore, with unabated zeal and energy, we "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:14).