

Don't use a gallon of words to express a spoonful of thought.

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."--Isaiah 8:20

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The Doctrine of Grace

By PASTOR ROBERT E. McNEILL

Randolph Street Baptist Church, Charleston, West Virginia
Preached at the 1962 Ashland Bible Conference

Some years ago, in the city of Edinburgh, Scotland, two ministers by the name of McClaren and Mustart were co-pastors of the Albion Church in that large metropolis. They were not only workers, but they were good friends. Finally, when McClaren was dying, his fellow-minister and he paid him a visit, and he asked him this question: "In your dying minutes, what are you saying, brother?"

McClaren's answer was: "Do you know what I am doing. I am gathering together all my prayers, all my sermons, all my

good deeds, and all my evil deeds, and I am going to throw them all overboard, and I am going to float to Glory on the plank of free grace."

The fountainhead of all salvation is the grace of God. Because God is gracious, therefore all sinful men are forgiven, converted, purified, and saved. It is not because of anything in them, or ever can be in them, that they are saved, but because of his boundless love, His goodness, His pity, His compassion, His mercy, but especially His grace.

What a subject is the grace of

God! Who can measure its breadth? Who can fathom its depth? Like all the rest of the Divine attributes, it is infinite. It is like the story of a woman who worked in a cotton factory in one of the cotton manufacturing towns in Lancaster, England. She spent most of her life walking from a very humble home on one of the side streets to the cotton factory, and then back to her home, going through all the menial tasks of trying to be a housewife and also trying to work in a cotton factory. Then she had the wonderful opportunity of taking an excursion to the seacoast, and for the first time in her life to actually see the ocean. When she caught the earliest glimpse of the

Irish Sea, the expanse lying out there before her eyes, the limitlessness of the ocean and its rush and roll of the billows, she exclaimed as she drew one breath of freshness and glory, "At last, here comes something that there is enough of."

The Greek word for "grace" is "charis." It is found in the New Testament more than 150 times. Of course, the fullest exposition of the amazing grace of God is to be found in the epistles of the Apostle Paul. The English word "grace" is found in our Bible first in Genesis 6, where we read that Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. The last place where the word "grace" is found in our Bible is the very last verse of the very last chapter of the very last book in the Bible — the book of Revelation. In fact, the last thing that God says to any man or woman who will read the Bible is, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."



ELDER ROBERT E. McNEILL

From Genesis to Revelation, God moves and deals with sinners in wondrous grace. Let me this morning very quickly do four things with this tremendous subject: Let us look at (1.) The Definition of Grace, (2.) The Characteristics of Grace, (3.) The Operation of Grace, (4.) The Assurance of Grace. (Continued on page 6, column 1)

At This Thanksgiving Season

What Does The Baptist Examiner Mean To You?

Here we are at another Thanksgiving season, a time when we, as Americans, are accustomed to especially remember particular blessings which God has given our nation. We think of our forefathers who landed on this continent and brought with them the great principles which have blessed their posterity. We think of our religious liberty and thank God anew that we live in a nation which is still religiously free. Truly, God has given us, as a nation, many things for which to be thankful. These are particular

tists, though all do not agree on every detail of doctrine and interpretation. Without TBE, there would not be the degree of contact between various churches and brethren that now exists.

A missionary to preach and teach. What sometimes can't be accomplished in person is accomplished through the printed page. This has been the case many times over through TBE. One brother said that when he did all he knew to do in witnessing, he then put the person on to receive The Baptist Examiner and he has seen many results.

We are sure that TBE means much to those who love the truth. And because of this, we are sure that these brethren want the paper to continue. Right now, we want our friends to know we still

need your support to go on.

At this Thanksgiving season — a time of year when many of our friends have through the years sent special offerings in appreciation and support of the paper — we ask you if this paper means enough to you that you will help it? Ask the Lord what His will is with regard to your giving a special offering to this work.

Remember, we are seeking to uphold the truth of God's sovereignty, Scriptural missions, the New Testament church, the ordinances, and other great Bible truths. When you support TBE you are supporting a church-authorized work of spreading the truth. Remember this work in prayer and if at all possible, remember it on this Thanksgiving with an offering.

God's Providence Works All Things For His People's Good

By BOB L. ROSS

Romans 8:28: "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."

Recently I brought a message on The Sovereignty of God and the Existence of Evil, showing that even the evil within the world is under the sovereign control of God and within the bounds of His purpose. The text now be-

fore us narrows our thinking down to God's people. It refers to "them that love God," those called according to His purpose. All things are working together for their good.

There are three possible ideas that people may hold regarding the events of life. First there is Fatalism, the idea that a blind, impersonal force sweeps everything before it, with God Himself even being a subject of its power. According to fatalism, there is no design, no purpose, no goal predetermined or planned, but things just have to happen as they do.

Then there is a second notion called Chance or Fortune, sometimes referred to as "luck." Those who believe this, just as Fatalists, deny there is any purpose behind the events of life and God is displaced from His throne. Both chance and fatalism make God an idle spectator.

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor John R. Gilpin

"Will A Christian Who Commits Suicide Go To Heaven?"

"For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson."—Hebrews 11:31.

Whenever a Christian commits suicide, naturally there is much comment relative to his death and many questions are asked as to his salvation. I believe that a preacher ought to be ready to give a scriptural answer at any time concerning any matter. We read: "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." (I Peter 3:15).

With the thought of this Scripture in mind, I therefore attempt to answer this question in the light of God's Word.

There are six cases of suicide in the Bible. Ahithophel who had

been a faithful servant to David, was one of those who rose in rebellion against David. On failing to become the close friend and adviser to Absalom for which he had hoped, he committed suicide. Listen:

"And when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his ass, and arose, and gat him home to his house, to his city, and put his household in order, and HANGED HIMSELF and died, and was buried in the sepulcher of his father."—2 Samuel 17:23.

Judas Iscariot was, of course, a suicide.

"Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty

pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? See thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and HANGED HIMSELF."—Matthew 27:3-5.

"Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out."—Acts 1:18.

These verses taken together would indicate that Judas hanged himself, and possibly by the breaking of a rope, or in some manner, he fell so that his body was burst open as a result of the fall.

(Continued on page 2, column 5)

"GOD'S PLAN WITH MEN"

We did not have sufficient space in this issue for the article from the book by T. T. Martin. The series will be continued next week.

But there is a third position and it is Predestination. I believe it, for it is Bible doctrine. This doctrine is that God is back of the things that come to pass. He has marked out the events of life and the course of this world, according to His own good pleasure. There is therefore a design, a purpose, a goal to be reached.

Romans 8:28 teaches the doctrine of Providence. Providence is the fulfilling of Predestination. Predestination is what God mapped out for His people. (Continued on page 5, column 5)



ings which we especially re-
ember at this season called
anksgiving.

We are wondering, however,
at our readers — at this par-
ular season — think of THE
BAPTIST EXAMINER. What
es the paper mean to you? To
any it means —

A source of spiritual food. It is
plementary to the teaching re-
rips from the pastor and, in
me cases, the only teaching re-
ived, as many do not have
and churches to attend. Fur-
more, many pastors look to
E for a spiritual lift.

A tie between fellow Baptists.
any churches and pastors are
own to each other by way of
od. The Examiner is somewhat of a "voice"
n 50:10. It is the faith of our kind of Bap-

Calvary Baptist Church Invites All Who Can Possibly Attend, To Be With Us For Our Thanksgiving Services. U All Are Welcome!

PLACE: MAIN DINING ROOM, VENTURA HOTEL

TIME: THURSDAY MORNING, NOVEMBER 22 — 8:30 A. M.

Thankful At This Thanksgiving

Dear Friends Of The Baptist Examiner:

GREETINGS in the name of Jesus and praise to God for His goodness to all. As this Thanksgiving season approaches, I bow my head in gratitude, knowing that "every good and perfect gift cometh from above."

ON THE EVE of another Thanksgiving, and as I write this letter, it is not hard for me to recall the many things that the Lord has done this year for us of THE BAPTIST EXAMINER family. I have been especially impressed by the number of blessings which I have for which to thank God.

I AM THANKFUL, above all, for my salvation. I never start to pen a Thanksgiving letter without salvation coming to my mind first of all. The longer I live, the more it means to me just to remember that when I was a lad in my teens, God reached down and saved my soul. From that day, I have said with David, "My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness and thy salvation all the day." (Psalm 71:15). I realize that I could never have saved myself. I have learned along with Isaiah that "his arm brought salvation." (Isaiah 59:16). As I rejoice over my experience in Christ, and of the salvation which He has brought to me, I am more and more impressed with the words of Jonah as he said, "Salvation is of the Lord." (Jonah 2:9).

I AM THANKFUL for the freedom we have in worshipping God, and editing this paper. Strong efforts have been made to silence this voice through the years. We may not long have the privilege of sending forth this testimony every week as we have in the past. Still we say with the Psalmist, "Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea." (Psalm 46:2). Especially, when I read of the turmoil in the nations of the world, I thank God for our religious freedom today.

I AM THANKFUL for the material blessings He has given us. I know we always have plenty of these. When we remember that we are not at war, our food is not rationed, our shores have not been invaded, our factories have not been bombed, our homes have not been damaged, our industries are stronger, our factories are more productive, and that we are enjoying the highest standard of living and income that any nation has ever known in the history of the world — when we remember all this, truly we must thank God for our material blessings. God has blessed us much materially — so much we could not begin to enumerate all His blessings to us. I stand amazed with the Psalmist to say, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me." To give our all wouldn't begin to repay Him for His blessings to us.

I AM THANKFUL for the measure of health that God has given me. I feel indeed grateful to God for this particular blessing. Not too long ago, my chances for a long life were indeed slim. As the Psalmist has said, "I was brought low, and he helped me." — Psalm 116:6. I never call on the sick and the afflicted, and never go to a hospital without saying upon leaving, "Thank you, Lord, that I am able to walk out unassisted." I know I don't deserve to live and I often wonder why God allows me to go on, yet I thank Him today that I have rounded out another year in His service.

I AM THANKFUL for our written ministry. There is never a day goes by that some of our readers don't write to express their appreciation for THE BAPTIST EXAMINER. Brother Bob, who does most of the work concerning it, has truly done a magnificent job during the past year, and I bow my unworthy head to render thanks for the written ministry which God has given us as we serve our readers scattered through all 50 states and in about 25 foreign countries.

I AM THANKFUL for enemies, who mainly, have raised up in opposition to our written ministry. Years ago some philosopher said that you can judge the caliber of a man by the quantity of the folk that hate him, and the quality of the folk that love him. Since ours is a positive ministry, we do have many who oppose us, and I presume that there are many who would shout if they were to hear that THE BAPTIST EXAMINER had been published for the last time. It is amazing how God again and again rebukes these, and blesses us. That which the Psalmist said of Israel is equally true of us. "He suffered no man to do them wrong." (Psalm 105:14). On another occasion the Psalmist said, "If it had not been the Lord was on our side, when men rose up against us: Then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us" (Psalm 124:2, 3). Surely, this is true of us, and I rejoice to feel that within the past year God has definitely been on our side.

I AM THANKFUL for Calvary Baptist Church, though it isn't big in the eyes of the world. It is an exceedingly little flock. Yet we are grateful to God for His goodness to us. Many are the doors that have been opened to us, and many are the rich seasons of fellowship which we have enjoyed within the past year. I have never enjoyed fellowship with any group of God's people as I have with the little group of saints of Calvary Baptist Church, and I truly thank Him for it.

I AM THANKFUL for one new church which God has enabled Calvary Baptist Church to start this year. We have been able

to be a blessing to a wonderful group of Christians in Cleveland—some of the finest folk we have ever met. On November 2, Bro. Bob baptized these people into the fellowship of our church and then assisted them in organizing the New Testament Baptist Church. At present they are meeting in the home of Brother and Sister Don Heche of 3269 Stockholm in Shaker Heights, O. We are thankful to see churches organized like this one—just as they were in New Testament days. (We will have a story on this next week.)

I AM THANKFUL for the radio ministry of Calvary Baptist Church, which Bro. Bob conducts. In addition to the local station of WTCR, he has had a program over WFRX of West Frankfort, Illinois, which is sponsored by Calvary Baptist Church, McLeansboro, Illinois (Murrell Combs, Pastor); also a program over WMOV, Ravenswood, W. Va., and beginning Sunday, November 4, we began a new program over WPAY, Portsmouth, Ohio. We thank God for this ministry of the Word and the response of Bro. Bob's listening audience.

I AM THANKFUL for the growth that God has given to Calvary Baptist Church, especially within the past several months. I don't mean that we have had a phenomenal growth or that we have mushroomed into a gigantic organization; however I am most thankful that of recent date God has seen fit to add about a dozen adults to our membership—all of whom are thoroughly developed in Baptist truth and are titheers of their income. Truly the type growth God has given us is most unusual.

I AM THANKFUL for the readers of THE BAPTIST EXAMINER. Truly, ours is a national and an international circulation. Day by day we hear from these readers, and their letters lift us by the encouraging, inspiring, and stimulating words which they contain. How good it is to know that God has allowed our little church to send out the Word through the printed page to thousands of readers scattered over the world. While we have a very small church attendance on Sunday, there is no church in America that comparatively has as great and widespread ministry as ours. Thousands of people every week have access to our paper, and that in itself is no small ministry.

I AM THANKFUL for our friends, both old and new, God has given us. I just don't know how we would get along without these friends to encourage us. Some of our friends have written us, and contributed to the on-going of our paper for many years, yet we have never seen them. In the providence of God, we doubtlessly will not see many of them in this life, but it will be a blessed time of meeting in the air, on that day, when we go "up" to be with Him. What a blessed privilege it is that God has given us these friends, who love the Truth, even though they are scattered far and wide over the globe!

I AM THANKFUL for my family. Mrs. Gilpin and I rejoice together over God's goodness to us. We have three children — of course, they are all married and have families of their own — and we truly thank God for all of them. John Jr., and his wife and four children live just two doors from us, while Bob and Ruth and their three children live next door. My oldest daughter, Rhoda, and her husband, John Smith, and their three children live not far from us. Often our family meets together for a season of fellowship — especially during the summer months. Most everyone is thankful for the family that God gives him. Yet I feel that I have just a little more for which to thank God in this respect, than the average individual. What a blessing it is to me, when Sunday morning, Sunday night, and Wednesday night comes, to look about and see my family united with me, serving the Lord in God's house. God has given us three fine children and the two finest son-in-laws and daughter-in-law that we could ask for. Truly, we thank God for a united family in Christ.

I AM THANKFUL for the missionary connections God has given us. First of all we are grateful for Brother Halliman, our long-time friend, now located in New Guinea. It seems only a little while since he came to me to talk about his going to the mission field. We are happy to tell our friends of him and his work from time to time in this paper. How I thank God for Brother Fred and his family. I pledged him my support, and that of this paper, when we first talked of his becoming a missionary. God helping us, we want to be true to him, and we urge our readers today to be exceptionally loyal to this great man of God. Then too, we rejoice to know that Bro. Jeffrey Brackeen of the Macedonia Baptist Church, Chicago, and Bro. James Crace (a member of Calvary Baptist Church of Ashland) plan to join Bro. Halliman as soon as God makes it possible. Likewise Bro. C. W. Bronson, pastor of the Bethel Baptist Church at Phillipsburg, Kansas is dear to our hearts, and we are glad to know that it is his plan to go as a missionary to Korea whenever God makes such possible. All these men are good, Godly men, and we can never thank God enough for them, nor assist them financially as much as we should. Both churches and individuals should get behind all these dear men of God and support them prayerfully and financially. Are you one of those privileged ones whom God has burdened for the work of missions?

(Continued on page three)



Why The Letter On This Page

Sometimes at the Thanksgiving season I send a letter to our readers telling them of God's blessings for the year and reminding them of our needs in carrying on our printed ministry.

The cost of mailing such a letter is tremendous. Four-cent stamps for such really cost money. In addition there is the cost of envelopes, paper, printing and the dressing of envelopes. You can readily see that it costs considerably for such a mailing.

Last year many were the appreciated comments concerning the beautifully printed letter at which we mailed. This was quite a cost to us, and this year it seems that we are more pressed financially and frankly we don't have the money with which to mail our usual Thanksgiving letter.

Therefore, we are printing our letter in this issue, with the prayer that God will bless it and use it. He has blessed us in the year gone by. We need your prayers and your financial assistance for this year. I fear that I am not able to impress it strongly enough upon you that we do need a tremendously large offering this year. Humanly speaking, there won't be a Thanksgiving letter (nor a Baptist Examiner either) next year, if God does not give us a great Thanksgiving offering this year. May it please God to give us a most liberal offering at this season! — J.R.G.



Will A Christian Who Commits Suicide Go To Heaven?

(Continued from page 1)

King Saul of the Old Testament was also a suicide. He had been mortally wounded in battle at Mt. Gilboa, and fearful lest he suffer abuse at the hands of the Philistines, he took his own life with his sword.

"Then said Saul unto his armourbearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith: lest these uncircumcised come and abuse me: for he was sore afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword, and fell upon it." — I Samuel 31:4.

Saul's armourbearer likewise was a suicide for when he saw that Saul was dead, he took his own life, thus dying with King Saul.

"And when his armourbearer saw that Saul was dead, HE FELL LIKEWISE UPON HIS SWORD, and died with him." — I Samuel 31:5.

Zimri, who was one of the kings of Israel, ended his life by burning himself to death.

"And it came to pass, when Zimri saw that the city was taken, that he went into a palace of the king's house, and BURNT THE KING'S HOUSE OVER HIM WITH FIRE, and he died." — I Kings 16:18.

The sixth suicide of the Bible is that of Samson.

(Continued on page 3, column 2)

We Are Grateful To Be Able To Edit TBE. Are You Thankful For It? Your Offering Will Be Most Deeply Appreciated At this Time.

"I Should Like to Know"

(THE BAPTIST EXAMINER welcomes questions, to be answered in this column. Please state questions on separate sheet of paper, rather than including them in correspondence which relates to book orders, subscriptions, or some other matter).

Does the Bible say anything about a "Christian flag"? I have seen some of these in church buildings.

No, there is nothing about a "Christian flag" in the Bible. Historically, Rome was the first to use so-called "Christian flags."

You said in your paper that people were only baptized in the Spirit on Pentecost. What can we say about Acts 11:16 and Acts 19:6?

While these two verses relate to the work of the Holy Spirit, the people were not on these occasions immersed in the Spirit as on Pentecost. While Peter remembered the words of John the Baptist, he does not say, nor does the Scripture, that the event was an immersion in the Spirit. They did receive "the like gift," namely, the Spirit, but it was not in the same manner. Both on Pentecost and at the house of Cornelius the Spirit manifested Himself in a marvelous way, and it appears to us that only on Pentecost was there an immersion in the Spirit. Pentecost, "there came a rushing wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them tongues as of fire, and it rested upon each of them." This was the Holy Spirit. He did not do this at the house of Cornelius. As for Acts 19:6, the Spirit did great work here, but nothing is said that would indicate that the people were immersed in Him.

Does one believe in order to regeneration or does one believe in regeneration?

The Holy Spirit's work of regenerating, or converting, is actually the bringing of the sinner to believe in Christ. In II Cor. 4:6 we read: "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." God's Word spoke light into existence and at the same time the darkness fled. So it is in regeneration.

When the Spirit sheds the light of the Word into the sinner, faith is born and darkness (unbelief) is at the same time dispelled. So there is really no "time" distinction that can be made, except to say that the Spirit's work is the

cause of faith. Faith does not effect regeneration, but there is no such thing as a regenerated unbeliever. Where there is light, there is no darkness. Likewise, where the Spirit has shed the Gospel into the soul, there is faith in Christ. There are some things which precede faith, such as conviction and spiritual unrest, but these experiences are not the new birth.

4. What is meant by the expression "in one accord" in various verses in Acts?

It means there was unity in faith and practice. The saints had one Lord, one faith, one baptism and had the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph. 4:1-6).

5. What is meant by "breaking bread from house to house" in Acts 2:46?

This reference does not apply to the Lord's Supper, but to regular meals. The verse says that they "did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart." Following the institution of the Supper, when the bread of the Lord's Supper is under consideration the definite article "the" appears in the Greek. It is not here in Acts 2:46. It is, however, in 2:42, which we believe is a reference to the Lord's Supper.

6. Did Paul observe the Lord's Supper with the church at Troas?

No. There was no church at Troas; at least, Acts 20 does not mention one, nor do we find one mentioned elsewhere in the Bible. Neither was the Lord's Supper observed at Troas; at least not at the time recorded in Acts 20. The disciples of Acts 20:7 were Paul's own traveling companions and the breaking of bread was a regular meal. You will notice that Paul did not eat while the others ate, but preached (actually, lectured) to his traveling companions. Then after he had finished speaking, he ate (20:11).

7. Does God's ability depend upon man's availability?

No, but man's availability does depend upon God. What is man, but God's own creation? What man would be available for anything at all, but by the ability of God?

8. Does God change His mind?

"For I am the Lord, I change

not"—Malachi 3:6.

"... the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning"—James 1:17.

"But he is in one mind, and who can turn him?"—Job 23:13.

God does not change His mind, but many times His actions toward men change from good to bad, or from bad to good, and men might describe God's actions as being a change of mind. This would only be, however, as man observes things; there has really been no change in God's mind. A change of action by God is not a change of His mind, but simply what He has always had in mind to do.—B.L.R.

Will A Christian Who Commits Suicide Go To Heaven?

(Continued from page 2)
"And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might, and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein. So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life."—Judges 16:30.

THERE IS NO ROOM TO DOUBT THAT SAMSON WAS A SAVED MAN.

He was the thirteenth judge over Israel. Our text indicates that he was saved for he is mentioned as one of the heroes of faith in God's great chapter of faith—the 11th chapter of Hebrews—God's Westminster Abbey of the faithful. I cannot believe that Samson would be thus spoken of if he had died unsaved, for it would be highly incongruous that God would place his name in this chapter along with the many others who were saved, if he himself had not died in the Lord.

When Samson was saved, he was just like all others in that he possessed two natures.

"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me."—Rom. 7:18-21.

God tells each of us exactly how we are to deal with these two natures. He says that we are to starve the old nature. Listen: "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof."—Romans 13:14.

He also tells us that we are to feed the new nature.

Listen:
"Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and all evil risings, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."—I Peter 2:1, 2.

Samson, just like many who lived before him and since his day, reversed the order in that he failed to feed the new nature but continually starved it, and at the same time, fed his old nature. If you will read the book of Judges, you will find this to be decidedly true.

By feeding his old nature, he had many experiences which brought one difficulty after another into his life. His final experience was with Delilah whereby his hair, which was a sign of his separation to God, was shaved off, and accordingly Samson himself became weak as any other individual, thus falling into (Continued on page 4, column 1)

Thankful At This Thanksgiving

(Continued from Page Two)

I AM THANKFUL for the guests whom He has given us within our home. Every time one of God's own comes our way, we feel that God has honored us and blessed us again. Within the past twelve months we have had guests from over half the states, coming from as far away as the West Coast and from all parts of our country. Truly He has blessed us with the visit of these Godly saints. How wonderful that He should have brought all these great men and women of God our way.

I AM THANKFUL for the seasons of spirituality that God has given me this year. I can say that I have had far more seasons of deep spirituality than ever before. As I think of these, with the Psalmist I rejoice, "For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness." (Psalm 107:9).

I AM THANKFUL for all of God's providential leadings within the past few years. God has separated me from some whom I thought were my best friends, thus teaching me that I am to lean entirely on Him, and not on any arm of the flesh. It has been a trying experience but I am thankful for it. Rom. 8:28 means more to me than ever before, and from the depths of my heart, I thank Him for all that has come to pass.

Mrs. Gilpin and I are most happy as we look back over the year, and although we have both worked beyond our physical ability, we are glad for the privilege of doing so. Mrs. Gilpin has been a loyal trooper during all the time when the going has been rough in life, and especially during the past few years she has been a wonderful blessing to our printed ministry. There are so few women like her, and from the depths of my heart I am glad for her and for what she means to our printed ministry.

I AM THANKFUL for the many miles which we have traveled in His service. In my own ministry, although I do not travel as much as I used to, God has given me over a million safe miles in the air, on the rails, and on the highway. Truly we are grateful for the safe journeys that God has given Brother Bob this year. Many are the trips that he has made, and in it all God has safely cared for him, so that he can say, "Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home."

I AM THANKFUL for the Bible Conference which God gave us in September. From many states our guests and speakers came. Those of you who read recent issues of our paper must realize something of the blessings God poured out upon us. Those of you who were privileged to attend, know indeed the blessings God gave us. It was the greatest season of spirituality and blessing from God that the majority of those present had ever experienced. Naturally, we are planning for a similar season in 1963, and we are looking forward with a great deal of expectancy, praying that God will bless us then as in '62.

I AM THANKFUL in it all for a sovereign God. I recognize that everything that I have mentioned is a reality because God sovereignly looks down upon us and leads His dear children along. As I think how He sovereignly controls, I am reminded of the words of the Psalmist when he declares, "Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep" (Psalm 121:4).

I AM THANKFUL that I am able to pen this letter, and to tell you that we need your financial assistance and support if we are to continue to bring to you this messenger of truth each week. I am appealing today to our friends that God would grant to us the biggest Thanksgiving offering we have ever received. I have been praying and asking God for a tremendous sum, because I know we need it, and I would urge every reader to do his utmost in our behalf with a worthy financial offering within the next few days. We have always depended on our Thanksgiving offering each year to lift our financial burdens at the close of the year. Only God knows how much we need your help at this Thanksgiving season of 1962. Let me personally urge you to be extraordinarily generous now, as we need your gift to carry on. We depend upon our Thanksgiving offering each year to lift our burdens at the close of the year. Your help this year will be most deeply appreciated.

I AM THANKFUL for every gift and for every giver of this past year, and in Jesus' name, I pray that you may have a most thankful Thanksgiving, and that you will enable us to do likewise as a result of the gifts you send us this year. Together, "we will bless the Lord from this time forth and for evermore. Praise the Lord." (Psalm 115:18).

Very sincerely yours,

JOHN R. GILPIN.

P. S. Please use the postage-free envelope enclosed in this issue, and send us an offering for our printed ministry, that will express your appreciation for the blessings you have received from THE BAPTIST EXAMINER.

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The Baptist Paper for the Baptist People.

OB L. ROSS Editor-in-Chief
JOHN R. GILPIN Editor

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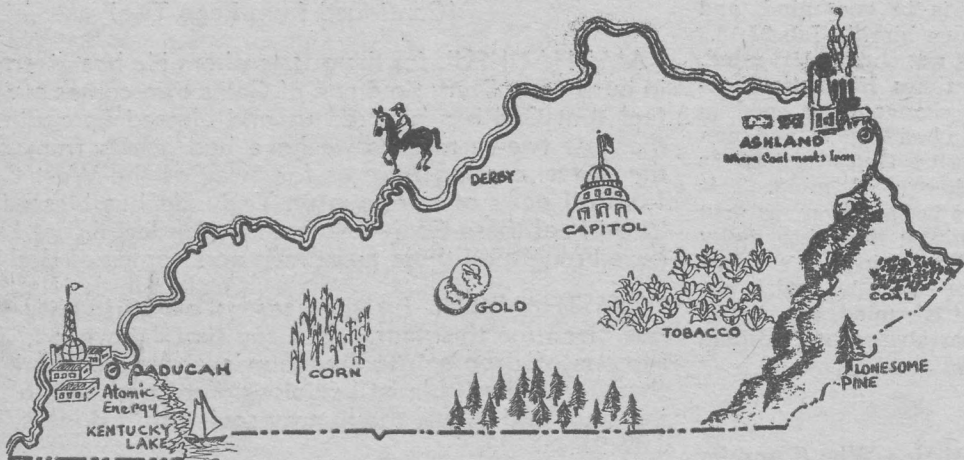
THESE RATES APPLY THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

Entered as second class matter MAY 19, 1961, in the post office at Ashland, Kentucky, under the act of March 3, 1879.

All subscriptions are stopped at expiration date, unless renewed or special arrangements are made for their continuation.

The Best Way To Tell Us You Are Thankful For TBE Is To Shout
So We Hear You. Your Action In Supporting TBE Will Speak Loud.

WE INVITE YOU TO VISIT US



In the eyes of many, Calvary Baptist Church, which publishes THE BAPTIST EXAMINER, is not the biggest institution in Ashland, Kentucky. Comparing us with Ashland Oil, Armco, and other industries who employ their thousands, we are most insignificant.

At the same time we do believe we are one of the most important. When these organizations of the

world are forgotten, the truths that we have stood for, and which have blessed you, will still endure, and be a blessing to others.

We are thankful for the friends that God has given us to help us to carry on our printed ministry, and we are always especially glad when some group of them comes to visit us. As you will note from the above map, we live in the extreme eastern end of Kentucky.

The day is never too hot nor too cold — the night is never too dark nor too long — and the number that you may bring in your group is never too great to always find a most hearty welcome in our home. Whether it be this Thanksgiving season, or next summer when you are on vacation, or whenever it may be — the latch string always hangs out at our house in behalf of our friends.

of God, whereby YE ARE SEALED unto the day of redemption." —Eph. 4:30.

The day of redemption concerning which Paul speaks, is the time of Christ's return. Thank God, He is coming back, and then He is going to redeem the body just the same as He has already redeemed the soul. That day of redemption is at the hour of His return. Listen:

"And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for YOUR REDEMPTION DRAWETH NIGH." —Luke 21:28.

"And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the REDEMPTION OF OUR BODY." —Rom. 8:23.

Thus these Scriptures would indicate that we are sealed and safe until Jesus comes again. I have a very definite conviction that if He can keep us until He returns, or, in other words, if He keeps us as long as we carry about this old tenement of flesh that certainly He will be able to keep us after He returns when this house of clay is no more and when we have a body that is perfectly redeemed just as the soul is already redeemed.

We might suppose an object sealed inside a keg and that keg in turn sealed inside a barrel, and that barrel sealed inside a hog's head. Now in order to get into that object that it might be destroyed, it would be necessary first of all to break the seal of the hog's head and thus destroy it; to likewise break the seal and destroy the barrel, and the keg. Since every believer is sealed by God, then it would be necessary for the Devil to destroy the power of the triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in order to take us out of the hands of our Heavenly Father. How we thus rejoice that we are sealed and kept saved and safe through the power of this triune God.

In the fourth place, the covenant which God makes between Himself and the righteous guarantees their security. Listen:

"And I will make an EVERLASTING COVENANT with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." —Jer. 32:40.

Rock of Ages?" However, let's just suppose that such a person could be found, who, though he was saved, wanted to damn his soul in Hell. Imagine a perverted individual, who, after knowing that he was going to Heaven, determined that he wanted to go to Hell. Could such a person succeed in his desires? Though the individual might live a life of the vilest and grossest of sins and the ungodliness, though he might bring disgrace to himself, his family, and his friends, still that individual could not take himself out of the hand of God and would not be able to "crawl off the Rock of Ages."

There is a type of life insurance that is known as "non-cancellable." That is, when a person gets one of those policies, the company cannot cancel it under any consideration regardless of what the physical condition of the man may become. Well, when we have in our Saviour something better than that, for our salvation is "non-cancellable" both from the standpoint of God and man. This covenant then where God promises that He won't turn away from us, and that He won't permit us to turn away from Him, secures us eternally.

In the fifth place, we have Christ's own statement which He is to make at the judgment bar of God to each of the unsaved, which proves that saved folks cannot lose their salvation. Listen:

"Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." —Matt. 7:22, 23.

What a fearful day it is which Jesus describes when He declares to unsaved preachers, personal workers, and even those who have religiously done "church work" that He never knew them. There could be nothing more pathetic than to see this crowd who have been deceived and deluded as He says to them, "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity." You will notice that at the judgment He is going to say to the unsaved, "I never knew you." However, Christ does know every believer. He assures us of this.

Listen:

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." —John 10:27.

Suppose then that some were saved and later was lost and that individual were to come to the judgement and hear Christ say, "I never knew you," yet once upon a time that one had been saved. Don't you see, beloved, that if one could be saved and then lost, the Lord Jesus Himself would be proven a liar at the judgement. In the light of His character, since He is Truth itself, then we can be assured that when one is once saved, that there is nothing that can take that individual out of the hand of God.

In the sixth place, when one is saved, he can never be unsaved because he already possesses eternal life. There is no truth more prominently taught in the Bible than the truth of eternal salvation.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath EVERLASTING LIFE, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." —John 5:24.

"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have ETERNAL LIFE, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." (Continued on page 5, column 2)

Will A Christian Who Commits Suicide Go To Heaven?

Continued from page 3)
the hands of his enemies, the Philistines.

It is a pathetic story as to how they took this erstwhile physical giant — Israel's champion, and gouged out his eyes. Notice his blindness, hear his chains clank, and observe his servitude to the Philistines and you have thereby the end picture of sin. Yet the Word of God tells us that though he was thus abused by the Philistines, that his hair began to grow so that eventually his strength came back to him little by little.

One day the Philistines brought him out that this old blind judge of Israel might amuse them. Then it was that he leaned against the pillars of the house and prayed for vengeance upon the Philistines.

"And Samson called unto the Lord and said, O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be

which indicate that this is so. Listen:

"Now unto him that is ABLE TO KEEP YOU from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." —Jude 24.

"Who are KEPT BY THE POWER OF GOD through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." —I Peter 1:5.

"For the which cause I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that HE IS ABLE TO KEEP that which I have committed unto him against that day." —2 Tim. 1:12.

Concerning all these verses may it be remembered that none of us are able to keep ourselves. If I had a thousand dollars in my pocket, I would be unsafe walking around on the streets of this or any other town. Not having the ability to keep this money myself, it would be the point of prudence and wisdom for me to go to the bank and place it there on deposit where the banker has the ability to keep it. The same

The fact that any of us go to Heaven when we die is nothing to our credit nor praise, for all glory belongs to Him Who has saved us and kept us saved through His own power.

In the second place, there is nothing that can take one out of the hand of God since each of the redeemed is a new creation. Listen:

"Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a NEW CREATION, old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." —2 Cor. 5:17.

It is utterly impossible for that which has been created to be uncreated. Go back to the first chapter of Genesis and you can observe that in six successive days God created the various and varied forms of life. When these had been created, nothing could uncreate them. In fact, there is an axiomatic law of life that whatever God does, He does it forever.

We read:

"I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever." —Eccl. 3:14.

Thus since the Scriptures declare that each redeemed person is a new creation and since that which has been created cannot be uncreated, then it logically follows that there is nothing that can take a believing child of God out of the hand of his Heavenly Father.

In the third place, there is nothing that can take a saved person out of the hand of God since believers are sealed unto the day of redemption. Listen:

"Who hath also SEALED US, and given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." —2 Cor. 1:22.

"And grieve not the holy Spirit

Only As God's People Support Us Will We Be Able To Continue Our Written Ministry. An Offering From You Will Bless And Help Now.

at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes." —Judges 16:28.

It would thus appear that Samson certainly took revenge in his own hands and that he failed to believe the Scripture which says:

"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." —Rom. 12:19-21.

Thus Samson became a suicide and died with a spirit of revenge predominating in his death. However, in spite of all this, Hebrews 11:32, our text, indicates that he was saved.

II

THERE IS NOTHING THAT CAN TAKE A CHILD OF GOD OUT OF GOD'S HAND.

When one is once saved, and has thereby become a child of God, there is nothing that can take that individual away from the Father—not even death at his own hands. That is true for several reasons.

First of all, every saved person is kept by the power of God. There are a number of Scriptures

is true spiritually. I have not the ability to keep myself in God's sight. If my spiritual preservation depended upon me, then undoubtedly I must spend my eternity in hell. The same is true of each of Adam's descendants.

None of us are able to keep ourselves. Hence, we commit ourselves into the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul said he had made such a committal. That committal was made on the day he was saved. In like measure, the day that I was saved, I thereby committed myself to Him and I have the assurance that I am kept now by the power of God.

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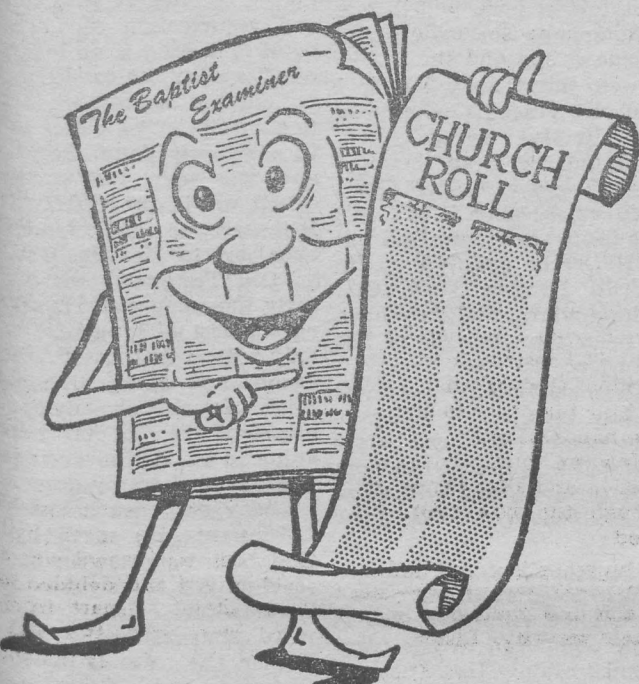
The Baptist Examiner

If you knew how much we needed your cooperation in this matter today, you wouldn't hesitate one moment, but would IMMEDIATELY send your contribution for this work.

Examiner Editorials

GOOD EXAMPLE—I re-filled the pulpit at the (Ohio) Baptist Church in absence of Brother Austin the pastor. After the serv-few of the brethren were the value of TBE and that a large proportion church received the paper. one of the brethren said he all the members of the should be on the mailing Brother Don Willis mentioned the Arabia church's mission Middleton, Ohio, where his er, Willard Willis, preaches, TBE in its financial budget sends TBE to all of those attend. Don's father, Joe, he thought that the Arabia Vell, with ought to also send TBE its members. Brother Wil-Fields, father of Austin, both. So the brethren told me it would be brought before church and the suggestion be made that TBE be sent every member of the Arabia

not send me to every member on the church roll. It's just a dollar a year on fifteen or more subs."



OPPOSITION TO TITHING—I have an article before me that tithing. What appears to of the writer's chief points law and grace. He seems ink that in the Old Testa-the Jews were saved by law there was no grace. Thus he tithing was "under the law" not to be practiced "under" This is a completely ed position.

ers in all ages, whether or Gentiles, have been saved by grace. Jews who were in the Old Testament saved by grace and their was motivated by love for God has always loved a ful giver, not just during the ed church age. God has appreciated giving that was "istic." Those who try to be-Old Testament tithing by it "legalistic," a "fear" or-ice, and mere "law" are in of a deeper study of the Old ment and a deeper under-ing of what motivates saved e to obey the Lord. You can't at the giving of Abraham, ob, of David and other men d and think you have better es or higher goals than they.

AN ERROR IN "CAMPBELL-BOOK CORRECTED"—It been called to my attention my book on Campbellism ns an error on page 101, re-to I Peter 3:20. I am glad this has been called to my tion and I wish to make the FE, and with an explanation as I think it occurred. The

Baptist Church. I was very impressed by this action by these brethren since I had not even made any kind of suggestion that would lead them to decide to propose this to the church. However, I would like to offer this action to other church-es as a good example for them to follow. Pastors by the dozen testify to the value of TBE in the church member's life in sup-plementing and reinforcing the preaching done in the pulpit.

If churches will put this paper into their church budgets and au-tomatically send this paper to all the members, adding new mem-bers to the mailing list as they join the church, we firmly be-lieve the spiritual and doctrinal strength of the church mem-ber-ship will show definite signs of additional growth during the course of a year's time. Experi-ence continues to verify this be-lief over and again.—Bob L. Ross.

He that believeth on me HATH EVERLASTING LIFE.—John 6:47.

I remember some years ago talking with a preacher of an-other persuasion and he declared that he believed in eternal life, that is, he believed that when we get into eternity we would then have eternal life. I cited to him the words of Jesus in His high priestly intercessory prayer: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."—John 17:3.

Jesus declares that life eternal is the knowledge of Himself as Saviour. Then just as soon as a believer comes to know Jesus Christ, he has eternal life abiding within him. We don't have to wait until we die, nor until we get to heaven. Just knowing Jesus now is enjoying eternal life and ever-lasting salvation.

This word "everlasting" is a most unusually interesting word. In Matthew 25:46 "everlasting" describes the punishment of the wicked. "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment."

In Romans 16:26 it describes the character of God's existence. "But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, accord-ing to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith."

In 2 Timothy 2:10 it describes the duration of Christ in glory. "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory."

In 2 Peter 1:11 it describes the duration of Christ's kingdom. "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

Now notice, beloved, that the same word which describes the punishment of the wicked, the character of God's existence, the duration of Christ in glory, and the duration of Christ's kingdom, is the identical word which is used to describe the life that is ours when we come to trust Jesus Christ as a Saviour.

Then, beloved, just as long as the wicked are punished, as long as God exists, as long as Christ's glory continues, and as long as His kingdom lasts—then that long the believer has eternal life. Or to say it inversely, if the punish-ment of the wicked could have an end, and if God Himself should come to an end, and if Christ glory and His kingdom should have an end, then and then only could the believer perish. In view of this fact then how we praise Him for this blessed truth that whenever a believer is saved he actually and definitely possesses eternal life.

III

IN VIEW OF THESE GREAT TRUTHS THAT WHEN ONE IS SAVED HE IS SAVED FOREVER, THEN MAY WE BRIEFLY NOTICE THE SIN OF SUICIDE.

It is a sin in that it indicates a definite lack of faith. There is no question but that anyone who is mentally sound who commits suicide has done so because of a lack of trust and faith. Anything that evidences such a lack is a sin. Listen:

"For whatsoever is not of faith is sin."—(Rom. 14:23).

Then it is a sin in that it is presuming on God, for it actually presumes that the individual knows more than God Himself. Suppose I hire a man to work for me and he keeps wishing for quitting time. All day long he keeps saying, "I wish the day were over; I wish quitting time would soon come." Such a man would not be a desirable em-ployee. Certainly he would not

bring much happiness to his em-employer. Well, the same is true in our relationship to God. Doubtless there isn't a person living who hasn't at some time wished to die. Yet even that wish was wrong, for it is presuming that you know more than your Heavenly Father.

This sin of suicide certainly affects one's position in glory. In fact, there is no sin that one can commit that does not affect his position in heaven. It does not change his relationship, for he is still God's child, but it does make a difference as to the re-wards which will be his.

The Word of God makes it clear that we are to be rewarded for what we do after we are saved.

"And every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour."—I Cor. 3:8.

Certainly our rewards will not be the same. "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory."—1 Cor. 15:41.

Some folk will even be saved without any rewards.

"If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."—1 Cor. 3:14, 15.

The Word of God indicates that even after one has been saved and has laid up a reward that that reward might be taken away as a result of sin. "Let no man beguile you of your reward."—Col. 2:18.

"Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward."—2 John 1:8.

Every sin has its consequences. A child of God cannot sin with-out these consequences becoming a reality. When he sins he loses his fellowship (not his relation-ship), with his Father. He loses the joy of his God-given salva-tion. He stands subject to chastise-ment from the hand of God. His physical life is actually in danger. While all this is true, it is also a fact that sin does affect one's position in glory, and especially is that true of the sin of suicide.

IV

IN SPITE OF THE FACT THAT SUICIDE IS A SIN, YET THERE IS A HOPE SHINING THROUGH.

However, in it all, we have this assurance that God knows.

"Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world."—Acts 15:18.

In fact, the death of each of us comes in God's appointed time.

"To every thing there is a season, and time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a TIME TO DIE."—Eccl. 3:1, 2.

In reality, God knows the time and the manner of the death of each of us.

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God."—John 21:28, 19.

In this instance, Jesus foretold the time of Peter's death—"when thou shalt be old." He also fore-told the manner of his death—that of crucifixion—"thou shalt stretch forth thine hands." I am sure Jesus knew the time and manner of Simon Peter's death. Then it is an evident fact that

BRO. GILPIN'S SERMON

The sermon in TBE Pulpit is a reprint, published at the request of several who have written to us in recent weeks concerning this ques-tion.

He knows the time and manner of the death of each of us. What a comforting blessed hope this is. What a wonderful assurance it brings to us.

"God moves in mysterious ways His wonders to perform; He plants His footsteps in the sea, And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines of never failing skill, He treasures up His bright designs, And works His sov'reign will.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take; The clouds ye so much dread Are big with mercy, and shall break In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense, But trust Him for His grace; Behind a frowning providence He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast, Unfolding every hour; The bud may have a bitter taste, But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err, And scan His works in vain; God is His own interpreter, And He will make it plain."

Just one question remains in closing. Do you have eternal life? If not, may God help you now to lay hold on that life through the Lord Jesus Christ. It isn't by a church ordinance nor by the work of the preacher that one is saved. We rejoice that we have a present and an eternal salvation wrought out by the Lord Jesus Christ. May you believe Him, receive Him, and be saved.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."—John 5:24.

God's Providence

(Continued from page one)

ped out to come to pass, and pro-vidence is the bringing of it to pass. When you start to build a house, you have plans drawn. This is the planning of the house. Then you hire contractors who build the house. There is the planning and the building. Predestination is the planning, providence is the build-ing.

"All Things"

Our text says, "All things work together for good . . ." That would include all beings and all of life's events, whether good or evil. Here are some examples of good things that work together for our good:

The Trinity, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Father worked for our good in planning our salvation and choosing us in Christ (Eph. 1:4). The Son worked for our good in coming into this world and giving us to Christ and conforming us to His image in sanctification. These three divine Persons work together; they are the one undivided God.

Good angels work for our good. In Hebrews 1:14 the Scripture speaks of them as "ministering (Continued on page 8, column 1)

Only God Knows How Much We Need Your Thanksgiving Offering.
Pray With Us That God Will Make It The Very Greatest For Us!

We Pray That This Thanksgiving May Be A Special Thanksgiving In Your Life For The Blessings Of An Almighty Sovereign God.

"The Doctrines of Grace"

(Continued from page one)
eration of Grace, and (4.) The Perversion of Grace.

I. Definition Of Grace

I think probably the most familiar definition of grace is the old standard—the unmerited favor of God. When I try to find out what a word means, I always go to the dictionary, and I am amazed when I go to Webster's Collegiate Dictionary and look up some of these great words that are found in the Bible. What wonderful definitions you will find sometimes for these words in the dictionary. In fact, I think sometimes if a sinner were trying to find out what the Bible teaches, he would learn a lot more from the dictionary than he ever would learn going to some churches. I turned to that word "grace" in the dictionary

John Henry Jowett, the famous English clergyman of the last century, who ministered on both sides of the Atlantic, was always probing into the depths of the meaning of grace, and was trying to discover some new aspect of its unsearchable riches. On one occasion he said this: "You cannot define grace, but you cannot define anything that is really lovely. Still less can you define love itself. As soon as you begin to describe a garden, you feel you have only got the alpha out of the great alphabet and all the rest is left untouched."

"I feel just like that when I try to say anything about grace. There is no word that I have wrestled with so much as the word 'grace.' It is just like expressing a great American forest by one word. No phrase can express the meaning of grace."

Jowett said that if anyone is in love, he does not take down a dictionary to find out its meaning. I could say the same thing this morning. I could spend a lot of time trying to define grace, but my prayer and my hope is that everyone of you have experienced grace, that you really and truly know what it is to be saved by the grace of God.

I think of all the things that I have ever read about grace, and the thing that has touched me most is the definition of the word "grace" by Alexander Whyte, the great Scottish preacher. Whyte said, "Grace and love are essentially the same thing, only grace is love manifesting itself and operating under certain conditions and adapting itself to certain circumstances. For example, love has no limit or law such as grace has. Love may exist between equals, or it may arise to those above us, or flow down to those in any way beneath us, but grace, from its nature, has only one direction that it can take. Grace is always flowing down. Grace is love indeed, but it is love to creatures humbling itself. Thus it is that God's love to sinners is always grace because it flows down."

As I have said, the word "grace" is even greater than the word "love." Let me illustrate. All grace, no doubt, has love in it, but all love does not necessarily have grace in it. Love may be nothing more than the fulfillment

of the law or command. I love God, but God deserves my love, and so it is not grace. I ought to love my neighbor, but the minute I say "ought," I immediately strike out grace. A mother's love for her child is wonderful and beautiful, but no mother would dream of calling it grace, for that child, whether male or female, if it has been born of that mother, deserves that love.

You see, there is a difference between love and grace. Grace is love which is not due us, to which we have no claim, and which we have no way earned or deserved, but which the heart, out of pure goodness, lavishes upon the unworthy. That is what God did for sinners. He bestowed grace upon those who did not deserve one thing.

II. Characteristics of Grace.

There are many wonderful characteristics of grace, but I think the most outstanding and most comforting to a sinner is the fact that God's grace is eternal. Grace was planned before it was ever put into operation. It was purposed before it was ever imparted. The Bible makes that clear, for II Timothy 1:9 says:

"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

Ephesians 1:7 tells us exactly the same thing, for it says:

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."

Verse 6 of this first chapter of Ephesians talks about grace, but in verse 4 we find when this grace began, for He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world. Grace started back there before He ever made this world.

Then in verse 10 he tells how long grace is going to go on, for it says, "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times." From before the foundation of the world to the end of eternity, grace is going to go on. What a wonderful thing it is, this wondrous grace, for it is eternal!

Another characteristic of God's grace is that it is free. Maybe that is why people don't appreciate it, because anything that is free peo-

ple don't care too much about. That is why missionaries out on the foreign fields say it is much better to take the Gospel of John and sell it just for a few cents than it is to give it away, because people would appreciate it more if they paid for it. However, if you just give it to them, many times they just throw it aside. But that is one feature about this wonderful thing we are talking about; grace is free. Romans 3:24 states:

"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

Eternal life is a gift; therefore it cannot be earned by the natural man. It certainly cannot be claimed as a right. And do you realize that there is nothing that will stir up the enmity in the natural man more than to tell him that God's grace is eternal, and that it is free, and that it is sovereign? Grace cannot be earned or won by any effort of man, and that is too self-emptying for the average self-righteous man.

The one thing most hated, I think, about grace is when you put the adjective "sovereign" in front of it, and that is another outstanding characteristic of God's grace. Grace, because it is God's gift, has to be sovereign. God exercises His grace upon whom He pleases. In Exodus 33:19, God spoke these words, and they have always been characteristic of His grace. Listen:

"I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy."

Because grace is unmerited favor, it must be exercised in a sovereign manner. Almighty God is under no obligation to His creatures, and certainly He is not under any obligation to fallen creatures who are in rebellion to Him. No wonder many of the hymn writers have tried to express in music and words something of what this Bible talks about. Only a slave trader, an immoral man such as John Newton, who was saved by God's grace, could pen such a hymn as "Amazing Grace." Another hymn writer talks about "Wonderful Grace." I think that some of them have gotten the idea and have seen what the Bible teaches, that out of all the mass of humanity down through the centuries, God chose them and bestowed His matchless grace upon them, and they wanted to sing and tell other people about this wonderful grace.

Don't you want to do the same thing? Doesn't that humble you? There are three billion souls in this world and some of you sit here this morning as recipients of God's grace. Out of three billion people God's grace has been bestowed upon you, and you are saved and belong to Jesus Christ.

A few weeks ago a woman up in years—past the three-score and ten mark—came to our church. She listened to the message, and at the end of the message came forward and said she wanted to be saved. She had come to church only three or four times. There are people who have been attending church for maybe eight or ten years, listening to message after message, not only from me but from other men of God, yet aren't saved. Now why did God in His wisdom and His sovereignty all of a sudden move upon the heart of one and didn't touch some other heart? I can't explain it, but I think that is His prerogative. I pray that the rest of you who are here will have the same thing happen to you.

III. Operation of Grace

Paul uses the expression, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,"

many places in the New Testament. Because it is found so many times in the New Testament, I think many readers of the Bible have a twisted notion that the Father is angry, and that the marvelous grace we have been talking about comes only from the Son. In other words, they believe that the Father and the Spirit have been divorced from the operation of grace. I don't think that that is right.

Another verse which has been highly contorted is John 1:17: "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

I have a Scofield Bible. I think it is a good reference Bible, but as I have pointed out many times, I don't ever take those things from the bottom of the page as the inspired word of God. As an example, it says here on page 11 concerning grace: "As a dispensation, grace begins with the death and resurrection of Christ. The point of testing is no longer legal obedience as the condition of salvation, but acceptance or rejection of Christ." I claim that that is absolutely false. Legal obedience was never the "condition of salvation" in the Old Testament. If it were, no old Testament sinner ever got to Heaven. God saved an Old Testament sinner in exactly the same way He saves sinners today — by grace, and the only reason that David, Abraham, Jacob, and Isaac, Daniel, Jeremiah, Isaiah, or any of the saints of the Old Testament are going to be in Heaven is because God saved them by grace.

Today, and back 2000 years, 2,000 years, He saved by grace. God bestows grace on the undeserving. All three persons of the Godhead are equally gracious toward sinners. The grace of the Father, the grace of the Son, and the grace of the Spirit are equal in degree, but I think they are different in operation. The Father is the architect, or the founder, of all grace. He purposed the plan of grace. He formulated the covenant of grace. He chose the subjects of grace.

The Eternal Son is the mediator of grace, for "grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Grace flows to the elect through Christ, and are perfectly exemplified in the Person of our Redeemer who came to earth, who died for His people on the cross, and who rose the third day triumphant.

"Much more the grace of God and the gift by grace, which is one man, Jesus Christ." — Romans 5:15.

"For if by one man's offense death reigned by one; much more to them which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one Jesus Christ." — Romans 9:17.

"That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." — Romans 5:21.

The Scripture talks about being saved through faith. Faith is the work of God's grace in us. No man can say that Jesus Christ is God except by the Holy Ghost. John 6:44 says:

"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him."

So that faith, which is coming to Christ, is the result of a divine drawing.

Now grace is the first and last cause of salvation, and is essential as it is, is only an important part of the machinery. It is the machinery which grace employs. It is true that we are saved through faith, but since faith is only the channel, or the aqueduct, or the pipe, and not the fountain head, we must not look to faith as to exalt faith above

RADIO MINISTRY

ASHLAND, KENTUCKY
WTCR—1420 on the Dial
Sunday—8:30 A. M.

RAVENSWOOD,
WEST VIRGINIA
WMOV—1360 on the Dial
Sunday—8:30 A. M.

PORTSMOUTH, OHIO
WPAY—1400 on the Dial
Sunday—8:00 A. M.

WEST FRANKFORT, ILLINOIS
WFRX—1300 on the Dial
Sunday—8:15 A. M.

ary and I was amazed, for there was quite a lengthy column explaining what that little word "grace" means. In fact, there were about twelve different definitions, and I had to come down to the tenth one before I found the ecclesiastical definition. This is what it said: "Divine mercy or forgiveness; divine assistance given man for his regeneration or sanctification; the state of the elect."

Now that is fairly good for a secular dictionary, but grace is more than mercy. Grace is more than love. Grace is the largest word in the Bible. I know some of you are going to say, "Preacher, you are wrong. The Bible says that love is the greatest thing in the world." No, the Bible does not. The Bible says that God is love. I Corinthians 13:13 says:

"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity (love)."

Notice, faith, hope, and love, but grace is not mentioned.

A little girl one time, when asked what grace was, said, "It is getting everything for nothing." The great C. H. Spurgeon said about the same thing when he said that grace was everything for nothing — Christ free, pardon free, Heaven free. That is all good and it is all very true, but I think that grace is even a little more than that. Grace is one deserving everything bad and getting everything good for nothing.

I want you this morning to listen very carefully to what some of these great men of God down through the years have tried to do with the word "grace." I think this word "grace" is probably one of the most misused and misunderstood words in our whole Bible.

Dale said that "grace is love which passes beyond all claims to love."

Alexander McClaren said that "the word 'grace' is a kind of shorthand for the whole sum of unmerited blessing which comes to men through Jesus Christ."

We Wish You A Most Thankful Thanksgiving



"O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth forever."

—Ps 107:1.

very divine source of our salvation, which is Christ Himself. He is the Father of this wonderful gift of the Puritan writers "Never make a Christ out of our faith, nor think of faith as it were an independent of your salvation." I am convinced that a lot of people today think that the faith they have made a Christ out of their faith. They have made an out of their faith.

only faith is just a channel by which the faith comes to you. You exalt it, but faith itself, according to Ephesians 2:8, 9, is a gift of the Almighty. We are never

ucted in the Bible to look for the author and the finisher of our faith. The Holy Spirit's work is the power of grace. He takes the work of Christ and gives them to us. He quickens, or makes the souls of God's choice, He leads them to the Lamb of God. The Father chose you, the Son died for you, and the Spirit works in your heart to make you want to receive Christ as the Son of God.

was saved in kind of a dramatic way, just like the Apostle Paul. I was struck down on a field and went through a breakdown before I came to Christ. Not everybody is saved that way. The vast majority of people sit in church and hear the preached and the Holy Spirit moves and opens their hearts and they receive Christ. Remember, the Holy Spirit is also sovereign in this operation.

I think this movement of God is similar to what we might call the silent movement of the sea. Let me illustrate that. A shallow brook bubbles and babbles as it goes on, and everybody can hear it as they walk by. But what about the seasons that change and are heard by anyone? Oh, they are heard, but the seasons change they are not heard by very many people.

Take, for example, the storm. It comes through and it rages and it rages through the people, but its fury is soon muted, its effects are partial and many times very quickly forgotten. Even in a great tidal wave or a great hurricane, the water comes back in and builds up a few years, and don't even think the storm had gone through. What about you? Did you get up early in the morning and look out and watch the dew as it falls on the earth? God brings it down gradually, but silently, yet think of the things that depend upon the life itself depends upon the dew for many things, and I think of a picture of the operation of grace in the souls of men down through the ages.

Jonathan Edwards said: "Those who are in a state of salvation do not attribute it to sovereign grace alone, and to give all the glory to Him who maketh them differ from others. Godliness is not a cause for glorying, except it be God. Such are not, by any degree, in any degree to attribute Godliness, their safe and happy state and condition, to a natural difference between them and other men, or to any strength or righteousness of their own. They have no reason to exalt themselves in the least degree; God is the being whom they should exalt. They should exalt the Father, who chose them; Christ, who set His love upon them and gave them salvation because they were born, and even the world was. If they inquire why God set His love on them and chose them rather than others, if they think that they can

see any cause out of God, they are greatly mistaken. They should exalt God the Son, who bore their names on His heart when He came into the world and hung on the cross and in whom alone they have righteousness and strength. They should exalt God the Holy Spirit, who of sovereign grace has called them out of darkness into His marvelous light; and who has by His own immediate and free operation led them into an understanding of the evil and the danger of sin, and brought them off from their own righteousness and opened their eyes to discover the glory, and the wonderful riches of God in Jesus Christ, and sanctified them, and made them new creatures."

Do you think preachers believe that today? Do you think preachers preach that today? Why Jonathan Edwards is so far from the average preacher today in American pulpits that they wouldn't know what he was talking about, yet he was one of the greatest preachers America ever had. When I was in high school we read his sermon, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." It was almost ridiculed by my literature teacher who said that it was all bygone and past, and some old kind of preaching that we don't have anymore. Well, that was true, because I never heard any kind of preaching like that when I was growing up. But what Jonathan Edwards said back there in the 1700's is still true today, for that is the way God works, and that is the way God operates so far as grace is concerned.

IV. Perversion Of Grace

Today we hear of sovereign grace, of saving grace, of distinguishing grace, of persevering grace, of dying grace, but you don't find any adjectives like that in the Bible. All you do is read the word "grace." Why is it when talking about grace, especially when we ask anybody if he has been saved, we say, "Do you really believe in sovereign grace?" Why do we use such a term? It is because of men's perversion. Men have perverted almost everything that God has given them, and so you certainly would expect men to pervert grace, which is the greatest gift of all the universe.

I think most of you are well aware that if you do something wrong in government there is a penalty. If you go through a red light, there is a penalty. There is a penalty in sports. If you jump across a line in football before the ball is snapped, it is "off-side," and you get penalized. This is all true in life, and God also has certain penalties if you pervert grace. Galatians 1:6-9 says:

"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that you have received, let him be accursed."

Now can God say anything plainer or more pungent or more earth-shaking than that? If anybody perverts this gospel of Jesus Christ he is going to be accursed, and today this world is full of the perversions of the gospel of grace.

Rome perverts grace continually. If I had the time I could read you what Rome says about its seven sacraments. It says that the seven sacraments are aids to saving. Well, that in itself would cancel out grace. If you have to do something, if you have to do

penance, you no longer have grace.

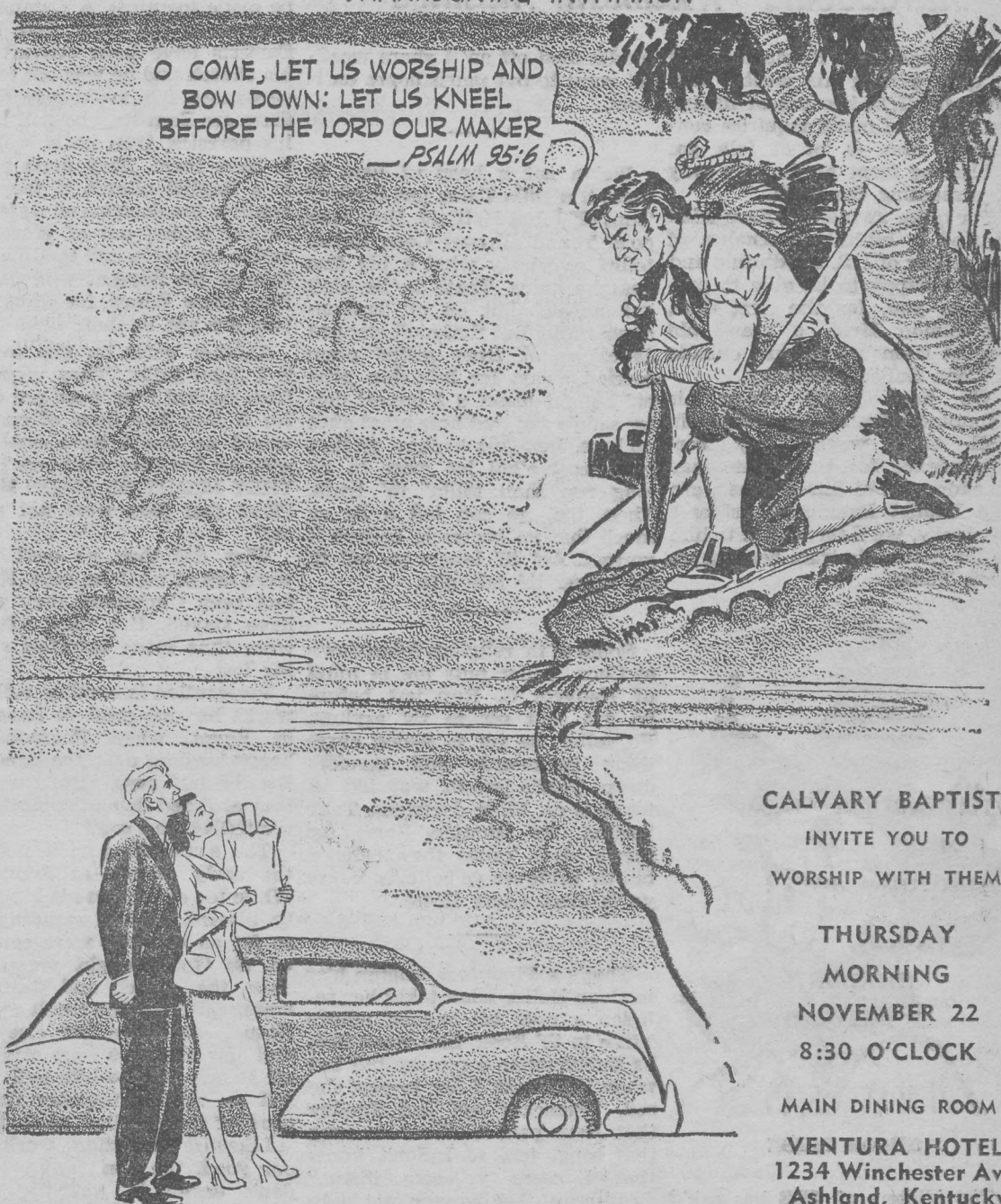
The Christian Scientists, Seventh Day Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses, and the Mormons pervert grace. They add something to what God has already said. The Protestant denominations are doing the same thing. They are perverting grace. And I believe with all my heart many Baptists are perverting this matter of grace as much as anybody. How? They never mention any of these things that have to do with grace. They can pervert grace by that. If you are trying to tell people about grace and you never mention predestination, or election, or foreknowledge, or glorification—if you never mention any of these great things that are connected with grace, how does a person really know what grace is all about? You can't talk about grace unless you bring in these great things that deal with how God Almighty saves people and He Himself is to get the glory and the honor.

In the story of the prodigal son, when the son comes home, the father rushes out to meet him. He is going to kill the fatted calf. The father puts the robe on the prodigal son. Do you know what the Arminian does today? He says, "Hold the coat and I will put my arm in the sleeve." That is about what you hear in most pulpits today. "You can be saved if you will do this or that." The Bible doesn't say anything about that. That is the perversion of the grace of God Almighty, and God says, "Let him be accursed."

If you will read the great Roman Council of Trent, you will see, over and over again, "Let him be accursed," and most of them were against the Reformers, because they were preaching grace. If anybody preaches the

THANKSGIVING INVITATION

O COME, LET US WORSHIP AND BOW DOWN: LET US KNEEL BEFORE THE LORD OUR MAKER
—PSALM 95:6



CALVARY BAPTISTS
INVITE YOU TO
WORSHIP WITH THEM

THURSDAY
MORNING
NOVEMBER 22
8:30 O'CLOCK

MAIN DINING ROOM

VENTURA HOTEL
1234 Winchester Ave.
Ashland, Kentucky

doctrine of predestination, the Council of Trent says, "Let him be accursed." If anybody says that you can be saved and kept forever and have eternity security, "let him be accursed." The Council of Trent has taken the very thing that God said and twisted it around, and they curse everybody who preaches what the Bible says—that we are saved by the grace of God.

If you will go up and down this land today you will find very few people who know what real, true grace is all about, for they are always trying to add something to the grace of God. The minute you try to add anything to grace, whether it is the slightest thing, you are going to pervert it, and God says, "Watch out. Let him be accursed if he perverts the gospel of grace." The minute you add anything, it is no longer grace, for it becomes grace plus works, and then it is no longer grace, and works is no longer works. (Rom. 11:6).

Conclusion

I believe that there are a lot of you who almost think about grace in the same light as you do repentance. You look back at the time you were saved and you say, "I repented, and I received Jesus Christ as my Saviour." A lot of people forget repentance then for the rest of their lives. I don't think there is a day goes by in which we don't need repentance. Repentance means "a change of mind." We need to ask God to forgive us. We need to repent of some of the things that we are doing or are not doing.

The same thing is true of grace. We have been saved by grace, and we almost act as if that ends it, but you pick up any one of the epistles and Paul is always speaking about the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be unto you. He is always invoking and ask-

ing God to give people grace—the abundant unmerited favor of God.

C. H. Spurgeon used to tell an illustration of a friend of his in England by the name of Roland Hill who had two men in his congregation—a very poor man and a very rich man. The poor man was a poor preacher, who hardly had any of this world's goods. The rich man came to Roland Hill and said, "I would like to leave this man about 100 pounds, but I don't want him to know that I am going to give it to him. I am going to give it to you, and you in some way give it to him."

Hill thought about it and he knew if he all of a sudden walked up to that preacher and handed him 100 pounds, the shock would probably kill him. Then he thought of this idea. He took five pounds and enclosed a note, "More to follow," and sent it to him. In a few weeks he sent another five pounds and all that was enclosed with it was a note, "More to follow." He did that until the whole 100 pounds was sent. When the 100 pounds was finished, the man got so thrilled with that "More to follow," that that was all he looked for—more to follow.

It is the same with grace. Some of you have been saved by grace, but there is more to follow. Someday you are going to be received into God's Heaven. You are going to have a new body like unto Christ's own body. You have grace, wondrous grace, already bestowed upon you, but there is more to follow throughout the ages of eternity.

Have you been saved by grace? If not, cast yourself upon God and receive this wonderful, wondrous grace. God's Word says, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God."

Trying To Show Your Thankfulness To God This Year, Why Not Remember Our Publishing Work With A Most Worthy Offering?

Introducing "Mountain Musings"

Ever since I. S. Hardtufule had to quit writing his weekly column for TBE because of illness, we have had many inquiries concerning him. A lot of folk got a blessing from his homely way of presenting the truth.

For quite awhile we have tried to find a hillbilly journalist of the caliber of I. S. Hardtufule and we are happy to be able to present to you, for the first time, Mr. Simon Muse, a grand old Baptist layman from just outside of Coon Holler, Kentucky.

We hope you'll enjoy his "Mountain Musings" presented in TBE each week. Any correspondence for Bro. Muse may be addressed to Simon Muse, c/o The Baptist Examiner, Ashland, Kentucky. We'll forward it to him on the first mule-train heading up Coon Holler.



SIMON MUSE

The idiots of TBE has ask'd me, Simon Muse, to pass along to TBE's readers some of my obscurashuns, expereiences, and fillosofies. Me jest bein' an ol mount'n boy all my life, all I knows is what I has larned 'round h'ar at Coon Holler an' visinnity. I ain't had much larnin', but I duz know a little 'bout how to rite and spell. So I hopes to rite a bit fer ye each week an' I hopes what I sez duzn't make any of ye mad—spacially 'round Coon Holler. I ain't had no 'casion for load'n my old flintlock sinse mos' of the

feud'n died off an' I shore wood-n't want to put much hopes on it now.

We've got a heap of liars in these h'ar hills. I wuz jest thinkin' 'bout ol' Jabez Hatfield. He's been goin' 'round all over Coon Holler tellin' evrybody what a big fine hoss he owns. Truth is, he ain't got nuthin' but an ol' broken-down mule. But that ain't stopped Jabez' mind from gittin' plum carried away, fer he's dun gone an' bought hissef a 2 hunert dollar saddle fer that hoss what ain't no hoss. Jest goes to show ye that lying cost a'hol lot more in th' long run than tellin' th' truth. Then, too, ye can tell a lie so much that ye begins to believe it yoreself. An' th' longer ye tell it, th' longer th' tale gits.

Some of th' religious fokes down at Coon Holler puts me in mind of Hadycol C. Rup jest before he got sent off to th' asylum. Po' feller, he got to seeing evrything backwards and up-side-down. That's jest th' way lots of fokes is on Bible doctrines. Take 'lection, fer 'xample. Some sez they's elect 'cause they believe, but th' Bible sez ye believes 'cause ye is elect (Acts 13:48).

Thar's a Pinnycost womun h'ar in Coon Holler what takes her religion a mite bit beyond what's 'ritt'n in th' Book. She owed Hollis Buckhannan a grossry bill but when Hollis ask'd her to pay, she sed, "Preacher sed last Sunday that Jesus paid it all an' we sung that song, too, so I don't know that I owes ye airy thang." Brutherun, that womun not only is guilty of warpin' th' Bible, she dun invaded th' hymbook.

Thar's a pitiful young lad what goes to school down to th' schoolmarm at Coon Holler. This boy's haid is so big that he gits off-balance and falls down evry now an' then. 'Minds me of lots of church fokes what are so high-faluttin' big-haided they jest don't have any spiritual balance a'tall. Crammed too full of th' wizdum of th' world, I gess.

(More Musings Next Week)

God's Providence

(Continued from page five)
spirits" that are sent forth to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation. The good angels work together for us.

Good men work for us. There are preachers, Bible teachers, brethren who love us and pray for us. They work together for our good.

None of us would doubt that good things work together for our good. No one questions that. But what about evil things? What about Satan, evil angels, evil men—do they work together for our good? There are numerous illustrations which reveal that even these evil agents are overruled and controlled by God in such a way to bring about our good.

In the case of Job, Satan certainly had a field day. He first was given permission by God to take away Job's material possessions and family. Then he was granted the privilege of afflicting Job's body with boils. Job recognized that this was all of the Lord and said that he had received good at the hand of God, now he was receiving evil. He said that the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away (Job 1:21, 2:10).

You might say, "How could these evil things work for Job's

good?" We read in Job 42:10 that the Lord gave Job "twice as much as he had before," and verse 12 says, "So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning." Not only was this true materially, but the spiritual knowledge that Job gained through this experience was for his good. He learned many things about himself and the Lord that he had not known before. So God used evil in producing good in the case of Job.

Then there is the case of Joseph and his brethren. Joseph was hated by his brothers and they sold him to the Ishmaelites who in turn sold him into Egyptian bondage. They meant it for evil, but God meant it for good (Gen. 50:20). Eventually, God placed him in a high position of power, second only to Pharaoh, and Joseph was used to save the lives of his family. "God," he said, "sent me before you to preserve you" (Gen. 45:7). This again shows how God worked evil for good.

Even false teachers bring about a certain kind of good in behalf of God's people. In I Corinthians 1:19, we read: "For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you."

This text indicates that heresy will weed out the false professors. The saved will not follow it; they will stand against it. Thereby

those "approved" or saved will be made manifest. A Campbellite boasted to me once that many Baptists have been converted to his church and he was out to convert more. My reply was that if there are Baptists who will accept his heresies, then he is welcome to have them. They don't belong in a Baptist church if they will swallow the doctrine of water salvation, falling out of grace, salvation by works and the like. Yes, take all the Baptists who will believe these things, for these Baptists are yet in their sins.

Another verse on this thought is I John 2:19: "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would not doubt have continued with us; but they went out. THAT THEY MIGHT BE MADE MANIFEST that they were not all of us."

Why did they go out? They were not of us, John says. If they had been Christians, they would have stayed. But they left and were thus made manifest as being lost.

Persecution is another evil that works for our good. It happened in Egypt, when Pharaoh laid heavy burdens upon the Israelites. Exodus 1:12 says, "But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew."

The same thing took place in the early church at Jerusalem. While the church was being greatly blessed, it was standing still so far as missions were concerned. So God brought persecution upon the church and the saints were scattered. The result was the Gospel was preached elsewhere and new churches were established. Persecution—while evil in itself—worked together for the good of those called of God.

Likewise affliction works for our good. We don't enjoy it, we don't desire it, yet the Bible teaches us that it is for our good. Paul says in Romans 5:3-5: "And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience experience; and experience, hope, and hope maketh not ashamed."

In II Cor. 12:10, Paul says: "Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong."

That all these things come to us by the will of God, notice these verses:

Philippians 1:29: "For unto us it is GIVEN IN THE BEHALF OF CHRIST, not only to believe on him, but also to SUFFER for his sake."

I Thessalonians 3:3: "That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that WE ARE APPOINTED THEREUNTO."

I Peter 2:21: "For even HERE-UNTO WERE YE CALLED: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps."

Even our own sins are so governed and controlled by God that they work together for good. Again you might question how such a thing could be. But to the Christian, the answer is not difficult to see. Peter furnishes us with a good example. He boasted that he would not deny Christ. Christ saw that Peter was one who leaned upon the strength of the flesh and needed to learn to do otherwise. Therefore, Peter was given over to Satan for a period of time that he might learn not to trust in the flesh. He went on to deny Christ, as the Lord had said (Luke 22:32-34). Peter learned from this experience just how weak he was and how greatly he needed sustaining grace in his life. He not only learned this, but passed this truth along to other Christians (I Peter 5:5-9). The sin of Peter was therefore used not only for Peter's growth,

but also for the benefit of other saints.

The effect of sin in the life of the Christian produces such an attitude of heart that we can see how it works for our good, even though it is within itself detestable and brings us a degree of hurt. When the Christian sins, he discovers more of his inward depravity and is led to a greater abhorrence of the flesh. He learns to never lean upon the flesh. He tends to despise the flesh and mortify it. He seeks to bridle it. He is humbled because of his sinfulness. Paul had a "thorn in the flesh" which kept him humble. He says:

"And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelation, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure."—II Cor. 12:7.

Now you know that Satan would not put the thorn in Paul in order to keep Paul humble, but God made a use of Satan's willingness to afflict Paul and by this means kept Paul humble.

From our sins we also learn to be less censorious of others. We are more forbearing with other Christians who have faults.

We also are weaned from the world, fearing being swallowed up by its temptations, due to our weaknesses.

We learn to depend solely upon the sustaining grace of God and in no wise upon the flesh.

The "all things" that work together for our good are not always good, nor enjoyous, nor do we immediately perceive the how and the why. But God says they work together for our good.

All Things "WORK"

The verse says "all things work together for good." It is not "shall work" or "have worked," but a present working. All things are now working together for good.

When we proclaim the truth of predestination, many people say that this doctrine will destroy all work, all activity. They say it will cause men to just sit down and do nothing. On the contrary, predestination is the reason there is activity and work. It has set all things in motion to bring to pass God's decrees. What the objectors fail to realize is that the predetermined end has predetermined means to reach that end. The God who planned the end likewise planned how the end would be accomplished.

Nothing in God's great creation, which is entirely upheld and sustained by Him, is inactive. Even those things without life are really alive with activity and movement. Nothing is idle. Nothing is still. The planets in this universe are moving swiftly in their orbits. Our earth is moving in its orbit, spinning on its axis. The seasons on this globe are changing as the moments fly. The elements have no rest, neither by day nor night. This world is one great machine, built and controlled by God. Those who study biology, botany, astronomy, zoology, geology and other sciences will tell you that this world is literally seething with life and activity. Things are working, they are moving. God's creation is alive and everything moves according to His design and purpose. They are not moving by fate or chance, but by the providence of God. He is their governor.

All Things Work "TOGETHER"

They don't work independently of each other, but they are a functional part of God's great machine. You might take one thing of itself and be unable to say, "This works for my good." Yet when that thing is related to other things, it brings about your eventual good. Affliction, by itself considered, could not be said to be good, but as it is related to other

matters, it works together to produce good.

Over in our printing shop, presses have big wheels and small wheels, some roll forward and some backward. You might say at one wheel and say, "Why, wheel will not produce anything if it is too small and it rolls the wrong way." But as other wheels blend together with this wheel and other instruments operate, the printed product comes out.

Some things that work together are actually contrary to each other, separately considered. For example, there is a positive and a negative to electricity. There are hydrogen and oxygen to water. Refrigeration is produced by heat power.

So it is in the Christian. There are the positives and negatives. There are the contraries. Yet all are working together to bring about eventual good in our behalf. God is working in us "both to will and to do of his good pleasure." (Phil. 2:13)

They Work Together "FOR GOOD"

Don't misunderstand. The things are not always good, but they bring about eventual good. That is the goal of their working together.

And, too, they do not work together for the good of every man. It is to "them that love God" things work together for good. It could not be said that all things worked together for Judas' good, neither for Pharaoh's good, nor the good of anyone who goes to Hell. Things work together for good to those who love God, the called according to His purpose.

Spurgeon said that believing things are now working together for our good is "the pinch of faith." It is not difficult for us to look back upon the past and believe this; but what of the present? Do you have problems now? Are you afflicted? Are you spiritually cast down? Are you persecuted? Are these burdens working together for your good? Believing that they are for good, the pinch of faith; it is often difficult to believe.

But it is true. And I know we all would be much happier with much more content, better satisfied, if we believed this deeply enough.

The "good" is not primarily temporal good, although God often bless in this manner. The good is spiritual good. We think of our temporal welfare so strongly that it is difficult for us to think of any other kind of good. We think of our health, wealth, our social standing, home and if everything is in good shape, we think things are working for our good. But this is not what Romans 8:28 has in mind. God is speaking of spiritual good.

As for our temporal state, He urges us to "be content with things as ye have" (Hebrews 13:5). He said, "I have learned that whosoever state I am, therewithal to be content" (Phil. 4:11).

If you look only for the temporal good, you will not see things work together for your good. But if you look for the spiritual, you'll see how God works.

As a Christian, you ought to "know" the truth of Romans 8:28. It should not be a matter of doubt. You have a three-fold basis for knowing that all things work together for your good:

- (1) God's own word.
- (2) God's work for you in the past.
- (3) The certainty of the future.

I wonder if you believe that all things are right now working together for your good? Do you really believe it? I hope so. I hope you will continue to read God's Word, serve Him and love Him for His providential hand working all things out for your good.

Many Do Not Know About TBE. If You Love It, Others Too Might Like It. Show Your Thankfulness—Send It To Someone Else Today.