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The Baptist Examiner

Paid Circulation In All States And In Many Foreign Countries

"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

VOL. 37, No. 41 ASHLAND, KENTUCKY, NOVEMBER 23, 1968 WHOLE NUMBER 1563

THE AUTHORITY OF A N. T. CHURCH

ELD. JOSEPH WILSON
Winston-Salem, N. C.

"And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Matt. 18:17,18.

Note especially the words: "HEAR THE CHURCH," for these shall constitute my text. In these words, we learn of the authority of the church, and the individual's responsibility to that authority.

Let us notice a few preliminary observations.

"For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinances of God." Rom. 13:1,2.

The word for power here is the word meaning authority. From these two verses we learn three things. All authority originally and ultimately resides in God. God, in his sovereignty, gives authority to individuals, groups, or organizations as He sees fit. This God-given authority can be illustrated in the cases of parent over child; man over woman; husband over wife; government over citizen; and church over its members. In each of these cases, the Word of God declares that God has given authority of one over the other: the first over the latter in the above pairs. Now I must emphasize that no man or group has any authority except it be given by God. Self-assumed power is rebellion against the God who gave that authority. The rebellious wife, child, citizen, and church member is not only rebelling against the husband, parent, government, and church, but also against God.

Church authority is a dominant and easily proven New Testament doctrine. I find it hard to keep from questioning the motives of

those who deny this authority. I do sincerely believe if you were willing to be the kind of church member that the Bible teaches you ought to be, you would have very little trouble seeing the truth of church authority. I also must question the Biblical scholarship (I do not refer to worldly



ELD. JOSEPH WILSON

scholarship) of those who do not see this Biblical truth.

HEAR THE CHURCH

Our text says, "Hear the Church." Now this clearly teaches that the church has an authority to which the individual is to listen and obey. No man can believe or intelligently interpret this verse apart from church authority. It is so clear here, that it seems to me that only the willingly ignorant can not see it. But to those who despise church authority — those to whom it does not matter if the church treat them as an heathen and publican — let them look at the next verse.

"Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: etc. . . ." Matt. 18:18.

This verse tells us that the action of the church is recognized and ratified and settled in heaven. According to Bagster's interlinear, this verse should read "having been bound" and "having been loosed." Then, this verse

teaches that the action of a true, Spirit-led church is an action that has been passed upon and settled in Heaven. Do you not clearly see that in this verse, the disciplinary action of a N.T. church is recognized and approved by God Almighty, and that despisers of church authority are here shown to be despisers of the authority of God? Now this is clear and there is no way of getting around this truth. Either "hear the church," or be guilty of rebellion against God.

"If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, (Continued on page 7, column 2)

Please Don't Forget An Offering For Us On Thanksgiving



In our last issue, we reminded you that this is the Thanksgiving season and we urged all of our readers to remember us with a worthy offering for the ongoing of TBE.

Please don't forget us. It is only through the contributions that come to us that we are able to keep our paper in the mails. We thank God and take courage today for the many friends that He has raised up in our behalf and we truly pray that God will lay our written ministry heavily upon the hearts of our readers this season.

Appreciated Mail

Greetings in Jesus. Sorry to learn that Mrs. Gilpin is in the hospital. I hope and pray she is back home and feeling better. I don't think you need to worry about TBE going out of the mail as long as it stays true to the Book.

John T. White
Blairsville, Ga.

Dear Bro. Gilpin:
I don't have much to send you, but I enjoy sending what I can, because you and the paper are worthy of the support from everyone.

Willard Windsor
(Alabama)

Enclosed check for \$10.00 for expense of publishing The Baptist Examiner.

I have been reading it for about 20 years, and get more Bible truth from it than any paper I have ever read.

Wolford Whitaker
Pontiac, Mich.

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor John R. Gilpin

"PAUL—GOD'S VESSEL"

"But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel."—Acts 9:15.

Last Sunday night I discussed at length the story of Paul's conversion. I read you lots of Scripture relative to how Paul was saved. I know no individual in all the Bible whose conversion stands out, or whose conversion is of more help to me, than the conversion of the Apostle Paul. Following the message of last Sunday, I wish to preach to you this morning about Paul as God's

vessel — how God used him as a vessel.

I
PAUL WAS AN UNCLEAN VESSEL.

We read:
"And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem."—Acts 9:1,2.

If this Scripture isn't enough to indicate that Paul was an un-

clean vessel, then hear the Apostle, thirty years later, give this testimony:

"Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief." — I Tim. 1:13.

If this isn't sufficient for you to realize that the Apostle Paul was truly an unclean vessel before he was saved, just remember the Scriptures that I read to you last Sunday evening that tell us how Paul persecuted God's people, even unto death, bringing them bound unto the city of Jerusalem. (Continued on page 2, column 4)

"But God forbid that I should the earth, will draw all men unto glory, save in the cross of our me."—John 12:32.
Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision avail-eth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God. From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus Christ."—Gal. 6:14-17.

Throughout this conference we have heard much concerning the cross of Christ, the blood of Christ, and Christ as our Pass-over. Tonight, I bring to you a message on the Cross of Christ.

The Literal Aspect of the Cross

The cross is an erected tree, or piece of wood with another member crossways across the top, forming a T. This is one type in which we are interested. This cross was a wooden cross and it is the type to which Christ was nailed.

In its ritual aspect we find that the cross today is actually worshipped by many people. In the Roman Catholic Church, it is worshipped and idolized. It is a sin to worship or idolize the cross, even though it means so much to us as Christians. I say to you, to worship the cross of the Lord Jesus is wrong.

I don't preach this message in hope that you'll begin to worship the cross, because I see so many of these crosses and crucifixes that have the Lord Jesus Christ upon it, but the cross that I preach unto you is empty. The Saviour is not nailed upon that cross. He is not only resurrected from His burial place, but He is also ascended to the right hand of God the Father.

I remember reading not so long ago about some little boys who climbed up the front of a Catholic Church building and took the cross with Christ down from the front of this cathedral. When they were caught, they answered for themselves by saying that they did not believe that it should be there because Christ was not on the cross — He was no longer nailed to the cross, and this symbol was wrong.

The Catholics seem to like this symbol, and seem to worship it, but I say to you, this is wrong. The cross of Christ that I preach to you is an empty cross.

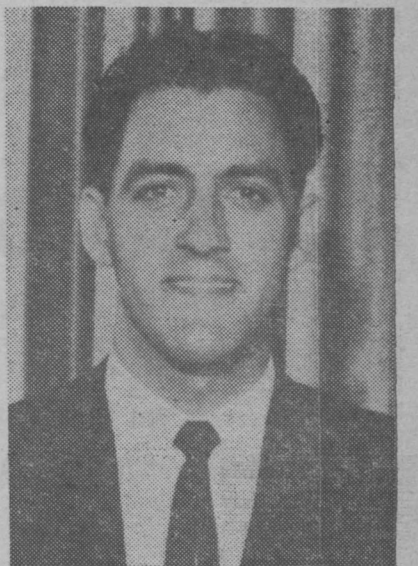
In its mutual aspect, the Lord Jesus Christ, speaking of the cross and signifying what death that He should die, said:

"And I, if I be lifted up from

The preaching of the cross, no matter how humble it may be, or how simple it may be, is effective. The Word of God goes forth and does that which He pleases. In preaching the cross of Jesus Christ, whether I preach it here, or whether I would be preaching to a native in some far-off land, I believe that this is the means that God uses to call out His elect. I believe that the cross must be preached.

I believe there are enemies of the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ not only here, but all over the world. God's Word says:

"Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an



KENNETH CROWL

ensample. (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ."—Phil. 3:17, 18.

I believe that the enemies of the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ are those who preach salvation by works. I believe that the enemies of the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ are those not only in our midst, but all over the world, that are preaching false doctrine and perverting the doctrines of grace. They hold up to ridicule and scorn the doctrine of election and salvation by grace.

The Death Upon The Cross

The cross was a place of capital (Continued on page 2, column 1)

We Announce Our Annual Book Sale At 20% Discount

Our annual winter book sale is announced in this issue of TBE, and all books thus on sale will be at 20 per cent discount, plus parcel post charges. (Except there is no discount on any of John Gill's works. We sell them too close to cost to allow any discount. We only carry them for the truth's sake).

Now would be an excellent time to take advantage of the opportunity of stocking up on the best books that are available today.

At this particular time, please do not ask for credit. We do not have a bookkeeper, and I do not have time to keep such records.

This sale will continue through December 31, 1968, and we would be most happy to have our readers take advantage of this fine offering of books, which are being sold cheaper than you can buy them any place else in the whole world.

The Baptist Examiner

The Baptist Paper for the Baptist People

JOHN R. GILPIN Editor

Editorial Department, located in ASHLAND, KENTUCKY, where all subscriptions and communications should be sent. Address: P. O. Box 910, zip code 41101.

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"The Cross"

(Continued from page one)
punishment. God's Word says:

"And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man." —Gen. 9:5, 6.

Notice, God says that any man who takes another man's life, who sheds man's blood, his life was also to be taken. God instituted capital punishment.

In many states of the United States today, people raise the cry that capital punishment is too severe and wrong, but I say to you, God instituted it, and I believe that He intended it for a reason. I believe it is not within man to direct his own self. It is not within man to know his way. It is like the leopard that cannot change his spots. He cannot change, and he is going on his own way—going astray.

I believe that man is absolutely totally depraved. I don't believe that he has a bit of good within him. All I have to do to

Bro. Gene Hensley To Be In Revival In Orlando Church

The Cheney Baptist Church of 2124 North Dean Road, Orlando, Florida, which is pastored by our good friend, Malcolm E. Thompson, has invited Brother Gene Hensley for a revival meeting beginning December 8th.

I am sure all of our friends know that I personally love Bro. Hensley and consider him one of



ELD. GENE HENSLEY

God's greatest men. They just don't come any finer than Gene, nor sounder.

We have lots of readers within driving distance of this church, and we would certainly insist upon you attending this meeting, and of course, it goes without saying that those of us who live at a distance should remember Brother Hensley and Brother Thompson and the Cheney Baptist Church in prayer.

prove that is to look into a mirror and see what I behold, because I say to you, out of everyone here, I feel less worthy to even stand to preach God's Word, or even to say the name of Christ. When I see myself and realize my total depravity, then I realize that except for the restraining grace of God, I would fall into the deepest and vilest of sins, except that He withholds me from it.

Brother, sister, sometimes He'll let you right down to the very edge of the pit to show you that (Continued on page 6, column 1)

New Testament Baptists Of Bristol, Tenn. Support TBE



DANIEL PHILLIPS

We think that TBE is the best paper in print; in fact, we know it is. Some papers are good on grace, but off on the church and other doctrines; others are good on the church, and off on other doctrines, but The Baptist Examiner is sound on all the doctrines.

Second, The Baptist Examiner is one of the best commentaries that you could find in print today. I have every copy of TBE since 1955 and wouldn't part with any of them for anything. I often dig down in some boxes I have and look up some sermons on certain subjects I'm studying. I thank Bro. John King of Sanford, Fla., who sent me my first copy in 1955, and I have been receiving The Baptist Examiner every since.

I have learned more from The Baptist Examiner in a year or two, than I would have from the average pulpit in 10 years, or maybe a lifetime. I learned more about the church in one year than most preachers that have been preaching for years. I owe much to The Baptist Examiner, and if thousands of other people would admit it, they do, too. Many people have received TBE and started coming to the truth enough that they looked up a church that preached these truths. Many of our churches have been helped by The Baptist Examiner. It helps the pastor to teach his church faster, the many truths.

As pastor of our church, I am going to encourage our members to help more than ever to support The Baptist Examiner. I know the expense of the Conference will be more, and it will be a greater burden on Calvary Baptist Church, so may it please God to raise up more churches to support this great work, that we might have a better conference next year and The Baptist Examiner and Calvary Baptist Church will not have to strain so hard to bless others. I think every church could send a little to help support this great paper, and encourage their members to read The Baptist Examiner, and send it to others.

May God lay it on the heart of other churches to send in a regular monthly support is my prayer.

DANIEL PHILLIPS, Pastor
New Testament Baptist Church

Three Great Books Received From Baker Book House

WHEN DEATH TAKES A FATHER

By Gladys Kooiman
200 Pages — \$3.95

This is a simple, straightforward book which tells a true story of heartache and pain, and at the same time, of faith and trust. From a family of ten, Mrs. Kooiman's husband was taken. This book should prove to be an exceedingly great blessing to hundreds of others who have, under similar circumstances, come face to face with the realities of life and death.

A TOPICAL DICTIONARY OF BIBLE TEXTS

By James Inglis
525 Pages — \$4.95

This book is just what its title indicates, in that it gives a topical presentation of many, many Scriptures. It has by far greater completeness than any other book of like nature. There is, in it, a

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

NOVEMBER 23, 1968

PAGE TWO

wealth of information, alphabetically arranged. For example, under the word "falsehood," there are nearly two full pages of references listed and this is characteristic of the book throughout.

THE DELUGE STORY IN STONE

By Byron C. Nelson
200 Pages — \$3.50

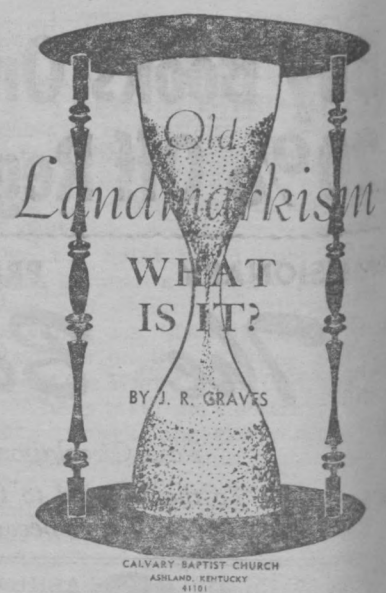
This is the book which gives a thorough presentation of the flood as written on the earth's crust. It very completely and carefully refutes the theory of evolution by showing that the strata of the earth in which fossils are contained were formed, not during long series of almost endless ages, but by terrific changes during the brief period of the Noachian deluge, and the period of adjustment following it.

"God's Vessel"

(Continued from page one)
saalem. All this would indicate that before he was saved, the Apostle Paul was definitely an unclean vessel.

Isn't it true that everyone of us who are saved could say the same thing as to our own lives? Isn't it true that everyone of us, before we were saved, were unclean vessels in God's sight?

When the Apostle Paul wrote



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to the church at Corinth, he said to them:

"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. AND SUCH WERE SOME OF YOU: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." —I Cor. 6:9-11.

If you will notice, Paul is talking about those that cannot go to Heaven, and he says, "And such were some of you," as if to indicate that at least some of these folk in the church at Corinth were originally just like the crowd that the Apostle Paul describes as being so bad that there was no possibility of them inheriting the kingdom of Heaven. This would tell us that these folk at Corinth, before they were saved, were unclean vessels in God's sight.

I tell you, there isn't a one of us but that if we were to tell the truth, would have to say that in God's sight, we were unclean before God today. The fact of the matter is, the only man that realizes how unclean he is, is the man that is saved. The only man that realizes that he was unclean, is the man who has been cleaned up by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Go back to the days of the Lord Jesus and you will find it was customary that whenever a leper met an individual, he would raise his hands, and cry out, "Unclean! Unclean!" The reason was, that it kept people from coming near him, lest they become contaminated by his leprosy. I often (Continued on page 3, column 1)

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MRS. ROY MASON DIES IN FLORIDA



ELD. AND MRS. MASON AT 1966 CONFERENCE

Mrs. Nellie C. Mason, the wife of our beloved Roy Mason of Aripka, Florida, died recently in a Florida hospital, and we extend today our sincere sympathy to Brother Mason.

Brother and Sister Mason have been two of our very staunchest friends for many years, and we thank God for them. Brother Mason's articles have appeared in TBE for the last quarter of a century and they have been, indeed, deeply appreciated.

For years, Mrs. Mason taught the "Whosoever Will" Bible Class of the Buffalo Avenue Baptist

Church, where Brother Mason was pastor.

We want to extend to Brother Mason our sincerest sympathy in this hour of grief, and pray for him, the son, Zane, and daughter, Sharon.

It would be impossible to estimate the great worth of Mrs. Mason to TBE in view of her letters of encouragement through the years gone by. Truly, she has made us thank God and take courage many times, and we rejoice today over the memory of her.

DO YOU WANT TO IMPROVE YOUR THEOLOGY?

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"God's Vessel"

(Continued from page two)

Think that leper is surely an illustration of what every unsaved man actually is, for unsaved people, if they were to do that which they should, would cry out when they meet God's people that they were unclean — that like the leper of old, would shout "Unclean! Unclean!" lest they be the means of contaminating the children of God.

So I say, beloved, first of all, Paul was an unclean vessel.

II

PAUL BECAME AN EMPTY VESSEL.

We read: "And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"—Acts 9:6.

Paul surely was an empty vessel that day. That was the day that he met the Lord Jesus Christ. That was the day that the Son of God appeared unto him on the roadway to Damascus. Paul fell to the ground, and when he arose, the Word of God says the first thing that he did, was to

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look up into God's face and say, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

Did Paul have any plans that day? Yes, he had plenty of plans. He had lots of plans a few minutes before. His plans just previously were to go to Damascus and if he found any Christians there, either men or women, he was going to bring them 500 miles from Damascus to Jerusalem to be tried for the crime of being a Christian.

Yes, Paul had lots of plans, but now he doesn't have any plans. What has happened to him? The Lord has appeared to him, and when Jesus Christ appeared to him, the Apostle Paul lost all of his plans so far as life was concerned. All of his plans and all of his purposes had been abandoned on the roadway to Damascus. Paul, the persecutor, came to the end of his way and Paul, the apostle, became a reality, on the roadway to Damascus; but before he became an apostle, he realized that he was just an empty vessel in God's sight.

As I have often said, just as a woman would take a vessel and turn it upside down and take a towel and wipe it out so there wasn't a drop of water on the inside, so God took Paul and turned him upside down and wiped him out, so there wasn't a single thing in him relative to his previous plans. As he stood there on the roadway to Damascus, he looked up into the face of Jesus Christ and said, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" He stood there a totally empty vessel, waiting on the Lord.

It is good for a person to come to the place that he realizes that he is empty. It is good for a person to come to that place that he realizes how empty he is, and how utterly dependent he is, and how much he needs the Lord to direct his life. That was Paul on the roadway to Damascus.

III

PAUL WAS A CHOSEN VESSEL.

We read: "But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is A CHOSEN VESSEL unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel."—Acts 9:15.

God was telling Ananias to go to the Apostle Paul and put his hands on him that he might receive his sight, and He said, "Paul is a chosen vessel unto me."

Beloved, I wish that you and I could realize that God chose the Apostle Paul. He was definitely chosen of the Lord.

Paul tells us that this was his experience, for we read:

"But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and CALLED ME by his grace."—Gal. 1:15.

"According AS HE HATH CHOSEN US in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."—Eph. 1:4,5.

Notice, the Apostle Paul was a chosen vessel of the Lord. He hadn't been chosen by his mother for this task. He hadn't been chosen by some professor, or by Dr. Gamaliel to whom he had gone to school. He hadn't been chosen for the ministry by some elderly preacher who put his hand upon his head and said, "Now my little man, I hope you will be a preacher when you grow up." Instead, he had been chosen of the Lord. So we see that Paul was a chosen vessel.

Notice again:

"Not to all the people, but unto WITNESSES CHOSEN BEFORE OF GOD, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead."—Acts 10:41.

Notice, when Simon Peter was preaching he indicated that the witnesses had been chosen before of God, and as Simon Peter preached, so the Apostle Paul had had that experience — he was a witness chosen before of God.

I tell you, it is a good thing for a man to be a chosen vessel of the Lord. I know preachers in the ministry because they have been chosen by their mother, chosen by some well-meaning elderly preacher, chosen by their friends. I have also known some that were in the ministry because they were chosen of the Lord. When a man is in the ministry chosen by some person, he can get out of the ministry just as easily as he can get in, but when a man is in the ministry because he is chosen of the Lord, he does not get out of it — he just stays in it, and keeps on preaching.

Recently, I put a streamer in THE BAPTIST EXAMINER at the top of the page, which said: "Paul was stoned, but not stopped." That was true, and that is true of every individual who is chosen of the Lord. He may be stoned, but he won't be stopped. Peter was a chosen vessel.

I go back to the Old Testament and I find the story of Eli who took his sons and put them in the priesthood. He chose them for the priesthood, but God unchose them just as fast as Eli chose them. Those wicked, sinful sons of Eli were definitely set aside so far as God was concerned. Eli chose them, but God didn't choose them, and God set them aside. At the same time, Eli did not choose that little barefooted Samuel that was growing up in his court like a beautiful flower on a dunghill, but God chose him, and the Word of God would tell us how Samuel became a mighty blessing to the land because he was chosen of the Lord.

I am saying to you, I like to see people chosen of God. I like to see people enter the ministry because they are chosen of God. I look back across my life and I think of some who entered the ministry, and I am satisfied they did it because God had chosen them. I have seen some that entered the ministry and they got out of it just as fast as they got in. When problems arise, it is only the man who is called of God that is going to continue to preach the Word of God, in the face of opposition.

Look at Paul. He was an unclean vessel. He was an empty vessel. He was a chosen vessel.

IV

PAUL WAS A FILLED VESSEL.

After God emptied Paul of himself, then God filled him. Listen: "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, TO REVEAL his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood."—Gal. 1:15,16.

Paul is saying, "The same God that separated me from my mother's womb, the same God chose me — that same God revealed His Son in me, and when He revealed His Son in me, I was so filled that I didn't have to confer with flesh and blood." Beloved, Paul was a filled vessel. God had filled him.

Notice another Scripture which would tell us that Paul was filled of the Lord:

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of

God, and not of us."—II Cor. 4:7. Paul says, "Whatever we are, it is because of the power of God."

Beloved, too many people look upon the preacher and think, "My, what a powerful fellow he is!" Too many people think of the preacher as a man of power. Paul said that "the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

Paul was filled. He is a filled vessel. He has been filled of the Lord. After God emptied him on the roadway to Damascus — after God got all of the uncleanness out of him and emptied him of himself, then God filled him to the extent that Paul said:

"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."—II Cor. 12:10.

How could a man make a statement like that? Only because he had been filled of the Lord. Any power that Paul had, was not of himself, but it was of the Lord, so that he said, "When I am sick physically, then I am strong." Paul has been filled of the Lord. His strength was of the Lord.

I look at Paul. He was an unclean vessel when he started on the roadway to Damascus. He was an empty vessel when he met Jesus Christ out there on the roadway and Christ emptied him completely of himself to the extent that Paul forgot all about the plans and purposes that he had in mind that day. He was a chosen vessel because God told Ananias that he had been chosen of Him. Now we see that for the rest of his life He was a filled vessel — filled with the Lord.

V

PAUL WAS A SEPARATED VESSEL.

Paul has not only been filled of the Lord, but he has been separated unto special service for the Lord. Listen:

"As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, SEPARATE me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them."—Acts 13:2.

Here in the church at Antioch, there were certain preachers and teachers, and among that group was a man by the name of Saul, and another by the name of Barnabas. One day as they were ministering, the Lord said, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." The Holy Spirit was speaking to the church, and He said, "Set apart, send out, send forth these two men, Saul and Barnabas, for the work whereunto I have called them." Notice that the Holy Spirit spoke to the church, and told the church to do this.

Every once in a while I find somebody who will say, "I am going out in my own strength." Beloved, God doesn't work that way. God works through His church.

There was a man sometime ago who thought he was going to the mission field. When he was rejected so far as a local Baptist Church was concerned to send him out, he said that he was going anyway, even if no church did send him out. Beloved, I am of the opinion that if he did, he would accomplish absolutely nothing by his going, for I believe that if God calls a man to do a task, God is going to call His church to separate him unto that task; and if God doesn't call a church to separate a man unto that task, I would say very definitely that I doubt if God had called that man unto the task.

Notice this, it was the Holy Spirit that separated Paul and Barnabas for the work to which they had been called.

The Apostle Paul would indicate that all the rest of his ministry was because he had been separated unto the Lord. Listen:

"Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ,

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called to be an apostle, SEPARATED unto the gospel of God."—Rom. 1:1.

"Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead)." — Gal. 1:1.

You will notice that in every instance Paul says that he is an apostle not because of man, but because he had been separated unto the work by the Lord.

I remember a young fellow who was a very high type lad — a boy of unusual mentality, and when he became grown, he entered the Methodist ministry. One day he was talking to his aunt and she said to him, "Have you been called of the Lord?" He said, "Now, Aunt, I wouldn't say that I have been called to be a preacher, but I would say that I have been schooled to be a preacher." What he meant was that his mother had sent him to school. In fact, she had sent him to several schools here in Kentucky, and had sent him abroad to a school in Europe. He was well schooled, and he told the truth when he said, "I couldn't say that I have been called of the Lord, but I have been schooled to be a minister."

Beloved, that wasn't the Apostle Paul, for Paul was a separated vessel. He had been separated unto. (Continued on page 5, column 2)

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THE BAPTIST EXAMINER
NOVEMBER 23, 1968

PAGE THREE

The Baptist Examiner FORUM

"In the light of God's Sovereignty and his dealings in election, please comment on Genesis 6:5 and 6."

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HOBBS

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The Bible teaches us that God is unchangeable. "God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: hath He said, and shall He not do it? Or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?" (Num. 23:19). "And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for He is not a man, that He should repent." (I Sam. 15:29). "The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of His heart to all generations." (Ps. 33:11).

These are just a few of the many passages that teach the fact that God does not nor cannot change. What, then, is the meaning of Genesis 6:5 and 6? Let me remind you that many times God speaks in what is called anthropomorphism. In other words, He gives Himself human attributes or speaks as a human would.

Verse 5 is not intended to make us think that God did not know that man would sin until He looked down and actually saw him sin. This would belie what Jesus said when He said we were to receive the inheritance prepared from the foundation of the world. (Matt. 25:34). This would deny the inspiration of the Bible relative to Eph. 1:4. "According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world." This would deny that Christ was foreordained before the foundation of the world to be our redeemer, yet I Peter 1:20 says He was slain from the foundation of the world. This would not have been true if God had to wait to see man sinning.

No, my friend, God did not just suddenly see that man was sinning. He knew man would sin, when, and how. My God is sovereign. He knows all things. He controls all things.

This was written in our language, to give us a time in relation to what God already knew to be. It is the same with salvation. God chose me in Christ long before there was an earth or life on earth. Yet I did not know of this until He revealed it to me through the preaching of the gospel and the work of the Holy Spirit. For this reason Jesus is said to have come "to seek and to save the lost." (Luke 19:10). He knows where we are — yet

He seeks us. From our viewpoint He finds us. From God's eternal purpose, He knows where we are constantly before and after salvation.

When the Bible speaks of God repenting, it is merely using a figure of speech intended to let us know without a doubt of His anger and dissatisfaction of us and our sin.

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In order to understand these two verses, it will be necessary to carefully consider the context that we might know what this wickedness was that God saw. In verse 1 and 2 we read where the sons of God (truth) married the daughters of men (error). There is nothing wrong with marriage for it was instituted by God, but as we look at these marriages, there is something very definitely wrong with them; it was these marriages that constituted the wickedness that God was displeased with. The sin in this chapter was God's people compromising the truth, in order to have fellowship with error.

God has always frowned upon his children co-habiting with those who hold to doctrine contrary to His word. He has always demanded that His people (sons of God) be a separated people. In this chapter His people lost their separated position, and as a result of their union with daughters of men (false doctrine), God set 120 years until He took vengeance upon the inhabitants of the earth. This wickedness will be the same sin that will cause God to rise up in all of His fury in the Tribulation Period. Read Rev. 9:20.

It was a false system of salvation in Gen. 6 that God was displeased with, which caused Him to rise up in judgment of them, and God will once more destroy the earth because men will not repent of their sins. Neither can they repent because their minds are continually evil. As their minds are continually evil, then regardless of how alluring you may make the good news (gospel) from Heaven, he could not receive it. Read Cor. 2:14.

Therefore if any are saved God must take the initiative which is evident in the saving of Noah and his family. Thus the sovereignty of God is manifest in saving

some, lest all perish. It is God's prerogative to save from among those with evil imagination whomsoever He will. Man, whose mind is so vile before God, cannot be depended upon to make choice; if he did, his choice would be evil, because his mind is continually evil.

God's Sovereignty is also manifested in the destruction of all of those whom He did not elect to save (physically) in the flood. Thus His sovereignty and His elective choice is made prominent in this chapter rather than their defeat.

When the Spirit says that God saw the wickedness of man was great, He was speaking as a man would speak; this He does on numerous occasions in the Bible. I think we are all aware that God knows all things; if He knows all things, then He does not have to look in order to know. When it says that God saw the wickedness of man, it does not mean that He did not know until He looked, for He knew this from before the foundation of the world; thus He was speaking as a man and looking at this situation as a man would look at it. With man it would seem that there was an emergency with God and that surely God was alarmed at what was taking place, yet with a Sovereign God we know that there is no emergency — neither is He alarmed.

The Spirit speaking once more in human language tells us that it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart. The reason I know that He was speaking only as a man would speak is that He told us that God never repents.

"And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for He is not a man, that He should repent." I Sam. 15:29.

God knew from before the foundation of the world that these events would transpire, and when He repented, as man would put it, it was simply God walking in a different direction than He had walked before, but it was in the way which He had ordained that He was to walk after the sons of God had corrupted His way upon the earth. Read Gen. 6:12.

ROY
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There are those who think that they can understand the two seemingly divergent teachings that relate in the Scriptures to God's election and human responsibility, but I frankly admit that I cannot. Much less can I explain how these two teachings can be reconciled. I believe that both are true. I believe that God has elected, predetermined and fore-ordained all things, yet I believe that human beings are fully responsible for their conduct. What I cannot fully understand, I accept on faith, willing to await God's explanation which will be forthcoming one day.

Here in the Scripture referred to by the querist we have the problem just referred to. Did God know what man would do before his creation? Surely He did, yet here we have the statement that God saw man's wickedness and that he "repented that he had made man."

We must take into consideration that language is here used such as is adapted to man's nature and understanding. God is often spoken of as having feelings and emotions such as we have. This can get us into trouble if

we rigidly confine God in our thinking to the capacities of human beings. By doing this, we can think of God as a changeable Being. Does God change? James (1:17) says not. Malachi (3:6) says not. "I am Jehovah, I change not." This being true, we must understand Gen. 6:5-6 in the light of this truth. We cannot in the light of God's foreknowledge and unchangeableness believe that God was amazed when man became unspeakably wicked. Please explain then, says someone, how and why such language is used. I cannot. I must await that future time when all things shall be made plain.

E. G.
COOK

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BIBLE TEACHER

Philadelphia
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Birmingham, Ala.



When we come to questions like this one we could wish that we could do like some of the great Bible scholars of the past have done — just skip it. A. W. Pink in his "Gleanings in Genesis" (a book every Bible lover should have) reminds one of the honey bee as it goes from one flower to another in search of nectar. If that bee chooses to skip over a certain flower, we just have to be thankful it did not

skip over all of them when we get hungry for honey. So it is with Brother Pink on Genesis. If he chose to skip over Gen. 6:5-6, let us be thankful for the rich nectar he gets from other verses for us. B. H. Carroll in his "Studies in Genesis" skips the entire sixth chapter, but still that was their prerogative.

But my fellowlaborers and I have not been given that prerogative. Someone has put his, or her finger on these particular verses, and has said, What about these verses. So I trust that whoever it is will be much in prayer for us as we try to shed a little light upon these much misunderstood verses.

It is not so hard to understand what we see in verse 5. Just take all restraint from totally depraved man, and what we see here comes naturally. It is the natural thing to expect. There is nothing supernatural about this. It is just depraved nature doing that which comes natural. But it is when we come to verse 6 that we find that which is not so easily understood. This is a verse that provokes one to much thought. And not only does it provoke thinking, it provokes prayerful thinking. And this prayerful thinking automatically casts one at the feet of the master begging for help.

There are many things that we can know without a shadow of a doubt. And one of those things is that God never repents in the sense that you and I do. Repentance in the New Testament. (Continued on page 5, column 1)

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The Forum

(Continued from page 4)

ment is from METANOIA which simply means to change one's mind. Naturally we must come to see that what we have been thinking is wrong before we are willing to change our mind. God has never found that which He was thinking was wrong about anything. Therefore, He has never found it necessary to change His mind about anything.

In Num. 23:19 we are told that "God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent." In I Sam. 15:29 we read, "And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for He is not a man that He should repent." In Mal. 3:6 He says, "I am the Lord, I change not." And in Jas. 1:17, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights with whom is no variableness (variation), neither shadow of turning." So, with our Great Sovereign God there can be no such thing as a shadow of repenting in the sense that He changes His mind.

What then is the meaning of His repenting here in Gen. 6:6 as well as in I Sam. 15:35? There are so many words that have different shades of meaning. If someone says, John caught a fly,

you do not know whether he caught a ball that had been knocked in his direction or whether he had caught one of these pesky creatures that torment us so when we try to eat outside. But I assure you there is a world of difference between those flies.

In the Old Testament the word "repent" comes from the Hebrew word NACHAM which sometimes has the meaning of a changed mind, but the literal meaning of the word is to be eased or comforted. So our Sovereign God was simply saying that He was going to be comforted by the destruction of all this wickedness by His bringing the Flood upon these wicked people. The Flood was planned in the eternity of the past for that specific purpose just as hell was predestinated in the eternity of the past that God might be comforted from the wickedness of all the ages.

We learn from experience and change our minds as a result of that learning. But God has never learned anything from experience. If He did that would prove Him to be human and not God.

"God's Vessel"

(Continued from page 3)

to the work of the Lord.

I wonder this morning if God may be speaking to someone here that you might be separated unto Him. Paul himself, writing to the church at Rome, said:

"I beseech you therefore, brethren by the mercies of God, that ye PRESENT your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."—Rom. 12:1, 2.

Paul, the unclean vessel, and a chosen vessel, became an empty vessel on the roadway to Damascus, and he became a filled vessel when God filled him, and he was a separated vessel — separated unto the service of the Lord.

VII

PAUL WAS AN HONORED VESSEL.

The Apostle Paul became an honored vessel. Paul who was emptied of himself and filled of the Lord, was honored of God as a preacher. What I mean by that is simply this — God blessed his ministry.

When the Apostle Paul stood in the presence of Agrippa to make his defense, he told how God had saved him — how God had sent him unto the Gentiles, and as Paul said:

"To open their eyes, and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."—Acts 26:18.

This would indicate to us that Paul was an honored vessel — that God honored him to the extent that He used Paul to turn people from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God, to give to them forgiveness of sin, and that they might receive spiritual light.

I wonder if you can point to one individual and say, "God has enabled me to lead this one to Jesus." I wonder if you can look back across your life and say, "Here is one soul that I have led to Jesus." If you can, God has honored you. You are an honored vessel if God has enabled you to lead even one soul from darkness unto light.

The Apostle Paul wrote later about being an honored vessel when he wrote to Timothy. Listen:

"But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a VESSEL UNTO HONOUR, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto

every good work."—II Tim. 2:20, 21.

Beloved, would you like to be an honored vessel, a vessel that is meet for the Master's use? He calls upon you to purge yourself from the things of this world, that you might be an honored vessel, worthy for the Master's use.

VII

PAUL WAS A SUFFERING VESSEL.

When God spoke to Ananias, he said:

"Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things HE MUST SUFFER for my name's sake."—Acts 9:15, 16.

You know, beloved, God started showing Paul that right away, for the Word of God tells us that as he preached there in Damascus after the scales fell from his eyes, that he suffered. Listen:

"But their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night TO KILL HIM. Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket."—Acts 9:24, 25.

You will notice, beloved, that his suffering began immediately when his service began.

I don't tell people to enter the ministry or to turn to the Lord and expect to have an easy time. I have told people all my life that if they got into the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ or if they try to serve the Lord Jesus Christ in any wise at all, they needn't expect an easy time, but rather to expect difficulties. Any man who is called of God can expect his life to be a suffering ministry.

I think of these individuals who have never had any suffering, and I can name lots of preachers of that type. I think, beloved, they would do just as well as blacksmiths, or if they were coal diggers. I think they would be just as well satisfied doing something else. I have a feeling that the man who is called of God is going to be like Paul — he is going to be a suffering vessel.

Paul tells us that all of his life there had to be some suffering so far as he was concerned. Listen:

"We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body."—II Cor. 4:8-10.

Notice again:

"Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness."—II Cor. 11:23-27.

Read it, beloved, and you will find that the Apostle Paul didn't have an easy life. As the song says:

"Must I be carried to the skies On flowery beds of ease, While others fought to win the prize, And sailed thro' bloody seas?"

I say, beloved, God calls upon you to be a suffering vessel for Him.

Later on, as Paul neared the end of his way, he wrote to Timothy, saying:

"If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him,

he also will deny us."—II Tim. 2:12.

Paul became a suffering vessel, and he said, "Someday I and the balance that have suffered for Christ's sake are going to reign with Him."

Paul who was an unclean vessel became an empty vessel, and a chosen vessel, and because of that he became a filled vessel, and a separated vessel, and an honored vessel, and as a result he became a suffering vessel.

I ask you, what kind of a vessel are you? Would you rather be a vessel of wrath and destruction and go on and live your life and make your plans, or would

you rather be the kind of a vessel that Paul was?

When Paul wrote to the church at Rome, he said:

"Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction. And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory."—Rom. 9:21-23.

There are two kinds of vessels. (Continued on page 8, column 5)

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THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

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"The Cross"

(Continued from page two)

you are nothing before He brings you back up. Sometimes God allows you to get down there to take away your own self-righteousness and your confidence in the flesh, because sometimes you may start thinking of yourself as being somebody, or something, and God does that to show us that we are not. If you have never been there, I say that you have not experienced the depth of your total depravity.

God's Word tells us that Cain having killed Abel, was punished of God, and that Cain's punishment was greater than he could bear. I say to you, God punishes all evil doers. God said:

"And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity."—Isa. 13:11.

Not only this, but He punishes sinners with everlasting destruction.

"Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."—II Thess. 1:9.

"Depart from me, ye cursed into everlasting fire."—Mt. 25:41.

We find that God indeed does punish, and that He instituted capital punishment. If the Lord Jesus Christ had lived His earthly ministry in our time, He probably would have been sent to the electric chair in order to get rid of Him. I say to you, God

planned in eternity past that at the time the Lord Jesus Christ would come, the Roman government would be in power, and that the means of execution of criminals would be the cross. His Word shows us that Jesus Christ was numbered among the transgressors, and that on either side of Him died the thieves that were nailed to the cross. God's Word tells us that Jesus Christ took the place of one who was in prison for murder and insurrection, and that Jesus was nailed there upon his cross. This was capital punishment. This was according to God's plan.

There are many ways of death mentioned in God's Word:

"Women received their dead raised to life again; and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented."—Heb. 11:35-37.

Back during the Dark Ages, the church at Rome persecuted the Christians who stood up for the Baptist faith — the local church, Baptist baptism, and the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith. I believe they preached the same messages you have heard preached from this pulpit during this conference — the messages of sovereign grace. I don't believe that they were persecuted for the mixture that we have today of works and grace, but I believe that those who stood for principles — especially the Anabaptists and those back through the Dark Ages — that the church at Rome and some of the hierarchy of those different countries, put them to the stake and burned them. This was their means of destroying them.

We in America don't appreciate what God has given us. We don't appreciate the freedom that we have. We don't appreciate the fact that we can assemble ourselves here tonight without facing torture.

I read a book recently of the underground Baptist Church in Russia, and the persecution that they are going through, even today, suffering for the Lord Jesus Christ. It is very little heard of today because the National Council of Churches has accepted the hierarchy of the Russian Church. The Communists that they have put in as the head of this church have come to be a part of this world Council of Churches, and bow down at the feet of Rome. They are nothing but Communist enemies which are representing the church over there, and they say everything is fine, the church doors are open, and people can come to worship if they want. They set up pastors in these churches, which are undercover men for the Communist government. Even underlying all this, meeting in the dark, meeting in attics, in basements, and in various places, and even holding baptismal services out in the dark in the river, there is the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, the local church, and those people are being persecuted and tortured.

Brother, when we talk about bearing a cross here in the United States, we don't know what we are talking about. We think it is a cross to get ready for church on a rainy Sunday morning. We get in a nice car and drive to church, we say, "Oh, what a terrible cross I have!" Or perhaps we work on some job where all around us are men who take the Lord's name in vain and we say, "Oh, what a terrible cross!" Or we hear somebody with some kind of sickness say, "Oh, what a terrible cross I have!" Not one of us is persecuted for preaching the Lord Jesus, or for witnessing

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for the Lord Jesus Christ. There is not a one of us that has been scourged, or beaten, or burned, or tied to a stake, or denied any of his rights for preaching the Lord Jesus Christ.

I hear Baptists today call themselves Missionary Baptists, but when you folk talk to them about sending out missionaries, they say, "We have all we can handle now. We just can't handle any more."

Brother, sister, I say to you preaching the cross is our responsibility. We say we are the church of the Lord Jesus Christ that has the commission and nobody else has the right to it, but what are we doing with it? We are falling mighty short, and I think we can do a whole lot better.

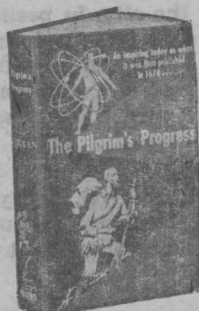
The cross that our precious Lord Jesus Christ died upon was a place of scorn and ridicule. I want you to picture in your mind the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ as He is nailed there in His agony, dying for you, dying for me, and dying for everyone of God's elect. I want you to picture in your mind as the priest, the scribes, and the Pharisees go by and wag their heads at Him, and mock Him, and say, "Come down from the cross, and we'll believe you." The cross was a place where the world poured out their contempt upon our beloved Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Although Pilate said, "I find no fault in this man," they cried out, "Crucify Him; away with Him out of our sight." The world does the same today. If Jesus were to step upon the scene as He did upon His first coming, born of a virgin, and walk upon the earth today, the religious world would cry out the same, "Crucify Him; do away with Him. We'll not have Him."

Jesus said that the world hated Him, and that the world would hate us. I tell you, when you start preaching the doctrines of grace and the doctrines of the church, you'll face persecution, and you'll be ridiculed, and you'll be hated,

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even as the Lord Jesus Christ was.

Let's notice a victim of this type of death — a person who would be nailed by his hands and feet to a cross of wood to suffer and die. The Communists in North Korea went into a village and killed many of the people. They took their mayor and brought him out to the center of the village. They placed him upon a sharpened stake that was driven into the ground. Then they brought his wife out and some 27 Communists mutilated her in front of her husband who was on this stake in front of the village people. They allowed enough people to escape to start spreading the word so as to instill this in the minds of the people. A picture of this man on the stake with the bodies lying about was published in a Communist newspaper in China, and they said, "this is what the American soldiers did."

I tell you, we are facing an enemy that we don't know. Just recently a person said, "There's a lot of good in Communism." Another person said, "My son said that if the Communists take over America, he would make them a good Commie." That is a sad state of events. If those Communists ever gained control of this country, they would stamp us out like a bunch of rats. They hate the name of the Lord Jesus Christ worse than anything, and they hate God's Word, the Bible. They high-pressured our government to quit sending Bibles and New Testaments over in balloons. Why? Because the Word of God is having such an effect on those who were reached by these Bibles.

I tell you, it stirs me up when I think about the cross, and how the Lord Jesus Christ suffered, and died, and how He said unto us to go into all the world and preach the gospel.

The Cross as a Symbol of Redemption

We find in Revelation 5:9:

"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."

As a symbol of redemption, I want to point out a cross of eternal foreknowledge and purpose: "Him, being delivered by the DETERMINATE COUNSEL and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."—Acts 2:23.

"The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together. For to do whatsoever thy hand and THY COUNSEL DETERMINED before to be done." — Acts 4:26-28.

I say to you, the cross as a symbol of redemption, was a cross of eternal foreknowledge, in that God foreknew and purposed that these people should crucify the Lord Jesus Christ from before the foundation of the world. This cross was a cross of eternal purpose, in that God purposed to send His Son to die on the cross, that He might redeem you and me from our iniquities. He came to save His people from their sins.

Outside of the name of the Lord Jesus Christ there is no other name whereby that man can be saved. I don't care whether it is a heathen in darkest Africa, or whether it is a heathen here in America. That heathen, wherever he is, is going to have to be saved through the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and through the preaching of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ or else he is not going to be saved.

Some say that a man doesn't have to hear the gospel to be saved. That is Hardshellism to say that the Spirit moves outside

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the Word. I say to you, the Spirit doesn't move outside the Word. In order for a person to be saved, he has to hear the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and how is he going to hear without a preacher?

As a symbol of redemption, we see that God purposed it.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John 3:16.

When I say that God gave His Son, I say that He gave Him to die a cruel death upon a cross. I say that He gave Him to die in my stead. I believe in substitutionary atonement. I believe that the Lord Jesus Christ went to the cross in my place. When I realize the sins that I sin every day, when I realize the violence in my body and mind, and the bondage I am in to this old flesh, I say that all this points to the fact that Jesus Christ stood in my place and died to redeem me, and that my sins — the sins that I sin every day — nailed Him to that cross.

What does the cross mean to me?

"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature."—Gal. 6:15.

What the cross means to me is like the story in Pilgrim's Progress. You read how Christian finds the cross, and his burdens rolled away. One day I was in the depths of sin. I was down in the bottom of the barrel. I was in the saddest condition that mankind can be in, even to the point where I said I had wasted (Continued on page 7, column 3)

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THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

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PAGE SIX

Maryland Pastor Encourages Us With This Letter

Elder John R. Gilpin, Editor

Greetings in the name of Christ Jesus.

Perhaps you have thought we have forgotten you, but we have not, we have been pressed for money ourselves, as we have to pay rent on our building, and the general expenses of the church, but as the Lord permits we will help on the expense of printing the paper, or use what we send as you see fit. We know



ELD. J. D. WISHON

it will be used for the Lord's work; we know that the expense was great to have the Bible conference, this little offering might help defray the expenses on that.

I want you to know, Bro. Gilpin, you have been my right hand these many years. I thank our great God, for arranging so I could get acquainted with the Baptist Examiner. I still say it is the only sound Baptist paper I know of. I search and research the Scriptures, and compare them with what you, and different writers put in this paper, and I find them to be the plain Bible truth. The greatest reason I am so grateful to The Baptist

Examiner is this: I did not get to go to a Bible College, or Seminary, but I feel I have been getting instructions in Bible doctrine, under the greatest Baptist preachers, and teachers of all time.

If there are others that have been called into the ministry, and are not blessed with getting any formal training, we heartily introduce them to subscribe for and follow the great teachings of the ministers that write gospel messages from time to time in this great paper, especially the message by the editor, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church of Ashland, Kentucky. We hope other churches will help get this great paper out to the public. This is the greatest home mission work I know of. It keeps us informed of what our missionary people are doing in New Guinea and other places where sound Baptist preaching is done.

J. D. Wishon, Pastor
New Testament Missionary Baptist Church
Baltimore, Md.

Church Authority

(Continued from page one)

which temple ye are." I Cor. 3: 17.

The words "defile" and "destroy" are the same in the Greek. Vine says: "It is used of marring a local church by leading it away from that condition of holiness of life, and purity of doctrine, in which it should abide, and of God's retributive destruction of the offender who is guilty of this sin." (Order Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words from TBE. It is one of the very best study helps available). God says in this verse that the church is so precious in His sight, and that the authority of the church is so great, that He will treat men in judgment as they treat His church. Oh! what a day when men who despise the Lord's church, meet the Lord, who loved that church above all else!

"Or despise ye the church of God?" I Cor. 11:22. Here we see that men miss out on the praise of God, and reap the judgment of God because of how they treat His church. The word "despise" means to think down upon. God thinks highly of His church. Man had better think highly of it too, or else he will answer to God.

If we will, notice the believer, the work of the Lord, and the church in the book of Acts, and note the relationship between the three, then, we will believe in, and practice church authority. When folk were saved in Bible days, the next thing was baptism and church membership. There are no examples of unchurched believers in the book of Acts. Always, and very shortly, upon being saved, the believer became a member of the Lord's church through Scriptural baptism. Read Acts 2:41,47; 18:8. The Lord's work, outlined in the great commission, was carried out by members of the churches, under the authority of the church of which they were members. Missionaries went out under the authority of a church; they reported their work to the church that sent them out and authorized the work.

"And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples." Acts 9: 26.

What an example is this of man willingly bowing to God-given church authority. When Paul came to Jerusalem, he did not get a radio program on his own; he did not start the "Pauline Evangelistic and Missionary Association" and beg for support; he did not get a tent or a building on his own. Paul wanted no part of free-lancism. He wanted to serve God as a member of, and under the authority of, a New Testament church.

ALL WORK TO BE DONE UNDER CHURCH AUTHORITY

There are those who say that there are examples of work in

the book of Acts not under church authority. The burden of proof is upon them. There are cases where church authority is not specifically stated. Now in these cases it must be assumed that they were, or were not, under church authority. The statement that they acted without church authority is assumption pure and simple, and is a bold denial of all that the Bible teaches on church authority. The statement that they were acting under church authority is based on the clear teaching that the commission is given to the church and is to be carried out, under the authority of the church. There is no case in the book of Acts where the Lord's work is carried out (Continued on page 8, column 1)

"The Cross"

(Continued from page 6)

twenty-five years of my life, that I might as well just do away with myself, that I wasn't worth anything to my family or my friends. But God spoke to my heart, and I will remember the night when I got on my knees there beside my bed, and I said to God, "Lord, I have ruined 25 years of my life; now I give it to you. You may have the rest of my life, be it twenty-five years, or whatever it be." I gave my life into the hands of a loving Saviour who treated me like the prodigal son coming home. He put a ring upon my finger, and a robe around me, and I knew the joy that comes from receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour.

When I view the cross — when I think about that time when I saw the cross, and the burden of my sins rolled away, then I love that cross — I cherish that cross. When we sing songs like "The Old Rugged Cross" and "Must Jesus Bear The Cross Alone?" I look to that time when God took away the burden of my sins, at the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So as I look at the cross of Jesus, I say:

"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."—Gal. 6:14.

By that I mean, before I met the Lord of the cross, I had no desire in my heart for the Bible, nor for the church, nor for Christian fellowship, but whenever

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SOME FALSE NOTIONS CONCERNING PRAYER

By ROY MASON
Aripeka, Florida

It is Satan's business to pervert the truth about everything. Since prayer is one of the most important things in the life of a Christian, it is natural to suppose that Satan would pervert the truth concerning prayer. The truth is, he has many perversions concerning prayer. Let us note some of the false notions that he has spread concerning prayer.

1. **THERE IS THE FALSE NOTION THAT SINNERS HAVE ACCESS TO GOD IN PRAYER.** We have heard unsaved persons say, "I know it does good to pray, for I have had lots of prayers answered. The truth is they haven't had anything of the kind. Why? Because such persons have no access to God in prayer. None of us have any merit with God. Even the Christians must come to God in the name and merit of Jesus. How can a sinner come to God in the name of one whom he rejects. Jesus said plainly, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Is that true? How then can people come to God through one whom they haven't received?

Prayer is the privilege of the Christian. It is a privilege that an unsaved person does not have. John 9:31 says, "Now we know that God heareth not sinners." This was said by the enemies of Jesus, but Jesus didn't deny the truth of what was said. Isaiah said, "Your sins . . . have caused him to hide his face that he will not hear." The psalmist said, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear my prayer." Is rejection of Christ iniquity? If it isn't, then there isn't any iniquity.

2. **THERE IS THE FALSE NOTION THAT SALVATION IS OBTAINED THROUGH THE SINNER'S PRAYING.** This is one of the biggest lies that anybody ever fell for. Many Baptists preachers think that there just isn't any such thing as getting saved except through getting the sinner to pray. Some hold the utterly erroneous notion expressed often like this: "Get down and pray the sinner's prayer, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.'" They teach that if a lost sinner tells the Lord he is sorry about his sins, and asks forgiveness, he is saved right there. He isn't. Such a plan of salvation would leave Jesus and his atoning work out of the picture entirely.

What does the so-called sinner's prayer really say? The correct translation is, "God be propitiated to me the sinner." Propitiation was upon the basis of blood atonement. Doubtless the man praying was offering a blood sacrifice there in the temple. What does the New Testament say? It says, "And He (Jesus) is the propitiation for our sins." It is true that many a sinner, as he trusts Jesus as his Sin-Bearer, speaks

there was a new creation, and whenever things were changed, I found that I had a love for God's Word, there was a love to hear the Word preached, and there was a love for fellowship with God's people.

There are so many Baptists who do very little, and say, "well, that is all right; I am saved by grace." Listen, brother, when God convicted me and saved me from my sin, that old life passed away and the pleasures of this world passed away. The world was crucified to me, and I unto the world, and I found a new life in Christ Jesus. Now, I glory in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ.

May this message bless your hearts.

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

NOVEMBER 23, 1968

PAGE SEVEN

out audibly and tells God so. In that case it is not the praying that saves him — he is saved through his faith in Jesus as the sacrifice for his sin. No sinner ever has his sins forgiven upon the basis of mere asking. A judge and jury does not "forgive" a criminal's offenses because he says, "I am sorry, please forgive me." The penalty must be paid. The sinner's sins are remitted when he trusts in Jesus, because the penalty has been paid in the atoning death on the cross.

3. **THERE IS THE FALSE IDEA THAT THE PROMISE GIVEN THE CHRISTIAN APPLIES TO THE LOST SINNER.** What promise do we refer to? The answer is, I Jno. 1:9, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins . . ." To whom was that written? To Christians only, and it tells the Christian how to have restored fellowship with God, when such is broken by sin. It is not INSTRUCTION TO A LOST SINNER AS TO HOW TO BE SAVED.

4. **THERE IS THE FALSE IDEA THAT A PREACHER IS A SORT OF PRIEST — ONE WHO CAN BY HIS PRAYERS GET PEOPLE RIGHT WITH GOD.** Many a preacher in holding a meeting, puts himself in the place of a priest — a mediator. His invitation is, "Come forward and LET ME pray for you." Great stress is placed on that, "LET ME PRAY FOR YOU." People are called down for prayer, with the idea that evangelist So and So can fix me up with the Lord. It is true in some cases of course that the preacher merely uses that business of "who wants ME to pray for them" as a pretext to get people to raise their hands. Then they are pulled forward, and pulled into some kind of a profession.

THE ALTAR and mourner's bench idea combines the prayers of the sinner and the preacher for salvation. The notion is that if the sinner gets down and prays agonizingly enough and long enough, accompanied perhaps with the prayers of Bro. So and So, the Lord will finally be properly impressed, and will save. Just as well trust baptism to save as prayer to save. Neither can save. Salvation is "by grace through faith in Christ plus absolutely nothing."

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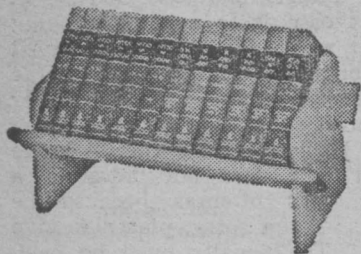
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Church Authority

(Continued from page seven)
where it is stated that they acted without church authority. For a man to deny that they had church authority is to pit his assumption against God's Word. Wherever the question is brought up, it is clear that they were under church authority. I challenge any man to show one case in Acts where it is stated that the Lord's people

went out, and did His work, apart from Church Authority. You say, it does not say they had such authority. Well, it doesn't say they did not have it. And where it does say anything about authority, it always says that they had church authority.

The church has authority over the work of the Lord in the world today. This is seen in many ways in the New Testament. The great commission of Matt. 28:18-20 was given to the church. It could not have been given to the apostles, nor to the believers as individuals, else it would have expired when they did, and the promise of the Lord's presence until the end of the age would have been meaningless, and men serving God today would be serving without a commission. The great commission outlines the work that is to be done for the Lord today.

The Church was baptized in the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost and set forth as the institution through which God works, and which He recognizes in this age. The Church is indwelt by the Holy Spirit as the one who gives power to do the Lord's work. The Lord gets glory through the church as the church carries out the commission. Every reference to the church in the New Testament sets it forth as the God authorized institution for doing the Lord's work. God does not authorize individuals to work

on their own, apart from, and in opposition to the Lord's churches. God does not authorize mission boards, Christian(?) schools, evangelistic associations, radio pastors and radio churches. All these organizations are acting without any authority from God. God does not authorize man-made churches to do His work. Only a true Missionary Baptist church has any authority from God to do His work.

"And keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you." I Cor. 11:2.

Here we learn that the church has authority over the ordinances. Matt. 28:18-20 includes authority to administer baptism. I Cor. 11:2 and 22 show that the church has authority over both ordinances. Baptism may meet all the other requirements, but if it is not administered under the authority of a true New Testament, it is null and void. One might as well be a Quaker, or belong to the Salvation Army, and have no baptism, be a Methodist or Presbyterian and have sprinkling, as to have immersion without Baptist authority. The Lord's Supper is null and void unless set in a Baptist Church, and by its authority.

The New Testament church has authority over its membership. "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye," Rom. 14:1.

Here we see that the church has authority over its doors, and is to receive into its membership those who are weak in the faith. Of course, they are not to remain weak in the faith, for it is the duty of the church to teach them. The church has the authority, yea! the duty to exclude members who ought to be so disciplined. Read Matt. 18:17; I Cor. 5:5-13 and many other Scriptures which teach the right, and duty of a church to exercise discipline. You say that you do not care if one church puts you out, another will receive you. Remember that the disciplinary action of a true church is recognized in Heaven, and the unscriptural action of a weak-kneed or unscriptural church will not change Heaven's attitude toward a Scripturally excluded member. The church has authority to restore an excluded member who has repented.

"Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many (the majority). So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow." II Cor. 2:6,7.

Here we learn that the church has authority, and is responsible, to restore an excluded member who has repented. So we see that the church has authority over its membership in receiving, excluding, and restoring.

LIMITS OF CHURCH AUTHORITY

Now let us notice some of the limits of church authority. It is limited to the church's own work and to its own membership. Each church is independent of all outside authority. A church cannot exercise authority over the activities of another church, or over the members of another church. One church can voluntarily fellowship with another church in some work it is doing, as we do with Macedonia Baptist Church in the work of New Guinea missions. We have authority to send, or not to send, an offering to this church, to help in this work, but we do not have any authority over Bro. Halliman, Bro. Doty, or the New Guinea work. Much harm is done when a church, or its pastor, seeks to exercise authority over another church. We may see much is wrong in another church, but we have no authority to try to correct what is wrong in that church. Listen, pastors: God made you an overseer over one church. This does not give you the right to meddle in the affairs of another church. Some preachers

hurt their influence with sound preachers and cause great harm by meddling in the internal affairs of another church. A church can refuse to recognize or fellowship a church she considers to be in error, but that is all she can do.

The authority of a New Testament Church is limited by the Word of God. This authority is executive, and not legislative. It is the duty of a church to carry out, and go by the Word of God, and no church has any right to seek to exercise an authority beyond or contrary to the Bible. Any rule made by a church that is not in absolute harmony with God's Word is null and void, and is not binding on anyone. A church may vote to let women speak, join a convention, or teach heresy, but it thereby transcends its authority, and is in grave error. Of course, even this is between the church and the Lord, and not to be corrected by an outside church.

The authority of the church is limited in that it does not relate to the eternal salvation of the soul. Salvation is between the individual and the Lord. When a church exercises its authority over its membership, it does not determine the salvation of the person involved. Many oppose church discipline because they infer that the church is deciding as to whether or not the person is saved. All the church, exercising discipline, is doing, is saying that the person is not qualified to remain a member in that church without repentance and correction.

DESPISERS OF CHURCH AUTHORITY

Now let us consider for a little while the despisers of church authority. First who are those who despise this God-given authority? The saved person who does not join a church is a despiser of this authority. He may think that he is a member of the universal invisible church, but this church originated and exists only in the brain of those who are heretical on church truth. No heresy that I know of causes as much rebellion against church authority as this one. In fact, I know of no one false doctrine that produces more evil results than the u.i.c. theory. Many truly saved people use this heresy as a cover up for their direct rebellion against the Lord's true local visible church.

The man who joins a false church is a despiser of church authority. Our Lord started a Missionary Baptist Church. All other churches were started by man. To join the church of man instead of the church of our Lord is to rebel against the Lord's church and against the Lord himself.

The man who rebels against the doctrines or practices of the church, or lives an immoral life and is excluded from the church is a despiser of church authority. Any person Scripturally excluded from a Scriptural church is in rebellion against church authority until he repents and seeks to get right with that church. Now, I submit the following statement for your consideration. The man who joins no church; the man who joins a false church; and the man excluded from a true church are all in the same condition before God. They are rebels against God-given church authority.

These despisers of church authority face a life of uselessness in the service of God. They face a life without the smile and favor and blessing of God. They face the judgment seat of Christ. Oh, my friend, you must face the Lord Jesus Christ some day and you must answer to him as to why you joined no church, or joined a false church, or were not the member you should have been of His true church. What a day, when men try to explain to the Lord as to why they despised His church which means so much to Him, and why they preferred some man-made institution to the Lord's true church.

The despiser of church authority will lose rewards at the judgment seat of Christ.

"And if a man also strive for

masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully." II Tim. 2:5.

Here we learn that those who serve God and who expect a reward, must serve lawfully. They must go by the rules which are laid down in God's Word. The woman preacher will not be rewarded; the sprinklers will not be rewarded; those who serve sacrificially to promote heresy will not be rewarded for such service. No! No! We must study the Word, and serve according to the Word, if we would be crowned on that day.

Brethren, let us stand by the Word of God no matter what ridicule and persecution we must bear. Let us honor God's church, and serve Him faithfully, as a member of, and under the authority of a New Testament Missionary Baptist Church.

"Unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end, Amen." Eph. 3:21.

"God's Vessel"

(Continued from page five)
One is a vessel of wrath fitted to destruction; the other is a vessel of mercy prepared unto glory. You are one or the other. If you were to die today, you would find out then which you are. I don't know which you are, but I know one thing, you are one or the other. You are either a vessel of wrath fitted to destruction, or you are a vessel of mercy that is prepared unto glory.

May it please God to reach down and reveal Himself to you, and to save your soul, and let you go out of this place realizing that you are a vessel of mercy prepared unto the glory of God, that God might empty your life of self — your ideas, your ambitions, and your desires of life, and let Him fill you of Himself, that He might send you out to be a suffering, separated, honored vessel in His service.

May God bless you!

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