

?? 1971 BIBLE CONFERENCE ??

In view of the problem that Calvary Baptist Church has this year in planning for our annual Bible Conference we are calling upon our readers for advice and assistance.

It is impossible for us to secure facilities for the Conference for Labor Day Weekend, and the best that can be done is to have the Conference three weeks earlier—August 13-16. Please understand that we would rather hold to the date we have used for years but since this is an impossibility, due to the early opening

of Marshall University (where our sessions will be held), it is necessary that a change of date be made. This is not our desire but it apparently is all we can do to have the Conference in 1971.

We would like to ask our readers who expect to attend the Conference to write us, and tell us whether or not they can be with us in view of this change of date. We realize that some people have already asked for their vacation for Labor Day weekend and in view of this it is necessary

that we get information at once from all those who plan to be with us. Please write us immediately and tell us whether you can attend at this particular time or not.

A second alternative is that we might begin our Conference on Thursday evening and close at noon on Sunday. This would give us the same number of sessions we ordinarily have. It would just mean that we would begin on Thursday night instead of Friday night and our guests would be able to return home a

day earlier.

Thus our Conference could be held Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, August 13-16 or else it could be held Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, August 12-15.

I have written a number of preachers, and we are hearing from them as to their opinion, but we want the opinion of all who plan to attend, and therefore we are sending out this notice herewith today. If you have any thought of attending the Conference won't you please write

us and tell us your idea relative to the date, and whether or not it would be possible for you to be with us.

This is most important to us. If we have a sufficient response from our readers, we will change the date from Labor Day, and proceed with the Conference as usual. This we would like to do—that is, if our readers could sufficiently attend.

May I ask that before you lay this aside, and forget about it that you write us at once, and tell us as to your intentions.

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"EASTER"

"IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME, TEACHING FOR DOCTRINES THE COMMANDMENTS OF MEN."

By ROY MASON
Aripeka, Florida

Our text has exact application today. Things purely traditional—things that have neither warrant nor command in the Bible, have come to be considered as more important than other things that are plainly taught in the Scriptures. And in other instances, there are traditional things that violate and go contrary to Scripture, that are held on to and practiced by professing Christians. Take Easter for instance, there isn't anything that has a stronger hold on churches and church people than Easter. Easter celebration is the big celebration of the whole year, and more to do is made over it than over anything else in the whole church calendar. Yet, where is the Bible warrant for observing Easter? The answer is, there isn't any Scripture for observing it. The word "Easter" only occurs one time in the Bible—in Acts 12 and then it occurs as a mistranslation, for the word should be translated passover. So, the biggest celebration of the whole church year, is a thing wholly without Bible warrant, and purely of human tradition. A whole Easter doctrine has grown up, and the words of Jesus exactly apply to it, as he says, "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

Then there are other traditional things that are observed, that contradict and do violence to the plain word of God. I mention "Good Friday" as an instance. The teaching that Jesus was crucified on "Good Friday" absolutely contradicts the plain teachings of the Bible, and the words of Jesus apply to this, as He says, "Ye by your traditions, set at naught the law of God." But I shall speak further of this, as I go along.

Caused Preacher Embarrassment

I have announced to speak today on "Jesus DID NOT—eat the last Passover; did not make His triumphal entry into Jerusalem on 'Palm Sunday'; did not die on the cross on Good Friday; and did not rise from the dead Easter morning." I realize that in dealing with these items, I shall be in disagreement with popular tradition on every point, but I feel that I should challenge the heathen traditions that have grown up to dispute the teachings and promises of Christ. And I do wish to brand the whole "Holy Week Calendar" as histo-

rically and Biblically false, and Easter as a fake and a fraud that has nothing whatsoever to do with the resurrection of Christ. For years now I have denounced these things both from the pulpit and in various published sermons and articles, and never one time has anyone tried to show that I am not correct in the position I take. One preacher wrote and complained that I had caused him a lot of embarrassment by inducing people to ask him questions. For instance, some had asked him this: "How can Easter be resurrection day, when it comes on a different day each year—sometimes as much as a month removed from the Easter of the previous year?" Another question was this: "Why is the day called 'Easter' and what does Easter mean?" Another question was, "How could Jesus be crucified on Good Friday and rise on Sunday and be in the grave three days and nights?" They sure had that preacher cornered—for if he tried to answer either of those questions, he would have to admit the fake and fallacy of the whole "Holy Week" Easter tradition. So he said that he wished I would quit putting notions in people's heads. I just want to say that when any preacher is afraid of the truth, there is something wrong.

Now every one of us ought to be honest in religious matters. And we ought not be so filled with traditions and prejudices that we get angry when the truth is presented. I want to commend the attitude of the old

judge who attended church and heard my anti-Easter sermon. We had a very delightful and distinguished old gentleman who attended our services over a period of weeks. He was for 12 years a judge of the Court of Appeals in Indiana. As a lawyer he had learned through the years to consider evidence, and to set-



ROY MASON

tle things on the basis of facts. On Sunday morning, he said to his nephew, "Easter Sunday—the greatest day of the year," or something like that. He had been saturated with the Easter tradition, and had been in a church that always had a big Easter blow-out. Imagine his surprise, when I got up in this pulpit and began to denounce Easter as a

Is There Any Harm In The Modern Round Dance?

R. L. HALLFORD
Lakeland, Florida

First, let me ask you another question: Do you know the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour? If not, there is no need for me to discuss any other question with you. I have no foundation or common ground upon which to deal with you. Satan has you blinded (II Cor. 4:4), and you are not capable of receiving the Word of God about this matter (I Cor. 2:14). Therefore, if you are not saved, will you now realize the truth of God's Word that you are a sinner (Rom. 3:22, 23), "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31)?

Second, are you now willing to face the truth and be honest about this? God's Word teaches that there are two natures or lives in every born-again person (John 3:6; II Cor. 4:16; Gal. 5:17; James 4:1). They are called Flesh and Spirit. You became a possessor of the carnal, or fleshly nature through your first or natural birth; you became a partaker of the spiritual nature

through the New Birth (See II Peter 1:4). The old fleshly nature wants to please self and Satan; the new spiritual nature wants to please God. Hence, there is a constant struggle going on between the two for mastery of your life as a Christian. God commands you to "put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof" (Rom. 13:14). Honest now, which of your two natures is it that wants to dance? Is it "Christ in you," or the "lust of the flesh"? Can you picture Christ at a dance, engaging in such? You know it is the "lust of the flesh" to do such things as dance, and if you "make provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lust thereof," you sin against God by disobeying the plain command of His Word.

Third, trace the history of the dance through the Bible and see the awful results of it: The Israelites danced naked around the golden calf in an act of idolatrous worship (Ex. 32:15-25); it had been used as a religious service (Continued on page 7, column 1)

fraud. Some men would have been so filled with prejudice as to close their ears to anything that I might have said contrary to their long established way of thinking, but the old judge, with his habit of weighing evidence didn't do that. He was interested to know why I opposed Easter observance, and I began to give my reasons, one by one. The old judge came across, when I gave the facts, and he went away saying, "The preacher is right—he has the facts of the case." I want to commend his attitude, and urge that you consider the facts that I shall present this morning. Let me take up some items of the "Holy Week" calendar.

Palm Sunday A Fake

PALM SUNDAY. It is taught that Jesus made His so-called Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem

on Palm Sunday, and I used to live in a community where they gathered great quantities of palm branches and shipped them for use in churches, where they were waved on Palm Sunday. A careful study of the Scriptures makes it plain that Jesus did not make His triumphal entry on Sunday at all—but on Saturday, the Jewish sabbath. It is commonly supposed that it was on the occasion of that entry that Jesus cleansed the temple, but that is not true. Let me read Mark's account of this: (Mark 11:11).

11 "And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple; and when he had looked around about upon all things, and now the eventide was come, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve."

Jesus went into the temple and looked around, and went out without doing anything. Why didn't he drive out the money changers and others who desecrated the temple? The answer is, because it being Saturday—the Jewish sabbath—there was no buying, selling, or money changing going on. But the next day when he came into the city, all of this was going full blast, so he cleansed the temple. Let's see if Mark doesn't teach this (Mark 11:12, 15).

12 "And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry."

15 "And they came to Jerusalem; and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money changers, and the seats of them that sold doves."

So much then for "Palm Sunday."

Good Friday A Lie

GOOD FRIDAY. It is taught (Continued on page 7, column 2)

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor John R. Gilpin

"WHO IS ON THE LORD'S SIDE?"

"Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord's side? Let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him."

—Ex. 32:26.

This text of Scripture is taken out of the story of the wanderings of the children of Israel as they traveled from the land of Goshen, in Egypt, toward Canaan.

In the course of events, God took Moses up into the mount in order to show him the pat-

tern of the tabernacle and all the articles and pieces of furniture which they were to use in their religious worship, and to give to Moses the Ten Commandments and the other laws which God gave to him in the mount. God took Moses up into the mount thus for that purpose, and for forty days Moses was in the mount seeing the pattern of the tabernacle as God showed it to him, hearing the Ten Commandments and the various laws which God gave to him, which he in turn was to

give to the children of Israel at a later date.

Finally, after he had been gone for nearly forty days, the people became tired and weary of waiting for his return. The Word of God tells us that they came to Aaron, who was Moses' brother and who was second in command in the camp, and asked Aaron to make them some gods which would go before them, for they thought that something had happened to Moses and he would not return. (Continued on page 2, column 1)

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JOHN R. GILPIN.....Editor

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"The Lord's Side"

(Continued from page one)

In other words, since Moses had been gone for nearly forty days, they assumed that he was going to be gone for good, and therefore they asked Aaron to make them gods which would go before them, seeing Moses had disappeared from their presence.

If we were to look at this story as an illustration, Aaron, I think, would typify a lot of weak-kneed, spineless Baptists. I think there are a lot of Baptists who have just about as much doctrinal stamina as this man Aaron. When the people asked for gods to be made, Aaron asked for their earrings. One by one the women and the children and the men took their earrings from their ears and threw them down in a pile, until there was a sizeable heap of gold before them. Aaron fashioned a calf out of gold and set it up on a high place for the children of Israel to worship.

There isn't any doubt but what Aaron knew that he was wrong, but there are some folk who would say "peace at any price," and Aaron was one who was willing to go along with the people in error rather than cause discord and confusion in attempting to stand and contend for the truth.

It is highly significant that the god which Aaron fashioned for the people was in the shape of a calf, and it is further conspicuous that the chief god of Egypt from which the Israelites

had been delivered was Apis the bull, of whom it is said that he died when God sent the murrain upon the beasts, which was one of the ten plagues that came over the land of Egypt. Aaron knew all this. He knew that the chief god of Egypt was Apis the bull. He knew that Apis had died in the murrain that fell upon the beasts, yet weak-kneed, spineless, Aaron made a god for Israel patterned after Apis the bull, the chief god of the Egyptians.

It is also conspicuous that this man Aaron, though he knew that Apis had died and though he knew that the idol which he had made was a powerless god, — it is conspicuous that he had the people to dance around this idol, in that he said to them, "These be the gods which brought us out of the land of Egypt." Aaron knew that he had made that calf himself and had fashioned it with his own hands, yet in a sort of "hokus pokus" religious racketeering Aaron deceived the people. The Word of God tells us that both the men and women stripped off their clothes and danced naked in their confusion around that golden calf.

You can mark it down, beloved, whenever an individual gets a low conception of God his conduct will be, in like manner, measured and determined by his attitude toward God. Thus, they danced naked around that golden calf and worshipped it as the God which had brought them out of the land of Egypt.

Up yonder in Heaven God looked down and saw what was taking place in the valley while Moses was on the mountain top. Moses knew not what was taking place, but the God with whom Moses was communing — that God saw what was happening, and God would have at once destroyed Israel as a nation and would have taken Moses and made of him a nation of people had it not been that Moses interceded and plead with God.

Of all the great examples of intercessory prayer, when someone pleads with God in behalf of some individual, the one found here in this instance when Moses plead with God in behalf of the continuance of the nation of Israel is doubtlessly the greatest. I can see Moses after that God had told him what Israel had done, how that he came down from the mountain with those two tables of stone in his hand, upon which were written the Ten Commandments, and entered the camp. It was true that they were making a lot of noise, but it wasn't the noise of those who were being overcome, nor was it a shout

of victory; instead, it was the noise of singing which he heard. When he saw what was taking place, immediately Moses broke the two tables of stones upon which the Ten Commandments were written. There was a reason why he did so. The people had already broken the Ten Commandments in setting up this golden calf; now he breaks the tables of stone upon which the Ten Commandments were written. They had broken the Ten Commandments, actually; he breaks them figuratively to show the Israelites the enormity of their sin, in that they had violated the entirety of God's Decalogue — the whole Ten Commandments having been broken by Israel in their worship of the golden calf.

Moses wasn't the type of preacher who would say to the people, "Now, that is all right. You grew discouraged." He wasn't the type of preacher, beloved, to hold back when he knew that they had done wrong. His very soul was stirred within him — stirred to the extent that he burned that golden calf into a powder, then took it to their supply of drinking water and scattered the ashes of that golden calf in their drinking water, and compelled Israel to

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drink water that was mingled with their god that they had made, teaching them thus the lesson that their god that they had worshipped was less than themselves, for they were then drinking their god unto themselves when they drank their supply of daily water.

Then, beloved, having thus chastened them by compelling them to drink of the water, Moses stood in the presence of the camp of Israel and asked, what is to me, one of the greatest questions that any man ever asked of another human being, when he said to them, "Who is on the Lord's side?" The Word of God tells us that immediately the Levites slipped to the side of Moses as if to say, "We are on the Lord's side," and Moses said, "If you are on the Lord's side take your sword and spear and slay the individuals who have perpetrated this enormous sin in setting up a golden calf as an image of worship instead of bowing down before the Triune God." When he had thus spoken these Levites each took his sword and went in and out among the camp until they had slain 3,000 individuals who that day had brought that sin of idolatry into the camp of Israel.

Let's get some lessons from this story.

I
FIRST OF ALL, LET'S NOTICE THE PRINCIPLE THAT UNDERLIES THIS TEXT, "WHO IS ON THE LORD'S SIDE?"

This text shows us the exam-

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

MAY 8, 1971

PAGE TWO

THE MORTALITY RATE OF MISSIONARIES ON THE FIELDS

"Our Mission Board has had half of the missionaries it has sent out since 1946 to quit, apparently having failed. Some of them did not even finish their first term of service on the field. One family did not return after their first furlough and one missionary who had been on the field for years returned to the field, but not under our board.

"Our secretary declares those who failed were dishonest and are liars and thieves, and that the fault is with the missionaries in every instance.

"Our secretary says this is a common experience of all boards and that the percentage is no higher than with all others. In fact, it is lower than most boards, so he said. Is this a true statement?

Missionaries Sent	Per Cent Casualties
Southern Baptist Convention	844 2.1
Greater European Mission	54 .0
Berean Mission, Inc.	79 22.7
American Baptist Convention	161 19.8
Evangelical Union of S. A.	45 13.3
Sudan United Mission	22 22.7
Woman's Missionary Society	30 16.6
Missionary Aviation Fellowship	33 .0
Regions Beyond Missionary Union	145 2.0
Gospel Missionary Union	159 8.1
North African Mission	27 3.7
Latin American Mission	87 17.2
South American Indian Mission	88 12.5
Egypt General Mission	24 4.1
Belgian Gospel Mission, Inc.	5 .0
European Evangelistic Crusade, Inc.	85 4.7
Japan Evangelistic Board, Inc.	28 7.1
China Inland Mission (Does not include years of 1948-1949—years of war and strife in China)	204 2.4
International Missions, Inc.	95 3.1
Far Eastern Gospel Crusade	167 12.5
Evangelistic Alliance Mission	801 7.6
Central American Mission	136 9.5
Mexican Indian Mission, Inc.	24 20.8
Wycliffe Bible Translators, Inc.	497 7.0
Ceylon & Indian General Mission	109 8.2
West Indies Mission	158 19.6
Orinoco River Mission	45 8.8
Sudan Interior Mission	876 3.7

Thus it can be seen that the per cent of casualties has ranged from 0 per cent to 22.7 per cent. In no instance has it in any wise reached the percentage reported by our querist. Any mission secretary that gives out a statement that half or more of the missionaries of all missions are failures is disseminating false information, either purposefully or ignorantly, as these figures show.

The mission agencies referred to above include Baptists and interdenominational missions, so that it is a good representation of all mission work. It is highly conspicuous that the Southern Baptist Convention lost only 2.1 per cent of its missionaries, which is most remarkable considering the exceeding great number sent out by this group of Baptists.

In addition, I contacted the Interdenominational Mission Association of N. A., which is a clearing house for 36 interdenominational mission societies. They say that from 1944 to 1954 these 36 mission boards sent out 6,054 missionaries with 1,221 casualties, which is 20.1 per cent. Of this number of 1,221 casualties, 161 were deaths, 69 retired due to age, 338 due to ill health, leaving 653 for various reasons including transfers to other missions, so that actually excluding deaths and retirements due to age and ill health, 10.7 per cent really constitutes the casualties of this group and even then many of these merely transferred to other missions.

As for our querist's statement that those returning are only at fault and not the mission, and that they are liars and thieves, it is highly conspicuous that of all the letters received from the various mission boards, not one referred to their casualties with these accusations. In contrast, in practically every instance they were spoken of in loving terms.

I think in view of the definitely false statement that the above mentioned secretary made wherein he said that 50 per cent of the missionaries returned as failures, and in view of his libelous accusations against the character of those returning, that in all probability this mission board needs a new secretary. He just doesn't sound like one who loves God and his fellowman as he should.—J.R.G.

ple of one good man. It is not the example of a whole camp, for the example of the entire camp was very bad. It is the example of one man who stood out against the whole camp of men, women and children of the Jewish nation. It is the example of one good man who dared to stand up for the things of God.

Oh, how I would to God today, beloved, that God would give us helpers by the dozen — men and women, and boys and girls who are willing to take their stand on the Lord's side! Moses was asking for people, not to stand with him, not to stand against him, but people who would stand on the Lord's side against the idolatry that all of them knew was contrary to the things of God. That is the principle that underlies this text — the princi-

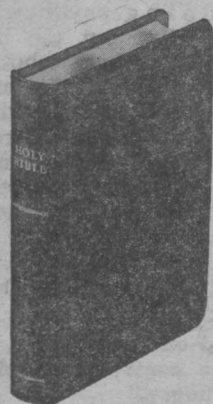
ple of a man calling upon men to stand up for the things of God.

Let me remind you this morning, beloved, an individual must either be on one side or the other. You are either on God's side or else you are on the Devil's side. There isn't any middle ground. There isn't any point of neutrality. There isn't any place of vantage where you can stand whereby that you can say you are neither for nor against God. You are on one side or the other.

Jesus said:
"He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."—Mt. 12:30.
Beloved, you are either for Him or else you are against Him. You are either on His side or else you are on the Devil's side. (Continued on page 3, column 1)

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10 ch. 1, 8.
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THEODOSIA ERNEST

(Continued from last week)

"But it happened very early (some time in the second century) that this wise arrangement began to be changed. In the large cities the first Church that was organized began to take precedence of the others, which were formed, to some extent, under its superintendence. The process was very simple and very natural. There was a large and influential Church; it had in it a number of ministers, who were all called presbyters—that is, elders or bishops. Some one of these it chose to be its pastor. As the membership increased, it would become inconvenient for all to meet in the same place. They would consequently assemble for worship in different localities in the city; and it was but natural that they should request him whom they all recognized as their pastor, and to whose Church they came to partake of the holy supper, and at whose hands they had received their baptism, to send them some elder to conduct their public worship. It was but natural that he should request some minister to go, and that he should even desire him to take the permanent charge, with the consent of all concerned, of this little interest. It was but natural that what was thus done as a matter of convenience and courtesy, should soon come to be regarded (among people so ignorant of Christianity as the first converts from Paganism must have been) as a matter of right, and founded in the original constitution of the Church. The new assembly still considered itself as an appendage to the first, and its minister was still subject to the pastor of the first as his pastor. And in time he was regarded as holding his place, not by the will of the people to whom he ministered, but by that of the pastor who had designated him to the work. A number of such outside assemblies would be formed: in each the same results would follow, from the influence of like causes. The pastor of the first and prominent Church would find himself, though having no immediate concern in their affairs, yet nominally the pastor of thousands of people, to whom he never ministered, but who were under the control of those who soon began to be styled his presbyters, or inferior clergy while he, by way of eminence, was called the *'episcopos'*; that is, in plain English, 'the overseer': a term which is employed several times in the New Testament, but always as synonymous with *'presbuteros'*, or elder; as when Paul is said to have sent for the *'presbyters'*, elders of the Church at Ephesus, and charged them to take heed to themselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Spirit had made them *'bishops'*—rendered in our version, very properly, 'overseers.' Now, all this may have been very innocently done. The first of the pastors who thus acquired the control of other Churches than his own, may have been, and probably was, desirous, not so much to extend his own power as to extend the conquests of religion. The influence which he exerted was probably much more dependent on his personal character than on his official position. The people loved him, and were unwilling to be entirely dissevered from his ministry. They offered him the spontaneous and unenforced subjection of willing hearts, and sought instruction and direction from him in their ecclesiastical affairs rather as a father in the Lord than as the ruler over their consciences. But a generation passed away. What was at first mere courtesy had now become custom. His successor could demand, as a right, the control which the other had, perhaps, reluctantly retained. The bishop claimed the right to designate the ministers to the secondary Churches; he claimed the right to control their discipline; he claimed as a right the fees and revenues which began to accrue from various sources. He found himself in a place of power and influence. His control over so many thousands of people made his friendship important to political aspirants. He could be useful to the state; the state therefore confirmed his claims, and, if need be, enforced them by the secular power. The bishop and his diocese became a part of the apparatus of the empire, and his relations to the Churches were established by the civil laws. Here was the first error. The original simplicity of the Church organization established by Christ and the apostles was lost, and the independent local Church was swallowed up in a hierarchy, or ecclesiastical establishment, consisting of all the Churches in a certain city, or province, or country, made subject, more or less completely, to one common head. Congregational independence was displaced, and episcopacy was set up in its stead. This was not done everywhere at once; nor was it ever done by all the Churches. Some there were who still refused subjection to any lord but Christ; and were for this the objects of the bitterest persecution on the part of those who had acknowledged the supremacy of the bishops, and formed alliance with the state."

"Excuse me, gentlemen," exclaimed the Bishop, who had come in after this conversation commenced, and had taken a seat apart from the little circle engaged in it, apparently with the determination to have no more to say in the discussion—"Excuse me, gentlemen, but I would like to know upon what authority such statements as those to which I have just listened can possibly be based. The explanation of the pretended rise of Episcopacy is certainly very ingenious, and to me has been very entertaining, as will be, doubtless, the story of the innumerable evils of which it is, I discover, to be made the parent. And it seems almost a pity to spoil such a beautiful fabric by knocking the foundation out from under it; and that I fancy I can do by simply asking upon what it rests? For if any fact recorded in ecclesiastical history is certain, it is that the Church of Christ, from the earliest days, even from the time of the apostles themselves, was organized upon the Episcopal plan, and recognized three orders of the ministry: to the first of which (that is, the bishops) was given the exclusive authority to ordain to the ministry, and exercise the discipline of the Churches."

"It is very easy," replied Mr. Courtney, "to make confi-

dent assertions, and sometimes very difficult to sustain them by the only admissible testimony. You ask me upon what foundation I base my explanation of the rise of the Episcopacy, and by what authority I have made such statements concerning it. I will answer you frankly and freely.

"In the first place, we have, by a careful study of this book, (laying his hand upon the Bible,) ascertained that the Churches established by the apostles were independent, local Churches. There is no such thing as a hierarchy there. There is no Church mentioned there which subjected any other Church to itself, or became itself subject to any other. If, therefore, Churches became thus dependent and confederated in the apostles' days, it must have been after the canon of the Scripture was closed.

"In the next place, it is, I believe, the unanimous testimony of those who have written impartially the history of the first Churches, that they continued to be thus independent at least until the second century.

"What says the learned Mosheim? A bishop, during the first and second centuries, was a person who had the care of one Christian assembly, which at that time was generally small enough to be contained in a private house. In this assembly he acted, not so much with the authority of a master as with the zeal and diligence of a faithful servant. He instructed the people, performed the several parts of Divine worship, attended the sick, and inspected into the circumstances and supplies of the poor."

"But when he comes to speak of the third century, he says, 'The face of things now began to change in the Christian Church. The ancient method of ecclesiastical government seemed still to subsist in general, while at the same time, by imperceptible steps, it varied from the primitive rule and degenerated toward the form of a religious monarchy. For the bishops aspired to higher degrees of power than they had formerly possessed; and not only violated the rights of the people, but also made gradual encroachments on the privileges of the presbyter. And that they might cover these usurpations with an air of justice and an appearance of reason, they published NEW DOCTRINES concerning the nature of the Church, and the Episcopal dignity. One of the principal authors of this change was Cyprian, (Bishop of Carthage,) who pleaded for the power of the bishops with more zeal and vehemence than had ever been hitherto employed in that cause. This change in the form of ecclesiastical government was soon followed by a train of vices which dishonored the character and authority of those to whom the administration of the Church was committed. For although several yet continued to exhibit to the world illustrious examples of primitive piety and Christian virtue, yet were sunk in luxury and voluptuousness, puffed up with vanity, arrogance, and ambition, professed with a spirit of contention and discord, and addicted to many other vices that cast an undeserved reproach upon the holy religion of which they were the unworthy professors and ministers.'

"Concerning the fourth century, the same learned historian speaks as follows: 'The bishops, whose opulence and authority were considerably increased since the reign of Constantine, began gradually to introduce innovations into the form of ecclesiastical discipline, and to change the ancient government of the Church. The first step was the entire exclusion of the people from all part in the administration of ecclesiastical affairs; and afterwards, they by degrees divested even the presbyters of their ancient privileges, and their primitive rights, that they might have no importunate protestors to control their ambition or oppose their proceedings, and, principally, that they might either engross to themselves, or distribute as they thought proper, the possessions and revenues of the Church. Hence it came to pass that at the conclusion of the fourth century there remained no more than a mere shadow of the ancient government of the Church. Many of the privileges which had formerly belonged to the presbyters and people were usurped by the bishops; and many of the rights which had been formerly vested in the universal Church were transferred to the emperors and to subordinate officers and magistrates.'

"Similar to this is the testimony of Neander. He says—"

"But what does it matter in this dispute," exclaimed the Bishop, "what such writers as Mosheim, or Neander, or Coleman, may assert? They are opposed to the Episcopacy. They wrote, in part at least, for the express purpose of bringing it into discredit. They, and such as they, are not disinterested, and, consequently, are not reliable witnesses."

"I should be very sorry to believe," replied the school master, "that such men could not relate the real facts of the history they profess to record, even though they did believe that the existence and authority of diocesan bishops was an unauthorized innovation upon the original order of the Churches. But I am disposed to be very accommodating in regard to the ecclesiastical character of my witnesses. I have such a variety that I am sure I can satisfy the most fastidious taste. Suppose we pass by Neander and Coleman. You surely will not object to Gibbon—the author of the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Mr. Gibbon says of the first and second centuries: 'The public functions of religion were solely intrusted to the established ministers of the Church—the bishops and the presbyters; two appellations which, in their first origin, appear to have distinguished the same office, and the same order of persons. The name of presbyter was expressive of their age, or rather of their gravity or wisdom. The title of bishop denoted their inspection over the faith and manners of the Christians who were committed to their pastoral care. In proportion to the respective

(Continued on page 5, column 4 and 5)

"The Lord's Side"

(Continued from page two)

There isn't any point of neutrality.

I often think of the time when Michelangelo, supposedly the greatest sculptor of all days, had made a statue of one of the early popes, Pope Julius II. When the statue was completed and the pope was invited to look at and inspect it, it is said that he walked about it, first to the right and then to the left, carefully scrutinizing the statue in every detail. Finally, he turned to Michelangelo, and said, "Would you tell me, am I pronouncing a blessing or a curse?" He just couldn't tell which the statue was supposed to portray.

Too often, beloved, that is true of you and me. Too often it is hard to tell which side a Christian is on, whether he is pronouncing a blessing or a curse—whether he is on the Lord's side or whether he is on the Devil's side. Too often it is hard to tell to the human eye, but, beloved, remember this, you and I are on one side or the other. The world may look at you and wonder which side you represent, but in your heart and in the sight of God you are on one side or the other.

I would like to remind you also as we study this text of Scripture that Moses' call to this people was a call to be on the



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unpopular side. When he said, "Who is on the Lord's side," he was actually asking for those who would volunteer to be on the unpopular side. It was popular that day to be an idolator. The whole camp had turned to idolatry. It wasn't popular to be on the other side, for to be on the other side meant that you had to stand practically alone.

I would remind you, beloved, that it has always been unpopular for a man to be on God's side. There never has been a day through all periods of earth's history when it was popular to be on God's side.

Take for example the two great outstanding teachings that we contend for; namely, that Jesus Christ in the days of His flesh established a Missionary Baptist church and none other; and, secondly, that when one is saved, that one can never be lost by sins that he may thereafter commit. Those are precious truths to well-taught and Biblically-instructed children of the Lord. They are precious truths to you and to me. We love them, but beloved, it makes a man mighty unpopular to say that he believes these. It has always been unpopular for anybody to be on the Lord's side in behalf of the truth.

So far as I am concerned, there isn't any doubt in my mind but

(Continued on page 5, column 2)

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

MAY 8, 1971

PAGE THREE

The Baptist Examiner FORUM

"Is capital punishment Scriptural? Is it for this age of grace?"

**JAMES
HOBBS**

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Not only is capital punishment Scriptural, it is also the only hope for any nation to have law and order.

God gave man instructions along this line before the Mosaic Law was given. Noah received this commandment and it has never been annulled. "Whosoever sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made he man." (Gen. 9:6). This was restated to Moses during the law. "He that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall be surely put to death." (Ex. 21:12).

Not only does the Bible teach that we should observe capital punishment, but it also teaches that it should not be remitted. "Moreover ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer, which is guilty of death; but he shall be surely put to death." (Num. 35:31).

Under the Mosaic Law the death penalty was to be observed for many things besides murder. For instance, adultery was to be punished by death. "And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife . . . the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death." (Lev. 20:10). The same chapter teaches that incest is to be punished by death.

Exodus 22:19 tells us that bestiality is to be punished by death also. "Whosoever lieth with a beast shall surely be put to death." We hear much today of people trying to say that homosexuality is a way of life and should be accepted. God says otherwise. "If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed abomination; they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them." (Lev. 20:13). (See also 18:22).

Another example in God's word is for disrespect for one's parents. "And he that smiteth his father, or his mother, shall be surely put to death . . . And he that curseth his father, or his mother shall surely be put to death." Ex. 21:15,17. "If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that, when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them . . . all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he dies. . . ." (Deut. 21:18, 21.)

There are many other causes given in the Bible as reasons to impose the death penalty; rape, purgery, kidnapping, witchcraft, offering human sacrifice,

theft, blasphemy, teaching false doctrines, treason, etc.

The Bible also teaches that the modes of capital punishment be by burning (see Lev. 20:14), stoning, hanging, beheading, etc.

My friends, I don't care how much people say that we are no longer under the law. I do not believe that we are no longer required to live by the dictates of that law. Of course, we are no longer bound by the penalties of the law because Christ suffered that penalty for us. But Christ did not do away with it. If He did we would be allowed to steal, commit adultery and do any of the things condemned by the ten commandments.

No country can stand when law and order is not enforced. We must keep capital punishment and administer it if we want to remain a country. We as Christians must observe God's teaching and abide by it. Let me remind you that it was given before the Mosaic Law when it was given to Noah.

**AUSTIN
FIELDS**

PASTOR,
Arabia Baptist
Church
Arabia, Ohio



Yes, capital punishment is Scriptural, and it is definitely for this age of grace as it was for all ages. In fact, the basis for capital punishment is the Word of God. From the first book of the Bible to the last one, it was taught and practiced before Mosaic Law, during the dispensation of the law, and under grace. Though the words of God very definitely teach capital punishment, today we hear those who claim to be God-called preachers, advocating that capital punishment is nothing short of legalized murder, and the law of God relative to the punishment of murderers by death has been set aside, and a new theory has been advocated, which teaches that God loves everyone, and will not that man be punished by death.

Yet, we hear God give the order to kill Achan by stoning when he took the spoils of the city of Jericho, a Babylonish garment, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold. Read Joshua 7. I am well aware that God is a God of love, but what the average professor does not know is that He is also a God of hate. I do not for a moment believe that God made Hell, motivated by love; rather His hatred of sin was the motive behind the creation of Hell and the Lake of Fire. Furthermore, I do not believe that the inmates of Hell went there by their own free will, rather God as a supreme ruler and judge of the

universe sentenced them there by using His power to place them in the place of death.

Those who teach that capital punishment is set aside must face the fact that God who is sovereign over His universe practices capital punishment, and that to do so does not make Him (God) a legalized murderer.

God's law of capital punishment for murder has not been changed, nor set aside. This law was revealed in the time of Noah, but the anti-capital punishment groups teach that God is not just in so doing, and what should be done is to confine the murderer for a space of 8 to 10 years until he reforms and then turn him loose. This theory belongs to man, but God has declared His will in this issue. Let us read His command relative to murder.

"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."—Gen. 9:5.

In the first Baptist Church there were two members who lied to the Holy Spirit (Comforter), and the spirit of God took their lives because of this sin.

"And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost; and great fear came on all them that heard these things."—Acts. 5:5.

"Then Peter said unto her, how is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall take thee out. Then fell she down straightway at his feet and yielded up the ghost; and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband. And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as hear these things."—Acts 5:9-11.

From these verses we can see the purpose for capital punishment, which is to instill the fear of God in the hearts of His people. Today men show forth their depravity for there is no fear of God before their eyes.

"There is no fear of God before their eyes."—Rom. 3:18.

Let us look at the Son of God and His crucifixion to point out to you the Scripturalness of capital punishment. When Jesus

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took to Himself our sins, though He was the Son of God, yet this did not set aside the law of God relative to the punishment of sinners. Jesus stood before the bar of God (justice) to hear the sentence of death and that by the orders of the high court of heaven.

"Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief; when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand."—Isa. 53:10.

It pleased God as the judge to bruise and bring the Son to grief. Jesus stood as a criminal in violation of God's law. Now I am aware that Christ was not a criminal by His action in the sense of committing sin; rather He was judged as a criminal and sentenced, because He stood in the sinner's stead. Because He took to Himself sin, He must be sentenced to death for the law had said "The soul that sinneth it shall surely die." and "The wages of sin is death." Therefore, He must be taken to the place of death and executed by God. Here at Calvary Jesus died as a sinner under the sovereign hand of God. I realize that the judge used men

to carry out the orders of death, yet it was according to God's determinate counsel. Therefore, I believe that capital punishment is Scriptural, and that it is for this age of grace as well as before Mosaic law.

**ROY
MASON**

RADIO MINISTER
BAPTIST PREACHER
Aripeka, Florida



Yes, capital punishment is certainly Scriptural. Back before the Law was given to the people of Israel — back indeed, in the days of Noah, we have the will of God expressed in these words, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God made he man." (Gen. 9:6).

Later in giving instructions to Israel, the Lord gave very definite, explicit instructions concerning how to deal with the sin of murder. In Numbers 35:16 we read, "The murderer shall surely be put to death."

You will find the teaching in the Old Testament that God punished Israel for not executing such characters as murderers, and allowing the nation to become a place of bloodshed and crime.

I know of no teaching in the Bible that would indicate that gross criminals are to be dealt with differently in this age of grace. For instance, in I Peter 4:15 we read, "Let none of you suffer as a murderer, or thief or as an evil doer." It is assumed there that such sins will bring suffering by way of punishment, and the Christian is warned to stay aloof from such sins that he may not have to undergo such punishment. In the closing book of the Bible, we read in Rev. 21:8 that "murderers shall have their part in the Lake of Fire." That is capital punishment of the most extreme kind.

This age of grace does not make it wrong for the law to punish gross crimes. The wonderful thing is that in this day of grace, the vilest sinner — even one who deserves capital punishment can turn to Christ, and can be cleansed of all sin. The laws of the land however will not spare the criminal because

he turns to the Lord, for grace does not operate in the realm of man's laws.

The trend of this day in which we live is against capital punishment. Many people are largely governed by sentimentality, so they feel sorry for the poor fellow who is caught. The result of light dealing with crime and criminals is a nation that is running over with criminals. Many courts seem to show more sympathy for criminals than they do for the victims of crimes. Those characters who helped to promote anarchy in Chicago, cursed and demeaned the judge and disrupted court proceedings, yet they are allowed to roam the country, and have been invited to speak at universities where they received hundreds of dollars. We need a lot of capital punishment in this nation — not less, but more.

**E. G.
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We are living in a day when people will go to great lengths to water down, pervert, and even nullify God's precious Word. Many seem to have come to the place where they think it is sinful to do what God's Word commands them to do. People are getting too good (in their own eyes) to do what they are commanded to do.

In Gen. 9:6 we read, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made He man." And in Ex. 21:12 we read, "He that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall be surely put to death." It seems that God was pretty strict in respect to murder. He did not even say, "or life imprisonment." There was only one penalty for premeditated murder. And I dare say that if our country went back to God's way of dealing with murder, it would cut the murder rate to practically zero.

I recall reading somewhere a comparison of the number of murder cases in Chicago and in London. If I remember correctly (Continued on page 5, column 1)

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—Christ

"And they answered, "We can not tell."
—the Jews

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PAGE FOUR

The Forum

(Continued from page 4)

the article stated that in one year London had seven murder cases while Chicago had fifty two. At that time London still had the death penalty in force, and still lived up to it. As I recall, the death penalty had been abolished in Chicago. The article went on to say that after England abolished the death penalty London soon caught up with Chicago in the number of murders. It would be interesting indeed to know just how many people have been murdered as a direct result of the abolishment of the death penalty.

In Ex. 21:12 we find that the death penalty was not reserved for murder cases only. There we read, "And he that stealeth a man, and selleth him or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death." And in verse 17 we are told that "He that curseth his father, or his mother, shall surely be put to death." God meant business, and He has not changed one iota. If salvation by grace is Scriptural, so is the death penalty.

Our Lord fulfilled the ceremonial laws, and they are no more. It would be a sin for us to observe the Passover or the sin offering. These laws were, in a sense, prophetic. And when Christ fulfilled these laws the prophecy found in them became history. So I repeat, it would be a sin for us to offer up a sin offering, or to try to put any of the ceremonial laws into practice. These laws spoke of the first coming and work of our precious Redeemer, but God's moral laws are not prophetic in any sense of the word. Our Lord

kept these laws to a jot and tittle, but He did not fulfill them and do away with them. It is still just as much a sin to kill today as it was in the time of the Old Testament.

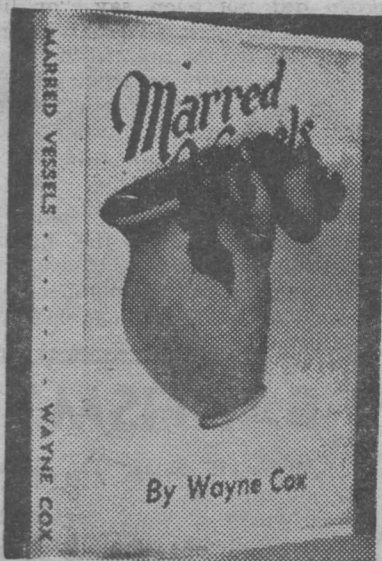
We need to be ever on the alert for the wiles of the devil. One of the things he is doing today is filling people so full of pity and compassion for the criminal they cannot even see the victim. Just last week there were six articles in The Birmingham Post-Herald dealing with drug addicts. I fully intended to read them. And I did read part of the first one. But the author of the articles pictured these law breaking outcasts from society as such fine people, and their way of living so nearly perfect that I quit reading it for fear I might be tempted to desert my wife and join them.

God can clean up a criminal just as He can clean up a law-abiding citizen. In fact, we know of cases where He has done just that. And when He does that often times that person is a more fervent witness for his Lord than so many others are. As you recall Mary Magdalene was not of the upper crust of society, and neither was the Samaritan woman at the well, but both of these women showed much appreciation for what their Lord had done for them. But until our Lord sees fit to clean up a criminal he should be treated as a criminal.

It seems to me that any sane law-maker in the country could check the results of the abolishment of the death penalty and see the great hazard caused by it, unless he is blinded by the glitter of the money the criminal element dangles before his eyes.

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"The Lord's Side"

(Continued from page three)
what the ordinance of baptism ought to be administered by immersion, and by immersion only, at the hands of a qualified administrator, which is none other than a Missionary Baptist church; yet, beloved, better than 90 per cent of the professing Christians of the world today are just as well content to take sprinkling or pouring as they are to ask for immersion. I tell you, beloved, it has always been unpopular to be on the Lord's side as far as truth is concerned.

Note again in that respect. We are in that season of Xmas festivities when, as you well know, the minds of the people are on themselves and fleshly things, and the thought of our Lord's birth is farthest from their minds. As you have heard me say many, many times in the past, Xmas didn't begin at the birth of Jesus. It was celebrated eight hundred years before Jesus was ever born, in Babylon. It was a heathen, pagan festivity, that was celebrated fully eight hundred years before the Son of God ever came to this world. It was never a part of early New Testament churches; it only became a part of religious life in the fifth century when the Catholics adopted it in order to overawe the barbaric minds of the Teutons, the Huns, the Goths — those savage people of the north land who swept in hordes over the country of Rome. It was never adopted by Baptists generally until hundreds of years later, but for a man today to stand up and say that Xmas is pagan and doesn't honor our Lord, but rather is a fleshly gratification and that it is paganism that has been merely baptized into our church — for a man to say that, makes him a crank, a religious fanatic, a queer sort of creature, and causes him to stand practically isolated from the religious world. I say, beloved, it has never been popular to be on the Lord's side.

I would like to remind you also that when Moses gave this call for people to stand on the Lord's side, then he asked them to stand with the minority. Most people don't like to be in the minority. I have never been any place else. I don't know what it

would feel like to be any place but in the minority. That is one reason why I am going to enjoy Heaven — I am going to be in the majority for the first time.

I can go back through the Word of God and can find some other people who were in the minority. I find that Moses was in a minority back there. I find that on that day long ago when a man and his wife, and their three sons and their wives, the family of Noah, survived, they were in a minority. I find that one day Caleb and Joshua stood up and said, "We are well able to overcome the enemy," but the other ten spies persuaded the people against them, so that Caleb and Joshua stood as a minority.

Listen, beloved, when Moses gave his call asking who was on the Lord's side, it was a call to the minority.

II

LET'S SEE HOW SOME FOLK WOULD COMPROMISE THIS TEXT AS TO THE LORD'S SIDE.

Some people would compromise it in that they want to be like their associates. "My associates observe Xmas, therefore so must I. My associates practice false teachings. I know they are wrong, but I couldn't go contrary to them." Some people would react to this text by compromising in that they would say, "I can't go contrary to my associates."

It reminds me of Israel when, in the long ago, they wanted a king. In 1 Samuel 8 we read

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OR IF YOU DESPISE—

BILLY GRAHAM

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where they said, "Give us a king." They never had seen a king before except on dress parade. They had never lived with one, and they didn't know what a king was like every day. They said, "Give us a king that can go out before us, a king that can fight our battles." They were not willing for God to be their king. They wanted an earthly man to be their king like the nations round about them.

Beloved, many and many a child of God looks at this text and says, "I just can't go all the way on the Lord's side because of my associates."

Then some would compromise this text by only wanting to go a part of the way on the Lord's side.

Long ago, God called Abraham and said to him, "You go to the land where I'll lead you." Abraham started but only went half way. He stopped at Haran which was half way between Canaan and the Ur of the Chaldees.

Some people are tarrying at "half way Haran." They are only wanting to go half way. They are only wanting to go as far as their will doesn't run contrary to the will of God. Moses' question was, "Who is on the Lord's side?" God doesn't want you and me to compromise our answer by just going half way with Him. He wants us fully on the Lord's side.

Some people compromise that question from the standpoint of (Continued On Page 6, Col. 3)

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Theodosia Ernest

(Continued from page 3)

numbers of the faithful, a larger or small number of these Episcopal presbyters guided each infant congregation with equal authority and with united counsels.

"In this we have a picture of one of the earliest Churches. It was an organized body of baptized believers, who had among them a number of members who, on account of their wisdom and gravity, were called presbyters, or elders; and to whom had been committed the general oversight of the membership; and they were on this account called bishops, or overseers. But Gibbon goes on to say that 'The most perfect equality of freedom requires the directing hand of a superior magistrate, and the order of public deliberations soon introduces the office of a president, (or chairman,) invested at least with the authority of collecting the sentiments and of executing the resolution of the assembly. A regard for the public tranquillity, which would so frequently have been interrupted by annual or by occasional elections, induced the primitive Christians to constitute an honorable and perpetual magistracy, and to choose one of the wisest and most holy among their presbyters to execute, during his life, the duties of their ecclesiastical governor; (that it, to make him perpetual president of their congregation; or, in other words, invest him with the pastorate.) It was under these circumstances,' continues the historian, 'that the lofty title of bishop began to raise itself above the humble appellation of presbyter. And while the latter remained the most natural distinction for the members of every Christian senate, the former was appropriated to its new president. The pious and humble presbyters, who were first dignified with the Episcopal title, could not possess, and would probably have rejected, the power and pomp which now encircle the tiara of the Roman pontiff, or the mitre of a German prelate. The primitive bishops were considered only as the FIRST of their EQUALS, and the honorable servants of a free people. Whenever the Episcopal chair became vacant by death, a new president was chosen among the presbyters, by the suffrage OF THE WHOLE CONGREGATION. Such was the mild and equal constitution by which the Christians were governed more than a hundred years after the death of the apostles.' (Decline and Fall, vol. ii., pp. 272, 275.)

"Here is, according to Gibbon, whom you will admit to be an impartial witness, a direct assertion of the fact that the elders and bishops were at first the same, and, for more than a hundred years after the apostles had died, there was no other distinction between them, except that the title of bishop began to be appropriated exclusively to that presbyter whom some Church had chosen, by the vote of the whole congregation, to preside in their meetings and execute their decisions. But now, when he comes to speak of the third century, he presents a different picture:

"As the legislative authority of the particular Churches was insensibly superseded by the use of councils, the bishops obtained by their alliance a much larger share of executive and arbitrary power. And, as soon as they were connected by a sense of their common interest, they were enabled to attack, with united vigor, the original rights of the clergy and people. The prelates of the third century imperceptibly changed the language of exhortation to that of command, scattered the seeds of future usurpations, and supplied, by Scripture allegories and declamatory rhetoric, their deficiency of force and reason. They exalted the unity and power of the Church, as it was represented in the Episcopal office, of which every bishop enjoyed an equal and undivided portion. Princes and magistrates, it was often repeated, might boast an earthly claim to a transitory dominion. It was the Episcopal authority alone that was derived from the Deity, and extended itself over this and another world. Bishops were the vicegerents of Christ, the successors of the apostles, and the mystic substitutes of the high-priest of the Mosaic law. Their exclusive privilege of conferring the sacerdotal character invaded the freedom both of the clerical and popular elections. And if, in the administration of the Church, they sometimes consulted the judgment of the presbyters, or the inclination of the people, they most carefully inculcated the merit of such a voluntary condescension."

"Surely Mr. Gibbon sustains substantially what I asserted. The Church is at first a local society, governed by several presbyters. One of these is presently selected by the whole congregation to preside over their deliberations, and execute their will. To him, in time, the title of bishop, which had at first been given to all the presbyters, becomes specially appropriated. But yet, though a bishop, he is bishop only of the one local society, and is among them rather a servant than a ruler. This continues till the third century. Then the bishops begin to combine to elevate the Episcopal office. Then they begin to change the language of exhortation to that of command. Then, so far from regarding themselves as the servants of Christ's people, they claim to be successors of the apostles and vicegerents of Christ Himself."

"But," replied the Bishop, "you must be well aware that Gibbon was an infidel, and an enemy to the Christian religion; and consequently, not the most reliable authority in matters of ecclesiastical polity."

"Certainly, sir; and I would not have thought of referring to him if he had not been; and that in regard to this very point most fully endorsed by Dr. Haweis, one of your own most eminent divines, and the historian of your own Church. Dr. Haweis says, 'Where no immediate bias to distort the truth leaves him an impartial witness, I will quote Gibbon with pleasure. I am conscious that his authority is more likely to weigh with the world in general than mine; I will therefore simply repeat his account of the primitive Church; I think we shall not on this point greatly differ.' (Eccl. Hist., vol. I, p. 414.)

"But, if you object to Gibbon, even thus endorsed and (Continued on page 6, column 1 and 2)

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Theodosia Ernest

(Continued from page five)

vouched for, I am disposed to be accommodating. I will give you testimony from the Episcopal Church of England. Nay, I will go back and call the ancient Fathers from their graves, and they shall testify.

"What say you to the statements of your own Episcopal Bowdler? 'I am aware,' he says in his letters, 'that in St. Jerome's time there existed generally, though by no means universally, this difference between the bishop and the presbyters, namely, that to the former was then confided the power of ordination. The transition from perfect equality to absolute superiority was not suddenly effected. It was the growth of time — not of years, but of centuries; the distinction of authority, or *office*, preceding that of order, or degree in the Church, and being introductory to it. With the former (the distinction in *office*) I have no concern; it being sufficient to show that, as a distinct and superior order in the Church, Episcopacy, in the modern acceptance of the term, *did not exist* in the time of the apostles; and that, however expedient and desirable such an institution might be, it cannot plead the sanction of apostolic appointment or example. It may be difficult to fix the period exactly when the Episcopate was first recognized as a distinct order in the Church, and when the consecration of bishops, *as such*, came into general use. Clearly not, I think, when St. Jerome wrote. Thus much, at least, is *certain*, namely, that the government of each Church, including the ordination of ministers, was at first in the hands of the presbytery, (the company of elders embraced in its numbers;) that when one of that body was raised to the office of president, and on whom the title of bishop was conferred, it was simply by the election (*co-optatio*) of the other presbyters, whose appointment was final, requiring no confirmation or consecration at the hands of any other prelates; and that each Church was essentially independent of every other.'

"But Bowdler, I know, though an Episcopalian, was a layman; and perhaps, as you are disposed to be so very particular about the ecclesiastical relations of your witnesses, you may prefer the testimony of a bishop; may, of an arch-bishop, and he one of the most eminent for his learning and logic. What says Archbishop Whateley upon this subject? Does he deny that the first Churches were independent, and the first bishops were bishops or pastors of only a single local society? 'Though there was,' he says, 'one Lord, one faith, one baptism, for all of these, yet they were each a distinct, independent community on earth; united by the common principles on which they were founded, by their mutual agreement, affection, and respect; but not having

(Continued on page eight, columns four and five)

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"The Lord's Side"

(Continued from page five)

neglect—they neglect their separation from the world.

I was reading of recent date how the children of Israel came out of the land of Egypt. Just when they got over into the land of Canaan they recognized the fact that they had forgotten the all important rite of the Jews—the rite of circumcision. They had forgotten it all the way through the wilderness until they got down to the land of Canaan. When they got to the land of Canaan, God, more or less, stopped them dead in their tracks; they had neglected the rite of circumcision.

As I was reading this, beloved, I was impressed by this fact, that many of God's children neglect the things of the Lord that pertain to His work. It is a mighty easy matter for you and me to be neglectful in being on the Lord's side. It is a mighty easy matter for you and me to

body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

—I Cor. 6:19, 20.

The Christian's attitude toward the world should also be one of separation from the world, for we read:

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you."

—II Cor. 6:14-17.

God wants us to recognize the fact that we don't belong to ourselves, but rather we belong to Him and that we should be separate from the world.

God also wants us to do all for His glory, for He says:

"Whether therefore, ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

—I Cor. 10:31.

God also tells us within His Book that you and I ought to live that when Jesus comes again, we won't be ashamed at His coming.

"And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming."

—I John 2:28.

In some manner on Wednesday night of this past week in our prayer service, I asked the question, "Where would you and I want to be, or what would you and I want to be doing when Jesus comes again?" Various individuals here within the prayer service spoke up and made mention that they would like to be right here in the house of God

when Jesus comes again, and I remember that I said that I would like to be standing in this pulpit when Jesus comes again. Beloved, I don't know whether I will be standing here in this pulpit or whether you will be sitting out here in the pew. I don't know where we will be, but I want us, as a body of people, to live, to preach, to teach, to exhort and to contend for the things of God in such a way that when Jesus comes, we won't be ashamed of His coming.

In one of the state houses in the city of Boston they have a large number of curios and relics which have to do with the history of the country, one of which is a flag pole from which the banner had been torn entirely away. There is a story back of that flag pole. At the battle of Ft. Wagner in the Civil War that flag was carried over a regiment of Negro soldiers, and the Negro color-bearer who was holding the flag pole had the experience of feeling the flag shot from the pole. The flag pole was almost torn by impact from his hands. This color-bearer clasped that flag pole in his hands and called above the sound of dying men, "It did not touch the ground."

Beloved, I would to God that you and I might rally as one man around the cause of the Lord Jesus Christ, that we might lift high the colors of our Lord, and as He would ask, "Who is on the Lord's side?" that you and I might say, "This has never touched the ground."

Beloved, God wants us on His side. It doesn't make any difference what side somebody else takes. It doesn't make any difference whether you be in the majority or in the minority. It doesn't make any difference whether you be popular or unpopular. It doesn't make any difference what anybody else says or does. God wants you on His side.

Oh, may it please the Lord this morning to take these faltering words of your pastor as a message from God. Might it please our Heavenly Father to use this simple message and cause you to walk a little closer and a little nearer — on the Lord's side.

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do as these people did here. They practiced circumcision for a while and then neglected it, and God brought it later to their attention.

Brother, sister, God is saying to you and to me who would compromise by wanting to be like our associates, to you and me who would compromise by only going half way, to you and to me who would compromise by neglecting our separation from the world — God is saying to us, "Who is on the Lord's side?"

III

NOTICE WITH ME WHAT
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OUGHT TO BE TOWARD THE
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We are coming down to the end of a year and are soon to begin another one. Only God knows what is in store for us, individually and collectively, as we end this year and face another one. Don't you want to know what attitude God would have you take this year? Don't you want to know what the Christian's true attitude ought to be toward this world? Listen, brother, you don't belong to yourself; sister, you are not your own. You belong to God if you are saved.

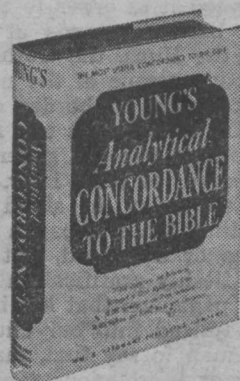
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Round Dance

(Continued from page one)

by the Israelites, but became a means of their daughters being stolen and carried away by the cursed Benjaminites (Judges 21:19-21, 23); and that faithful preacher, John the Baptist, got his head severed from his shoulders because of a woman's dancing (Matt. 14:6-11).

Fourth, some present day facts about the modern dance would prove sufficient ground for every child of God having nothing to do with it. The modern dance originated in a Negro bar-room in New Orleans. If there is no harm in it, why do 75 percent of those in houses for fallen women say that they got their start on the downward road in the modern dance hall? Furthermore, the only reason people engage in the modern dance is a matter of sexual lust. If not, why don't men dance with men and women with women? If the "hug" were taken out of it, there would be none of the dance left. People would lose their interest in it.

Christian, how would you like for Christ to come back for us and find you engaged in this? Has it ever done you any good? Does it help your testimony as a Christian? Do you suppose that the lost people with whom you dance have any confidence in your testimony? No, they look upon you as being just like they

are and no better. You could not lead one of them to Christ if you tried to, as long as you do the same things they do.

For the honor of that Name which you bear, for the preservation of your own testimony, yes, even for own personal safety and purity leave such things behind and "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you (II Cor. 6:17)."



Easter

(Continued from page one)

almost everywhere that Jesus was crucified on Good Friday, and that he arose from the dead early Sunday morning. And on this assumption, services are held in cities all over America on Good Friday afternoon, with ministers of the various denominations lamenting and speaking on the seven sayings from the cross. Often schools are turned out for these occasions. Now what is there wrong about this Good Friday observance? Well, it just makes a falsifier out of Christ—that's all. He said that he would be in the grave three days and three nights, and you are going to have to be a mathematical genius that makes Einstein ashamed of himself, if you can figure three days and nights between Friday afternoon and Sunday morning. You can't figure more than two nights to save your life.

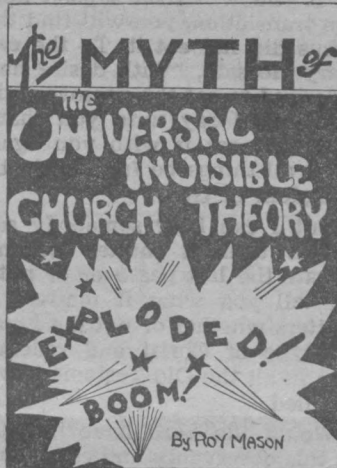
Eleven different times it is reiterated in the New Testament that Jesus would be in the grave three days and three nights, and one type was involved. Jesus has told us that the one type setting forth the length of time that he should be in the grave is the type of Jonah... "for as Jonah was three days and three nights in the stomach of the sea monster, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Do you believe that that type of Jonah is true, or a phoney something? Do you believe the eleven times re-iterated statement that Jesus would be three days and three nights in the grave? You can't believe it, and believe in Good Friday, for they are mutually contradictory. "But," folks say, "We need to be sticklers—a portion of a day or night was accounted as a full day or night." I want to flatly deny it, and then I want to remind you that even if that were true, it wouldn't work, for there are only two nights allowed by the Good Friday myth. I want to point out to you that God is a God of exactness. If that were not true, we would have a whole universe in confusion. "When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son." God wasn't behind one minute. A study of the Bible will reveal that God fulfills His Word in the most careful, minute, and painstaking way. I made a list of fifty prophecies that were accurately fulfilled on the day of the cross. The very words that our Lord should utter on the cross were foretold seven hundred years before He hung there. Then, in the face of all the Bible—with its dozens and scores of ac-

curately fulfilled predictions, we are asked to believe that the Lord just part-the-way, slap-hazards, carelessly, sorta fulfilled the prediction concerning Christ being in the grave three full days and nights. And why do men impugn the Word of God? Why do they contradict the words of Christ? Why do they wreck the type of Jonah? Why do they deny the accurate and literal fulfillment of the promise of Christ to be in the grave three days and three nights? The answer is, in order to validate a wretched tradition, and to join in with the popular order of things. Truly the words of our text aptly apply when it says, "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" and truly do these other words of Christ apply, as he says, "Ye by your traditions set at naught the law of God." I say, away with such traditions! Let God be true and every man a liar!

Easter, The Biggest Lie

Let us consider EASTER. I can take Baptist history and show you that the time was when Baptists took no stock in Easter—when they repudiated it utterly. John T. Christian in his History of the Baptists, tells how several hundred Baptists were put to death in England in the early days because they would not observe Easter. But most Baptists of today have gone back on the

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stand that their ancestors died to maintain. Many of them have swallowed Lent, Good Friday, Easter and the whole works. That's their business of course but personally I can't go into something that I know to be a fraud and that contradicts the Bible that I believe and preach. I say to you that I would no more be a party to observing Easter Day than I would be to observing Baal Day. I can't think of anything much more wicked than for us to engage in Easter observance. "Strong words," you say. Yes, and it deserves strong words. Let me tell you in plain words what is wrong with Easter:

Where "Sunrise" Service Started

1—It is wrong BECAUSE IT BEARS THE NAME OF AN OLD PAGAN GODDESS. The very name is heathen. The Teutonic tribes of Northern Europe had a goddess of the Spring and the sunrise called Eostre and every Spring at a certain time they would meet out on a hill or a mountain top and have a big drunken revel—then as the sun came up over the horizon, that marked the climax of their revel, those heathen would go wild. And those heathen sunrise revels furnish the background and the ancestry for our present day "Sunrise services." What about bringing the name of a pagan goddess into our worship today? I remind you that God in the ancient time told the people of Israel, not to even mention—not to even name the names of the heathen gods of the tribes

that surrounded them.

This pagan goddess of Spring, Eostre, can be identified with pagan worship in other lands. She was the same as the "Ishtar," that we read about in the Bible, and the Lord condemned her worship in the most scathing terms. You can easily verify the pagan origin of Easter, by consulting any encyclopedia.

2—Easter is wrong, BECAUSE IT DOES NOT REPRESENT THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST. How could it, when it comes at one time one year and at another time the next year? The truth is Easter is not determined by the resurrection, but by the full moon and the vernal equinox. For Easter always comes on the first Sunday, following the first full moon after the Spring equinox. These things had much to do with the festival of the goddess of Spring, but they have naught to do with the resurrection of our Lord. Why falsely pretend that Easter represents the resurrection when it does not? Why not tell the truth about it?

3—EASTER IS WRONG, BECAUSE IT IS FILLED WITH PAGAN SEX SYMBOLS. If you want to embarrass some ardent Easter worshipper, just ask the question as to what rabbits, chickens, and the like have to do with the resurrection. They don't have even the slightest connection. They are pagan symbols of sex and fertility.

4—Easter is wrong, BECAUSE IT CANCELS 51 RESURRECTION DAYS A YEAR IN FAVOR OF ONE DAY. Why do we have Sunday, or the Lord's Day as a special day to observe? Because it was on that day—the first day of the week, that Jesus disclosed Himself as risen from the dead. And history shows that always, down through the centuries, Christians have observed this day as their worship day. Fifty-two days a year, we are to commemorate the fact that our Lord is not dead, but risen. The day has no significance apart from the resurrection, and we had as well throw it away, if it is not resurrection day. Any crooked business man would be a slick schemer if he could manage so as to pay off his debts at the rate of one dollar for every fifty-two. Yes, and the devil is a slick old schemer too, for he has managed to cancel 51 resurrection days a year, and to substitute one day. And that one day he has named with the name of a heathen goddess, and he has dumped into that day new clothes, chickens, rabbits, and colored eggs.

5—Easter is wrong, BECAUSE IT SETS ASIDE THE DIVINELY APPOINTED MEMORIALS OF THE RESURRECTION. I have already said that each first day of the week is resurrection day, but in addition the Lord has given us two other things to memorialize the resurrection. One is BAPTISM. The Bible says, "we are buried with Him by baptism... that like as Christ was raised

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from the dead... so we also should walk in the newness of life." Every time a believer is raised from the watery grave, that is a testimony to the resurrection of Jesus. The second is the Lord's Supper. It commemorates the death of Christ and points to the Lord's return. That has to imply that the Lord has risen, else he could not return.

6—Easter is wrong BECAUSE IT IS NOT IN THE BIBLE, as I have already said, except by mis-translation. Why should Christian people ignore the things that ARE in the Bible, and substitute something then that is not in the Bible? We Baptists are supposed to be "Bible people." We have always prided ourselves on being able to give a "thus saith the Lord," for our practices, but when it comes to Easter, there isn't any "thus saith the Lord." And when somebody condemns me for not observing Easter—or for opposing Easter—just ask him why he should condemn me for not observing something that is not in the Bible.

Jesus Didn't Eat The Passover

But now I promised to deal with another thing—the EATING OF THE LAST PASSOVER. I made the statement that Jesus did not eat the Last Passover with his disciples, and I stick to that like as Christ was raised

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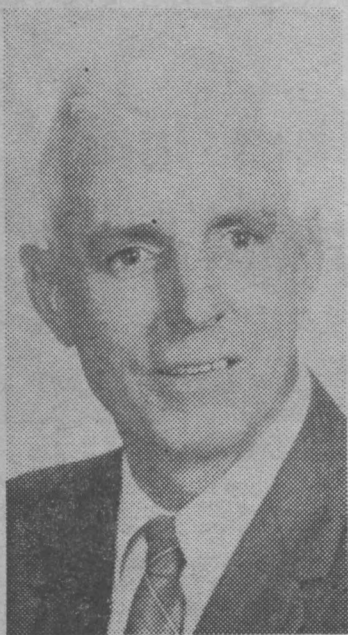
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GIVE US READERS
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Easter

(Continued from page seven)
it. It is commonly assumed—and the King James translation of the Bible, helps this assumption, that Jesus ate the last passover with His disciples, and then at the close instituted the observance of the Lord's Supper. The truth is He did NOT eat that Passover, for He DIED AS the PASSOVER LAMB at the same hour that the Passover lamb was accustomed to be slain. I have several reasons for saying this:

1 — BECAUSE PAUL BY DIVINE INSPIRATION SAYS SO. I Cor. 5:7 (Revised Version) says: "For even Christ, our Passover hath been sacrificed for us." Is that so, or not so? It is so, of course.

2 — I say Jesus did not eat the last Passover, because John makes it clear that at the time of the mock trial of Jesus the PASSOVER HAD NOT BEEN EATEN. Listen to this (John 18:28):

28. "Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment; and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover."

There is no way in the world in which that passage can be reconciled with the idea that Jesus had eaten the passover that night. It is true that Jesus had the disciples to prepare for the passover, but if you will go into a study of the Greek original — or if you will read a good modern translation, you will find that Jesus did not eat it. To the contrary He said, "With desire have I desired to eat the passover with you, but I say unto you that I shall not eat it with you again, until all things be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God."

But I can hear somebody say, "What does it matter whether He ate the last passover or not?" I'll tell you what it matters. It matters whether or not the greatest type of Christ and redemption in all the Old Testament was fulfilled.

Would the Lord have instituted this observance and commanded that it be kept through all their generations, rebuking and punishing them when they became careless about its observance — then let the whole thing fall to the ground at the end? The most amazing and awful happening that this world ever witnessed was the death of the first-born in Egypt. In one night there was a death in every Egyptian home. But God made provisions for a lamb to be the substitute for the firstborn. A lamb was killed, the blood was sprinkled on the doorway, and no home thus protected suffered death. And down through the centuries following, that Passover Lamb was held up as the type of the Redeemer that should come. John meant to tell Israel that he had arrived, when there on the bank of Jordan he pointed to Him and dramatically cried, "Behold the Lamb of God." Jesus was born to be that Lamb. Jesus was revealed to Israel to be that Lamb. Jesus lived to be that Lamb and Jesus died as that Lamb.

Jerusalem was filled with people that year, and thousands of lambs had been bought. On a Wednesday afternoon those lambs were killed. You see, the Jewish day closed with sundown, and the new day began. So right close to sundown the lambs were slain. But listen — outside the city — out here on a skull-shaped hill called Golgotha, God's Lamb was already dead. He was the one that every lamb slain down through the centuries pointed forward to. They hurried his body into Joseph's tomb so that it might not hang there on Passover night and on over the period of the high Sabbath day — the Passover Sabbath day. And the body of Jesus lay there in the tomb Wednesday night, Thursday night, Friday night — then at sundown Saturday afternoon,

Theodosia Ernest

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any one recognized head on earth, or acknowledging any sovereignty of one of those societies over others. Each bishop originally presided over one entire Church." (*Kingdom of Christ*.)

"And, if it will not seem wrong to come down from the high place of the archbishop to the stand of a simple minister, what will you say to the testimony of that learned and eminent Episcopal divine, John Edwards, D. D., who, after a careful exposition of the teachings of the Fathers upon this subject, thus concludes: 'From all these we may gather that the Scripture bishop was the chief of the presbyters, but he was not of a distinct order from them; and as for the times after the apostles, none of these writers, (Clement, Ignatius, Cyprian, Chrysostom, Theodoret, Jerome, etc.,) nor any ecclesiastical historian, tells us that an order superior to presbyters was set over the presbyters. It is true, one single person is recorded to have presided over the college of presbyters; but this college had the same power with the single person, though not the particular dignity of the presidency. The short is, the bishops in these times were presbyters; only he that presided over the body of presbyters was called bishop, while the rest were generally known by the title of presbyters; and the bishop was still but a presbyter, as to order and function; though, for distinction's sake, he was known by the name of bishop. He was superior to the other presbyters so long as he executed his office; just as a chairman in a committee is above the rest of the justices, whilst he holds that place. It was generally the most ancient presbyter that was chosen to preside over the college of presbyters; but he had no superiority of authority. All the priority or primacy he had was that of order. Here is the ancient pattern. Why was it not followed? To single Fathers we may add councils, who deliver the same sense. This, then, is the true account of the matter. Bishops were elders, or presbyters; and, therefore, of the same order. But the bishops differed from the presbyters in this only, that they were chosen by the elders to preside over them at their ecclesiastical meetings or assemblies. But, in after ages, the presbyters of some Churches parted with their liberty and right, and agreed among themselves that ecclesiastical matters should be managed by the bishop only.' (Edwards's Remains, p. 253)

"So also the famous Bishop Burnet says expressly, 'I acknowledge bishop and presbyter to be one; and so plead for no new office-bearer in the Church. The first branch of their power is their authority to publish the gospel, to manage the worship, and dispense the sacraments; and this is all that is of Divine right in the ministry, in which the bishops and presbyters are equal sharers. But, besides this, the Church claimeth a power of jurisdiction, of making rules for discipline, and applying and executing the same; all of which is, indeed suitable to the common laws of society, and the general rules of Scripture, but hath no positive warrant from any Scripture precept. And all these constitutions of Churches into synods; and the canons of discipline taking their rise from the division of the world into several provinces, beginning in the second or beginning of the third century, do clearly show that they can be derived from no Divine original, and so were, as to their form, but mere human institutions."

(To be continued next week, D. V.)

just as the old day ended and the new first day of the week begun, having been in the tomb three full days and three full nights, the angels of God came and hurled back the stone door and Jesus came forth to reveal Himself on that first Lord's Day as alive from the dead!

Ah, if that Passover type had failed, then there would be no redemption. I would not be here today; this church building would not be here today; and there would be no blessed gospel of everlasting life to preach. We would be a race of poor, feeble, dying men and women in a causeless march toward the grave, had He not died there as the Sacrificial Lamb of God. But since He hung here as the Lord's true Passover, I can exclaim with the Apostle Paul "For even Christ our Passover hath been sacrificed for us."

Is He Your Passover?

Oh, take your stand there today, will you, on that skull-shaped hill, and try to reconstruct the scene. Time and again, I chasten my soul with the realization of the suffering and grief and sorrow He bore in order that I might have the prospect of living through the golden ages of the future! I can see the black darkness settle down over Calvary. I can hear the drip, drip of His blood as it pours down and soaks into the earth. I can hear His forsaken cry as He passes under judgment — as "He who knew no sin was made to be sin for us." His cry rings out, "it is finished," and His head drops upon his breast and He dies, and as that happens an earthquake makes the earth to rock and reel as if in agony. My friends, I stake the future of my never dying soul on that death died there

that day. Just as those Israelites there in Egypt took God at His Word and placed the blood on the door posts and went inside and rested secure, so as one who has applied the blood of the real Lamb of God to the cleansing of his own soul, I rest this day, secure in Him. Can you say that? Have you claimed any part in that redemption that is in Christ-Jesus? Have you relied upon the merits of that blood shed there, as the Israelites looked unto the protection of the blood of the lamb by applying it to the door posts? What a tragedy — what a useless tragedy had any Israelite perished, when such provision for safety had been provided. What a tragedy — what a useless inexcusable tragedy should any person in this house perish when God has made such provision for you in the death of the Great Passover Lamb. Maybe you have not thought about it right — maybe you haven't let the meaning of it sink into your heart and mind — maybe you haven't thought of the great cost of the Redemption that is offered you. I am asking you to think. Who is there today, who will walk over and take your stand with me and with the rest of these Christian people, under the blood? Who is there, just now, who will look up and say from the depths of your heart, "O blessed Lamb of God, Thou who didst die for my sins, I gratefully receive thy great atonement for me, and I will confess thy name before men?"

Ed. Note: This fine message by Bro. Mason is available in booklet form at 10c each, plus postage. It is a masterpiece. Buy several today for your friends.

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

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