

The Baptist Examiner

Baptist Is Our Middle Name

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"To the law and to the Testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."—Isaiah 8:20

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MOURNER'S BENCH NOT IN THE BIBLE

A. M. OVERTON
Fulton, Mississippi

THE NEW TESTAMENT PRACTICE

In this article we want to call to the reader's attention enough of the instances of New Testament salvation to show that there was nothing like the "mourner's bench" used by any of the apostles, or New Testament preachers. We would like to challenge the reader to a close reading of the New Testament with this one thing in mind: To see if he can find one single instance where anyone, the Lord or any of His disciples, ever used anything remotely resembling the "altar-service," "mercy-seat," or the "mourner's bench." Surely if it cannot be found in the New Testament, those who claim to accept the New Testament as their rule of faith and practice ought to lay it down.

The Lord Jesus used nothing like it with Andrew, Peter, Philip and Nathaniel in John 1:35-51. Neither did He use anything of the kind with Nicodemus (John 3), or the woman at the well (John 4), or with Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10), or with the thief on the cross (Luke 23:39-45). When each one saw Him as the Messiah, the Christ, their Saviour, they received Him immediately without any help from anyone.

The gospel of Christ is God's appointed means, in the hands of the Holy Spirit, of revealing Christ, God's righteousness, to lost men. Our task is to preach it. God will make it truth to our hearers, if it

ever becomes truth to them. The Lord was emphatically clear about this in His words to Simon Peter, (Matt. 16:16,17) just after Peter had declared, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," which is saving faith (John 20:30, 31; I John 5:1). He said to Peter, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it (that truth) unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Saving faith cannot be revealed by flesh and blood, and "flesh and blood" works around the "mourner's bench."

Nothing resembling the "mourner's bench" was used on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2).

Philip did not use anything like it with the eunuch (Acts 8).

We do not see anything suggestive of it in Paul's salvation (Acts 9).

Peter does not use it with the household of Cornelius (Acts 10). Paul and Silas did nothing but speak "unto him the word of the Lord" to the Philippian jailer (Acts 16).

In writing to the Corinthians, after his first visit to that city, the apostle Paul says, "And I, brethren, when I came unto you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in (Continued on page 5, column 4)

FRIENDLY DOGMATISM

RAYMOND BENNETT
Ithaca, New York

I have not always been a Landmarker per se, but as a recent proselyte to the Landmark position, an outsider looking in, in a sense, a few points could be made.



RAYMOND BENNETT

The writer of Proverbs puts it this way, "A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly" (Prov. 18:24). The key word for our purpose is the word translated by the phrase, "shew himself friendly." Young's Analytical Concordance makes the whole phrase come from the root word "raa" and translates the word as per the King James, i.e., "show himself

friendly." It is in the hithpael species, meaning self-inflicted action upon one's self. Hence, he is to show himself friendly, no one else can do it for him.

The word does not really deal with the sincerity of the heart, as it could equally well mean to feign one's self friendly. But the impact is that certain self-restraints or impulses must be used to put forth a friendly front.

Much is left to personal judgment here, I suppose, as to where being friendly stops and compromise begins. I have known some "fundamentals" in my past that thought it wrong to play softball with a liberal. Now, I ask you, have you ever tried to witness to a man you otherwise shunned?

I have met some who apparently would rather the Gospel weren't preached at all, rather than have it preached by, for instance, a Reformed preacher. There are many who once stood behind this writer (Continued on page 7, column 3)

TUNE IN TO THE INDEPENDENT BAPTIST HOUR EACH SUNDAY

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1:00 - 1:30 p.m.

God's Redemptive Plan

By WADE H. MILES
Bluefield, West Virginia

I have been questioned many times by many types of theologians on the proper order of election, foreknowledge, sanctification, and atonement in the salvation of a lost sinner. Without any discussion about different points of view concerning this, suffice it for me to say that anyone who would order these in any fashion apart from what God has done in His Holy Revelation to His children — the Bible — is justifying an Arminian method for their "willing" their own salvation or themselves into God's good grace.

Where is the reference in the Bible to find the mind of God in this matter? There are many places but I would like to confine our study to a passage of Scripture found in I Peter 1:1-2: "Peter an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."

As is evident on observation, Simon Peter is the author of this (Continued on page 4, column 3)

A SNAKE IN A BOTTLE

By: MILBURN COCKRELL

"Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder" (Prov. 23:31-32).

The wise man discloses in these words that alcohol is a snake in a bottle. Those who have dealings with it are playing with a rattlesnake. The word "alcohol" is derived from the Arabic words "al ghou" which means "the devil." Apparently the one who coined the term had seen the havoc and heartache strong drink creates.

In our time people are alarmed at the growing number of persons on drugs and narcotics. But little is being said about a killer who stalks the lives of millions. While drug stores capture the headlines, alcoholism devastates the lives of millions of people. Churches have hushed their campaigns against ethyl alcohol. Yet alcohol is ruining lives, wrecking marriages, and breaking homes by the millions.

ALCOHOLISM IN AMERICA

Alcoholism is the fourth-ranking public problem in this country. Only heart disease and cancer causes more deaths. There are over nine million alcoholics in America. One out of every thirty-six is a victim of this curse. Three hundred fifty thousand gasp out their last breath because of this deadly evil each year. Somewhere around twenty-five million people in the United States are directly affected by chronic alcoholism. This includes the families of alcoholics which means one-eighth of the population. It is believed that half a million new victims are added every year to the number of drunks.

Americans spend twelve billion dollars annually on ethyl alcohol. The consumption of distilled spirits in 1967 was estimated at more than three hundred twenty-five million gallons. The Internal Revenue Service collected \$3,441,656,000 in taxes from liquor in 1965. The Medical World has gone on record as calling alcoholism America's most destructive drug problem. It is the most widely used drug among teen-agers. About five hundred sixty thousand youths are involved in excessive drinking. The users are up forty-one per cent. The age when drinking begins is now twelve.

Excessive drinking is the cause of many problems in America. Industry loses seven billion dollars due to this evil annually. Every major city spends one million or more each year (Continued on Page 3, Columns 4 and 5)

Pre-Trib & Post-Trib Plans In Light Of God's Word

By BILL BURKE, JR.
Lexington, Kentucky

"Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains" (Matt. 24:16).

The second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ is certainly a most controversial subject among the brethren. We have the pre-tribulation rapture teaching and the mid-trib, although the advocates of the mid-trib have dwindled somewhat in the last few years and have gone on to embrace the third teaching, the post-tribulation rapture. We have some who believe in the pre-millennial return of our Lord Jesus and others who hold to a post-millennial belief. Then there are others who do not believe Christ will return to the

earth and reign a thousand years. These are known as anti-millennialists.

Many brethren who in the past taught a pre-trib rapture have now embraced the third position I have mentioned, the post-tribulation position; that is, that every saint on the earth will inevitably go through the Great Tribulation.

I recently read in a religious publication these words: "Another error these false prophets are exposed by is their false teaching concerning a secret rapture or gathering of His people to Himself, i.e., 'Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not.'"

The obvious conclusion of this dear brother, according to his own writings, is simply this: "All who hold to and teach a pre-tribulation rapture are false prophets, and being false prophets, are lost — doomed to a lost eternity without the Lord Jesus Christ. If we (Continued on page 3, column 2)

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon By Milburn Cockrell

HOW TO ORGANIZE A CHURCH

(PREACHED JULY 10, 1977, AT THE ORGANIZATION OF CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH OF CLAY, N. Y.)

"For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch" (Mark 13:34).

One of the outstanding things about Jesus Christ was that both His friends and His enemies viewed Him "as one that had authority" (Matt. 7:29; Mark 1:22). This was so because the Father in the Everlasting Covenant, made before the morning of time, had "given him authority" (John 5:27). John 17:2 says, the Father gave Him "power (Gr. "exousia" — au-

thority) over all flesh." The Saviour exercised authority over demons, death, and disease. Those who saw Him use this authority were all amazed and said: "What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out" (Luke 4:36).

Our Lord's critics often questioned His authority: "And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?

And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him? But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet. And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what (Continued on page 2, column 1)

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How To Organize . . .

(Continued from page one)
authority I do these things" (Matt.
21:23-27). The inescapable con-
clusion of these words is that
Christ had cleansed the temple
by the authority of Heaven, an au-
thority which He possessed as the
Divine Son of God.

In the passage in Matthew 21:
23-27 we have the Saviour's testi-
mony that John the Baptist preach-
ed and baptized with all the au-
thority which Heaven could bestow
upon him. John, "a man sent from
God" (John 1:6), baptized Jesus
(Matt. 3:13-17), and many others
who were latter baptized in the
Spirit on the day of Pentecost
(Matt. 3:11; John 4:1).

With Heaven's authority John
went about his task "to make
ready a people prepared for the
Lord" (Luke 1:17). Jesus Christ,
"one having authority" (Matt. 7:
29), called out the baptized dis-
ciples of John into a company.
This company followed Christ "be-
ginning from the baptism of John"
(Acts 1:22). This company of bap-
tized disciples was the church,
founded by Jesus Christ during
the first year of His ministry on
earth.

THE CHURCH GIVEN AUTHORITY

Shortly after the organization of
the New Testament church, John
was beheaded. This left the au-
thority to make disciples and bap-
tize entirely in the hands of Christ
and His apostles, the first officials
of the church (I Cor. 12:28). It is
expressly said that Christ "gave
them power and authority" and
"sent them to preach" (Luke 9:
1-2). These apostles, acting under
the authority of Christ, "made and
baptized more disciples than John"
(John 4:1-2).

In a post-resurrection appear-
ance the Lord commissioned His
company of disciples to continue
to make disciples, to baptize, and
to indoctrinate baptized believers.
Having "all authority" in Heaven
and on earth (Matt. 28:18), Christ
said to His assembly: "Go ye
therefore, and teach all nations,
baptizing them in the name of the

Father, and of the Son, and of the
Holy Spirit: Teaching them to ob-
serve all things whatsoever I have
commanded you: and, lo, I am
with you alway, even unto the end
of the world" (Matt. 28:19-20).

This commission empowered the
church to go teach and baptize
with all the authority of Heaven
behind her activities. This was
presented in the illustration of the
text. The Son of man went on a far
journey into Heaven. He left His
house—His newly organized church
in the world. Before leaving He
gave His servants the authority
to do work in His absence. His
churches through their ordained
servants have the right and privi-
lege to act for Christ in evangel-
izing, baptizing, and teaching the
things of God. This important work
was not left to a few people who
are now dead, but to the church
as an age-lasting institution.

There was no need for Christ to
have specifically given the authority
to preach and baptize to the
church, if any believer could
preach and baptize. To assume
the Lord left the work of preach-
ing, baptizing, and teaching to
anyone who might come along is
to accuse the Lord of great care-
lessness. The overwhelming testi-
mony of the Scripture confirms
that the work of preaching, bap-
tizing, and teaching was done by
the ordained ministers of local
churches as seen in the Book of
Acts.

Dare we to suppose that Christ
gave this work to the Mother of
Harlots? Dare we suppose He com-
missioned and committed the work
of preaching and baptizing to those
who pervert the gospel and sub-
vert the ordinances? How could a
person who has been sprinkled for
baptism teach the ordinance of
baptism to anyone? How could
Christ commission the disobedient
to teach obedience to all of His
commandments? Dare we to even
suppose that Christ left the work
of evangelizing and baptizing to
some lone unbaptized believer as
our Reformed Baptist friends as-
sume? A thousand times no! Jesus
Christ would never have made
such a foolish, silly, stupid blun-
der!

THE CHURCH EXERCISES THIS AUTHORITY

The church at Jerusalem, acting
with the Divine authority given her
in the Great Commission, organ-
ized other churches of like faith
and order. She sent forth qualified
officials from her own member-
ship to plant gospel churches in
other towns and cities. The Book
of Acts gives detailed information
on the missionary endeavors of the
Mother Church.

According to Acts 6:5-6, Philip
was ordained as a deacon in the
Jerusalem Church. Shortly after
this he became "an evangelist"
(Acts 21:8). In Acts, chapter 8,
we see him going out from the
Jerusalem Church to do mission
work in Samaria: "Then Philip
went down to the city of Samaria,
and preached Christ unto them"
(Acts 8:5). Those converted under
his preaching were baptized: "But
when they believed Philip preach-
ing the things concerning the king-
dom of God, and the name of Je-
sus Christ, they were baptized, both
men and women" (Acts 8:12).

These converts were organized
into a New Testament church, for
Acts 9:31 speaks of a church in
Samaria. Through the missionary
work of Philip the church at Jeru-
salem brought forth after her
kind, and the church in Samaria
was a direct descendant of the
Jerusalem church. This was the
first church started after the Jeru-
salem church, and it was the child
of the church which Christ Him-
self established.

In Acts 11:19-21 I read: "Now
they which were scattered abroad
upon the persecution that arose
about Stephen traveled as far as
Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch,
preaching the word to none but
unto the Jews only. And some of
them were men of Cyprus and Cy-
rene, which, when they were come

to Antioch, spake unto the Gre-
cians, preaching the Lord Jesus.
And the hand of the Lord was
with them: and a great number
believed, and turned unto the
Lord."

Just who these preachers were
is uncertain. They may have been
some of the seventy missionaries
Christ had sent forth. But there is
one thing certain: they were mem-
bers of the church at Jerusalem
who had been driven to Antioch
of Syria by persecution.

These disciples were constituted
into a New Testament church by
two preachers from the Jerusalem
Church. Acts 11:22-26 relates:
"Then tidings of these things came
unto the ears of the church which
was at Jerusalem: and they sent
forth Barnabas, that he should go
as far as Antioch. Who, when he
came, and had seen the grace of
God, was glad, and exhorted them
all, that with purpose of heart
they would cleave unto the Lord.
For he was a good man, and full
of the Holy Ghost and of faith:
and much people was added unto

NOW READY!

ONE HUNDRED REASONS FOR THE PRE-TRIB RAPTURE

By MILBURN COCKRELL

\$1.50

There is no subject as controversial
among Baptists today as the rapture
question. In my book I have examined
the rise of the post-trib doctrine. The
Margaret MacDonald theory is ex-
ploded. Then I have given one hundred
reasons why I believe in the pre-trib
rapture. Those interested in the pro-
phetic Word will want to read this
book.

TBE has been pre-millennial and
pre-tribulationist since its beginning.
While we constantly seek more light
on old doctrines, we have little desire
for "new life."

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the Lord. Then departed Barnabas
to Tarsus, for to seek Saul: And
when he had found him, he brought
him unto Antioch. And it came to
pass, that a whole year they as-
sembled themselves with the
church, and taught much people.
And the disciples were called
Christians first in Antioch."

Both Barnabas (Acts 4:36) and
Saul (Acts 9:26-28) were members
of the church at Jerusalem. The
disciples at Antioch may have be-
come a church upon Barnabas's
arrival, but if not then, they were
constituted into a church upon the
arrival of Barnabas and Saul. It
seems that Barnabas and Saul
moved their membership to the
church at Antioch some time after
a brief visit back to the Mother
Church (Acts 12:25). They are
seen as members of it in Acts
13:1-2.

Once again we see that preach-
ers came from an already estab-
lished church and organized a new
group of baptized disciples into a
church. The church at Antioch had
a definite link with the church at
Jerusalem, for part of the mem-
bers of the Jerusalem Church went
into the church at Antioch. Thus
the Mother Church again brought
forth after her kind.

The church at Antioch sent forth
Barnabas and Saul to do foreign
mission work. These men, acting
under the authority of their home
church, organized churches in
Rome, Corinth, Ephesus, Galatia,
Thessalonica, Philippi, Iconium,
Laodicea, Lystra, and other places.
All of these new churches were or-
ganized by missionaries from the
church at Antioch, which had a
connection back to the Jerusalem
church organized by Jesus Christ.
The church at Antioch brought
forth after her kind.

Churches in the apostolic age did
not just spontaneously pop up
without any connection with an-
other church or the work of a
missionary. There were baptized
disciples at Ephesus before Paul
came with authority from the
church at Antioch of Syria, but we

read of no organized church until
Paul's visit and re-baptism of
these twelve disciples. If a mere
coming together of disciples makes
a church, then a Christian gather-
ing at the Lion's Club is a church.
There must be the Divine authority
present before you can have a
New Testament Church. To ignore
this fact is to turn one's back upon
the revelation of God.

To have a cow you must have a
mother cow. No one but an infidel
evolutionist believes otherwise.
There cannot be a calf without a
mother cow. The same is true of
a church. In order to have a new
church there must be a mother
church. God's immutable law is
that everything brings forth "after
his kind" (Gen. 1:24-25). There is
no such thing as a spontaneous
generation of animals, nor is there
any spontaneous generation when
it comes to New Testament
churches.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CHURCH SUCCESSION

Ever since Jesus organized the
first church, there has never been
a single minute when there were
not true churches in the world
preaching the gospel and baptiz-
ing believers. There were true
churches in the Valley of Piedmont
all during the Dark Ages. There
were true churches in Wales from
the first century until now. Whole
churches from Wales came to
America. The churches in Amer-
ica are the descendants of the
English Baptists. Calvary Baptist
Church of Ashland, Kentucky, is
in the line of Baptist perpetuity.
We have a mother church and
that church has a mother church
for two hundred years — all the
way back to the planting of En-
glish Baptist churches in America.

Church perpetuity is not so
much a historical question as it
is a Biblical one. Jesus Christ
promised in Matthew 28:19-20 that
His church as an institution would
be in the world to exercise His
authority until the end of the age.
He did not promise to preserve
all the historical records — just
His churches. No one doubts that
Christ kept His promise but a
religious infidel.

If Jesus Christ still has true
churches on earth today, then they
alone have authority to start other
churches. You cannot have a New
Testament church after the apos-
tolic order unless you have a
mother church — a church which
has a perpetuity back to the first
church at Jerusalem. For believ-
ers to organize a religious society
apart from the aid of an already
existing church of Christ is to
give the world another synagogue
of Satan. God forbid that men
ignore the bride of Christ, if they
desire to begin a church.

I am here today with a letter
of authority from my home church
to constitute the baptized believ-
ers in this place into a true church.
That is the purpose of this service.
Today Calvary Baptist Church will
have a child — she will bring forth
after her kind. I am here aided
by Elders Oscar Mink, Harry Bal-
mer, and Willard Pyle, to confer
by the authority given to Calvary
Baptist Church by Christ all the
rights, powers, and privileges up-

on this assembly possessed by
any New Testament church.

A DOCTRINAL SUCCESSION

A church must have fellowship
around kindred beliefs and prac-
tices. The basis of fellowship in
the Jerusalem Church was the
apostles' doctrine. A church of the
living God must be "the pillar
and ground of the truth" (I Tim.
3:15). She must "keep the or-
dinances" (I Cor. 11:2) as they
were delivered by Christ and His
inspired apostles. She must not
deny the body of truth contained
in the Old and New Testament
(Rev. 2:13), but rather she "should
earnestly contend for the faith"
(Jude 3). She must not deviate
from "one Lord, one faith, one
baptism" (Eph. 4:5).

A historical succession from the
Jerusalem church is worthless
unless a church today conforms
(Continued on page 3, column 1)

BRIEF NOTES

Grace Baptist Church of Tulsa,
Okla., and Pastor David O'Neal
have opened a mission in Kirks-
ville, Missouri. It is called Grace
Missionary Baptist Mission, and
its missionary-pastor is Eld. Bruce
Morgan. The worship services are
conducted on Sunday at 10:30 a.m.
and 6:00 p.m., and on Wednesday
night at 7:30 p.m. Presently they
are meeting in homes, but they
hope to have a building soon. Any-
one interested who lives in this
area may call 816-665-2559.

I goofed again! In the Bible Con-
ference program I carelessly left
one brother and his topic off. Eld.
Wayne Crow will speak from 3:30
to 4:00 on Saturday afternoon on
the subject of "The Sin Unto
Death" from I John 5:16. Please
add this information to your pro-
gram.

There will be tapes offered again
this year of each sermon. More in-
formation will be given on this
following the conference.

The Hallman children who were
involved in a wreck some time
back are doing fine. God has
granted them a restoration of
health.

Some have written asking how
to get to the Mountain View Bap-
tist Camp which is near Monti-
cello, Ky. The city of Monticello is
south of Lexington, Ky., and west
of Interstate 75. It is best to come
to Monticello and then to take
Highway 200 and follow the signs
until you get to the camp. If you
have any trouble finding it you
may contact the Immanuel Baptist
Church by calling 606-348-8620.

Things are shaping up for a
good conference again this year.
We hope to see many of our friends
on September 2-5.

The Indore Baptist Church and
Pastor Ray Brown will conduct
revival services Aug. 22-28. The
services will be nightly at 7:30
with Elder E. G. Cook of Birm-
ingham, Ala., as the speaker. The
church and pastor invites you to
attend these services.

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How To Organize . . .

(Continued from Page Two)
to God's Word in its faith and practice. There might be a historic succession from the apostles, yet in the lapse of ages the whole form, doctrine, spirit, and life of the body could be changed. A historic connection is no proof of identity of character. The Roman Catholic Church goes back to a group of dissatisfied Baptists in the church which Paul organized in Rome.

A church cannot qualify as a New Testament church unless it conforms in the principles, precepts, doctrine, and organization of the church constituted by Christ. Only then can it be a true church invested with all the powers conferred on the church by Christ and be permitted to act under His authority. Such a church which conforms to the apostolic pattern is invested with as much Divine authority as the original church of which the apostles themselves were members.

HOW MANY DOES IT TAKE TO CONSTITUTE A CHURCH?

The Bible seems to teach that two or three persons are sufficient to constitute a New Testament church. Jesus Christ said: "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20). When such a number in a remote area where there are no other churches assemble with reference to Christ, there is a suitable number to organize a true church. Such persons must come together with a desire to advance Christ's cause and live according to His teaching.

The church at Jerusalem began with five members (John 1), and the church at Ephesus with twelve members (Acts 19:7). Some Scriptures indicate that a church should have more members than two or three. There are at least five members implied in a church in dealing with the personal offense. The church at Philippi consisted of saints, bishops, and deacons, suggesting six or more persons (Phil. 1:1).

WHAT IS A CHURCH?

A New Testament church is not the place of worship, for any place of worship is called the house of God (Gen. 28:17). The tabernacle (Jud. 18:31) and the temple (I

Kings 4:1-2, 29) were places of worship, but neither of these places were called the church.

A true church is more than a branch of another church. It is more than a religious body with authority. It is more than a group of disciples meeting together to preach and study the Bible. A church in the Bible sense is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ, governed by His law, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word.

In order to have a church, baptized saints must come together in one place at the same time. It is written of the church at Jerusalem that "they were all with one accord in one place" (Acts 2:1). When Paul and Barnabas came to Antioch they "gathered the church together" (Acts 14:27). Paul wrote to the Corinthian church: "When ye come together in the church . . . When ye come together therefore into one place" (I Cor. 11:18, 20). In such a local institution when all the members are present in the service, they are called "the whole church" (Rom. 16:23). The assembly of the church at Jerusalem is called in Acts 15:22 "the whole church."

Baptized believers must come together in a church state and be a habitation of God through the Spirit (Eph. 2:22). They are to be glued together in a union of spirits as if they were but one spirit. It is written of the Jerusalem Church: "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul" (Acts 4:32). "The whole body" must be "fitted together and compacted" (Eph. 4:16). The hearts of each member of the body of Christ must be knitted "together in love" (Col. 2:2), and they are to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:13).

This union of qualified persons is made by voluntary consent and agreement. They must give themselves up to Christ and His cause and to obedience to God's pastor. Of the Corinthians it is said: "And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God" (II Cor. 8:5). It is incumbent on them as a body of Christ to walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Head of the church. It was only after Israel covenanted and consented to obey the laws of God that they were called "the church in the wilderness" (Acts 7:38). (Continued on page 5, column 4)

Pre-Trib And Post-Trib

(Continued from page one)
follow this reasoning to its logical conclusion, it necessarily follows that anyone who does not embrace the post-trib theory is doomed to the fires of Hell. This reasoning (?) makes one's salvation contingent upon what he believes

IS "THAT" IN THE BIBLE?



Question:

"CAN YOU COMPARE WITH REFERENCE TO VARIETY OF INSTRUMENTS THE TWO MOST FAMOUS ORCHESTRAS IN THE BIBLE?"

Answer: David's and Nebuchadnezzar's both had psalteries, harps, and cornets, but David's had cymbals, timbrels, and trumpets, which are not mentioned in Nebuchadnezzar's. The latter, however, had flutes, sackbuts, and dulcimers (bagpipes), which David's did not have. But Nebuchadnezzar's is credited with having had "also all kinds of music." See Second Samuel 6:5; First Chronicles 15:16-28; and Daniel 3:5. The word translated "sackbut" is in Hebrew "sabbekha," probably like the Greek "sambuke," a stringed instrument, perhaps, a large harp. It was an easy mistake to identify the sabbekha with the sackbut, or trombone (from the French "saquebute," literally pull push).

rather than in Whom he believes.

This reasoning is somewhat along the lines of Roman Catholicism, Campbellism and Armstrongism. These three religions have two things in common; baptismal regeneration and no salvation outside their church. Mr. Armstrong, who has "discovered" the ten "lost" tribes, writes in the Plain Truth (?): "Baptism is essential to salvation," and consigns those outside the World Wide Church (?) of God to a future annihilation. Where does this leave those who have died before Mr. Campbell or Mr. Armstrong came along? Do you see the similarity? We thank God that such reasoning is neither logical nor scriptural.

To make "secret chambers" (Matt. 24:26) mean being caught up "to meet the Lord in the air" (I Thes. 4:17) takes a rather active imagination and a bit of spiritualizing. In all fairness to the post-tribbers, they are excellent spiritualizers. They can find in almost every verse in both the Old and New Testaments a church, in spite of the fact that the Lord didn't build His until the days of His own personal ministry.

The cloud of the glory cannot be a secret place, literally a closet. Of the four times "tamion" appears in the New Testament, it is translated twice "closet" (Matt. 6:6; Luke 12:3), "secret chambers" (Matt. 24:26), and "storehouse" (Luke 12:24). How can being "caught up together with them . . . to meet the Lord in the air" (I Thes. 4:17) be the similitude of a closet or a storehouse? It cannot if the literal method of scriptural interpretation be employed.

"Air" in I Thessalonians 4:17 comes from "aeer," not "tamion." I read in Isaiah 26:20-21: "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity." Here Isaiah in prophetic vision sees the rapture, and the prophet doesn't describe the "hiding" as "secret chambers," but only as being "chambers" which would be where the Lord is (John 14:1).

I believe and teach that in the Great Tribulation, God deals in particular with His own chosen (Continued on Page 8, Column 1)

A SNAKE IN A BOTTLE

(Continued from Page One)

to take care of its drunks. Alcoholism is responsible in part for our jammed jails, clogged courts, and over-worked police forces. In a recent report to the U.S. Congress, the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse estimated that we spend fifteen billion dollars to take care of the drunks in this country.

Alcoholism contributes to the rise in crime in our country. The Methodist Board of Temperance relates: "More than sixty per cent of all arrests made by police in the first six months of 1956 were due to crimes directly related to alcoholic beverages." Of 2,945,216 arrests for all offenses made by police in 1,771 cities, 1,273,999 were for drunkenness, 325,935 for disorderly conduct, 137,098 for driving while intoxicated, and 50,195 for violations of state and federal liquor laws. The total of 1,786,547 liquor related arrests amounted to almost 10,000 a day. Former Director J. Edgar Hoover of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, in his 1958 annual report, said: "Fifty-two per cent of all major crimes in our nation involve drunkenness." To call ethyl alcohol a snake in a bottle is to give it a very mild term.

Alcohol is the largest single factor leading to highway accidents and fatalities. Survey reports that the drinking driver is responsible for the slaughter of over 25,000 people and 800,000 crashes in the U.S. every year. One out of every 550 cars coming at you on the highway is being driven by a person on alcohol or narcotics.

Centuries ago the prophet Amos wrote: "Woe to them . . . That drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments: but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph" (Amos 6:1,6).

ALCOHOLISM A WORLD-WIDE MALADY

Alcoholism is not just a problem in America. Its tentacles spread into virtually every nation on earth making it a world-wide tragedy. According to Mexico's Alcoholics Anonymous one out of every five Mexicans is an alcoholic. This means that there are nine million alcoholics out of the fifty million population.

In France there are about four million alcoholics. It is said that 355,000 Frenchmen lose their lives annually because of the consumption of alcohol. Recent statistics reveal the average French adult consumes 29.5 quarts of alcohol each year. The liquor problem costs the French government 7 million francs annually.

Drunkenness is a major problem in Russia. It is believed there are 10 million drunks in the Soviet Union. Alcoholism is a factor in 65 per cent of all murders, 71 per cent of all bodily harm, 40 per cent of all absences, 90 per cent of all juvenile crimes, 84 per cent of all thefts and 54 per cent of all rapes.

Public drunkenness has reached an alarming proportion in Britain. There are about half a million alcohol abusers in this country. The snake in a bottle cost the British 250 million pounds a year.

Canada has 300,000 alcoholics. Six per cent of all Australians are drunkards. There are 370,000 alcoholics in South Africa. In West Germany alcoholics number 600,000. Two million Spaniards are drunks. It is also a serious problem in other countries.

Alcoholism is a serious problem in all the world. There are 25 million drunkards scattered over the world in all nations. Three million others are pre-alcoholics. The Holy Bible says to this 25 million: "Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them! And the harp, and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts; but they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands" (Isa. 5:11-12).

ALCOHOLISM AND HISTORY

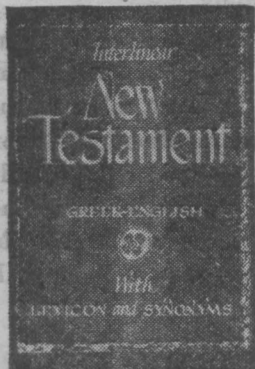
By the sin of drunkenness Noah exposed himself to shame and contempt (Gen. 9:20-21). While drunk Lot committed incest with his two daughters (Gen. 19:30-36). Amnon's blood was mixed with his wine when he was murdered by Absalom (II Sam. 13:28-29). Ben-hadad, the king of Syria, and his confederates were killed while intoxicated (I Kings 20:13-21). The kingdom of Babylon fell when King Belshazzar was drunk with wine (Dan. 5). The use of strong drink got Nabal the Carmelite into serious trouble (I Sam. 25:36-37). Alexander the Great died drunk at the age of thirty-three. Many American soldiers were drunk when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor in 1941.

ALCOHOL AND BUSINESS

Drinking is big business in our country. Seventy-five per cent of all Americans drink in some form. There are more alcoholics in the U.S. than there are people in the state of Kentucky. Men in their late thirties who are married, steadily employed, and attend church are the largest group of alcoholics in America. Fifty-nine per cent of all Protestants, 79 per cent of all Catholics, and 87 per cent of all Jews drink ethyl alcohol.

Someone will say, "People are going to drink. We need the tax money. So let them drink so we can get more taxes."

Must we raise taxes by selling a snake in the bottle? Must we accumulate taxes at the expense of letting people wilfully commit suicide by drinking themselves to death? Would it not (Continued on Page 4, Columns 4 and 5)



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THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

AUGUST 20, 1977

PAGE THREE

The Baptist Examiner Forum

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT TO:

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER — P. O. BOX 910 — ASHLAND, KY. 41101

"Did God send the wise men to see the new born King? Were they magicians?"

JAMES
HOBBS

Rt. 2, Box 182
McDermott, Ohio

PASTOR
Kings Addition
Baptist Church
South Shore, Ky.



Let us consider the last question first. The Greek word that is translated wise men is the word that could be translated magician. However, we must understand that the magician considered there is not the same as the magician of our society. Another translation for "magician" is "oriental scientist." They were indeed wise men as far as the knowledge and education of their day. They saw the star that appeared over Christ and followed its sign. They were actually fulfilling the Scripture. "And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising" (Gen. 60:3).

Did God send them? Since they fulfilled the Scripture, my answer is a very definite "yes." God controls all things. "Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, THE MAN THAT EXECUTETH MY COUNSEL FROM A FAR COUNTRY: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it" (Isa. 46:9-11).

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We are not told that God sent these wise men, but rather that He led them. He led them by means of the star. In Matthew 2:2 they saw His star. And in verse 9 we are told that the star went before them and stood over the place where the young child was. The Catholic Church has messed up the story of the wise men just as she has everything else in the dear old Book. In the Nativity Scene that you can see in most Baptist churches at Christmas time you will see three of these men. And most likely you can even learn their names. Who set the number and gave the names to them? If you do not know that all this is Catholic junk you need to wake up.

All we know about the number of these wise men is that there were more than one. It could have been two, or it could have been a dozen of them. And the names that have been given to them is nothing but the figment of evil men's imagination. Another heretical thing about the so-called Nativity Scene is their having these wise men come to see the young child while He was still in the manger. In Luke 2, the shepherds did come to see Him while He was still in the manger, because they were in the same country,

that is, they were already nearby. But in Matthew 2:11, the wise men came into the house where the young child was. From verses 7 and 16 we learn that Jesus was some two years old when these wise men made their visit. Joseph and Mary with the young child had long since returned to their home in Nazareth.

These men were certainly not magicians by any means. If they had been magicians they would have probably just made Jesus think He was receiving some gold. A magician is a person who is an expert in the art of deception. These were learned men. Men of true wisdom.

ROY
MASON

RADIO MINISTER
BAPTIST PREACHER
Arlpeka, Florida



All sorts of fanciful myths have been devised concerning the wise men. What we don't know about these wise men would fill a volume as big as a Sears, Roebuck catalogue. What we do know about them is contained in a few verses in the second chapter of Matthew. All kinds of notions about these men have been formed in our minds through Christmas cards and Christmas advertising. There are several things about the so-called wise men that we need to realize.

1. Did God send them? Your guess is as good as mine. If God did send them we don't know anything about it.

2. Were there three wise men? We simply don't know. The Bible doesn't say there were three. Because gifts were made consisting of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, it is generally assumed that there were three gift givers to dispense these gifts.

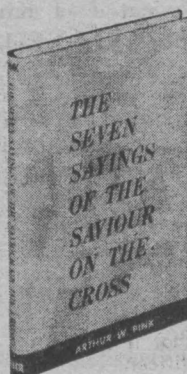
3. Did the wise men visit Jesus in the stable of Bethlehem? No, it was some time after the birth of Christ before they showed up, and Mary and Joseph were living in a house at that time. This is declared by Matthew 2:11. Christmas pictures portray three men on three camels, and we have a Christmas song that has them saying,

"We three kings of the Orient are."

4. Were these men magicians?

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Not necessarily. The expression "wise men" is from the Greek word "magoi." Men designated by this title often dealt with astronomy. Some dabbled with various forms of learning, and some were involved with different forms of magic.

Did God send these men to see the new born king? We have no record that He did. One guess is as good as another, as I remarked at the beginning of the article. Some have believed that these were men of wealth, and that they gave gifts that were valuable. Because of the determination of the King to put the baby to death, the Lord warned Joseph to take Mary and the Child and go to Egypt. This probably involved the need for quite a bit of money. Perhaps these gifts were enough to cover their expense while they lived in Egypt. If it happened this way, then perhaps God did send the wise men to Bethlehem. I don't know about this. I'll just have to wait and find out.

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Of course God sent them. Why else would they have come?

Their arrival was, evidently some time after the birth of Christ, maybe as much as two years later (Matt. 2), nevertheless, they came, found Him and worshipped (Matt. 2:11).

Were they magicians? Probably not, but they were astrologers (Matt. 2:2), at least to the extent that they were able to ascertain His star. The original word for these men is MAGI — most often interpreted WISE.

God's Redemptive . . .

(Continued from page one)

who would, it appears, rather the Epistle and let me suggest that you read it through very carefully two or three times. To read and study in this way will fill you with hope because this is the Epistle of hope. Through this manner of study you will become well grounded in the doctrines of assurance and faith. You will also be greatly impressed by the majesty and greatness of God and thrilled by the glory of God revealed here.

Note how the letter begins: "Peter." He starts by giving his name as was the custom in the days in which he lived. He was perhaps the best loved of all the Lord's disciples. He was married and was a fisherman by trade. He was introduced to Jesus, at the start of our Lord's ministry, by his brother Andrew. Peter was a very impulsive and affectionate person. He made some spontaneous confessions concerning the Lord and later grieved the Lord by his denial. However, he was later wonderfully restored and commissioned. He preached one of the greatest sermons in the Bible (Acts 2:14-36)! In the phrase following his name, he addresses himself as an apostle of Jesus Christ. An apostle is a sent one, one who is sent by the Lord and not self appointed.

Having given his name and informed us of his authority, Peter goes on in verse one and two to give a description of the people to whom he is writing, and this (Continued on page 5, column 2)

A SNAKE IN A BOTTLE

(Continued from Page Three)

make more sense to raise taxes some other way, especially since most drunkards cannot afford to drink?

To legalize liquor for the sake of taxes is foolish. In 1959 in the state of Georgia it took \$23.61 of the taxpayers money to collect each dollar of revenue from liquor, wine, and beer. Georgians spent \$148,333,300 for whiskey, wine, and beer as revealed in the sales tax division of the Revenue Commissioner. Estimated crime in Georgia due to liquor is \$290,400,000. In the United States we receive around 4 billion in taxes, yet we spend 15 billion to take care of the drunks. Is it worth it for the taxes?

"But, preacher, there is much money to be made by selling ethyl alcohol," says someone. I do not dispute this, but look at the harm the product does to your customers. The Bible says, "Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues without right" (Prov. 16:8). Habakkuk 2:12 declares: "Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood, and stablisheth a city by iniquity."

King David assisted Uriah in getting drunk. II Samuel 11:13 says: "And when David had called him, he did eat and drink before him; and he made him drunk . . ." Those who give a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple shall be rewarded. But he who gives his neighbor ethyl alcohol commits abominable wickedness. He is an enemy to his neighbor and a destroyer of decency and order.

ALCOHOLISM AND COMMON SENSE

It is not smart to drink; it is stupid. "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise" (Prov. 20:1). Drinking causes one to err mentally, morally and spiritually: "But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment. For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean" (Isa. 28:7-8).

Alcohol abuse leads to adultery and cursing: "Look not thou upon the wine when it is red . . . Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things" (Prov. 23:31-33).

Is it right to build churches to save men, and at the same time license shops that destroy them? Is it right to license a man to sell that which will make him drunk, and then punish the man for being drunk? Is it right to license a man to make paupers, and then to tax sober men to take care of the drunks? Is it right to license a saloon to teach vice, and then to tax people for schools to teach virtue? It is right to derive a revenue of a traffic which no decent man will defend? Is it right to preach justice and charity, and then vote to license a thing which robs the widows and orphans of their bread?

Statistics show 10,000 people are killed by intoxicating liquor, whereas only one is killed by a mad dog, yet we kill the dog and license the liquor store. We kill rattlesnakes who bite people, but we license people to sell a snake in a bottle.

Some may say they just drink socially. I heard of a man who told his preacher that. He told the preacher that a social drink never hurt anybody. One night on the way home from church he found his daughter and her boyfriend dead in a car wreck. The crash was caused by drunkenness. As the man went home he cursed the man who sold his daughter the devil soup. Upon arriving at home he decided to take a social drink to settle his nerves. But his bottle was not in its usual place. On the shelf was a note signed by his daughter which said: "Dad, we took your bottle with us. We thought you wouldn't mind us drinking a little since you do it yourself." Did a little social drink hurt this man?

But another will say, "I drink moderately. I am temperate in all things like the Bible says." This saying is unscriptural and absurd. It is a sin to drink moderately. Would it be right to murder moderately? To steal moderately? To lie moderately? We know that this would not be right. Seventy per cent of alcoholics started out by drinking moderately.

One has well written: "Drink has shed more blood, hung more crepes, sold more homes, plunged more people into bankruptcy, armed more villains, slain more innocent, blinded more eyes, dethroned more reason, wrecked more manhood, dishonored more womanhood, broken more hearts, snapped more wedding rings, blasted more lives, driven more to suicide, and dug more graves than any other scourge that has ever cursed the world!"

Abe Lincoln once said: "Liquor has many defenders, but no defense."

ALCOHOLISM AND POVERTY AND SORROW

The Bible teaches that excess drinking is a road to sorrow. Proverbs 23:29-30 declares: "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine." Isaiah 28:1 reads: "Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim, whose glorious beauty is a fading flower, which are on the head of" (Continued on Page 6, Columns 4 and 5)



FOR CHRISTIAN BOYS . . .

The editor urges our readers to contribute articles to this column. Articles "FOR CHRISTIAN BOYS" should be written by Christian men and boys, and "FOR CHRISTIAN GIRLS" by Christian women and girls. Such articles must be at least one page, typed and doubled spaced, yet it must not exceed two such pages. Each article should be accompanied by your name and address as well as the name of the Baptist church where you are a member.

"THE FIRST STEP"

By FERRELL KENNEDY
Normantown, West Virginia

Much sound Scriptural advice has been given you through this column. I have followed it closely and have wished that in my youth I could have had the advantages and exhortations which, thanks to TBE, are yours for the taking. I might have avoided the pitfalls, the wanderings, and the backsliding that marred my early life. It would be well for you to continually thank God that He has put it in the hearts of His people to offer you this helping hand, that you would lead a more consecrated life.

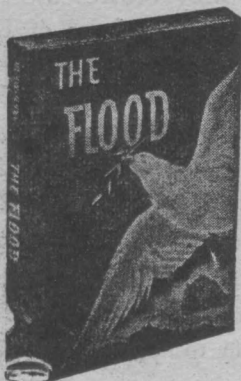
My word of exhortation will be brief, dealing primarily with just one grievous error that is so common in this age where iniquity abounds. It is the use of beer. I know the commonly accepted theory that beer is harmless, that its alcohol content is low, that it can in moderation, be beneficial to the health, and the Satan-inspired excuse that "everybody does it." None of these theories are true. No, not one. It is harmful to the health, its alcohol content is high enough to be habit-forming, and not all people drink it. The obvious falsity of these theories should cause the young Christian to shun it as he would a plague.

But the great danger lies in this fact, that probably 95 per cent of the hopeless alcoholics in America took their first step toward alcoholism when they drank their first glass of beer. Of course, they had no intentions of becoming addicts. But to be "one of the boys," because they believed the lie that it was harmless, and that "everybody does it" they drank again. Soon they began to like it and a craving for more seized them.

Inevitably, the mildness of beer failed to quench their thirst, and they felt the need for something more potent. By the continued use of beer, their once tender conscience, became seared, so the

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change to hard drink was easy. At first, only small quantities were necessary, but the appetite grew and more and more alcohol was needed to produce that feeling of well-being, a feeling that is one of Satan's tools, as he lures them deeper into his evil web. The result is acute alcoholism, and most of the Skid Row tenants could claim this gradual descent into evil as their life's story, a story that began with a "harmless" glass of beer.

A wise and merciful God has given you ample warning in His Word as to the hidden dangers and the unspeakable evils of drinking.

"Wine is a mocker and strong drink is raging and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise" (Prov. 20:1). This should be sufficient for the young Christian who desires to please God. But the evils of drink are revealed and denounced throughout the Bible. So, let me beseech you: "Seek ye out the book of the Lord and read." "Search the scriptures." "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed." And when you are pressed to take that first glass of beer, refuse. Don't make that first perilous, downward step. Don't be taken captive by Satan at his will. Believe me, it isn't as far from a glass of beer to acute alcoholism as he would have you to believe. "Resist the devil and he will flee from you," and at all times, be "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." God bless you and keep you from evil.

God's Redemptive . .

(Continued from page 4)

brings us to the point of our sermon. Notice the arrangement of five key words in verse two: elect, foreknowledge, sanctification, obedience, and sprinkling of blood. If you are a Christian you might want to ask yourself the question, "When and where did the amazing work of grace begin?" It began back in eternity before the foundation of the world in the heart of God.

Verse two tells us we were elected and chosen by God back in eternity — before time and creation. I cannot understand the wonder of it nor am I able to explain it, however, I am sure and fully persuaded that God selected everyone of His children (Eph. 1:4-6). Verse two also tells us that we were not only chosen or elected, but we were elected according to the foreknowledge of God. It is important to notice that God the Father is the author of salvation.

Foreknowledge conveys the idea of previous knowledge which includes choice. You might say that God knows because of His choice. He decreed, therefore He knows. It is a deliberate action because of divinely ordained decision that was made in eternity. God chose me in spite of my sin, my failure, my weakness, my total depravity. He not only chose us but He also put our names down in the book of life. Regardless of what the song says, there is never a new name written down in glory. I think we can safely say then that we were sanctified by God for salvation from eternity.

This leads us to the next step in the process of atonement and that is encompassed in the phrase we find in verse two, "through sanctification of the Spirit." Our salvation was planned in eternity and now the Holy Spirit has searched us out, identified us, and set us apart to be the Lord's. He is seeking out and setting apart those whom God the Father has chosen. How is it a lost, spiritually dead sinner ever becomes interested in spiritual things, and primarily, the Lord Jesus Himself? It is only because the quickening power of the Holy Spirit has done a work in his heart.

The effective operation of the Holy Spirit doesn't end here — He is at work in the believer after redemption to lead him into all things. I think some have defined this as progressive sanctification. I have no argument with this, however, it is an important work of the Holy Spirit to choose out of the elect those that should be part of the Bride of Christ and lead them into Scriptural baptism. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether

Such as leaves the Master's hand.

There is not the clearest color Can display His beauty grand. None on earth can save a soul— 'Tis God's wondrous work of grace.

Jesus Christ — the Mighty Victor Over sin — did take my place. See the picture of salvation See the vivid crimson flow — That by simple faith believing Jesus washes white as snow.

How To Organize . .

(Continued from Page Three)

A church is composed only of those who are voluntarily associated, under special covenant, to maintain the worship, the truths, the ordinances, and the discipline of God's Word. Therefore membership involves a personal obligation to promote the object of the body expressed in the covenant. These objects are three: the social united worship of God, the perpetuation and diffusion of the gospel, and the sanctification of its own members.

A church is a permanent organization with a definite design and a mutually obligatory compact; and it differs from an ordinary assembly of Christians in that it is organized under a Divine constitution and according to a Divine model. Otherwise, any Christian organization — as a missionary society or convention — would be a church. The compact naturally consists of a covenant and of a statement of the fundamental truths of the Word of God as received by them.

Let us always see the church in the light of its glorious Head, Jesus Christ. May we that are members of His body faithfully serve our soon-coming Bridegroom. May our motto ever be: "Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end" (Eph. 3:21).

Mourner's Bench

(Continued from page one)

much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power" (I Cor. 2:1-4).

In this passage we find three important facts:

1. Paul came to these lost Corinthians "declaring the testimony (Word) of God." That was what he was sent to do.

2. He determined not to know anything among them (lost people) save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. He was determined not to know anything like the "mourner's bench," or anything except the crucified Christ.

3. He did not use enticing (persuasive) words in dealing with these lost people. That is, he did not use what man's wisdom would dictate as being persuasive. He used God's Word, which is both persuasive and empowering.

Therefore, we may go where we will in the New Testament, and we will find nothing that resem-

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bles the modern practice of the "mourner's bench." How so many conscientious people, preachers, and others, could have been so blind to this fact is hard to understand! And yet, having been so misled, this writer fully sympathizes with them, and prays earnestly that this little article may be used of the Lord to open their eyes to their error.

THE TESTIMONY OF HISTORY

The natural reaction of any inquiring mind, after seeing that the "mourner's bench" is utterly without Scriptural foundation in fact or principle, is to ask, When did this practice actually get started?

As stated above, this writer was led to see that this practice was wholly unsupported by the New Testament, and laid it down years ago. He knew that it was of "this side of the New Testament" origin, but he could not find any reliable data as to just when and where it actually did originate.

Some months ago, he spent some time in the world's largest library, the Congressional Library in Washington, D.C., with the aid of a trained assistant, searching out what history had to say about this matter. There he was able to search out the various church histories and check through many thousands of volumes that might have something to say on the ques-

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tion. To his utter surprise he discovered that very little has ever been written about the "mourner's bench." He found out for the first time that it is a provincial southern religious custom and is almost wholly unknown outside the south. When he inquired of the librarian there, supposedly one of the best informed men in the land, about the "mourner's bench," he exclaimed, "The 'mourner's bench.' Why I never heard of it."

But, there and elsewhere, we have found enough historical evidence to show conclusively that the "mourner's bench" is of comparatively recent origin. In no instance have we found, even from those who believe in it and practice it, any claim that it was known or practiced in any form before 1780 A.D.

Those who are acquainted with the Scriptures know that the Lord speaks of a general "falling away" toward the end of this age (II Thess. 2:3; II Tim. 3:1-7; Rev. 3:14-18). Therefore, anything that is of modern origin may be a part of, or a result of that "falling away." Most of the "Christianity" of today is "apostate Christianity." The only way we can be sure and safe in our judgments of such things is to try them honestly and unbiasedly by the Scriptures. This we have sought to do with reference to the "mourner's bench" in this little volume. Our treatment has been brief, but we challenge the reader to carry on an exhaustive investigation of the whole New Testament, until he becomes thoroughly convinced about this matter.

The "mourner's bench" seems to have been first called "the anxious seat," and grew out of "the

(Continued on page 6, column 1)

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

AUGUST 20, 1977

PAGE FIVE

THE FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM

By FRANK BECK

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Mourner's Bench

(Continued from page five)

"inquiry," or "anxious meetings" used by zealous evangelists of the early part of the 19th century. At the first the preacher would invite those interested to come to the front and remain for further instruction after the close of the services. This type of practice does not violate any principle of the Scriptures, but may be used with great profit and in complete faithfulness to the Lord and His Word.

But Satan's business is to corrupt everything that honors the Lord, and that is used to lead lost sinners to a saving knowledge of Christ. This he did with the "inquiry meeting."

We were rather surprised to find that even these "inquiry meetings" were of modern origin. Charles L. Thompson, in his book, "TIMES OF REFRESHING," published in 1877 says,

"Inquiry meetings, properly so-called, may be counted among the new methods of the past fifty years."

Humphrey, in his "REVIVAL SKETCHES AND MANUAL," says,

"My acquaintance with them (inquiry, or anxious meetings) was about 1817."

In the book "THE ANXIOUS BENCH," by John W. Nevin, president of Franklin and Marshall College, published in 1843-44, we found this testimony:

"The system of new measures (the 'wailing bench') has no affinity whatever with the life of the Reformation, as embodied in the Augsburg Confession and the Heidelberg Catechism. It could not have found any favor in the eyes of Zwingli or Calvin. Luther would have denounced it in most unmerciful terms . . . The system in question, in its principle and soul, is neither Calvinism, nor Luther-

anism, but Wesleyan Methodism."

Those who know the life and work of Martin Luther, who dared to break with Catholicism and fight its formalism, ritualism and priestcraft, can easily imagine his reaction to anything so inherently Catholic as the "mourner's bench."

An interesting testimony was left by a remarkable woman, Mrs. Calvin (nee Eglantine Garrett) Henderson, mother of our late departed brother, J. L. Henderson, who was born in Edgefield District (County) South Carolina in 1813. Mrs. Henderson said that somewhere around 1830, a converted negro slave, one Henry Adams, preached to the negroes and also to the whites. He adopted the practice of asking those who were interested to come to the front and let him pray for them. They would then go back to their seats. Mrs. Henderson, born and raised in South Carolina, and spent most of her long life in Alabama and Mississippi, said that this was the first instance she ever heard of any such practice.

The question "What is the origin of the mourner's bench?" was submitted to the National Conference of Jews and Christians, in New York City. Quoting from a leading "Protestant," they reply:

"The origin of the mourner's bench is obscure. It seems that Dr. William P. Chandler, M.D., invited seekers of a Christian experience to come forward to the chancel as early as 1799. In the great camp meeting that began in the Nineteenth Century exhorters walked through the congregation and urged people to fall on their knees where they were. The mourner's bench was a distinctive feature of the meetings conducted by Charles G. Finney in the 4th and 5th decades of the Nineteenth Century. In the old Methodist Church, at the head of the river in New Jersey, down near New Republic, I remember to have seen an old mourner's bench as it was used there in the early days. This building goes back to 1780. Whether the mourner's bench is that old cannot be said."

David Burris, in his tract, "The Altar and the Mercy-Seat," says: "The mourner's bench had its beginning in 1794, and is at least 1700 years too young to be the New Testament way of leading lost sinners to Christ."

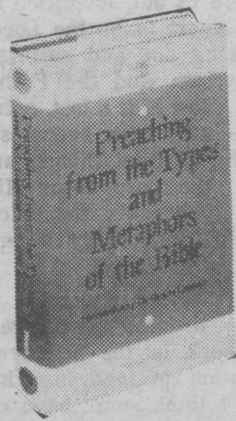
We wrote to James R. Joy, secretary of the Methodist Historical Society, New York City, and asked him for information concerning the origin and development of the "mourner's bench." He replied:

"The 'Mourner's Bench' and 'Anxious-seat' were terms that came into use in America in the early part of the 19th century, at camp meetings and other revival services."

In all of our search through

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scores of religious histories, encyclopedias, and reference works that covered thousands of volumes of religious history, we found no reference, or claim that the practice of the "mourner's bench," or "anxious seat," in any form whatever, dated back of 1780 A.D. in this country or anywhere else.

In view of the fact that the "mourner's bench" has absolutely no Scriptural warrant, but on the other hand, does distinctly teach and suggest that which disparages and dishonors Jesus Christ and His work of redemption, and since it is easily seen from the Scriptures that it serves in no way to help a lost sinner to know the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour, and since it is definitely and unquestionably of modern origin, we submit that no one who loves the Lord and His Word and desires to honor Him, should practice or have anything to do with it. It is foreign to the letter, spirit, principle and practice of the New Testament, and has no place in any church that seeks to follow the New Testament pattern.

CONCLUSION

We believe the dangers of the "mourner's bench" are far greater than many are willing to believe. It is the candid opinion of the writer that no other one thing is so much responsible for so many lost people in our church membership today.

Zeal is a fine thing, if always kept in submission to the will of Lord. But, so often it is as the Lord Jesus said to His disciples, (John 2:17): "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." Our zeal may completely consume the spirit of obedience, and lead us into religious sins.

A study of the apostle Paul reveals much along this line. Surely none of us can rightfully claim to have a greater zeal for the Lord, or to be more concerned about lost sinners than he. As we read what he said to the Romans in Romans 9:1-3, 10:1, we must admit that he had a compassionate heart for the lost. But we never find him using anything similar to the "mourner's bench" or any of the many other high pressure methods employed so widely by modern (Continued on page 7, column 2)

A SNAKE IN A BOTTLE

(Continued from Page Four)

the fat valleys of them that are overcome with wine!" Joel 1:5 says, "Awake, ye drunkards, and weep; and howl all ye drinkers of wine, because of the new wine; for it is cut off from your mouth."

Alcohol abuse is a ticket to poverty. Proverbs 23:20-21 declares: "Be not among winebibbers, among riotous eaters of flesh: For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags." Proverbs 21:17 says: "He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man: he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich."

ALCOHOLISM AND CHRISTIANS

The Bible forbids Christians to engage in excessive drinking. Ministers of God must not be given to wine. The Lord commanded the priests in the Old Testament: "Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee . . ." (Lev. 10:9). A bishop in the New Testament must not be an alcoholic: "A bishop then must be . . . not given to wine" (I Tim. 3:3). It is written in Ephesians 5:18: "And be not drunk with wine wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit." Christians are commanded in I Thessalonians 5:6: "Be sober."

A born-again believer is even forbidden to be among drunkards: "Be not among winebibbers" (Prov. 23:20). A drunkard cannot be a member of the Lord's church. Paul told the Corinthian church: "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous or an idolater, or a railer or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat . . . Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person" (I Cor. 5:11,13).

Such plain Scriptures as these need no explanation. They are easily understood. Yet, look at the present pitiful situation. Many church members use alcohol. Even preachers are sometimes given to drinking. Some liberal churches have bars in them. Those who are guilty of excessive drinking and who name the name of Christ are living a lie. They are contradicting the Word of God. They are misrepresenting Christianity to the lost world.

IS ALCOHOLISM A DISEASE?

We call alcoholism a disease, but God calls it drunkenness. We call the alcoholic sick, but God says he is a sinner. We say the alcoholic needs a clinic, but God says he needs salvation.

Liquor is not a disease. If it is, it's the only disease which is contracted by an act of the will. It is the only disease that requires a license to propagate it. It is the only disease that is bottled and sold. It is the only disease that produces revenue for the government. It is the only disease that is habit forming. It is the only disease that provokes crime. It is the only disease that is permitted to be spread by advertising. It is the only disease without a germ or virus cause, and for which there is no human corrective medicine.

I no more believe that alcoholism is a disease than I do that thievery is a disease. I no more believe that alcoholism is a disease than I do that murder is a disease. Galatians 5:21 declares drunkenness to be a sin of the flesh. Men get drunk because they give in to the sinful desires of their depraved human nature. Alcoholism is a disease only in the sense that it is caused by the disease of sin common to all mankind.

ALCOHOLISM AND HEREDITY

The transmission of this terrible disease by drunkards to their descendants was well known in antiquity. The Latins had a saying, "The seed of drunkards is corrupt." Modern science has confirmed the view of the ancients. It has been proved by means of laboratory experiments that the spermatozoa of drunks are literally poisoned and cannot possibly evolve into a sane and normal being. This all proves the truthfulness of Exodus 20:5 which says God visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation.

Professor Morel, in his essay, "Physical, Intellectual and Moral Degeneracy of the Human Race," established the following table on alcoholic heredity:

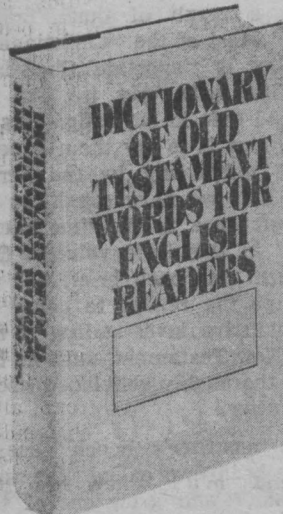
- 1st generation — Immorality, excesses, depravity, brutality.
- 2nd generation — Hereditary drunkenness, fits, manias, general paralysis.
- 3rd generation — Sobriety, tendency to hypochondria, persecution mania, homicidal tendencies.
- 4th generation — Under-developed intelligence, stupidity, transition to idiocy, and finally, probable extinction of the line.

Family histories of drunks have been compiled and are on record. I mention one collected by a professor at the University of Bonn. "The subject, a woman named Adda Jurcke, was born in 1840 and died at the beginning of the present century. She had a total of 834 descendants. Of her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, 106 were born illegitimately, 142 were beggars, 64 inmates of workhouses; 181 of the girls became prostitutes; 79 were sentenced for various crimes, including seven for murders" (The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Sex, pp. 419-420).

It may be observed that the historian of Adda Jurcke's family confines himself to the social aspect of the matter and (Continued on Page 8, Columns 4 and 5)

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THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

AUGUST 20, 1977

PAGE SIX

"WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE RELIGIOUS WORLD TODAY?"

WASHINGTON (EP) — President Carter's appointment of a personal representative to the Vatican has stirred a beehive of protest among the President's fellow Baptists and a flurry of interreligious strife.

The meaning of a Vatican envoy is not a new step, although Carter's choice, Miami attorney David Walters, 60, who succeeds the Nixon-appointed Henry Cabot Lodge, is the first Roman Catholic and the first Southerner to occupy the unsalaried post.

Jimmy Allen, recently elected president of the 13-million-member Southern Baptist Convention, Carter's denomination, fired off a telegram to the President charging that the appointment was "in violation of the spirit and probably the letter of the First Amendment to the Constitution." That Amendment provides for separation of church and state.

James E. Wood of the Washington-based Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, which has a constituency of 25 million Baptists, raised a similar complaint in a telegram of protest to the White House. He added that the appointment of a Vatican envoy "also officially underscores the special concern of this government for one religious body to the point of preferential treatment not accorded any other church or religious body anywhere else in the world."

ALBANY, N.Y. (EP) — The Universal Life Church, criticized as a mail-order religion, is being used as a "tool" to fight widespread tax exemptions in the Ulster County town of Hardenburgh, according to the town supervisor.

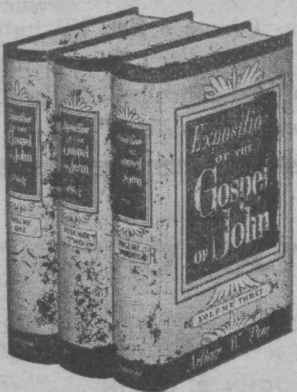
Almost all the town's residents had applied for, and been granted, religious exemptions as ULC "ministers" in the hopes the situation would draw attention to state tax law loopholes, Lester Bourke told United Press International.

Almost half the town's property was exempt when the ULC movement started because the land is owned by charitable and religious groups.

Meanwhile, the national head of the church, Kirby Hensley of Modesto, Calif., conceded he has been criticized as a "con man."

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He said, "I guess I am a con man, in a way," but added that the charge could be leveled at other churches as well.

With 82 per cent of the town's property now exempt and almost 100 per cent of its voters ordained as ULC ministers, the remaining taxpayers consist of corporations, utilities, and a few absentee landlords. A spokesman for the State Board said the case had forced the board to reassess its position on exemptions.

MINNEAPOLIS (EP)—A homosexual-run development firm here wants to open an opulent bathhouse-hotel for homosexuals — opposite Billy Graham's international headquarters.

WASHINGTON (EP) — Serious reported crime in the U.S. decreased 9 per cent in the first three months of 1977 compared to the 1976 period, according to the Uniform Crime Reports of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Attorney General Griffin B. Bell said the decline was the first in the FBI's quarterly Crime Index report since 1973 when a 1 per cent decrease was reported. It is also the greatest reduction since the FBI began issuing quarterly reports in 1958.

TORONTO (EP) — Canada's largest evangelical congregation, the People's Church, again surpassed its goal in its annual "faith-promise" missionary fund raising, with total pledges for the coming year of \$1.13 million. The amount includes \$143,000 to help alleviate poverty in Haiti. The church shares in the support of 470 overseas missionaries, 35 of whom are from its own 2,000-member congregation.

Mourner's Bench

(Continued from Page Six)

evangelists preachers and pastors. If there was no legitimate reason for Paul to use things, then where can we find warrant for them? But he simply preached "the Word," "the gospel," "Christ" and left it with the hearers and the Lord.

It is a greater test of our faith than most of us can stand to simply preach the gospel of Christ and wait on the Lord for results. Too many preachers are afraid the Lord may fail to keep His promise and honor His Word, so they introduce methods and practices that will produce "results" satisfactory to themselves without checking by the Word whether or not those methods are pleasing to the Lord they profess to follow.

God promised Abraham and Sarah a son (Gen. 15:4,5). But, like so many of the Lord's people today, they could not stand to wait for the Lord to keep His promise in His own way. So at Sarah's suggestion (Gen. 16:1-11) they proceeded to work out for themselves what the Lord had promised. They got "results" all right but no Isaac. Instead of Isaac, the son of promise, they got Ishmael a son of the flesh, doomed to be cast out. Read carefully Galatians 4: 19-31.

When we go beyond what we are commissioned to do — preach Jesus Christ, His Gospel, the Word of God, and use human wisdom and fleshly methods, we can get "results" that highly please the flesh, but we get Ishmaels instead of Isaacs. Our churches today are filled with Ishmaels, those who have been brought through an "experience," but one of the flesh. And most of them will never know the difference until it is too late. And as Paul states (Gal. 4:29), "But as then he that was born

after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now."

God has never broken any promise, and He never will. We can confidently preach His Word, knowing that He will honor it and that the Holy Spirit will use it according to His will to His eternal glory. It is none of our business what results from the preached word; it is our business to proclaim it faithfully, persistently, simply and in love.

This writer's greatest desire is to do the will of his Lord. Our greatest joy comes when we have just reason to believe that we have been faithful to Him, even in our limited way. We delight to see lost sinners come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ the Saviour. We are genuinely concerned about the vast multitudes of lost all about us, and because of

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this concern, we are trying to use every means we know to get the "good news" of God's wonderful grace to as many as we can while it "is yet day."

And it is because of our concern for these lost multitudes, and because of our desire to be faithful and true to Him Who gave Himself for us, that this little volume is published. We hope and pray that it will serve in some small way to remove that unscriptural barrier that man has erected between lost sinners and the Christ Who died to set them free from every yoke.

If it proves helpful in guiding any of the Lord's children now in bondage to tradition and error, into the glorious liberty of the gospel of Christ, we shall be happy indeed.

Friendly Dogmatism

(Continued from page one)

gospel be held back from the Indians than have it preached by one who differs on the issue of the "church." This doesn't quite follow with Paul's attitude expressed in Philippians 1:15-18, "Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds; But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel. What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice."

Further study of our key word reveals, however, some startling facts in reference to our attitudes. As much as this writer detests the concept of "salesman" in reference to evangelism, there is still an aspect we can learn from a good salesman. When a man comes to my house to sell me a vacuum cleaner or whatever, he doesn't start out by telling me my house is filthy, my children unruly, my dog is mean, etc. He doesn't tell me I drink too much coffee or that I cheer for the wrong baseball team or that my hobby is a bore.

On the contrary, he notices whatever he may have in common with me and starts a friendly conversation. His thought is that even if he doesn't get a sale at that visit, he is welcome back to visit his new friend and try again. Are we as considerate? In the early

years of my ministry I had the privilege of preaching at a county jail in Western New York. At that facility the men stayed in their cell blocks, and after the preaching service we would go around and visit with them. I ran into one man who was extremely angry, and I thought rightly so. It seems that my predecessor had told him he was going to Hell because he was a Catholic. Needless to say, the man wasn't very interested in hearing my gospel.

While this writer does not attempt to portray himself as a Hebrew scholar, certain logic can be here observed. According to Gesenius' Hebrew and Chaldean Lexicon, the word used here is the word usually translated "evil" or "wicked," from its root meaning "to make a loud noise" or "to break in pieces." A simple application of logic here makes good sense of the verse translated one of the two following ways. "A man who has friends must not be evil or wicked;" or "A man who has friends must not break in pieces (i.e.: attack and tear down) his potential friends."

Now let's make a simple application of this logical principle, making it to be consistent with Biblical commands in regard to separation.

1. If I am to win an audience for my Lord, I must first make a friend for my Lord's servant. Simply stated, I will never be an effective witness to a man who dislikes me, so I must show all men simple respect and courtesy. I do not have to agree with them or join them, but I cannot insult them. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Our Lord was often attacked by the self-righteous religious leaders of His day because He was "the friend of sinners." In fact, He was friendly toward sinners. He ate with them and walked with them, but He never condoned their sin in the process. It was the religious leaders, too blind in their own arrogant pride to see the need of "mercy rather than sacrifice" who were the objects of our Lord's verbal and physical attacks (John 2; Matt. 23).

2. I should make it my business

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to proclaim a positive gospel rather than attack another man's position. We have all experienced that it is plenty easy enough to make people mad at us by simply declaring the truths of the Bible, especially in regard to the doctrines of grace and the church, without adding insult to injury by making our ministry based on another man's errors.

There is a brand of Calvinism that I don't particularly appreciate, that is the brand that majors on depravity and man's inability, while seeming afraid to proclaim the doctrine of God's definite atonement, justification by faith, etc. There is a brand of Landmarkism that I don't particularly appreciate, that is the brand that conveys the thought that non-Landmarkers are some way inferior and subordinate Christians. Do we soon forget that it is only by God's grace that any truth is revealed to us?

We are bound to heed the admonition of Titus 3:10, "A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject;" we must remember that the term means to avoid, not slander.

Since this writer has made the transition from so-called "fundamentalism" to "Landmarkism," he has received a good bit of anti-Landmark attacks, which we feel are uncalled for, discourteous and slanderous. I have discovered that many of my new associates, like myself, have inherited enemies, not because of our position as much as because of certain people whom our new enemies didn't like, so they automatically don't like us. This is taken in stride.

However, the gist of this article is a plea that we do not respond in kind!

As a missionary, we are primarily interested in winning an audience for our Lord and Saviour. We trust His effectual call to do its work as we faithfully proclaim the gospel truth at each opportunity. However, especially when working with a minority group, already sensitive, we must be mindful of the proverb, "A man who has friends must shew himself friendly."

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER
AUGUST 20, 1977
PAGE SEVEN

Pre-Trib And Post-Trib

(Continued from page three)
people, the Jews, and any turmoil will be the after effect of this dealing.

We read in Jeremiah 30:7: "Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it." In Daniel 12:1: "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation." This "nation" is not the USA, England, nor Russia; it is the nation of Israel. Do I have any dissenters or disputers to this statement? No? Then I shall continue my reading in Daniel 12:1: "... even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book."

Call this dispensationalism if you will, but these two verses refer to particular people, Daniel's people. Who are Daniel's people? Your imagination will have to work overtime to make them to be England, the U.S.A., Outer Mongolia, or Denmark, or any other nation but the nation of Israel. Notice, Daniel, not Burke, Smith, or Jones, but Daniel who was inspired of God to write, said: "... such as never was since there was a nation."

It doesn't take a D.D. or a L.L.D. to read the Bible in a literal sense, does it?

The Bible is abundantly clear that in this life we shall have tribulation. The Lord said so (John 16:33). Can we suppose that because it is obvious that Paul will not go through the Great Tribulation because he has already departed this life and is now with the Lord — I say, can we suppose he will not be in the kingdom of God? Listen to Acts 14:22: "We (Paul uses the personal pronoun

WE, not YE, as he would have done had he intended to exempt himself from this statement of fact) **must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.**" The truth is that every time "tribulation" appears in Holy Writ it does not have reference to the Great Tribulation, which is the time of Jacob's trouble, and that of Daniel's people, the Jews.

The post-tribber finds a church in Matthew 23, as well as in about every other chapter in the entire Bible. I found a church in Matthew 24, but I was using Calvin's specs, Gill's specs, and the specs of our reformed (?) brethren. True, our Lord was addressing His church which was then composed entirely of Jews, as the natural branches at that time had not been broken off (Romans 11).

Note a few things said in Matthew 24: "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached." Not that of grace or reconciliation, or of repentance and faith in Christ. This is the peculiar work of the Lord's church, not preaching the gospel of the kingdom.

Remember we are briefly noting a few things said in this chapter. Here is the clincher (verse 15): "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place." Who sees the abomination of desolation? The churches in Kentucky? Then look out, Eastern Kentucky, there will be a mass exodus from Lexington, because we have no mountains here to flee to. Maybe churches in Alabama, or West Virginia, or Pittsburgh, or Tupelo? No! "Ye," the Jews! "Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains" (verse 16).

In order for the post-tribbers to get the maximum benefit of this, may I suggest he make plans to be in Judaea when the man of sin is revealed. The airlines should be doing a lucrative business. The Jews should be building more airports and more motels and raising

their prices for accommodations for the post-tribbers who wish to fulfill this prophecy. The temple can be constructed from the profits realized from this endeavor. You see, you will have to be in Judaea to literally fulfill this prophecy. Also you will have to be a Jew. Of course you can take the easy way out and spiritualize these passages. Origen and Mr. Whitby would be proud of you, should you do so. I mention one obstacle: Matthew isn't figurative; it contains no figure.

A reformed brother has suggested that deliverance comes in the midst of the greatest persecutions as shown by Jehovah's deliverance of the children of Israel out of Egypt, and that this is a type of the deliverance of the saints at the end of the Great Tribulation. It is indeed true that deliverance occurs when the persecutions and tribulations become unbearable, as was the case of the children of Israel's deliverance from the land of bondage.

However, no where in the Bible, do I find: "And as it was in the days of Moses, so shall it be in the days of the Son of man." Be honest, does the Bible read that way? Of course not! We do read: "And as it was in the days of Noe..." (Luke 17:26). Preparations had been previously made for his deliverance, and no water, not one drop, touched him.

In Luke 17:28: "Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot..." Concerning Lot, we read Moses' divinely inspired account: "The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar. Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven" (Gen. 19:23-24).

Mr. MacPherson, in his book (?) **The Unbelievable Pre-Trib Origin**, contends that we obtained our pre-trib theology from one Margaret McDonald of Scotland in the late 1880's. I am at a loss to explain where he obtained his post-trib theory — apparently from the Bible, certainly not in the Bible. One thing I must confess, his book is unbelievable. But if Miss McDonald did believe in the pre-trib rapture, then John's words are certainly appropriate. John wrote: "I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth" (II John 4).

I have mentioned briefly some things said in Matthew 24 without taking time to explain what they mean. If we cannot take the words of Christ as meaning what they say, then pray tell, why didn't our Sovereign say what He meant? The dilemma is yours.

The facts are that the second coming of our Lord Jesus occurs in two distinct phases. I Thessalonians 4:16-17 tells of His coming in the air for His saints. Jude tells us of His saints escorting Him to this earth: "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all" (vss. 14-15).

Brother E. G. Cook justly observes: "I must admit that your assuming facilities are working better than mine if you can see a church of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Great Tribulation. As I see it, the teaching that Christ comes for His saints and with them, all in one event, is stark untenable assumption."

The post-trib theory makes such passages as Matthew 24:40-41 and Luke 17:34-36 worse than useless, unless Mr. Whitby's method of interpretation is employed.

I shall be more charitable and judge no one on what he believes about the second coming of Christ. Suffice it to say that all who were chosen in Christ, redeemed by Christ, and effectually called by the Spirit are saved, and different beliefs about the second coming will not alter this standing in Christ one iota.

A SNAKE IN A BOTTLE

(Continued from Page Six)

fails to mention the physical defects of the family. It does not require a powerful imagination to guess how terrible the physical defects must have been.

ALCOHOLISM AND HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY

Alcoholism is a moral and spiritual problem rather than a physical disease which preys upon men. People drink because there is a disease in their character. The alcoholic doesn't want help! He wants alcohol! He is so occupied with himself that he has no concern for anyone else. He cares not how much disturbance he is causing. He does not care what others think of him. Nor is he concerned in the least about the money society spends to help him. His overindulgence in alcoholism has become a substitute for life itself. Drunkenness makes him live in a world of unreality. It is his source of comfort and ease from the frustrations of this world. To many, alcohol is a false god who gives solace. Alcoholism is a false god which enslaves its addicts.

He who is overcome by alcohol is his own afflicter. He has maneuvered himself into his present predicament. He cannot blame his problem on other people or the devil. He is responsible for his own conduct. Leviticus 5:17 declares: "And if a soul sin, and commit any of these things which are forbidden to be done by the commandments of the Lord; though he wist it not, yet is he guilty, and shall bear his iniquity."

The alcoholic is a slave to drink. Jesus Christ said: "Who-soever committeth sin is the servant of sin" (John 8:34). He can conquer his problem only with Divine help. Christ can give him power to overcome. The solution to the problem is for the alcoholic to quit drinking. He must repent of the sin of drinking and turn to God for help. He needs to practice abstinence. The Apostle Paul said: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13).

The greatest need of the alcoholic is the new birth. After he is born of the Spirit and brought to the knowledge of his salvation, he is in a position to quit drinking. He must constantly call upon God for help. I Corinthians 10:13 reads: "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it." He should keep away from his alcoholic friends: "Evil communications corrupt good manners" (I Cor. 15:33). "How long wilt thou be drunken? put away thy wine from thee" (I Sam. 1:14).

ALCOHOLISM AND ETERNITY

In the age to come there will be no drunkards. "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind. Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor DRUNKARDS, nor revilers, nor extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God" (I Cor. 6:9-10).

In the Millennium there will be no Skid Rows. There will be no gutters filled with drunks. There will be no temperance societies or Alcoholics Anonymous. Our highways will not be littered with beer cans or liquor bottles. There will be no bars in the Kingdom Age. There will be no drunks. These will all have been sent to Hell.

The late Billy Sunday once said: "I hope to live long enough to see America so dry you'll have to prime a man to spit." Then he added words which proved his determination to continue to oppose the liquor traffic: "I'll kick it as long as I have got a foot; I'll fight it as long as I have a fist. I'll butt it as long as I have a head. I'll bite it as long as I have a tooth. When I am old and fistless, footless, and toothless, I'll gum it till I go home to glory and it goes down to perdition."

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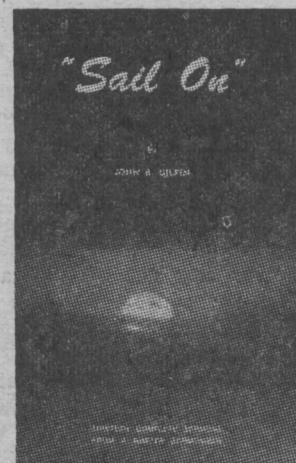
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