

MISSIONARY

PREMILLENNIAL

BIBLICAL

BAPTISTIC

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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RELIGIOUS BUT LOST

by Ron Boswell
Smithsburg, Md.

"Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial; they knew not the Lord" (I Samuel 2:12).

In the text before us, we have two religious men that were lost. All through history it has been religious people that have persecuted God's people. It was religious people that crucified Christ; yet, it was the common people that heard Him. Listen: "...And the common people heard him gladly" (Mark 12:37).

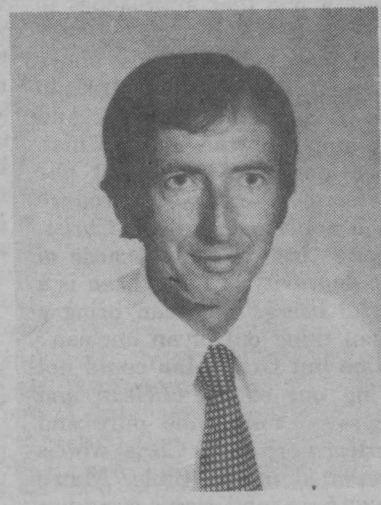
Many times we have found it true, that those without religion, the immoral, the profane have heard us and the religious have opposed and persecuted us.

Being sincere is not enough. A preacher once said, "It doesn't matter what religion you have, as long as you are sincere."

The prophets of Baal that opposed Elijah were sincere. The

Bible lets us know how sincere they were.

"And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and



Ron Boswell

lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them" (I Kings 18:28).

I say a man is surely sincere when he will cry aloud and cut himself until the blood gushes out! There is no virtue in being sincere and lost. Those emotional and sincere prophets of Baal were all slain at the brook Kishon by the judgment of God.

1. Grace Does Not Run In The Bloodstream.

Eli was a Godly man. Of course he was not perfect, like all Christians, he was flawed. Nevertheless, he was by Divine

Grace, a leader of God's people. His relationship with God was not passed on by birth or upbringing to his two sons.

Aaron, likewise, many years before, could not pass the Grace of God on to his sons. Listen:

"And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not. And

(Continued on Page 3 Column 2)

THEY'RE FOR THE BIRDS

by Herb Evans
Allison Park, Pa.

"Drive out all the inhabitants... and destroy all their pictures, and destroy all their molten images... but if ye will not drive out the inhabitants... then... those which ye let remain of them shall be pricks in your eyes, and thorns in your sides, and shall vex you..." (Nu. 33:55).

Christendom is being flooded, in the Christian (?) Bookstore, with "bird holy spirit" and "fish christ" images, plagues, pictures, and pins. This barrage of seemingly harmless trinkets is, in reality, a subtle return to Pagan Idolatry. Until recently, only water salvation Catholics used these bird and fish images.

(Continued on Page 8 Column 1)

Raymond A. Waugh, Sr.
We may assume that we live in a scientific, a technological, and even an intellectual age, if



Ray Waugh

you will. And we do! I believe that we can validate this in many ways. In fact, as I have noted in considerable detail in

"All Space Men are Earth Men," except for the antediluvian age wherein men reached a supreme level of intellectuality and technology, our generation has exceeded all others. This may very well be in accord with, "...Seal the book, even to the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."

Our world, nonetheless, it would seem, is full of some rather strange facts. With respect to facts, anthropologists of considerable note have informed us within the last century that there was a time when some Eskimo young folk put the older folk outside their igloos in the wintertime. Needless to say, those older folk did not give the younger folk any further trouble, at least not in this life.

(Continued on Page 5 Column 5)

THE TRUE CHRISTIAN—A PARADOX

by Roy W. Snell
Charleston, W. Va.

The better dictionary definitions of the word paradox state that this denotes, first, "something apparently absurd or incredible, yet true; a tenet contrary to received opinions." A second meaning is given as "something self-contradictory." A third definition is one which better supports my thesis, id est, "a statement seemingly absurd or self-contradictory but really based on truth."

I make no supportive case for the sinning "saint," either in my own behalf nor yet to encourage others. Human nature being what it is, this can become a cop-out for those who have no heart and appetite for the narrow way of Matthew 7:14. However, anyone who has any definitive knowledge of the Word of God knows full well

that every son of Adam has a certain propensity for straying from the highway of holiness. One of the song writers with a fine insight into his own heart has stated it best; "Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love." In addition, the totally honest Christian can bear witness to this same paradox in his own experience. Deny this, my brother, and you will have refuted the First Epistle of John, chapter 1 and verse 8.

Forgive a brief word of personal experience, but when I was first saved I had the badly mistaken notion that even the new believer had a full command of practical holiness at his fingertips. Consequently, when old Adam made an appearance and I discovered a residue of the old depraved nature still pre-

(Continued on Page 2 Column 5)

INTERESTING COMPARISONS

The singing of a hymn should be a great experience for us. It can be a prayer, a testimony, a praise, an invitation to others. Someone has written some interesting comparisons on the hymns we sing. See how many you can think of.

We sing "Heavenly Sunshine" and stay away from church when it is too hot.

We sing "Sweet Hour of Prayer" and content ourselves with 10 or 15 minutes a day.

We sing "Onward Christian Soldiers" and wait to be drafted into His service.

We sing "For A Thousand Tongues" and don't use the one we have.

We sing "There Will Be Showers of Blessing" but do not come to church when it is raining.

We sing "When They Ring Those Golden Bells" but never seem to hear the church bells.

We sing "Hiding in Thee" and then go and hide FROM Thee.

We sing "Blest Be the Tie" and let the slightest offense sever it.

We sing "Serve the Lord With Gladness" and gripe about all we have to do.

We sing "We're Marching to Zion" but fail to march to Sunday School and Church.

We sing "I Love to Tell the Story" but never mention it all year.

We sing "Cast Thy Burden On the Lord" and worry ourselves into nervous breakdowns.

We sing "O Day of Rest and Gladness" and wear ourselves out traveling, cutting the grass or playing golf.

We sing "Throw Out the Lifeline" and content ourselves with throwing out a fishing line.

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon By Joe Wilson

THE BIBLICAL PRESENTATION OF CHRIST AND A TWO-FOLD IMPLICATION

"While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, What think ye of Christ: Whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? And no man was able to answer him a word..." (Matt. 22:41-46).

The question Jesus asks here is a theological one. It relates to an interpretation of a portion of Scripture. The Pharisees denied that Jesus was the promised Christ of the Old Testament. He asks them the question, that when the Christ does come, whose son will He be. They answer that the Christ is to be David's son. Jesus then asks them how the Christ could be David's son when David in Psalm 110 called him Lord. The

Pharisees could not answer this. But for those who believe savingly in Jesus Christ, the answer is easy. As man, Jesus is David's son. But as God, Jesus is David's Lord. Thus we have here a statement of the two-fold nature of Jesus Christ. He is the God-Man. In this article I desire to deal with the following proposition: The Biblical presentation of Jesus Christ proves: 1. That the Bible is the inspired Word of God. 2. That such a person does not truly exist, because the mind of the natural man cannot furnish the materials for the creation and presentation of such a person. Please study this proposition until it is clearly in your mind.

Let us look at the Biblical presentation of Jesus Christ. This will, of necessity be limited due to time and space, and due to the marvellous fact that Jesus Christ is the central character of the Bible: that the whole Bible is about Him. Jesus Christ is presented as a person of the

Trinity of the Godhead. The Bible teaches that within the one true God, there are three eternal, equal, and personal distinctions known as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. This is a revealed doctrine of the Bible, and could have never entered into the heart of man, unless revealed by God. It has no part in any of the religions invented by man. It is a doctrine that cannot be fully explained or understood by human reason. It is revealed in the Bible. It is received by faith. Truly saved believers have no difficulty with this doctrine, for they have personal knowledge of the Triune God and of each person thereof. This truth cannot be illustrated or explained by anything in man or in nature for there is nothing therein comparable thereto. The doctrine of the Trinity is a fundamental doctrine of the Bible, and does constitute a part of saving faith. To understand the Biblical presentation of Jesus Christ, it is

(Continued on Page 2 Column 1)

HIS ONE MISTAKE HE LEFT OUT GOD

He brushed his teeth twice a day — with a nationally advertised toothpaste.

The doctor examined him twice a year.

He wore his rubbers when it rained.

He slept with the windows open.

He stuck to a diet with plenty of fresh vegetables.

He relinquished his tonsils and traded in several worn-out glands.

He golfed — but never more than eighteen holes at a time.

He got at least eight hours sleep every night.

He never smoked, drank, nor lost his temper.

He did his "daily dozen" daily.

He was all set to live to be one hundred.

The funeral will be held Wednesday. He is survived by eighteen specialists, four health institutions, six gymnasiums, and numerous manufacturers of health foods and antiseptics.

He forgot God, lived as if this world was all, and now he is with those who say, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved" (Jeremiah 8:20). Guess his name!

—Selected

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(Continued from Page 1)

necessary to see that He is
presented as a person of the
Trinity. He is the Eternal Son of
the Eternal Father, and Eternal
Companion of the Eternal
Spirit.

Jesus Christ is presented as
being one Person with two
Natures. He has a Divine
nature. He is God, John 1:1. He
has a human nature. He is man,
I Timothy 2:5. These two
natures were at the incarnation,
permanently united in one per-
son. They do not become one
nature, neither does this union
produce two persons. Jesus
Christ will exist eternally from
His incarnation as one Person
having a human nature and a
Divine nature. Isaiah 9:6
presents Him as a child born:
His human nature, and as a Son
given: His Divine nature. Our
text presents Him as David's
son, and as David's Lord. John
1:1 presents Him as God and v.
14 tells us that "He became
flesh." Romans 1:3-4 tells us
that after the flesh He is the seed
of David, but that He is also
declared to be the Son of God
with power by the resurrection
from the dead. Not made the
Son of God, for He eternally was
such, but 'declared to be.'
Romans 9:5 tells us that Jesus
came from Israel concerning the
flesh, but also tells us that He is
"God over all, blessed
forever." I Timothy 3:16 tells
us that "God was manifest in
the flesh." Again and again,
the Bible tells us in the same
Scriptures of the Humanity and
the Deity of Jesus Christ.

He was so human that His
Mother brought Him forth,
wrapped Him in swaddling
clothes and laid Him in a
manger; but so Divine that the
angels said "unto you is born a
Saviour which is Christ the
Lord." He was so human that
He was tempted of the devil; yet
so Divine that he said, "get thee
hence, Satan." He was so
human that He was taken 'even
as He was' in the ship and was
fast asleep through a storm in

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER
MAY 29, 1982
PAGE TWO

The man who has a true Christian spirit never takes delight in the faults of others.

the hinder part of the ship; yet
so Divine that He arose and
stilled the stormy sea. He was so
human that He hungered; yet so
Divine that He fed five thou-
sand men, besides women and
children, with five loaves and
two fishes. He was so human
that He died; yet so Divine that
in that death He saved eternally
all the elect of God, and later



Joe Wilson

arose from the dead.

The Bible presents Jesus
Christ as an eternal Being. John
1:1 tells us that He was in the
beginning, and that beginning
relates to eternity. Micah 5:2
tells us that the one who was
born in Bethlehem was one
whose goings forth had been
from everlasting. Proverbs 8:23
tells us that the Son was set up
from everlasting. Jesus did not
begin to be when He was born in
Bethlehem. Rather, He began a
phase of His eternal Being. He
is the eternal God, and is so set
forth in the Bible.

The Bible presents Jesus as
one who was born of a virgin. In
spite of the error of heretical
translators and in spite of the
scoffs of men, the Bible declares
that Jesus Christ was conceived
in the womb of a virgin by the
power of the Holy Spirit. All
truly saved people do verily
believe this truth.

The Bible presents the earthly
life of Jesus Christ as a sinlessly
perfect life, and as the only such
life ever lived upon the earth. In
Matthew 3:17, the Father
declares that He is well pleased
with the Son, and only perfec-
tion can please the Father. In
John 8:29, Jesus declared that
He did always those things that
pleased His Father. Oh, what a
statement! And it was a true
statement. And surely, none
among mortal men would dare
to make such a statement, and if
they did, it would stand against
them at the judgment. In Mark
1:24, a demon refers to Christ as
the Holy One of God. You see,
some devils know more than
some men. In Luke 23:4, Pilate
testifies that he finds no fault in
Jesus. Hebrews 7:26-28 informs
us that Jesus Christ is holy,
harmless, undefiled, separate
from sinners, and made higher
than the heavens. Oh, read the
four partial accounts of His life
in the four gospels. Is there any
error, sin, or fault contained
therein? Are not these accounts
of a perfect life, and are they not
far different from our own lives
or the lives of any we have ever
known or heard of?

The Bible tells of the
multiplied miracles of Jesus
Christ in His earthly life. No be-
ing of true or of false history has
ever done so many miracles in
such a short time. There are
over thirty-five specified
miracles of Jesus. Then there
are many accounts of a
multitude of miracles He per-
formed without detailing them.
They are a multitude. They are
varied, He manifested his power
over nature, over sickness, over
death itself. And He did not do
His miracles in the name of, or,
by the power of another, as the

apostles and prophets did. And
He never failed in a miracle. He
never tried to do a miracle. He
did whatsoever it pleased Him
to do.

The Bible presents the
marvelous and unparalleled
teachings of Jesus Christ. Colos-
sians 2:3 tells us that "in Him
are hid all the treasures of
wisdom and knowledge." And
we know that this is true. When
His enemies came to Him
repeatedly trying to catch Him
in His speech, He constantly put
them to shame, and finally, they
durst ask Him no further ques-
tions. In Luke 4:22, His
townspeople wondered at the
gracious words which proceeded
out of His mouth. The officers
sent to arrest Him, returned
empty-handed and declaring
that "never man spake like this
man." Oh, the power and
wisdom of the teaching of Jesus
Christ stands as a testimony to
Him forever.

The Bible presents the death
of Jesus Christ as different from
the deaths of all other men. No
man took His life. He laid it
down of Himself. It took a
miraculous act of His sovereign
will for Him to die. Man could
not kill Him. He died as a
substitute for others. He did not
die for Himself. He could have
ascended to Heaven without dy-
ing as easily as He did later. He
owed not the penalty of death.
Then, the Bible presents the
glorious truth, that, by His
death, He effectually atoned for
all the sins of the elect people of
God so that they all must and
will be eternally saved. Never
was such a death as this written
upon the pages of any book, ex-
cept here and in the Bible.

The Bible presents the resur-
rection of Jesus Christ. After
three days and three nights in
the grave, He came forth, to live
forevermore. He had power to
lay His life down, and He had
power to take it up again, and
He did take it up again. Death
could not keep its prey, He tore

the bars away. He defeated
death for Himself and for all His
people.

Now my proposition at the
head of this article is that the
natural man cannot produce,
create, or present such a
character as is presented in the
Bible as Jesus Christ. I call
upon you to witness the heroes
of the writing of men. Even
though they leave out their bad
points, and magnify them to the
utmost of their literary ability,
still among all the heroes of the
literature of the world, there is
not a character that can begin to
measure up to that of Jesus
Christ. Witness also the gods of
the writings of men. See their
faults, their weaknesses, their
failures, and their many sins.
Not even among the gods, in-
vented in the writings of men, is
there a one that approaches to
the person of Jesus Christ. A
human author cannot rise above
the materials of his own brain in
the production of his pen. And
the mind of the natural man
does not have within it the
material to create or produce
such a person as Jesus Christ.
This is true in part because of
the depravity of man. Man is a
sinful being. Who can bring a
clean thing out of an unclean?
None but God. Man could not
bring out of his unclean and
depraved mind, the pure and
perfect Lord Jesus Christ who is
presented in the Bible. Man's
love of sin, and man's prejudice
against perfection and the car-
nal mind's enmity against God,
would not allow man to produce
such a person as Jesus Christ.
Further, the presentation of
such a person by a mere man
would forever condemn man as
he is. And depraved man will
not condemn himself, apart
from an effectual work of Divine
grace.

Now, since the natural man
cannot produce in writing such a
person as Jesus Christ presented
in the Bible, therefore, the Bible
which contains just such a
presentation, must be inspired
of God. Only God could write
such a life of such a person. I in-
sist that the Biblical presenta-
tion of Jesus Christ proves that
the Bible is inspired of God.
And this doctrine of inspiration
is the fundamental of the fun-
damentals. If the Bible is not
the inspired Word of God, then
nothing else therein matters at
all. What difference does it
make what the Bible teaches, if
it be not the Word of God? But
since it is the Word of God, it
matters more than all else in the
world what is taught therein.
And your attitude toward the
Bible becomes of supreme im-
portance.

The Biblical presentation of
Jesus Christ proves that such a
person really and truly does ex-
ist. If there were no such person,
then no such presentation could
be made. For man could not
make it, and God would not
make a false presentation. The
Biblical presentation of Jesus
Christ is not the product of im-
agination, but is the true
description of a real person:
even our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, one must believe in
Jesus Christ, as He is presented
in the Bible, or go to Hell. Any
person less than this One so
presented could not save from
hell. And if you do not believe in
Him, He will not save. It is so
important that one believe that
Jesus Christ is all that the Bible
says He is. Jesus said that "if ye
believe not that I am He, ye
shall die in your sins" (John
8:24). To deny what the Bible
teaches about Jesus, and still to
profess to believe in Jesus, is to

believe in a Jesus other than the
one revealed in the Bible, and to
believe in an idol god who can-
not save.

This Jesus, who is presented
in the Bible — Oh, what a
wonderful person He is — is
worthy of our faith, trust, and
confidence! He is worthy of all
our love! He is worthy of our
worship and adoration! He is
worthy of the utmost we can do
for Him as to our life and ser-
vice!

Reader, what think ye of
Christ? This is the supreme and
determinative question of time
and eternity. What you think
will not change the truth of the
matter at all. He remains the
same person as presented in the
Bible no matter what men think
or say about Him. But what
men think about Him reveals
the condition of their heart and
prophecies the place of their
eternal destiny. And, yet, we
must remember, that if we think
aright about Him, it is because
of sovereign grace and irresist-
ible power, for no man can say
that Jesus is Lord, but by the
Holy Spirit. God bless you all!

TRUE

(Continued from Page 1)

sent, the accuser of the brethren
was immediately at hand to
"show" me what a false pro-
fessor I had been. And he could
have thoroughly convinced me,
and stolen my testimony, except
that "greater is He that is in
you, than he that is in the
world." There, then, was the
paradox of my own experience
— having been born of God and
with His seed remaining in me,
yet in the flesh I was not only
capable but prone to the errors
of that first man, Adam. Self-
contradictory, but really based
on truth.

Personal experiences and dic-
tionary definitions may or may
not be worth the time it takes to
record and recount them. So if
we would lend credibility to our
statements and assumptions it
behooves us all to get into
something more substantial and
trustworthy, the infallible
record which our Lord has left
for our guidance and edifica-
tion.

A study into the lives of the
saints, both Old and New Testa-
ment believers, will serve to pro-
ve that there can be paradoxes,
even in the lives of our Lord's
choice followers. A fine example
is found in the story of David —
one chosen and called by God to
fill a specific place in the plan of
our Lord. Here was one who has
been uniquely classified, the only
one of God's saints to be
specifically referred to as "a
man after God's own heart."
Yet, we find David guilty of

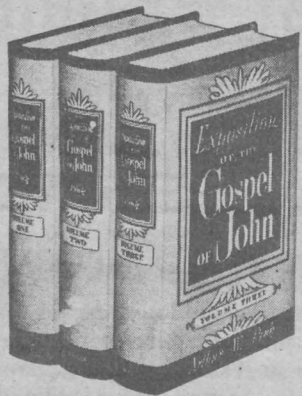
(Continued on Page 3 Column 1)



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TRUE

(Continued from Page 2)

grievous sin, both against his Lord and against a brave and loyal officer of his army.

Remember Elijah, most assuredly a superlative servant of our precious Lord, so honored that a thousand years after his bodily ascension into the heavens, he was allowed to be present at the transfiguration of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Matt. 17:3). There was an occasion when this valiant man confronted four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and an additional four hundred prophets of the groves and his Lord honored his faith and put them all to rout. The infallible word records that Elijah brought the prophets of Baal down to the brook of Kishon and slew them there. Almost immediately, after such a tremendous victory, Jezebel, the wicked wife of the idolatrous King Ahab, swore to have the life of Elijah. This great man of God promptly fled to a place which is a day's journey beyond Beer-Sheba, there he sat himself down under a juniper tree and requested of his Lord that he might die. From there this one who had discomfited and defeated and destroyed four hundred and fifty false prophets was driven to flee to a cave and hide again. Fleeing and hiding from the wrath of a mere woman, albeit the queen over Israel. A true paradox indeed!

The Old Testament is replete with examples, proving that indeed the elect of God yet have their precious treasure in an "earthen" vessel. Likewise, the New Testament continues to bear witness to the "two-fold" nature of the Christian — that paradox of contradictions, but really based on truth. Both the written word and the examples in the lives and actions of the "new creature in Christ" give adequate evidence. Galatians 5:17, with the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the spirit against the flesh serves to paint a graphic word picture of the conditions and circumstances surrounding the child of God.

John 3:6 shows why such contradictory "facts" surround the Christian's life. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." By natural birth I have been born of corruptible flesh and that I cannot undo. If my Lord carries this body will remain until I am called in death. Yet, and at the same time, I have been born of the Spirit and that transaction is sealed until I receive a glorified body. "like unto His own glorious body," as in Philipians 3:21.

The Apostle Paul, in Romans 7, adds ample credence to the fact that the Christian is not only a contradiction in terms, but in essence also, as he depicts an inner struggle. Peter also is a living example of how the acts of and in the flesh can conflict with the testimony of our lips, however sincere. In Matthew 16:16 Peter is led of the Holy Spirit to make one of the sublime statements of the New Testament; "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Our Lord immediately commends him, saying: "Blessed art thou..." Following closely upon this most intimate and personal blessing, our Lord has need to severely rebuke our fine but impetuous apostle. In the garden, and seemingly against heavy odds, he again pulled his sword and would have fought to the death for His Master. A few short

Some of the Bible's most precious treasures are discerned only with tear-filled eyes.

hours later; he warmed himself by the fire of the enemy and denied any connection with our Jesus. We have a secular saying: "Will the real Peter please stand up." A saying which might well apply to anyone of us — under certain conditions.

The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak. Mark 14:38 again portrays the paradox in the Christian experience. And the declaration of the father of the child possessed of a dumb spirit (Mark 9:24), would indicate that both faith and unbelief can reside, side by side in the heart of the saint. So, my brother, think it not strange if at times your heart is seemingly a contradiction and a paradox. Human experience, the written Word and the examples from the Scriptures all teach that God's peculiar people are sometimes subject to spiritual phenomenon such as this. And "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man..." (I Cor. 10:13). If, then, you be one who takes the Bible literally, Jesus himself was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin (Hebrews 4:15).

LOST

(Continued from Page 1)

there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord" (Leviticus 10:1, 2).

You must be washed in the Blood of the Lamb regardless of who your parents are, if you are to be saved. You must be born again from above no matter who your earthly parents are.

Baptists, unlike Protestants, insist on evidence of a new birth before a person can be baptized and join the church. They get that from the first Baptist preacher that insisted on a work of grace before he would baptize those who came to him. Listen: "But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore, fruits meet for repentance:" (Matthew 3:7, 8).

2. The Sons of Eli Had More Advantages Than Most

They were exposed to sound teaching from the Word of God. I fear that I speak to many in such a state. You have not heard all the false ways. Christ has been presented to you as the only way of salvation, the substitute sacrifice for the sins of His people, yet you remain lost like the sons of Eli.

They were exposed to Godly people. They no doubt rubbed shoulders with some of the finest saints of their day. They were exposed to Godly conversation and no doubt heard many testimonies, yet they were lost. What about you?

You have heard of the faithfulness and greatness of our Christ. You have heard of His love and mercy, but in your heart you have said with the wicked, "...We will not have this man to reign over us" (Luke 19:14).

3. Their Position Did Not Bring Salvation.

The sons of Eli served in the House of the Lord. To be a preacher, deacon or Sunday school teacher in no way brings salvation.

An old preacher once said to me that he felt the ministry was a good mission field. If an individual trusts in their service for salvation, then they are as lost as the heathen. Hell is full of



The Baptist Examiner

BIBLE STUDY LESSON

By WILLARD PYLE

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Psalm 30:1-5.

Intro: David ever recognized God's divine providence in every aspect of his life, whether it be the physical, material, or spiritual. He therefore, found ample reason for praise and thanksgiving. Naturally there were special occasions which demanded special attention, and during which David reached a higher note in his songs.

VERSE 1

"I will extol Thee, O Lord." David called on his total being to help in manifesting the glory of God (I Cor. 6:19, 20) and he determined to allow nothing to stand in his way in performing this. Neither friend nor foe should be allowed to keep us from our worship, praise, and service to God (Acts 4:29; 5:29; Matt. 16:22, 23). Just like the brazen serpent was placed on a pole and lifted up in the midst of the camp, so the child of God should ever lift up Jesus Christ. He is to be extolled as the Author and Finisher of our faith. He is to be extolled as the Captain of our salvation, and as the Head of the church. He is to be extolled in song and sermon. This means, of course, He is to have the pre-eminence in all things.

"For Thou has lifted me up." We love Him because He first loved us, and washed us from our sins (I John 4:19; Rev.

Sunday school teachers, preachers, and deacons. Listen:

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

These individuals pleaded their "wonderful works" and went to Hell. A child of God can only plead the Blood and Perfect Righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. We have no wonderful works, but must claim by faith the ancient prophecy:

"...he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS" (Jeremiah 23:6).

I say you must be saved in spite of your works and service.

4. Attendance At The Lord's House Does Not Save

You can be sure Eli's sons were regular attenders at the Lord's house. They had a head knowledge of the sacrifices, but did not know the one to Whom all the sacrifices pointed.

Some today sing the hymns of redemption, regularly attend the services, listen to the preaching, and yet, do not know Christ. As John Bunyan put it, "Some crawl over Calvary's Cross on their way to Hell."

A man said to me once that he attended church every Sunday, but he was not a fanatic. He trusted in his church attendance. Like the sons of Eli, there was regular attendance but no salvation. No power of God in the soul. No spiritual appetite. No love for Christ.

God's people are not perfect, (Continued on Page 5 Column 1)

1:5). He lifted us up from the grave of sin and corruption (Eph. 2:1). Notice, He lifted us up when we were unworthy; therefore salvation is by grace,

BIBLE VERSE



PSALM 71:23
My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto thee; and my soul, which thou hast redeemed.

and not merit (Eph. 2:8; Titus 3:8). However, we lift Him up because He is worthy.

"And hast not made my foes to rejoice over me." Any temporary joy our enemies may have is only brief at best, and will turn to weeping and wailing. David is exalted in the presence of the enemy. God had provided a table for him in the midst of the enemy (Ps. 23:5), and now He has provided a throne for him in the midst of the enemy and has given him the victory. When the saints are exalted completely, the foes will be put down forever.

VERSE 2

"O Lord my God." The personal aspect of salvation should never be forgotten. David had had a personal experience, and was assured of his relationship to God (Ps. 23:1).

"I cried unto Thee." David had a need and knew where to go in time of need (Heb. 4:16). One of the first marks of a Christian is the newborn cry (Gal. 4:6). "Behold he prayeth," has a vital meaning (Acts 9:11).

"And Thou hast healed me." In regeneration and justification, the believer is healed spiritually, and this on the basis of His stripes (Isa. 53:5), and on many occasions the saints are healed physically by God's provisions and in His providence. However, there are times in God's purpose that He doesn't heal physically (II Cor. 12:7-10). In all cases, the child of God should pray, "Not my will, but Thine be done."

VERSE 3

"O Lord, Thou hast brought up my soul from the grave." David, it would appear, was very critically ill, and had from the human viewpoint been given up, but in God's mercy had been healed.

"Thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit." Our preservation, whether it be physical or spiritual, is because of the power of God (I Pet. 1:3-5). However, keep in mind that physical death for the child of God is not defeat, but victory (I Cor. 15:57; Philip. 1:23).

VERSE 4

"Sing unto the Lord." David becomes a choir director, and exhorts and leads in singing God's praises.

"O ye saints of His." Surely

if anyone should sing God's praises, it should be those redeemed. One cannot enter into Heaven without a new birth, and one cannot sing spiritual songs without being a saint. To be in the heavenly choir, one must have on heavenly robes!

"And give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness." The reason we are saints or sanctified ones is because we are partakers of His holiness.

VERSE 5

"For His anger endureth but a moment." Because of His holiness God cannot look upon sin; therefore, His wrath is called forth against all ungodliness (Rom. 1:18). He ever deals with His saints by chastening them (Heb. 12:6, 7), but He does this that we might be made partakers of His holiness (Heb. 12:10, 11). Just like the afflictions which are but for a moment, so are God's chastenings.

"In His favor is life." When Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord, he found life. This is why God's countenance meant so much to David (Acts 2:25-28). God looks with favor on every believer in Jesus Christ as they are accepted in the Beloved. Heaven is glorious because "where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:3). Salvation is more than just being saved from Hell and having a lot of nice things. It is being like Him (I John 3:2). It is having fellowship and companionship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ (I John 1:3).

"Weeping may endure for a night." The night of our sojourn on this earth brings forth its periods of sorrow and outward disappointments. It results in afflictions and pains, but we can praise God, these are only for a season; they are for a moment, and they are not to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us (Rom. 8:18; II Cor. 4:17, 18). They should also cause us to lift up our eyes on high for our redemption draweth nigh.

"But joy cometh in the morning." The time when "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Rev. 20:4). We can spiritually cast anchor and wait for the day (I Thess. 1:10); the day when the Lord shall descend from Heaven and shall change our vile bodies and shall catch us up to meet the Lord in the air (I Thess. 4:13-18; Philip. 3:20, 21).

Conclusion: This should ever cause us to extol the Lord and to wait with patience "for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." How is it in your life? Do you have an anchor of the soul (Heb. 6:18-20)?

(EDITORS NOTE: If you would like to write to Bro. Pyle expressing your appreciation for the lessons or ask him questions about his exposition of the Scripture his address is Rt. 22, Box 17400 Mo. Rd., South East, Fort Myers, Fla. 33908.)

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER
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PAGE THREE

The Baptist Examiner Forum

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER — P.O. BOX 71 — ASHLAND, KENTUCKY 41101

What is the difference between Soul and Spirit? I Thessalonians 5:23?

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Following Paul's exhortation, he prays to God, in knowing the weakness and impotency of the saints to receive the full benefits of such exhortations and to act accordingly. Also, he realized his own insufficiency, in trying to impress their minds with such needed instruction.

Too, he realized that unless the Lord opened their ears to discipline, and sealed his instruction to them, their lives would be useless and vain.

Therefore, he appealed to the throne of grace, by addressing God as "the God of peace" (I Thess. 5:23). This title was very appropriate because of God's provision for such peace and reconciliation, as accomplished by the blood of Christ, which gives peace and reconciliation, as accomplished by the shedding of the blood of Christ to give peace of conscience with the concord of unity among the saints with true happiness and prosperity, both in this world and the world to come (Rom. 15:33).

So, with this in consideration, Paul petitioned this "very God of peace" first to "sanctify you wholly" (I Thess. 5:23); that is, perfectly, though these saints were already sanctified by the Spirit of God, in that the Gospel had already come to them in power, and had wrought salvation effectually in them, in that they were turned from idols to serve the living God with true faith, hope, and love, as already implanted in them.

Thus, with God's enabling grace, they had already exercised God-given faith in a very commendable and comfortable manner; yet this work of grace and sanctification, as already begun in them, was far from being perfected in them. Indeed, in this life, there is always something lacking, even in the greatest of saints, in that they humbly disclaim perfection in themselves, though, rightly they should desire such perfection. But, in Christ Jesus, they already had such sanctification propitiated to their account, though not of themselves, as by their own good works. So, in this life, there is only perfection in degrees, as prayed for by Paul, since such sanctification is only a progressive and gradual work, because sanctified persons are first as new-born babes, who are to grow progressively in the grace and knowledge of the Lord, which works, as begun, will, in Christ Jesus, be carried on, performed, fulfilled, and made perfect, in that God works in them to will and to do until He finishes it in His own time.

This has to do with Paul's first petition in this verse.

The next petition of Paul in this verse is: "I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Thess. 5:23).

Originally, when God made man, He (as a Trinity) said: "Let us make man in our image..." (Gen. 1:26). Therefore, I presume that man must also be a trinity, as is set forth in this verse (I Thess. 5:23). Hence, man, in his normal integrity, as designed of God, will, in Christ Jesus, be glorified as a trinity of spirit, soul and body, to constitute the entire man, as a trinity in the image of God, a Trinity.

This "spirit" may intend the understanding (Job. 32:8), which is the principle leading and governing faculty of the soul. So, in regeneration, this "spirit" of man is enlightened by the Spirit of God. In this, man comes to know himself, Christ Jesus, and the things of the Spirit, the truths of the Gospel, and receives the spiritual value of them. This "spirit," then, links man with the higher intelligences of Heaven, and is the highest part of man, as being receptive of the quickening of the Holy Spirit in regeneration.

But, on the other hand, before regeneration, the "spirit" of the natural man is, more or less, subservient to the "soul" in its im-material animating essence, in having not the Holy Spirit (Cf. I Cor. 2:10-13). Such an unbeliever, in the resurrection of the unrighteous, shall arise with an animal (soul-animated) body.

However, in the resurrection of the righteous, the believer will have a spiritual (Spirit-endued) body like that of Christ's body (Rom. 8:11).

The "soul," then, may include the will and affections, which are influenced by the "spirit."

So, with the "body" as the temple of the Holy Spirit, the "whole spirit and soul and body" are, as a trinity, complete as to unity; yet each component of this trinity is individually entire, though complete in unity, as a "whole" with no grace wanting at the resurrection of the "body" in the likeness of the resurrected body of Christ Jesus.

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This is a subject that has been debated over for years. There are two main schools of thought on this subject. These theories have become known as the trichotomous and the dichotomous theory.

Those who hold the dichotomy theory believe that man is composed of two parts,

the physical part or the body, and the spiritual part or the soul and spirit (the soul and spirit being the same thing), thus showing how sharp the Word of God is that it can divide the soul and spirit (see Heb. 4:12). I know at least one of the writers on the forum holds this position.

I, however, hold the trichotomy theory. I believe that man is made up of three parts — the body, the soul, and the spirit. Since God is a Trine God (the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), I believe He created man in a trine manner. The passage given in your question bears this out. "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God, your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Thess. 5:23).

When God created man He breathed into him the breath of life, which part of man can never die because it is the breath of God. It is eternal, just as God is eternal. When man sinned he died, but what part of man died? Not his body, as it was still alive after the sin, to be sure it dies as it was intended to do, but it did not die in the garden of Eden. Ephesians 2:1 tells us that we are dead in trespasses and sins. What part of us was dead before we were saved? Was it the body? No, we were all alive physically when we were saved. Was it the soul? No, because that is the part of God that can never die. Was it the spirit? Yes, we were dead spiritually, thus we could not understand the great things of God. We are dead spiritually without Christ as our Saviour and it is literally quickened or made alive when we are saved.

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"...I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Thess. 5:23).

Let me say to start with that I am an ardent and adamant dichotomist. I am totally convinced that the Bible overwhelmingly favors this view. The Bible teaches that man is a spirit-being who lives in a body. These two parts make up the total man. This is repeatedly and clearly taught in the Bible. In creation, God made a body, and breathed a spirit-being into that body. Jesus divides man into two parts when he says to fear Him who is able to cast body and soul into hell. The vast majority of commentators, as I know them take this view. The older commentators, usually the best, overwhelmingly take the dichotomous position.

One can easily distinguish between the body and the spirit-being who inhabits that body.

But it is exceedingly difficult to distinguish that spirit-being into two different substances and make man a trichotomous being. I shall be interested in seeing how my fellow Forum brethren distinguish between soul and spirit.

If I Thessalonians 5:23 teaches that man is a trichotomous being — consisting of three distinct substances, then Mark 12:30 teaches quartochotomy—that man is made up of four distinct substances, and Hebrews 4:12 would teach that man is a pentochotomous being, consisting of five parts. Look at these Scriptures and see if I am not telling the truth.

There is no real difference between soul and spirit. Very frequently these words are used interchangeably in the Bible. Either one of them is used Scripturally to refer to the spirit-being that lives in the body which is the real man. When the two words are used together as in I Thessalonians 5:23, it is just an intensified way of referring to the inner man which lives in the outward man. Just as Mark 12:30 does not mean there are four parts to man, but intensifies the thought that man is to love God with his total being, so I Thessalonians 5:23 intensifies the thought of the whole man being preserved blameless by using the three terms, body, soul, and spirit.

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If man is made up of two distinct elements (dichotomous theory) there is no difference between the soul and the spirit, as they would be one and the same. But if man's nature is made up of three distinct elements (trichotomous theory), then there is a difference. I believe that the Bible teaches that man is a three-fold being, made up of body, soul, and spirit. This verse in I Thessalonians 5:23 and Hebrews 4:12 show this to be so.

Man was made in the image of God and as God Himself is a Trinity. He made man the same. The spirit is that part of man that makes him God-conscious or that part of man which can commune with God. The soul is the individual himself and is the seat of his emotions. The body is his house or tabernacle. The day that Adam sinned he died spiritually. Death as used in the Bible means a separation. When Adam sinned he became separated from God, his spirit could no longer commune with God.

From the Scripture we find the soul is that which controls our emotion, "The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David and Jonathan loved him as his own soul" (I Sam. 18:1); "and his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel" (Judges 10:16); "We saw the anguish of his soul" (Gen. 42:21). The unsaved man is controlled by his soul, his lusts, his desires, his emotions. He has no consideration for spiritual matters because his spirit is separated from God (dead). He is "alienated from the life of God" (Eph. 4:18). This is why it is said in I Corinthians 2:14, "But the natural

man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." We are told that the Greek word for "natural" comes from the same root word for soul. This being true, this passage is saying the unsaved man, being ogoverned only by his soul, can neither receive nor understand the things of God. Only the spirit of man can commune with God, but that is "alienated from the life of God."

At regeneration the spirit is restored to commune with God, "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life" (Rom. 5:10). The spirit is once more in a position to commune with God. Paul said, "For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit" (Rom. 1:9), and again, "My spirit prayeth" (I Cor. 14:14). In Romans 8:16 we are told, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."

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I Thessalonians 5:23, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Hebrews 4:15, "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing assunder of soul and spirit..."

Isaiah 26:9, "With my soul have I desired Thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek Thee early..."

When Paul speaks of the "body" (I Thess. 5:23), he speaks of that which man has in common with the animals of the field, fish of the sea, and fowls of the air, i.e., animal life. Man's corporeal existence is chemically the same as all animals, his nerves, blood vessels, bones, and muscles are of the same material as that of the lower animals. The characteristics of the human body and that of the body of the lower animal is much the same, made of the same dust, and both appointed to return thither. And we need to remember, it was not to the soul nor the spirit, but to the body, God said, "For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

The sameness of man with the lower animal creation extends beyond that which is material, to that which is immaterial, they both have souls (Job 12:10), and if this was the sum of man he would have no preeminence above a beast (Eccl. 3:19). But body and soul is not the sum of man's being, he has also a spirit, and it is his spirit that distinguishes him from the lower animal creation.

Man is a trichotomous being — body, soul, and spirit. With his physical body, man relates to the natural world, with his soul he has self-consciousness, and with his spirit he has God-consciousness. The present

(Continued on Page 5 Column 1)

FORUM

(Continued from Page 4)

natural body is the organ of the soul, the future spiritual body will be the organ of the redeemed spirit, and shall with a redeemed soul render perfect praise and service unto God. Here and now we are concerned with our physical well being, consequently, the soul is intensely active. Then and there, the saved will be concerned only with the glory of God, and the spirit with its perfected God-consciousness will without cessation seek the glory of God.

Romans 8:16, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit (not with our soul, nor with our body, but with our spirit), that we are the children of God." Luke 1:46 & 47, "And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." In this Scripture, both the soul and spirit of Mary are mentioned, and to each a separate action is attributed. It is the redeemed spirit of man that communicates with God, for the things of God are spiritually discerned (I Cor. 2:14). "But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding" (Job 32:8). And "He that is spiritual (not soulish, but spiritual) judgeth all things..." (I Cor. 2:15).

Our identification with Christ in His death breaks the power of sin over us, and awakens the spirit of understanding in us; our identification with Him in His resurrection will give us a body likened unto His glorious body, in which both spirit and soul will be entirely and eternally occupied with the worship of God and His service.

LOST

(Continued from Page 3)

but their desires and motives have been conquered by the love of Christ. Listen:

"For the love of Christ constraineth us..." (II Cor. 5:14).

We are driven by it, even compelled by it. We attend services not because of duty, but because it is a joy to us. We know how David felt when he wrote:

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord" (Psalm 122:1).

All the years of attendance by the sons of Eli did not bring salvation. It would have been better if they had not had this false hope.

5. Some Go Far In Religion And Yet Remain Lost

The Roman governor Felix went so far as to tremble at the Word of God, yet remained lost. We have the account of Paul, the apostle, preaching to him in Acts 24:25. Listen:

"And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee."

Many are like Felix, they tremble at the preaching and want no more of it. Perhaps you are like Felix. There have been times when you have feared, been visibly shaken, and yet your condition is unchanged.

Some go so far as to believe the Scriptures and almost they would be a Christian, but yet they are still lost. Such a man was King Agrippa. Listen:

"Then Agrippa said unto

There is no greater freedom than that enjoyed by a "bondslave" of Jesus Christ.

Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian" (Acts 26:28).

Maybe you have gone as far as King Agrippa. Yet if you die in this condition, you will have your portion with the damned and be tormented for ever and ever.

6. Some Go Even Farther In Religion And Are Still Lost

Such a man was King Ahab. Here is a man that is in Hell today. Even as you listen to this sermon, he is enduring the torments of Hell. Listen:

"And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him" (I Kings 16:30).

Ahab went farther than most in religion, perhaps even farther than you have gone. Yet he was lost. When Elijah spoke the Word of the Lord to Ahab of God's judgment, Ahab did some things. Listen:

"And it came to pass, when Ahab heard those words, that he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly" (I Kings 21:27).

The question, my friend, is have you gone this far? Have you humbled yourself before God like this? Has the preaching of God's Word had such an effect upon your life?

Even if you have gone this far, it is all in vain. It could not save Ahab and it can not save you. Some confess their sins and own their guilt and are still lost.

Eli's sons had gone far but were still lost, bringing us to our next point in the text.

II. The Sons of Belial

God reveals their true position. They were children of the Devil. God knows our true position. We may fool friends and family, but we can never fool God.

1. They Tampered With The Sacrifice

"Wherefore the sin of the young men was very great before the Lord..." (I Samuel 2:17).

Lost religious people despise the sacrifice and sometimes through ignorance they tamper with it. Some have mixed baptism with it, believing it is needed to make the Sacrifice of Christ effective. Some have mixed church membership with it, believing it is needed to make the sacrifice effective. Some have mixed their morals with it, believing it is needed to make Calvary effective. Some have just simply made light of it, denying the effect of the blood sacrifice of Christ. All such tampering is Godless, blasphemous, and straight from the doctrines of devils.

Paul wrote concerning the substitute sacrifice of Christ for the sins of His people in these words,

"And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased" (Galatians 5:11).

In other words, if there is no offense by our preaching, then we are preaching works for salvation. The sacrifice of Christ for the sinner secures salvation without human works. Listen:

"For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Hebrews 10:14).

2. They Had No Regard For The Sacrifice

It is possible to wear the garments of outward Christianity and yet be a stranger to the Grace of God. We are not saved by our feelings or works or holding the orthodox doctrines, or knowledge, nor by making

decisions, nor by sympathy for Christ, nor by reverence for the Son of God, but by an act of free grace that cast our poor, naked soul on the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ as our only hope for Heaven.

The Good News is that we can do nothing, but Christ has done all. Listen:

"...It is finished..." (John 19:30).

The light of the gospel shines in our heart. Only then can we understand as never before: How that Christ died for our sins and was buried in our stead, and rose again the third day to justify us as though we had never sinned. It is like the old hymn says, "All my sins were laid on Jesus."

Although this Gospel is good news to those taught of God, yet it is offensive to the self-righteous and legalists since they must add works to it or else they would be stripped of their self-righteousness.

Addition of works to the death, burial and resurrection of Christ for salvation is sin. Whole congregations will be damned for ever, because they are going about to establish their own righteousness. Christ will not make up whatever you lack. You will be saved entirely by His Blood and Righteousness, plus nothing, minus nothing, or you will be damned by your own self-righteousness.

The sons of Eli had no regard for the sacrifice. They were as is shown by the text — the children of the Devil. They had no inward work of grace.

III. They Knew Not The Lord.

It takes a revelation from God for us to know Him. Listen:

"...the Lord revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the Lord" (I Samuel 3:21).

Before this time Samuel did not know the Lord. Before Samuel had a revelation, he, like the sons of Eli, knew not the Lord. Listen:

"Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, neither was the word of the Lord yet revealed unto him" (I Samuel 3:7).

If you know the Lord, it is because of Divine Revelation.

Christ asked His disciples who men said that He was. There were many opinions. Then He asked them:

"...But whom say ye that I am?" (Matthew 16:15).

Simon Peter answered and said, "...Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16).

We can see that Peter indeed knew the Lord. The question is, how did he come to know Him? Listen:

"And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 16:17).

We can be ever so religious but aside from a revelation from God, we will never know the Lord.

I recall speaking to a man regarding the Lord Jesus Christ. He just could not understand. Suddenly, his eyes lit up and he said, "Oh, I see, now I can see." He had a revelation from God as to the person and work of Christ.

My friend, you need Christ revealed to you. The preacher just can not do it. Christ said flesh and blood could not do it.

The Apostle Paul's commentary on his preaching at Corinth, is found in I Corinthians 2:4:

"A MIRACLE"

A miracle has happened, a gift from above. The Lord has saved my soul, and filled it with love.

My days are now a blessing, my path is now clear, The Lord has given me wisdom and ears in which to hear.

My thoughts are always of Him, my heart is beaming so, I find myself wanting to learn all there is to know.

I tell friends of the Bible, and the words that are there, But only the Lord can open their ears and make them want to hear.

Sometimes I'm with guilt, because I'm not without sin all the time, But then the Lord's words ring out — Jesus Christ died for mine.

As a babe in Christ, I still carry lack of understanding and fears, But the Lord's words comfort me, and I know He always hears.

So thank you, Lord, once again for showing me the way. And please, Lord, keep teaching me with each and every new day!

by Kim LaBare
Covington, Ky.

RETIRING

(Continued from Page 1)

"And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power."

Many people had been saved at Corinth. What was the secret? How did it come about? How did their faith come?

Did Paul use wisdom on them? Did he use an emotional service? No, read the next verse:

"That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" (I Corinthians 2:5).

You must come to know Christ as Saviour in order to be saved, and that by the power of God. Listen:

"...no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father" (John 6:65).

Eli's sons did not know the Lord. They were strangers to the Grace of God.

IV. How Tragic If The Text Was Written About You

It is written of some. There are some that could claim this text as their very own. This text has always been true of many people throughout history.

John Bunyan, the author of "Pilgrim's Progress," was for many years deceived by church membership and self-reformation. Then by his own testimony, God saved him.

George Whitefield, the English evangelist, was likewise deceived. He prayed nine times a day and wore the oldest of clothing to show his humility. All of this while he was studying for the ministry at Oxford. By his own testimony, he was lost until God intervened in his life and saved him.

I say, are you like the sons of Eli? Religious, but lost. What if you should die in this condition? Some already have. They have slipped out into eternity religious, but lost. You are not too young or too healthy to die. The sons of Eli died in this condition. Some shall die in this condition. It would be tragic if you were to die in this condition.

Listen to the words of a Baptist minister as he proclaimed the only hope for mankind:

"...Behold the Lamb of God!" (John 1:36).

I say it would be tragic if you died not knowing Jesus as the Lamb of God. May it please God to reveal His Son to you! May God bless you all!

Some of these learned men also tell us that some of the so-called less civilized tribes of earth had an equally-final way of disposing of their older folk. The word is that when the older folk reached that point in living that they could not longer be productive, fend for themselves, and participate in the required religious activities and rituals, the younger folk arranged for them to be outside the village walls or gates at eventide. Understandably, wild animals quickly and perhaps unceremoniously disposed of them. The older folk, in those instances, were no longer a threat or a burden on the younger folk.

Some "euthanasists" of our day may suppose they have discovered some new "humanistic" way of disposing of some of their problems. Quite obviously, they would seem to be rather "primitive" and certainly unsophisticated.

We may boast that our civilized advances, intellectually, and technologically, are such that we no longer need to resort to such inhumane treatment. We certainly do not await the winter or spring thaws to take our "older problems" down to the sea. Neither do we attempt to satiate the hunger pangs of wild animals or any animals with the flesh of our older folk.

There is, nonetheless, one word that has been suggested which precludes our being self-righteous about our supposedly-civilized attitudes. Mr. Ralph Nader and others, and that not without some basis in fact and justification, have been rather vocal regarding the manner in which we treat older folk. These have deplored the manner in which younger folk of this generation have "abused" and "warehoused" the older folk when they could no longer be productive, fend for themselves, or participate in living activities.

Survival

Such pragmatic efforts or human devices may not be the result of considered, rational forethought on the part of younger folk. Therefore, we

(Continued on Page 6 Column 1)

RETIRING

(Continued from Page 5)

would not want to suppose that the younger folk have moved with malice aforethought against the older folk. Rather, the younger folk, in too many instances, are simply oriented to a "survival-of-the-fittest" philosophy which has been indoctrinated in them by the older folk.

This, perhaps, is one of the inescapable tragedies of our day. On the one hand, men deceive themselves and each other into supposing that they have a concern for their fellowmen or their neighbors. On the other hand, these same men are adamant and often resolute in insisting and ensuring that the "survival-of-the-fittest" thesis is "drummed" and indoctrinated into the hearts, minds, and lives of all of America's children from the earliest moments of their intellectual awakening, through the hours of their most advanced intellectual development and their greatest intellectual exploits and accomplishments.

Understandably, these younger folk live by the philosophies of godless men and have interests contrary to those of the Lord Jesus Christ. These piteous creatures may appear to be religious, and some of them may suppose that they have attained a degree of "righteousness" by "Keeping the Law," "Religious Rituals" or their "Good Works." It should be evident to all, however, that such have never known the Christ of Calvary or the Jesus who cried, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and you would not!"

These younger folk, then, are involved in promoting the "Survival-of-the-fittest" thesis as necessary to their own survival and earthly security. Too often they rationalize their unscriptural biases and their satanic prejudices by attitudinally concluding that the older folk are weak, decrepit, and a burden or a drain on this generation's society. Such attitudes certainly help the younger folk to assume that the older folk are no longer capable of thinking rationally, logically, or definitively.

Resultantly, it is assumed by the younger folk that there is no way that the older folk can ever understand really all of the supposedly-good changes which they are making in the realm of religion, in the churches, or in the area of Christianity. Thus, it is expected that the older folk will keep a rather low profile with respect to such things as "theology," "doctrine," and "practices" or "practical matters" as they relate to the churches. When the older folk fail to keep that low profile, the younger folk are able to separate them from the functioning social milieu by categorizing them as "senile," "off their rocker," or "just a little bit crazy."

Our society is oriented so completely to the "survival-of-the-fittest" thesis that the younger folk can appeal their cases to the professionals of our time. Thus, medical, psychiatric, and even judicial

processes are brought to bear on the older folk so that they might be removed completely from the "flow," if you will, of the milieu of society as we know it.

Success

If we have any knowledge of the Scriptures, however, we can know that every such effort and every such device of men is satanic. The truth is that God in every age has employed older folk for some of His most important tasks. We may remember Enoch, for example. He was one of God's choice servants who lived some 365 years. We have God's own testimony, "And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him."

Enoch had a witness which spanned the ages. That witness rings true even now for men of faith. In one holy moment, Enoch looked across the generations, the centuries, the millennia, the epochs, and the ages and said, "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him!"

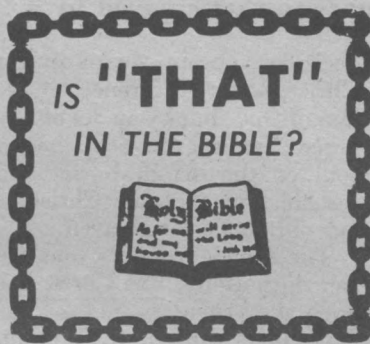
We remember, too, that Noah was near his "six hundredth year" when God declared to him, "The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth." Certainly, Noah was an older man when God commissioned him to "Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch," and he was even, older when God said, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth."

Was it not an aging Abraham whom God chose to become the father of His earthly people, and, as well, a heavenly people? God is most exact and descriptive. Therefore, all should be able to understand, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee; and I will make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

For both His earthly and His heavenly peoples, God is most exact. We hear the word, "For exact. We hear the Word, "For what saith the Scripture? was counted unto him for righteousness." Thereby, we have the assurance, "So then they who are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham."

God goes on to explain to all who might have any questions regarding His sovereign call of Abraham, "As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes; but as touching the election, they are beloved for the Father's sake. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

God's effectual calling and use or employment of Abraham, the old man who was as good as "dead," is without qualification and without equivocation. It may have appeared and it may even appear to men to have been accomplished in time. Yet, it was, in fact and in truth, timeless, though it was effectual in time. A measure of insight is provided for us in "Jacob have



Where are paper and ink mentioned?

ANSWER:— Second John 1:12 — "Having many things to write unto you, I would not write with paper and ink: but I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face, that our joy may be full." See also Jeremiah 36:18; Third John 1:13.

I loved, but Esau have I hated."

Such truth is encompassed forever and forever encompassed in the eternal covenant of God, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

Time and space, at this point precludes the mentioning of so many, many more older folk who have been used, and that wonderfully, by our God. It was an aged Moses whom God inspired to lead the Israelites from Egypt and through the vicissitudes of 40 years of "desert wandering." It was an aged John whom the Lord chose to provide the APOCALYPSE or the portion of the Bible that we call the book of Revelation.

Surrender

The question, then, arises! As older folk, are we planning on retiring to "See the world," or to "Sit on our veranda and rock," or to "Sit on some river bank and fish?" Or, are we "retiring," if you please, to serve the Lord?

Those of us who have done a bit of traveling can recall that the rocks on the coast of Maine, those off the mainland of the orient, or those off Acapulco do not differ greatly from those in the heights of Idaho, the coast of Mexico, or the hills of Big Bend. They may even be like those in our back yards. Too, the sands on the beaches of Greece and Southern France differ very little from those in Australia, Florida, Texas, or Rio.

I come, then, not to tickle your gospel-hardened fancies!

I come not to push you deeper into your religious passivity!

I come not to commit you to your non-committal attitudes!

Rather, I come to challenge you. I come to tell you that a true commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ will require a great deal more than your money or your cash and time. If we are to be Paul's, we must be ready and willing to "fight the good fight of faith" without fear and without favor. It is highly probable that there is not one minister, one preacher, or one evangelist out of 10,000 who is even capable of such.

Sadly, and tragically, men commit themselves to men!

Men surrender themselves to the devices of evil men!

The Lord Jesus has no place in the hearts of such!

If I may be especially per-

sonal, the fight has gone out of most Baptists. We may claim that we have the faith, and that our churches have a Scriptural Emphasis. Like a lot of other things, however, we have determined that the faith is just not worth fighting for. We find it much more comfortable to be religious and even "ecumenical" like everyone else.

Professors in our colleges and seminaries tell us we are the "off-shoots" from monkeys, and the word does not even raise the hair on the nape of our necks. Young preachers, and some deluded older ones, tell us that we are Protestants, and though some of our forefathers may be "turning in their graves" even at the thought, we do not even bristle anymore. Our politicians tell us that the human fetus is just a thing, and we permit them to legislate the death of fetal life without any pangs of conscience whatever.

So-called "Religious Fundamentalists" tell us that we should join forces with evil men in order to put down the immoralities of the time, and we suppose that they received their commission from the Lord Jesus who hung on Calvary's Cross. Professionals tell us that our Bibles really are books just like a lot of others in the world, and we hold forth in our corners with rousing "Amen's"!

Thus, I come to the challenge!

Dare to be Daniels right now!

As I, you may have been bombarded in other days by pictures of a young, vigorous Daniel in the lion's Den. The truth is, the Daniel who was in the Lion's Den was an old man! Thus, as older folk of your church of the Lord Jesus Christ, realize your responsibility and then act on that responsibility! As an older person who has committed himself to the Lord Jesus Christ from his youth, I can assure you that "older" can be better, though God, on occasion, yet speaks to us "out of the mouths of babes."

Therefore, I challenge you to service to God in the confidence of His Holy Word, and with confidence in His Holy Word — not in men! Rise up, older folk, and take a stand on the Word of God. Rise up, older folk, and take a stand on truth as you have known it since your youth. Rejoice in the glorious fact that truth that has been truth in the past is still truth today.

Jesus said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall never pass away." As He is "the same yesterday, today, and forever," so is His Word! Therefore, the challenge:

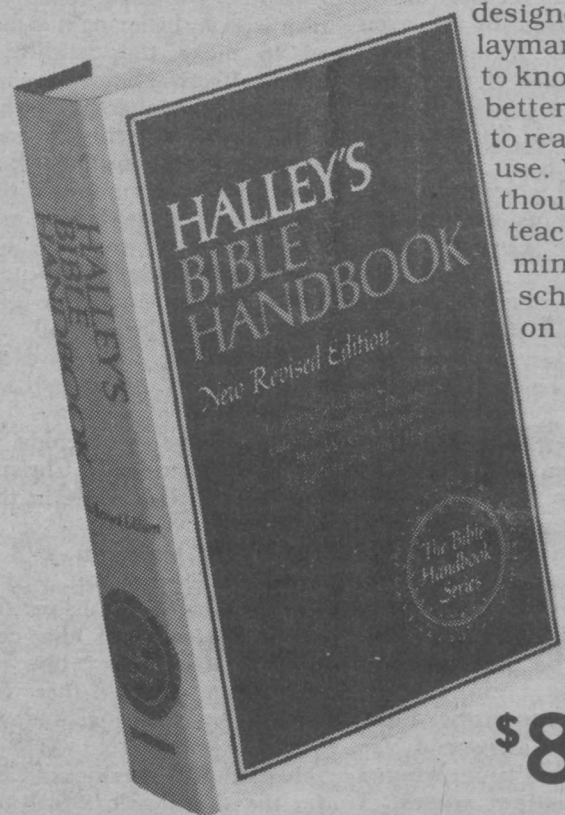
Dare to be Abrahams!
Dare to be as Moses!
Dare to be as Johns!
Dare to be as Daniel!

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"WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE RELIGIOUS WORLD TODAY"

LONGWOOD (AP)—Tired of aerobic exercise programs that feature disco music with suggestive lyrics, a number of chubby women in Central Florida are jogging, stretching and bending in the name of the Lord.

Participants in a series of classes held in churches combine music and praying. And the founders of the program say it is rapidly spreading to other areas of the country.

"I dedicated my diet to Jesus and I lost 85 pounds," says an advertisement for the program showing "before" and "after" pictures of one of the founders, Bernadette Di Francesco.

For an hour, twice a week for eight weeks, participants clad in shorts, T-shirts and sneakers work their bodies to the Damascus Walk, the Jesus Jog, the Heavenly Stretch, the Salvation Rock and the Seventh Heaven.

"It's the Christian alternative to aerobic programs and their rock and disco music," says Mrs. Di Francesco's husband, Joey, a former record company executive.

Di Francesco says the idea came to him one day while he was showering and praying.

ATLANTA (EP)—A church founded by a woman who calls herself "a pagan and a witch" is entitled to a property tax exemption on the building it uses for worship, the Georgia Supreme Court ruled April 7.

The ruling came in the case of the Ravenwood Church of Wicca here. Its members call themselves witches and warlocks. "It's an obvious victory for religious freedom for even small minority, misunderstood churches or groups," said Thomas Maddox Jr., a lawyer for the church. "And it means that the guarantees of religious freedom in this country have some meaning."

The court ruled that if property is used primarily as a place of worship it can qualify for a tax exemption. The ruling modified an earlier Supreme Court judgment that property must be used exclusively for worship to qualify. Lady Sintana, the founder of the church, said in a sworn statement to the court that her faith is a matriarchal religion that originated in Europe. It includes a belief in a diety but not an anthropomorphic God, she said.

The Wiccan church believes in a primordial, supernatural force that creates and permeates the universe, but the church is not Christian and does not believe in the devil. It does, however, believe in the teachings of Christ, she said. Maddox said the religion is not a cult and "does not have anything to do with devil worship. They have rules and regulations... sort of like the golden rule and Christian doctrines."

WAYNE, Pa. (EP)—While it may not be unusual for a church to have a mother-daughter banquet, a mother-daughter baptism is unique. On Palm Sunday, the Central Baptist Church here celebrated such an event.

Three ordained American

Baptist women, all members of Central Baptist Church and all members of the executive staff of the American Baptist Churches which has offices in nearby Valley Forge, one by one entered the baptismal pool of the church to be baptized, in turn, their daughters. Clad in white gowns, the mothers and daughters may well have been the first to participate in such a rite in history.

Three women in ministry in the membership of a single church may appear unusual, but the American Baptist Churches has been a leader in the acceptance of women in clergy roles for many years. There are estimated to be about 300 ordained women in the ABC: 252 women actually serve in professional church leadership roles in local churches (ABC has approximately 6,000 local churches) and there are ten ordained women serving at the executive staff level in the Valley Forge offices.

NEW YORK (EP)—The mainly homosexual Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches has cleared the first hurdle in its bid to become a member denomination of the National Council of Churches, but the council notes that the most critical stages lie ahead. If the application for membership passes all tests, it may come up for a final vote by the council governing board by November, according to a report from the Religious News Service.

The council's constituent membership committee recently voted to send the membership application to its 260-member governing board for initial consideration of eligibility, the NCC said in a statement.

The governing board at its May 12-14 meeting in Nashville will decide if the church is eligible for membership under the NCC's constitution and bylaws. If the gay church passes the eligibility test, its application will be returned to the NCC constituent membership committee — which will decide at a fall meeting whether to recommend the church for NCC membership. If it does, the application will likely come up for a final discussion and vote at the NCC governing board meeting here, Nov. 3-5.

PHOENIX, Ariz. (EP)—Christian Hope Indian Eskimo Fellowship headquartered here reports "very sad news from our Miskito Indian Christians in Nicaragua and Honduras... They are suffering enormous indignities and destruction at the hands of the Sandinista government." The reports include: 24 Miskito Indian villages burned to the ground, including churches; at least 60 Moravian Christian Indians have been killed and 8 native pastors put in prison; Sandinista government claims 8,500 resettled in Nicaragua. The Indians say they are in "concentration camps," and Up to 10,000 Miskito Indians have fled to Honduras... 60% of these refugees are children.

NEWCASTLE, New South Wales, Australia (EP)—Evangelist Luis Palau

concluded his 17-day Newcastle, Australia crusade March 28 before an audience of over 6,000. The audience sat attentively despite a rain storm as the evangelist exhorted them not to leave the Newcastle Showground (race track, site of the crusade) without having settled their relationship with God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The rain was a befitting climax to the crusade (March 12-28) which was hampered from the beginning by unseasonable rain and high winds. Despite the weather, aggregate attendance for the open-air meetings was over 52,000 and 1,400 made a public Christian commitment. The Argentine evangelist believes Australia is ready for a spiritual awakening. Palau claims, "Australia more resembles Latin America, where a spiritual revival is taking place, than Europe where there is spiritual indifference. In Australia there is freedom to proclaim Christian events and the Christian faith, and the population is less intellectually arrogant than other parts of the West."

PORTLAND, Ore. (EP)—A report from the American Remnant Mission of Pleasant Hill, Calif., states, "A newspaper article published by the Portland Oregonian, March 29th, reported that an anti-semitic organization is following the newspaper boys as the newspaper is thrown on the doorstep of influential homes and stuffing in anti-semitic literature. The organization is called the Christian Educational Foundation of Arizona. The flyers report that all Jews are communists and anti-Christian, and everyone should 'resist them.' The flyer also requested that they tell others about Jews and ask for more of these flyers from the foundation."

MODESTO, Calif. (EP)—Response to a revival meeting at Orangeburg Avenue Baptist Church in Modesto was so great, the meeting stretched from one week to seven. Just before the final week of meetings, 313 persons had made public decisions to become Christians and the church had baptized 143 of them into membership.

"We have met for five weeks every night, including Saturday night," said church secretary Juanita Jackson. "We didn't give the devil Saturday night either." The schedule was so jammed that one couple, scheduled to be married in the church, incorporated their wedding service into the meeting.

Among those making public decisions were four members of a rock group called The Destroyer. A restaurant owner poured out the alcohol in his establishment and burned his state alcohol license. Members have brought records, posters, rude T-shirts, tapes and magazines and left them on the altar.

WASHINGTON (EP)—The House of Representatives recently voted unanimously to reassert its right to employ a full-time chaplain for more than \$52,000 per year. By a vote of 388 to 0, the House reaffirmed its more than 200-year-old tradition of having a chaplain open each session with a prayer. The chaplain is Dr. James D. Ford, a Lutheran Church in America pastor; the Senate chaplain is Richard C. Halverson.

The practice of paying

chaplains in both the House and Senate is being challenged by atheist Madalyn Murray O'Hair. Two years ago, she filed a federal suit saying the use of federal funds to pay the chaplains violated a taxpayer's right to "freedom from religion."

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (EP)—National Football League players Archie Griffin, Donnie Shell and Lyle Blackwood joined 2,500 college students here recently for a very out-of-the ordinary spring break. Students from some 70 campuses represented every state east of the Mississippi River — and several states west of the Mississippi — poured into this resort city for "Operation Sonshine," an annual conference and evangelistic outreach of Campus Crusade for Christ.

As in previous years, participants came to hear messages on effective Christian living and to take part in individual and small-group evangelism during the yearly spring break period. What made this year's "Operation Sonshine" the most unusual ever was the active involvement of Griffin, Shell and Blackwood, who are outspoken Christians. According to conference director Cliff Mills, participating students spoke with more than 12,000 people during the first three weeks of "Operation Sonshine." Almost 950 people indicated they received Christ as personal Savior, Mills said.

WALLA WALLA, Wash. (EP)—Prescott Beals, retired Nazarene missionary, died March 16 here. He was 89. Mr. Beals had a long distinguished career spanning nearly 40 years. He served in India for 32 years. He also served in Barbados, Trinidad, and Belize.

MONROVIA, Calif. (EP)—A cooperative effort between a major international relief agency and national health clinics in strife-torn Lebanon is providing some 2,500 handicapped civil war victims with emergency medical care and outpatient therapy. The victims, mainly Lebanese Muslims maimed or handicapped in the cross fire, are being treated at the Contact and Resource Center in Beirut, and in several clinics throughout Lebanon's Bekaa Valley and along the "green line" dividing East and West Beirut.

World Vision International, sponsor of the cooperative project, is channeling more than \$96,000 in operating funds and pharmaceuticals to the clinics. The project, now in its second phase, brings World Vision's total involvement in Lebanon to more than \$506,000. Among other centers being supported are the Shaab Hospital and a Red Cross clinic in Sidon, the Hamlin Hospital in Hamana and a Red Cross clinic in Zahle.

HILLSBORO, Ks. (EP)—In the 37 years since the atomic bomb devastated the city of Hiroshima, Japan, the citizens have been involved in construction projects of one sort or another. One of them currently underway is the city's first Mennonite Brethren church.

The building, to begin in April, will mark a milestone for the congregation, which didn't exist in the summer of 1976 when Ivan and Jean Wohlgemuth came to plant a church at the bidding of the

Missionary To New Guinea Eld. Fred T. Halliman



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Japan Mennonite Brethren Conference. At that time the city of over 850,000 had only 20 evangelical churches. Today, the congregation of about thirty meets in a rented room on the third floor of an office building downtown. The group has been industrious in conducting worship services, Sunday school classes, fellowship dinners, prayer meetings, Bible studies, English classes and youth meetings — all in the one room.

NEW YORK (EP)—Mr. Andrew Schulze, a white pastor of three black churches and a pioneer in race relations in the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, died of pneumonia March 30 in El Cerrito. He was 86 years old.

Schulze was the pastor of black congregations in Springfield, Ill., St. Louis, Mo., and Chicago, Ill., before becoming the first executive secretary of the Lutheran Human Relations Association, then located in Valparaiso, Ind.

"The man was heroic, but it didn't come easy," said Clemonce Sabourin, 71, a longtime friend from Petersburg, Va. "I sat with Andrew through many a meeting and he trembled before he was about to speak. But he always spoke what he considered to be the Christian point of view on the racial question."

SYDNEY, Australia (EP)—On April 1, three light planes were blown up at Sydney's Bankstown Airport. One of those planes, a Cessna 720, was the property of The Church Army in Australia. Captain Gilbert Page, the Federal Dictator in Australia, commented that it seemed to be a senseless act, without reason, yet so well planned. Each plane involved had a bomb planted in an engine. An airport spokesman said the planes appeared to have been picked at random. The Church Army's plane had only finally been purchased 18 months ago.

BIRDS

(Continued from Page 1)

Now, even professing fundamentalists are engaging in their promotion. We have read Bible accounts of others who became vain in their imaginations... and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible... birds," (Rom. 1:21-23). (Rom. 1:21-23).

The justification for the "bird holy spirit" images is supposed to be found in the Holy Spirit descending "like a dove" in

Matthew 3:16, Mark 1:10, Luke 3:22, and John 1:32. Charismatic promoters portray the dove falling on those baptized by the Holy Spirit. One Charismatic T.V. program goes so far as to place a giant size dove in a pulpit background scene.

The "fish christ" images are fashioned in an outline of a fashion which contains the Greek letters "I-X-O-Y-S" (ICHTHUS) which spell "fish" in Greek. These letters are supposed to be the first letter of each Greek word for "Jesus Christ God's Son, Saviour" and

was supposed to be used as a secret password during the early days of persecuted Christianity. It is interesting to note that the outline of an animal or fish, according to the authorities on symbols, denotes their "remains;" in other words their dead bodies - hence, a dead Christ. It may also be noted that these letters also stand for the Greek words for "Fish Christ, God of Water Salvation." Alas, Dagon the fishgod (I Sam.).

If the above flimsy excuses justify this idolatry, then perhaps we need to take a fresh look at the Old Testament heathen. Maybe they were not so bad after all. It would not be too difficult to justify their multi-winged and multiheaded idols. After all, they must have been familiar with stories about the Cherubim and the Seraphim, the multiwinged and multiheaded creatures of Ezekiel, and the metaphoric "shadow of God's wings" in the Psalms.

Could it be that Christendom needs to have its remembrance stirred as to the basic Bible teaching concerning religious images? Perhaps they have forgotten, or never knew the many Old Testament examples that are given for our admonition? Perhaps we have applied idolatry to motorboats and automobiles so much that we have ignored the primary application to images.

Consider the following academic teaching in Exodus 20:4; "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above... or that is in the water." It does not take a great deal of spirituality to interpret this, but Deuteronomy 4:15-18 is even clearer; "Take... heed... lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure... the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the air... the likeness of any fish..."

Condemnation of idolatry is not confined to the Old Testament. We are commanded in I Corinthians 10:7, "Neither be ye idolaters, as we were some of them." We are commanded in I John 5:21, "Keep yourselves from idols." Demetrius the silversmith, whose lucrative silvershine business was in danger of extinction because of Paul (Acts 19:24-27), could open himself a Bible (?) Bookstore if he were alive today.

Oh, but you say, "I don't make them; I just have them." We will try to penetrate such superior reasoning with a story of a former pastor of mine. He was saved while he was an employee of a cigarette manufacturing company. He was convicted about smoking and stopped. He was convicted that if it was wrong to smoke them, then it was wrong to make them and quit his job. He was called to preach and was convicted that if it was wrong to smoke them and wrong to make them, then it was wrong to grow it and also wrong to be silent about smoking it, making it, and growing it. Needless to say, God used him to establish a great church in a tobacco town. Now, we realize we have come a long way from these kind of principles; but if it is wrong to make graven images, it is wrong to have them. For what it is worth; they're for the birds.

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