

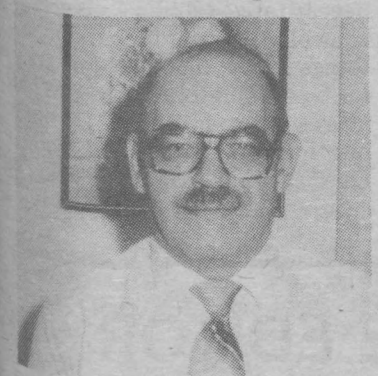
Be humble or you will TUMBLE!

I BELIEVE GOD

by Chester Powell
Burghill, Ohio

Acts 27:25

Every believer should be able to say with the Apostle Paul "I believe God." Sometimes it may be difficult to appropriate this declaration of faith, but if we will analyze the reason we will find that the reason is a lack of faith, and whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Romans 10:17 says, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." If we get out of touch with the Word of God, we will be out of touch with the living God, and believing God will



Chester Powell

be difficult, if not impossible at times.

Let us consider the circumstances of the Apostle Paul, and the trials he was enduring as he makes this wonderful statement. Paul is being sent to Rome from Caesarea to stand trial before the emperor, Caesar, (Acts 26:32). His mode of transportation would be by ship and it would necessitate three of these. In those days there were no ships sailing at regular times from city to city, but people who wished to go places over the sea waited until they could find ships with loads sailing to them. Paul along with some other prisoners was given into the custody of a Roman centurion named Julius, to be taken to Rome. Julius found a ship sailing from Caesarea to places on the coast of Asia Minor, which would take them part way to Rome. At a city called Myra they left the ship to board another which was sailing from Alexandria with a load of wheat into Italy. After many days a heavy wind drove the ship into a place called The Fair Havens near the city of Lasea. This harbor was not a good one, and those in charge of the ship and Julius sought to leave it and sail to another one, preferably Phenice, to stay for the winter (Acts 27:12). Paul, knowing the sailing would be dangerous warns them to stay where they are to avoid hurt and much damage. However, the owner of the ship and the centurion decided against the advice of Paul, "And when the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, loosing thence, they sailed close by Crete" (Acts 27:13). Now God caused a great storm to arise. It was of near cyclone velocity, and was called Euroclydon. Except for the grace of God the ship would have broken up in the storm. The storm drove the ship off course and out into the sea. It ran under an island named Claudia, and there it had to be re-inforced and lightened to keep from sinking. Day after day, and night after night, with no sun or stars appearing the ship was battered by the heavy

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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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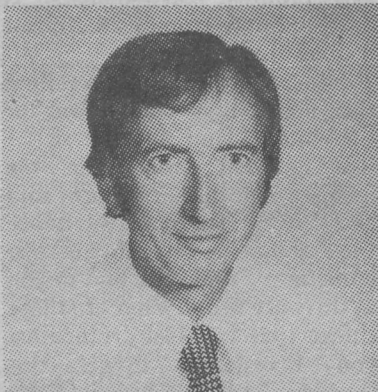
WHOLE NUMBER 2428

WHY WE DO NOT HAVE A CHRISTMAS SERVICE

by Ron Boswell
Hagerstown, Md.

Often we are asked what kind of Christmas services we have here at Calvary Baptist Church. The inquirers have asked an honest question, it demands an equally honest answer. In the day in which we live the simple answer of "None" is not sufficient. People expect some kind of service. The religious page of our newspaper lists all types of Christmas services. To say you have none is to definitely put you in a minority. It is sad that we are in a minority, especially by those that go by the name of Baptist. It was not always so, but concerning Christmas it could be said: "...truth is fallen in the street..." (Isaiah 59:14). The question then is the basis of this message why we do

not have a Christmas service.
I. BECAUSE CHRISTMAS



Ron Boswell

IS PAGAN. Christ was not born in December. The shepherds never kept their flocks in the fields in the winter-time in Palestine. Due to weather conditions the sheep

were always corraled in the lower grounds no later than the middle of October which means that in December the shepherds would not be abiding with their flocks in the field. When Christ was born we read: "And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night" (Luke 2:8).

The Holy Spirit has not seen fit to record when Christ was born. The Bible nowhere commands Christ's birth to be observed as a birthday. These are human inventions without the sanction of the Word of God.

To have a Christmas service is to have a service based on the flesh since it can not be found
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THE BREVITY OF LIFE

by Raymond Waugh
Midland, Texas

In several instances in the Word of God, the Lord directs our attention to the reality that mortal life is extremely brief. In the early portions of the Word of God, there is a rather extensive cataloguing and noting of the great men of old. Regardless of how famed they may have been and regardless of what they may have done, except for Enoch and Elijah, the conclusion to which God finally directs our attention is, "And he died."

Isaiah and later James, as you will remember, speak to the reality that our lives are as "a vapor which appears for a mo-

ment, and then is gone."



Raymond Waugh

Simply a breath, as it were! From the human perspective, perhaps, we might say that our

lives are little more than a shadow coming forth from the dark and returning to the same in a moment. Thankfully, in the Lord Jesus Christ, "There is no darkness at all." Rather, as we learn, "He is the light of the world," and in Him even the darkest hours of our lives are bathed in His Brightness.

The Lord Jesus dramatizes the reality of this truth in a most marvelous manner. He makes His emphasis in a most dramatic way. He says, "What shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul." Herein, He doubtless is direc-
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The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

WHEN THINGS LOOK BAD

To get my subject before the reader, I ask you to consider the contrast between two Scriptures. "...all these things are against me" (Gen. 42:36). "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:28).

Notice the despairing and despondent statement by Jacob. He felt, as we often do, that everything was going wrong. Things really looked bad for Jacob. We have all had such experiences, and we need to know what to do when things look bad. I have a Bible answer for this situation, and it really works. Surely everyone should be interested in my subject. God has given us the answer. What should we do when the sky is dark, when the storms rage, when we see no way out, when it

looks like we are surely going to sink beneath the waves of trouble? Oh, the storms that come to the dear children of God! "Days of darkness still come o'er me, sorrow's path I often tread." Children of God often give way to despondency in such situations — as if they had no other resources than the worldings have. We often dishonor our Lord, and mis-represent our salvation before the world — by acting as if we had nothing better and no other help or source of strength and comfort than the unsaved have. God has the answer as to what to do when things look bad. If we will learn this and practice it, we will be happier, serve the Lord better, and have a better testimony before the world.

Jacob said, "all these things are against me." What were

"these things?" His beloved son, Joseph, had been gone for 22 years, and Jacob thought he was dead. Simeon had been a captive in Egypt for some time. The famine was sore upon the land, and they had used what had been brought from Egypt. He feared that he would lose Benjamin if he allowed him to go with the other brothers to Egypt for more supplies. Oh, how bad these things looked to Jacob! Surely, he thought, all these things were against him.

But what was the truth of the situation? Joseph was not dead, but was a master in Egypt. Joseph had been sent to Egypt by God, though in a very strange way — to preserve Israel through the time of famine. God had some wonderful and surprising blessings in store for Jacob. Soon he would see

(Continued on Page 2 Column 1)

THE SIN OF ETERNAL DAMNATION

by Fred Beard
Cambridge City, Ind.

"But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation" (Mark 3:29). No less than three times in the Word of God we find our Lord and Saviour Christ Jesus, telling us that there is a sin, one sin that is unto eternal damnation.

In Matthew chapter twelve and verses 22-37, we find this same account, and in verses 31 and 32 we hear Jesus as he says,



Fred Beard

"Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come."

That's a sin for which there is no forgiveness, not now, and not
(Continued on Page 4 Column 5)

CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH'S MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND BIBLE CONFERENCE

Calvary Baptist Church of Ashland, Ky., God willing, will have her annual Bible Conference May 25th-27th. There has been some confusion due to the fact that we used to have this on Thanksgiving Day. And due to the fact that Calvary Baptist Church of Hagerstown, Md. now has a conference on Thanksgiving. So please note that our conference here in Ashland will be on Memorial Day Weekend.

We plan to have 23 or more preachers from different states. We will have many you have heard before. We hope to have some new ones we have not had before. You will meet and hear many of the men you have read after in The Baptist Examiner.

You will hear the great truths that this paper stands for proclaimed in power by some of America's finest preachers. You will meet many saints of God from many different places. It will be a great time of fellowship around the precious Word of God.

We urge every reader of this paper to do his best to attend this conference. It will be a time of blessing for you, and your presence will add to our blessings.

Contact this pastor and editor for any information concerning the conference or for any needed help as to your plans to be with us. Pray for God's blessings on this conference.

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THE BAPTIST PAPER FOR
THE BAPTIST PEOPLE

JOSEPH M. WILSON, Editor

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WHEN

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Joseph again. He and his would be provided for abundantly during the remaining years of famine. God had a gracious purpose in all these things. These things, which looked bad, were all for Jacob's good and God's glory. What wonderful blessings were just around the corner for Jacob! There was a silver lining to what looked like a dark cloud of great storm. "Behind a frowning providence, was God's smiling face."

Jacob did not know of God's purpose for good in all these things. He was in the dark, as we often are. He did not know what great blessings were just ahead for him. Not knowing this, just looking at outward circumstances, imagining the worst, Jacob became despairing and despondent, grumbling and complaining, hard to live with. Jacob judged by outward appearances and by his own reasonings, leaving God out of the picture — as if he had no God who lived, and loved him, and was in control of all these things.

Jacob should have trusted God. His despairing statement showed his lack of, or little, faith in God in these circumstances. Oh, what a poor testimony Jacob was at this time! Now, I know that Jacob did not have Romans 8:28. But he did have the God of that Scripture, and the thing was just as true before it was written down as afterward. Everything that is true has always been true and always will be true. God's Word is forever settled in heaven (Psa. 119:89). It was all true and settled in the mind and will of God from eternity — before it was ever written down. Romans 8:28 was as true for Jacob as it is for you and me. I will admit, however, that Jacob did not have it written down for him to read. Still, he should have known this truth in his heart and from his experiences of God's grace. God's sovereign-

They have no cause to be proud who live upon the aims of God's mercy.

ty over all things and His love for His people establishes the truth of Romans 8:28 as certainly as its being written down does. It would be absolutely impossible for anything to take place that was not good for God's children so long as God was in control and loved His own. I am trying to say that God's sovereignty and love for His own makes the truth of Romans 8:28 certain, whether God had written it down or not. I am saying that Jacob should have believed this truth even though he had never seen Romans 8:28. I am saying that Jacob had the God of Romans 8:28, even though he had not the writing.

Jacob should have trusted instead of doubting, because he had experienced the blessings of God so abundantly in the past. And God will not bless His children for awhile, and then just forget all about them. The God who has blessed us will



Joe Wilson

bless us today and for all of our tomorrows. Praise His name! Remember how God met with Jacob at Bethel. God had appeared to Jacob and made many wonderful promises to him. God had protected Jacob from material ruin by the hands of his conniving, thieving Father-in-law, Laban. God had protected Jacob from physical harm when Laban had pursued and overtaken him. God met Laban and warned him against harming Jacob. God had met with Jacob at Peniel, blessed him, and changed his name to Israel. God had protected Jacob from Esau when he came with 400 men to meet Jacob. God had shown Jacob a host of protecting angels at Mahanaim. God had delivered Jacob from all his enemies and preserved him and blessed him in every way. So, he should have trusted God in the present foreboding situation. He should have argued, from the experience of past blessings, that God would bless him still. Yes, Jacob should have trusted God instead of plunging into the depths of despair as he did.

But before we become too critical of Jacob in this, let us look at ourselves. Many times things look bad for the child of God. We all have had such experiences. Physical sickness always looks bad. It is hard for one to apply Romans 8:28 to physical sickness, but it does apply. Times of financial strain and stress often look bad for the child of God. Not many of God's children are rich. Many of them are poor as to the things of this world. Sometimes one does not know what to do, or what is going to happen to him. It is so hard to see any good in such circumstances. It is hard to apply Romans 8:28 to such a situation, but it does apply. Emotional problems afflict many of the children of God. It is difficult to maintain an emotional calm in the storms of life. To always have the right attitude towards self, things, and others is not an easy task. The emotions become tossed as a

ship in a stormy sea. It is so hard to see any good in this.

Spiritual problems arise. One just cannot maintain the high spiritual level he desires. Oh, how spiritual "downs" trouble the child of God! He would always walk on the mountain top. He desires to always be at his best for God. He wants to live right all the time, to love all others as he should, to serve God to the utmost of his ability. But the world, the flesh, and the devil are against him, and he just has his "ups" and "downs" in his spiritual experiences. I know there are some "victorious life" exponents who teach that one can always maintain a spiritual "high," always have perfect victory and peace, always overcome; but most of us know better than this. It is hard to see any spiritual good in our sins, failures, and defeats. It is hard to apply Romans 8:28, but it does apply.

I could go on and on detailing things that look bad to and for the child of God, but I desist. I will let you preach for me awhile. You take it up now and carry it on for me. What are those things in your life and circumstances that look bad to you at this very time. What are those things that you feel are against you? I urge you to give this thought, to catalogue these things. If there is nothing that looks bad to you now, there has been, and there will be. I think that we need to face these things and to deal with them. These things which look bad are different for and to each one of us, so you must preach this part of my sermon for me.

What do we often, even usually, do in such situations? What do we do when things look bad? Well, we often do just like Jacob did. We murmur, grumble, complain, and give over to fits of despondency and despair, don't we? One often wonders at the continual murmuring of the children of Israel in the wilderness. How could they continue to murmur and doubt, when God had done so very much for them. God delivered them from Egyptian bondage, and they despaired at the Red Sea. God brought them through the Sea on dry ground, and they murmured at the bitter water at Marah. God made that water sweet and they grumbled and despaired about lack of food. God gave them manna from heaven and they grumbled and doubted about water. On and on it went with them. One wonders why they doubted so often, why they did not just trust in the Lord — one wonders, that is, till one considers his own lack of faith, grumbling, complaining, and giving up in despair.

Now, the truth of the matter is that nothing can ever take place in all the history of the world, in all the multitudinous details of daily life, that is not for the eternal good of the child of God. This is what Romans 8:28 teaches. Read it again. All things for our good. Nothing for our bad. No matter how it looks, nothing is, or can be, against the child of God. God is in sovereign control of all things. Do we believe this or not? I will say that we preach it more than we practice it, and that it is easier to preach than practice. But, brother and sister, it is true. Oh, the sovereignty of God, the sovereignty of God! It is more than a theory to be believed and preached as a doctrine. It is a warm, wonderful, encouraging, comforting, strengthening, blessed truth! We should apply the doctrine of God's sovereign control over all

things to every detail of our lives. Now, when things go well for us, when the sun shines, and we are in good health, and we have no problems, and the pantry is full, and there is no cloud in the sky, and no storm at sea — then it is easy to believe in the sovereignty of God. But, oh, when things look bad, when we are sick, or persecuted, or the sky is dark, or the sea is stormy, or we do not know what to do — then we begin to wonder if God is really in control of all these things. I tell you that there is no doctrine in all the Bible which will help, bless, and encourage us like that of God's sovereign control over all things.

Now this control of God over all things is for the good of His children. When God, in eternity past, predestinated all the events that would ever take place in time — and He did just this — and He will bring them to pass just as he predestinated them to be — When God did this, He had His children in mind. It is as if He figured out how each event would affect His children, as if He figured out if any event would, in any wise

hurt any one of His children — and then planned all things so that nothing would hurt. Everything would help His own. Oh, brother and sister, is not this a glorious truth? God's children have been loved with an everlasting love. They have been effectually called to the salvation experience by the Spirit of God. They love the Lord with a love He wrought within them. Now this truth that all things work together for their good manifests: 1. His great love for them, 2. His control of all things. I say again that the truth of Romans 8:28 is a necessary consequence of the two truths of God's sovereignty over all things and His love for His children. If these two things are true, Romans 8:28 must be true.

Now let me emphasize that Romans 8:28 proves and necessitates God's sovereign control over all things. Do all things work together for good for God's children? Why? What makes them so work? Do they just happen to turn out good? Does the devil cause them to be

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FROM THE EDITOR

"Love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. 13:10). Please note what this verse really says, for there is much misunderstanding, and some willful perversion thereof. There are many Antinomians abroad in the land. Under the guise of "magnifying the grace of God," they are really disgracing the truth of God's Word. There are many kinds of Antinomians, some much worse than others. In this article, I refer to those who teach that the law of God has nothing to do with the believer; that the believer has nothing at all to do with the Ten Commandments.

These men say that love is the rule of life for the believer. They err greatly in this, and deceive the souls of men. They may not mean to do so, but they greatly lessen the claims of God upon the believer, and their doctrine tends to a lowering of moral standards among those who fall victim to such teaching. They misuse the above Scripture. They expound it as though it meant that, if one has true love, he need pay no attention to God's law. That having this love is all he needs. That this love will be all the guide he needs in living a proper Christian life. These men miss the true meaning of love as to its role in the believer's life, and they confound terribly the relationship between "love" and "law."

Love is the motive of true obedience to the Lord. There will be no true obedience which does not come forth from true love. Without love one cannot even begin to obey. When one is saved, God works in that heart a genuine love for God and (hear this, you Antinomians) for the law of God. God's commandments are not grievous to the truly saved soul. (I John 5:3). The saved person in the Old Testament said, "O how love I thy law..." (Psa. 119:97). The saved person in the New Testament says, "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man" (Rom. 7:22). There is no conflict between and no difference in proper attitude towards the Law of God in the Old or the New Testaments. The man who hates the law of God is unsaved. The man who makes light of the law of God, who wants nothing to do with the law of God, is in a very dangerous and unenviable position. He shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven, (Matt. 5:19). Mr. Antinomian, explain this verse to your hearers.

Love is the motive of all true obedience, but — hear this — law is the rule thereof. Love is motive. Love is power. But love is no guide. Law is the guide and rule. Love moves one to be obedient, but law guides that one in the path of true obedience. Love would not know what to do without law to guide it. Here comes the engine of obedience. Love is the power which moves it along. But law is the tracks upon which it runs. The engine cannot move down the tracks without the power of love. But the empowered engine will run wild without the tracks of law to guide it along, and keep it in its proper bounds.

Now, this is the proper interpretation of Romans 13:10. Love is the power which enables one to fulfill the law. Love does not make the law useless. Love does not take the place of the law. Love does not negate the law. Love leads, moves and empowers one to obey the law.

There are two varieties of Antinomians who outwardly seem to oppose one another, but who wind up in agreement in their opposition to the law of God. There is the hyper-dispensationalist who says that the law was given only to a certain people for a certain period of time; therefore it has nothing to do with the believer. There is the hyper-graceite who says that, since men are saved by grace, they have no responsibility to obey the law of God. Like Pilate and Herod, these enemies become friends in their mutual hatred to the law of God. I would say to both of these varieties of Antinomians who tell me that the Ten Commandments have nothing to do with the believer: Which one can we break? I have yet to receive an answer to this question. I suppose that no man, in his right mind, would say that we have the right to break any one of the Ten Commandments, so I guess we will all agree that we are obligated to keep them all. But will the Antinomian say this? How will he answer my question?



Question: — Who died at the age of 120 without senility?
ANSWER: — Moses, Deuteronomy 34:7. "And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died; his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated." For the last phrase, the Hebrew has, as the margin indicates, "nor his moisture fled."

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for our good? Do we so control them as to make them good for us? No! No! No! If they are for our good — and they are — it is because the God who is all powerful, the God who is all wise, the God who loves His own with an everlasting love — because this God, the only true God, is in absolute control. Does the devil exercise any control over events? Then those events will not be for our good. Do events just happen with no one in control? Then those events may be for good and may not. Only the doctrine and truth of God's sovereignty control over all things causes Romans 8:28 to be true. And it is utter folly for men to pretend to believe Romans 8:28, and yet deny God's sovereignty. Let them try to explain how things are for our good if God is not in control.

Now, we should believe Romans 8:28. We really should. This is God's answer to the situation when things look bad. This is God's solution to the problem when things look bad. No matter how things look, and they really do often look bad, still God says they are good. Do we believe how things look or what God says? Be honest now. How many times have you and I doubted Romans 8:28 when things looked bad? What a terrible sin is this, yet one that we all commit. How awful! Man will tell us something, and we will believe him. God tells us that all things are for our good, and we don't believe Him. Oh, it is a terrible sin to doubt the Word of God Almighty. It is a great proof of our awful depravity, that we find it difficult to just believe what God says. We look at the circumstances. We listen to the whisperings of Satan. We reason about the circumstances. We deduce the conclusion that they are all against us. In so doing, we doubt the Word of God.

Despondency and despair is the result and proof of our lack of faith in God's Word. Worry is a conclusive proof that we do not really believe Romans 8:28. How could we grumble, complain, worry, and despair if we believe that all things were controlled by our God and for our good? I read somewhere that a person said he would as soon curse as worry. I will not go this far, but I will say that it is a sin to worry. I heard of a preacher who had a motto on his desk which read, "Why pray when you can worry." You will say that should be turned around. You are right, but how often do we fail to turn it around? How often do we worry rather than

pray? How often do we pray and still worry? The song says, "take your burden to the Lord, and leave it there." How often do we fail to take the burden to the Lord at all? How often do we just worry, worry, and worry about it? How often do we take the burden to the Lord, pray about it, and then take it back and worry some more about it? Listen to this, "Said the Robin to the sparrow, I wonder why it's true, that the restless human beings, rush around and worry so. Said the sparrow to the robin, I guess that it must be, That they have no Heavenly Father, such as watches o'er you and me." How true this is of us all, and how this manifests our lack of trust in God.

Now, let me give you another blessed truth. We should believe Romans 8:28. It would encourage us, bless us in many ways, cheer us up when in despair. But we often do not believe, at least as we should, this Scripture. But, praise the Lord forevermore, it is true whether we believe it or not. The truthfulness of God's Word does not depend upon the reality or strength of our faith therein. "If we believe not, ye he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself" (II Tim. 2:13).

When we simply cannot wrap our faith around the promise of God, it is still true. Now, if we do not believe Romans 8:28, we will lose the encouragement, blessing, and strength it would give us for the present time. We will suffer from our lack of faith. But this will not change the fact that all things work together for our good. Here is a certain matter. It looks bad. We cannot see any good in it. We grumble, complain, and despair about it. We do not apply Romans 8:28 to it. We just refuse to believe that it is for our good. Well, we will become despondent about it. We will not have the encouragement, comfort, and blessing of Romans 8:28 about it. But this will not change the fact that it is for our good, praise the Lord! We may, and often do, lose the blessing Romans 8:28 could be to us, but we can never change the fact and truth taught therein.

I further believe that eventually, in that other world, when the things of time are seen in the light of eternity — I believe that then we will see and understand, concerning all the details of our lives, that Romans 8:28 was true of each and every one of them was for our eternal good. We will understand it better by and by. Farther, along we will know all about it and understand it. Let us ask God to help us believe it. Let us draw from it the sweetness contained therein. Let us look at the things which appear to be against us through the truth of Romans 8:28. This would still the storm, dry the tears, comfort the heart. Let us try to do this, and pray for help in doing it. But let us know that, no matter how weak our faith, Romans 8:28 is still true. Apply Romans 8:28 when things look bad. This is the total of my message. I have said all I have in this article to just tell you to apply Romans 8:28 when things look bad. May God bless you all!

WHY

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anywhere in the Bible. It can not be found by example or command.

Christ was never in Christmas. Some preachers are saying, "Put Christ back in

Christmas." How could such a thing be? Christ was never in it. He has never a part of it. Dear preacher brother, it would be good for us to do our homework before we speak.

Christmas is simply pagan revelry and ritualism given a Christian name. It was not celebrated in Bible days, not until several hundred years after the birth of Christ. The apostles and the churches in the Bible knew of no such practice.

In England, the Christians known as the Puritans gained political power and then the celebration of Christmas was banned in England in 1644 by an act of Parliament.

The Pilgrims that settled New England made it illegal in their colonies. It was not until 1856 that a Christmas service could be legally held in New England. December the 21st has great significance in pagan worship services. The sun worshippers used it because it was when the sun reached its southernmost point. Their services covered 12 days. In Germany it was a Germanic festival that celebrated rebirth. It was known by the name of "Yule." Hanukkah also dates back to sun worship and was held at the same time. In England these pagan services later became known as the 12 days of Christmas.

The one that was generally worshipped during these times was Sol — the sun God. This dates back to an ancient rite of Baal worship.

God is very serious about the tainting of His people with Baal worship. In Ezekiel 25 with only 17 verses, God condemns four nations because of their treatment of Israel. In the next 83 verses, God condemns one city state — Tyre. What was the terrible thing that they had done to Israel? They had brought about the downfall of Israel by introducing Baal worship to her. Jezebel, the wicked queen, was a Zidonian from the region of Tyre. It was through her that Baal worship first gained prominence in Israel.

With respect to Christmas, Elijah's words still have force: "...How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him..." (I Kings 18:21).

II. BECAUSE WE ARE LED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

The spirit of Christmas is the spirit of Antichrist. Listen: "...the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind..." (Ephesians 2: 2, 3).

Some do things at this time of the year that they would not think of doing at other times. It is open season on sin of all kind. The spirit of the season leads men and women to fulfill the desires of the flesh. Drunkenness, adultery, fornication and covetousness mark the season.

The crime rate at the Christmas season is higher than at any other time of the year. Dr. Brothers writing in a syndicated column says: "In almost all cities the crime rate increases, especially among the poor where people are often forced to come to grips with the reality that their hopes and dreams are not being fulfilled. Most crimes in this season are family crimes and often, children are the victims. In many cases, alcohol is a factor. People drink because of stress and this can lead to serious trouble." Churches are closed if the

season interferes and where they are open the preaching of the word of God is replaced by plays, ritualistic services and carol services.

Giving is not to Christ but attention is diverted from Christ. This is exactly the position of the modernist with his social gospel where humanity is exalted. Where men are pointed to their fellow man instead of the crucified Lamb of God that rose from the dead. The modernist works by the same spirit that we see as the Christmas spirit. Notice the claims of the modernists and the good works of the Christmas spirit and see if they do not exalt man and exclude God.

Instead of saying "Get the Christmas spirit," Christians should pray to be delivered from the Christmas spirit. The Holy Spirit works the direct opposite of all this. He leads men and women to live holy, chaste lives. He gives them a giving attitude towards Christ and His cause. He exalts Jesus and causes our eyes to be fixed upon Him. He guides us into all truth.

Bright lights and parties are the hallmarks of the pagan season to which the Bible says: "...have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Ephesians 5:11). Some would say just preach on the birth of Christ. Is it probable that the Holy Spirit would give every preacher a message on the incarnation of Christ on the same day every year? How then can a preacher honestly say, "Thus saith the Lord" and preach a message dictated by the season? When such things happen we must say the message is either by the spirit of the season or the flesh. In either case, they will not profit the people.

Since the Holy Spirit is Sovereign, we can not program a message on a set day either for or against. We rely on the Holy Spirit, therefore we have no Christmas service. We still believe that a preacher must have a message laid upon his heart by the Holy Spirit. When truth is fallen in the street and the Devil comes with a flood of lies, the Holy Spirit will still raise a standard against them, listen: "...When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him" (Isaiah 59:19).

III. BECAUSE CHRISTMAS IS A GREAT CONTRADICTION

The world loves Christmas, yet it hates the One whose birth it says it celebrates on that day. Listen: "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you" (John 15:18). We have before us a great contradiction. How can the world celebrate the birthday of the One it hates?

When we understand that Christmas is a pagan holiday practiced by the heathen long before Christ was born and that His Name is merely added to it in order to give it respectability, the contradiction begins to clear up.

The world has united with some Christians and some churches in having a holy day. It is those Christians and churches that have compromised. Perhaps through ignorance, perhaps through pressure, some have gone along with the world. They have united with those that hate Christ in order to honor Him. This in itself is an unanswerable contradiction. The Bible, as usual, puts light on the pathway for the child of

God, listen: "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you" (II Corinthians 6:17).

The world is always opposed to God's Word and God's Way. Whatever the world is in favor of is always to be suspected. Listen: "And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness" (I John 5:19).

The Christians should always be careful of anything that is popular with the world. We should at the least be suspicious.

Though this is true with the world in general, it is especially true with respect to religious customs. Listen to how Christ put it: "...for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God" (Luke 16:15).

Since Christmas is so highly esteemed as a religious day among men, is it not probable that it is an abomination in the sight of God? I believe the weight of evidence shows it to be just that. That would certainly clear up this great contradiction.

Suppose a young lady was engaged to marry a young prince that had gone away to receive a kingdom and return to marry her. While that prince was gone the young lady began to fool around with another man. What would you think of her? She would certainly be a two-timer of the lowest sort. That is exactly what would happen if our church fooled around with Christmas. The church is the espoused virgin to the Lord Jesus Christ. The other man would be Sol — the Sun God of Baal worship. Some would think this too extreme but listen to how the Apostle Paul put it: "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ" (II Corinthians 11:2).

IV. BECAUSE WE DO NOT BELIEVE IN MASS

The word Christmas comes from two words — Christ and mass. This shows that it was the Catholic Church that promoted Christmas. We firmly believe that Christ was born of the virgin and that He was God manifest in the flesh fulfilling all the Scriptures. You may have thought upon this, too. However, you may still go to Hell, unless you have been to Calvary and seen Him as your bleeding substitute. The sin-bearer that rose from the dead must be made your only hope for Heaven.

We totally reject any idea of a mass in connection with Christ. Salvation is totally by Grace. The sacrifice of Christ was once and only once. The mass is a bloodless sacrifice offered over and over again by the priest. The participants receive a benefit of grace according to the priest. Christ was only sacrificed one time and that is the only benefit that anyone can receive and He Himself was the high priest. Listen: "...this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God" (Hebrews 10:12).

To use the word Christmas in connection with a worship service is to give credulity to the mass. It is to admit the possibility of it being true. We are against mass with all of our be-

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The Baptist Examiner Forum

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER — P.O. Box 71 — ASHLAND, KENTUCKY 41105-0071

Before a mission is organized into a church, none of the people are members. The preacher is not their pastor. Should they then be taught the doctrines of grace, woman's place, head-covering, etc., or just preach the gospel and leave the doctrines for a later time and a future pastor when they do become a church?

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To answer this question I think we first need to see what constitutes a scriptural mission. After the Holy Spirit had told the church at Antioch to separate Barnabas and Saul for the work for which He had called them, it is said, "And when they (the church) had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away" (Acts 13:3). Upon their return it is said that they, "sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled" (Acts 14:26).

Concerning Paul's second missionary journey, we are told, "And Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God" (Acts 15:40).

These passages show us that for a mission to be scriptural, it must be under the authority of a scriptural church. A minister going out to do mission work must, like Paul, be sent out from a church. When a church sends out one to do mission work, she is carrying out the commission which Christ gave to His church. This commission was to, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). In Matthew 28:19, 20, we are told that the commission was to make disciples, baptize, and to teach all things which He had commanded.

From this we see, that the missionary is not only to preach the gospel, but to baptize those who believe, and to teach the all things as commanded by the Lord. We see that Paul did this, as he told the elders of Ephesus, "I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house" (Acts 20:20). He also told them, "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27).

Before a mission is organized into a church, the people who wish to become a part of the work, are to be received either by letter (if they have scriptural baptism) or by baptism into the membership of the home church, which sent out the missionary. This makes them members just as much as any member of the home church.

When it comes time to organize the mission into a church, the home church grants letters of dismissal to the members of the mission for the purpose of becoming charter

members of the new church.

Now to answer the question, yes, all the doctrines should be taught as well as the gospel. Of course, the unsaved must hear and believe the gospel to be saved, but then those that believe should be taught the "all things which I have commanded."

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The mission referred to in the question is certainly not a Baptist mission, nor does it remotely resemble a New Testament Baptist church mission. All members of a properly constituted mission are first members of the sponsoring church, and are members of the mission in a secondary sense or in a loose sense of the term, membership. The pastor of the sponsoring church is also the pastor of the mission. This does not mean that the sponsoring church cannot appoint a qualified man to lead in or oversee the work of the mission for the church, but it does mean that the mission and her church-appointed leader is subject to the sponsoring church and her pastor.

It appears to me the first truth which the nondescript mission of the question needs to be taught is New Testament church doctrine, and especially the doctrine of church authority.

A scripturally formed mission, while not a church per se, should nevertheless have all the counsel of God preached to it. The primary prerequisite for a mission to be organized into a church is doctrinal soundness, which without, though all things else be in readiness, the mission should remain a mission until the first essential is realized. A mission should not be a mission any longer than is absolutely necessary, but on the other hand it should not be given church status before it is able to function as a New Testament Church.

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Let me first state that the Bible is silent on the subject of missions. The only scriptural basis for them is that God gave authority to His Church to make disciples, baptize those disciples and then to teach them the all things of the Word of God. Much of how this is to be done is not specified in The Bible. Please do not misunderstand

that last statement. I am not saying we can go to any means we desire to carry out the work of the church. There are many Bible guide lines for us to follow. We cannot use games and gimmicks. We are to do our job by the preaching and teaching of The Word of God. We are to have Church services on Sunday to worship God. We are to partake of The Lord's Supper. We are to be scriptural in all of our practices and discipline. There are things we are to do that I believe are left to the discretion of the individual church. I give as examples. Sunday School, Wednesday night services, how often we take the Lord's Supper and Missions. I personally feel that many missions remain missions for far too long a time. If they can meet together on Sundays as a Church does, then what is the sense in them being a mission for years or even many months. Are we basing their remaining a mission on the number of people they have? If so, how many must they have? Are they remaining a mission because they do not have a pastor? If so, when a Church loses a pastor, do they after a while cease to function as a Church? Many, or even most missions, are just like a Church, but they have to send their tithe to the sponsoring Church and they cannot of themselves take the Lord's Supper or Baptize. I think the sooner they are organized as true churches, the better. If you say they are not doctrinally sound enough, then should they even be a mission? I am not anti-mission, I just think they remain a mission too long.

The answer to the question, is a resounding "yes." A mission is just an extension of the Church. They should be taught everything the Church is taught. They should be forced to practice everything the Church practices. A mission has a pastor. He is the man that pastors the Church which gives authority to the mission. When it comes to the doctrines of grace, woman's place, I say, mission or Church; pour it on. The more, the better!

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Even though the mission is not a church, we must remember that the members of the mission belong to the mother church. The preacher who is serving as "mission pastor" should also either be a member or working in cooperation with the church.

As members of the church, they should be taught the doctrines. Remember that every preacher that is working with the church must have one purpose in mind which is defined in

Ephesians 4:11-16. "And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists, and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of The Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ; From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

Mission services then can be conducted in every way such as a regular church service or can just be a preaching service. The only thing a mission service cannot do is observe The Lord's Supper or work in opposition to the authority of the mother church.

WHY

(Continued from Page 3)

ing. We would not dishonor the services of the Lord by adding the word Christmas to it.

Many souls are in the everlasting torments of Hell having been deceived by the Devil with respect to mass. If their voices could be heard they would plead with the preachers to tell the people the truth. How can we tamper with the souls of men and women by not telling them the truth and denying the false hope of mass? The one word in Christmas we love and revere — that blessed name of Christ. The other word we despise and reject — that blasphemous word, mass.

V. BECAUSE WE ARE NOT GOVERNED BY THE WORLD'S RELIGIOUS CUSTOMS

The world does not understand true religion and worship. Let me illustrate it for you. Listen: "Hath not the same Hezekiah taken away his high places and his altars, and commanded Judah and Jerusalem, saying, Ye shall worship before one altar, and burn incense upon it?" (II Chronicles 32:12).

These words were spoken by King Sennacherib of Assyria. They were spoken to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. He was telling them to surrender because their God would not help them or deliver them. He cites our text as the reason why God would not help them. He had observed that years earlier, King Hezekiah had destroyed places of worship and done away with religious customs. He did not realize that King Hezekiah was acting on the written Word of God. He did not understand that King Hezekiah had brought the people back to the Bible He did not know that their religion and worship was now according to the Word of God.

King Sennacherib is not alone in his misunderstanding. He is not alone in denouncing the right ways of the Lord. Many

today do just like Sennacherib. The cry of the Sennacheribs today is the same as in King Hezekiah's day. Sennacherib was wrong then as they are wrong today. God still honors them that honor Him.

The world is a poor judge of the right ways of the Lord. How can they that are not born again understand? The Bible says:

"...the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them..." (I Corinthians 2:14).

We might well expect the denunciations of the Sennacheribs. We expect to be misunderstood. We expect to be given wrong motives by those that are ignorant of the Bible.

Do not misunderstand, Sennacherib was not an atheist. He was a religious man that no doubt thought that all religion was good. In fact, he was later assassinated during a religious service in which he was deeply engrossed in worship. Listen: "And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword..." (II Kings 19:37).

It is the world in general and the religious world in particular that do not understand true religion and worship. We must worship according to the Bible, therefore, we have no Christmas service. So then, here are five reasons why we do not have a Christmas service.

May God grant that you can see the truth and by His Grace, stand for it!

SIN

(Continued from Page 1)

in the world to come.

In chapter twelve, we hear Jesus as He warns us against the teachings of the Pharisees: And He tells us in verse 32, "And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him, but whosoever speaketh unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven." He will not be forgiven because he will be guilty of the sin of eternal damnation.

The Pharisees of the days when Jesus walked upon the face of the earth were good at their trade! That's right, they were a zealous bunch (much like the false metaphysical cults of today). They would compass land and sea to make one proselyte, and Jesus condemned that evil zeal in Matthew 23:15. Their zeal was an ungodly zeal; they had a zeal for self-glorification; they had no desire to glorify God; they used the Scriptures to frighten unregenerated sinners into joining the synagogue. The modern day Pharisees are of the same cut of the cloth. They use the Word of God, or I should say misuse the word, to scare confessions of faith out of those who have no faith, and those who have no possession; and when they have finished, they have made them twofold more the child of hell than they were. They are added to that ever increasing number that will some day stand before the throne and hear the Lord of Host say to them, "Depart from me, I never knew you." Many are those that have been misinformed as to this sin that is unto eternal damnation.

I. IT IS NOT. This sin is not any sin that man commits against his fellow man. Now

(Continued on Page 5 Column 2)

THE LATE JAMES HOBBS

James Hobbs is not deceased, but is late again with his Forum Answers.

Question: Will any be saved other than the elect?

Those who believe the doctrine of election know that there cannot be anyone saved other than the elect. This question actually is not, will there be any saved other than the elect, but actually, is the doctrine of election true? If the doctrine of election is true (and it is), then there can only be the elect saved. In Bishop's book "The Doctrines of Grace" we read, "the Bible not only teaches the doctrine, but makes it prominent — so prominent that you can get rid of election only by getting rid of the Bible."

The definition of election answers this question. "God, of His own purpose, has from eternity determined to save a definite number of mankind, as individuals, not for or because of any merit or work of theirs, nor of any value to Him of them; but of His own good pleasure." (J.P. Boyce, abstract of Systematic Theology). "Election is that eternal act of God, by which in His sovereign pleasure, and on account of no foreseen merit in them, He chooses certain ones out of the number of sinful men to be the recipients of the special grace of His Spirit and to be made voluntary partakers of Christ's salvation." (A.H. Strong, Systematic Theology).

All who are saved are God's chosen (or His elect). Jesus Himself said so. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37). "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:44). Acts 13:48 tells us, "...and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."

These and multitudes of other Scriptures show us clearly that God chose His people (before the foundation of the world, Eph. 1:4; II Thess. 2:13) and that only His chosen will be saved.

Question: What is it to offer strange fire? (Lev. 10:1).

Everything that was done in the tabernacle worship was a symbol of the purity and sacrifice of Christ. The altar of sacrifice, of course, pictured the fact that Jesus took our sins upon Himself. Even the altar had important lessons concerning this; for instance, when the ashes were removed, the priests had to change clothes before taking them out of the tabernacle.

The fire was to remain burning at all times and any new fire must come from a coal from that fire. "The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out" (Lev. 6:13).

When Hadab and Abihu offered incense they took fire from the camp, thus breaking the symbol and marring the purity of salvation.

Anything that is done must be done according to God's pattern and not our ideas. Many people try to do God's work in their own way and not according to God's will. It is because of this we have many organizations called churches that were started by men, but not according to the pattern given to us by God.

SIN

(Continued from Page 4)

don't you misread me. I am not saying that there is no sin against your fellow man. I am saying that this sin, this sin which is of eternal damnation, is not any sin against your fellow man. Man sins against his fellow man, and those sins must be answered for. Those of us that are saved; Jesus the Son of God paid for those sins in His own body. Those sins are under the blood and washed away; those crimson stains of our sins have been made white as snow never to be remembered any more. These are sins that are forgivable.

Even those sins that are against Jesus are forgivable. Did you know that? He said they were in Luke 12:10. Men deny the very deity of Christ Jesus. That's a terrible thing, and they should not. But they can be forgiven. Some have denied that He was virgin born to their shame, for He was thus born. But for this terrible sin there is forgiveness. Some, just like we did in times past, reject Him as the Lord and Master of their lives; but, praise be to God, even this is forgivable. It was, in our lives, or we would not be saved.

There are those that reject the Lordship of Christ Jesus, even unto the death, and I tell you their sins are not forgiven. They will spend eternity in the depth of a literal hell. But don't you know their sins were forgivable. The sin of unbelief is not the sin of eternal damnation. Unbelief can be forgiven. But the sin of eternal damnation is a sin from which there is no forgiveness.

Sinners against God the Father is a terrible thing, and one would surely think that for such a sin there would be no forgiveness. But not so. The Word of God tells us that "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." Cursing and using the name of God to curse with, is a terrible sin; but it can be forgiven. The fact of the matter is, committing any transgression of any of the laws of God is a terrible thing that none of us should be guilty of, saved or lost. But every one of those laws that every one of us have broken, are forgivable.

Christ died to redeem sinners from the curse of the Law. He forgave his people, for whom He died, all their sins. Jesus became that curse, and paid the debt in full.

So we can see very clearly that those sins against man, sins against Jesus, and sins against the Father are all sins there is forgiveness for. But the sin of Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit of God, there has never been, and there shall never be any forgiveness for.

There are sins that we have committed against the Holy Ghost that we have forgiveness for. How many times has the Holy Spirit that dwells within us, pricked our minds and our hearts to go somewhere and speak to this one or that one, to do this thing or that thing, and we grieve the Holy Spirit by saying within ourselves, "No"? Do you know what we do? We ignore the Holy Spirit, and that's a sin. But it's not unforgivable. From such a sin there is repentance! Ask, and He is faithful to forgive us our sins. The unregenerate resist the Holy Spirit. Stephen said to the Jews, as they were about to stone him to the death, "Ye do always resist the Holy Spirit of God." They are resisting the witness of

the Holy Spirit of God that comes forth with the preaching of God's Word. They would resist, even as every lost man resists; until the Irresistible Grace of God takes hold of their hearts.

Some one has said that there are those that resist unto death, but I want you to know that is just not so. The Holy Spirit of God does not work on the heart of the reprobate in salvation conviction; for if he did, then they would not be reprobates. The reprobate dies with his sins unforgiven because he has not believed on the Son of God. But his sins were forgivable sins, they just were not forgiven. There is but one sin that is unforgivable. One sin for which there is no pardon. That sin we call the unpardonable sin. It is the one sin that those who are guilty of are in danger of eternal damnation. That sin is the sin of Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

II. "Blasphemy" Now there are many blasphemies. Webster says of the word blasphemy: That it is an utterance constituting an affront to God, a deliberate irreverence, in speech, for sacred things." Saul of Tarsus went out from Jerusalem, searching out the believers, and "Compelling them to blaspheme" (Acts 26:11). But the Blasphemy that they did was not unforgivable. They blasphemed against Jesus, not against the Holy Ghost. Saul did not compel the believers to blaspheme the Holy Ghost, but to Blaspheme Jesus.

Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is committed when man says something that is to deliberately and willfully dishonor the Divinity of the Holy Spirit of God. That's what the Pharisees were guilty of, when they said of Jesus, "He hath an unclean spirit." They were dishonoring Jesus, yes. They were disclaiming the power that was His, to be the power of God, working by way of the Holy Spirit of God within Him. They blasphemed the Holy Spirit, saying that that Spirit was the Spirit of Beelzebub, the prince of demons. In other words, they were calling God the devil; the Holy Spirit Beelzebub, the devil's prince, and Jesus one of the devil's disciples. It's little wonder that Jesus said to them, "Those that blaspheme the Holy Ghost, to them there is no forgiveness, not in this world, neither in the world to come." For such as these, there is but eternal damnation.

III. "Why Not?" I read over in Romans 5:9 "Much more then, being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." I read in Revelation 1:5, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins, in his own blood."

And I read in I John 1:7, "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his son cleanseth us from all sin."

I tell you, my friends, that the blood of Jesus Christ is All-sufficient to cleanse every one of His people from every one of his sins. Yet I am telling you even how that Jesus Christ did not shed even one drop of His precious blood for the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.

Jesus was beaten, he was spat upon, He bled, and He died. He was laid in the earth for three days and three nights, and He arose for the sins of His people. His people are not now, nor shall they ever be guilty of the

sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit of God. Why not? Because God keeps us from it!

He could have determined to cast every one of the creatures of His creation into the lake of fire, where the fire is never quenched, and the worm dieth not, but He didn't. If He had, who could oppose Him? He provided instead the only sacrifice that would suffice for the redemption of those souls that God wanted, and God chose. He sent His own Son that we might live.

Beloved, there is but one sin that is unforgivable. Now I tell you there are many that are unforgiven, but only one that is unforgivable. And if this is true, and it is, then why is it that men would add to the Word of God.

I have heard of those that would not have a man or woman whom has been divorced to be a member of their church. I know of many that say that a divorced man cannot Pastor or preach. Some claim that only those that have been to some "Bible College" are qualified to pastor.

I have to wonder in my own mind, just what is it that these are saying. Could it be (I pray it is not) that they are saying that the Spirit that has quickened these to new life, and that Spirit that has called these men to the Gospel Ministry is the spirit of Beelzebub?

I know that no Child of God will ever blaspheme the Holy Ghost. From that sin there is no forgiveness, and that is the only sin from which there is no pardon. May God bless you! May He ever keep you faithful to His word, as it is written!

BREVITY

(Continued from Page 1)

ting our attention to the fact that most of what we do, most of that in which we are involved in our lives in this world, in actuality, should have a very minimal priority in our own thoughts, in our own desires, in our own planning, and in our own goals.

On the one hand, while thinking in this direction, memories of my Mother course and flood through my being. Thankfully, the Lord provided that I might have her for more than 65 years. Thankfully, too, she had most of her priorities pretty straight. She thought of the welfare of her children before her own, and she put the things of the Lord before any personal interests. Though widowed just three days prior to my sister's birth — my Daddy was buried on the day she was born — and often not knowing whether we would eat on the morrow, without any fanfare, and on several occasions, I have seen her give her last dollar to the preacher.

This dear man, however, as far as I know, never ever asked any man or any woman for a dollar, a dime or a nickle, all of some worth in those days. Rather, he ministered in a church attended by some of the wealthy and landed men of the area, but it was their intention that he live on a mere pittance. As he, all of these men are dead, and, as far as I have been able to determine, they did not take "one thin dime" with them. They left their worldly accumulations, and their monetary accretions, to their descendants. Though apprised by evangelists, on occasion, of "The rich man and Lazarus" and of "The wealthy farmer" who heard God say, "This night shall thy soul be required of thee," they, apparently, never understood the message.

Today — and this perhaps is a tragedy of equal proportion — those who have "benefited" from that wealth and affluence have a "covetousness" equal to that of their "fathers" and their "grandfathers." These, however, and that very simply are approaching what they call their "religion" with a little different tact. Instead of ensuring that their "preacher" is existing at the poverty level, these of the new generations are making "a great show of their giving" from the profits and the interests that accrue to their accumulated wealth.

It is quite probable that these — and many of them already have the many marks of age and accumulated time — will be no more successful in taking their wealth with them than those who preceded them. In their brief spans of life on earth, these have attempted to make a show — and sometimes a religious show — for the benefit of their peers, but I am quite certain that the judgment of God for these will not differ greatly from that which has befallen their predecessors.

Within the Lord's provision, I was especially blessed by my dear Mother's faith and her faithfulness. Wherever I have been and most of whatever I have done has been against the background of the truth that for her what was ahead was far more important than what had happened yesterday or what was really happening today. There was a reality to her faith in God which gave meaning to every day. She endured the trials of widowhood which God had ordained without complaint and without regard to her own personal welfare or desires.

She had experienced "The Brevity of Life" doubly, in a most dramatic way. While she was yet an infant, her own mother had died. Then, her first child had died in infancy. Finally, her husband of just a few years had died just three days before her last child was born. Yet, and I shall praise God to my dying day, and then perhaps throughout the eternal ages, that none of this altered my Mother's undying faith in God. I shall not attempt to elaborate on the details here, but she and Job had a great deal in common.

She was content with God's Sovereign Design!

And similarly, with His Sovereign Provision!

Often times, there was weeping in the night. Sometimes there were tears during the day. Though she certainly did not understand always, she never "argued" with God! She never attempted to "bargain" with God! She prayed, but always it was in faith. Though sometimes with "a broken heart," she ever committed her way and the way of her own to God. As none other whom I have ever known, she truly lived in the confidence of, "All things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His Purpose."

Often, in the presence of death, and in the presence of tragedy, there was a calmness about her and in her spirit which manifested that faith in God which she knew and by which she lived. Always, her concern was for those who yet remained, and she would attempt to find "a word" that was applicable

(Continued on Page 6 Column 1)

BREVITY

(Continued from Page 5)

for the circumstances or the occasion. Since I never had that gift. I have marvelled at what God had provided for her in this regard.

As she grew older, and then older, and still older, we sometimes would speak of the many who were gone. Mostly, however, she would rejoice in the fact that some yet remained. In the recesses of my heart and my mind, there are the details of these happy and hopeful conversations. As God may so design, they, too, shall be woven into word patterns that others might be blessed both for time and eternally. This, truly, is "The fruit of the Spirit," and, on occasion, enables me to comprehend the right and the good when it would seem that wrong and the bad are preeminent.

She did not understand why most or perhaps all of her peers preceded her in death. In some dark hours in life, she wondered why they should when, from her perspective, they seemed to have more to offer or to give the world. Nevertheless, she did not "argue" or question God.

She saw it as God's Holy Design!

That God was effecting His Ends!

Yet, as I reflect on these more than 65 years during which she was appreciated and loved, I am reminded that it was but a moment. Her 91 years and more were but a moment, "a vapor which appeared for a moment, and then was gone!" Perhaps, we would not be amiss in saying, "a wisp of smoke," as it were, "which was wafted by the breeze"! Nonetheless, it was "A Holy Moment," a moment in God's accounting of time as He prepared her for "Eternity"! Thankfully, as she, I can see that this was within the Holy Purposes of God's Sovereign Provision!

On another hand, my Beloved Wife outlived only a few of her peers. She outlived by more than 45 years the dear lady who directed her heart to the Lord. She outlived her Mother and her Father by some 35 and 25 years. Because my Beloved Wife came to the end of her "brief life" in midlife within the Holy Purposes of God, many of her peers yet live. The more than 35 years which we had, the love, the begetting of children — though such is not necessary to true love — and the appreciating of one another more and more as mortal-togetherness in earthly life drew to a close might seem to be "forever and a day" to young folk with the future ahead of them. Nevertheless, in truth and in reality, as I reflect upon those years, it was but a moment in time.

"Brief" though the lives of my Mother and my Wife may seem to have been upon the earth, I was especially blessed by God in that the two women most intimately involved in my life should have been very strong and humble women of the faith and of faith. Both saw me and understood me as a man of clay, yet they never ceased to love me and pray for me. Without them, there is a void in my life that can never be filled until I walk The Streets of Glory with my Savior!

Yet, even in this, God has a purpose!

His Design is without favor or fault!

As I watched and "felt" the life of the flesh depart from these — thanks, in part of course, to their faith — I would not and I could not fault God. Rather, in both instances, He enabled that I might raise my voice in everlasting thanksgiving and in praise. Even in those hours which seemed very dark from the human perspective, I knew, "God doeth all things well"! In those hours, truly I knew, "All things work together for good to those who love God, and to those who are the called according to His Purpose."

Even more, I could rejoice — as never before — in the Word, "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." Though walking in mortal flesh, and though dwelling in the midst of men, I could know by the Word and in Truth that God had accomplished **THE WONDER OF GLORIFICATION** for them.

Such moments in time dramatize anew, and, in truth, the reality and the importance of eternity. It is true that we shall never pass this way again. Nonetheless, in God's Tomorrow, we shall live today as it might have been if Eve and Adam had never sinned. The poet comprehended something of the reality in his efforts which we know as "Paradise Lost" and "Paradise Regained." Though we know from the Word that it will be apart "from marrying and giving in marriage," we can know that there shall be a reality of personal ecstasy beyond anything that mortals have ever known or experienced.

Jesus certainly was cognizant of this!

Some of the Apostles, too, were aware!

We see this, on the one hand, in their lifestyles. We see the contrary in the fleshly lives of some. Solomon had his houses and lands, creaturely comforts and sumptuous fare, wealth and affluence, and even his 700 wives and 300 concubines, but none of this satisfied. We have his plaintive, "All is vanity and vexation of spirit." The ultimate tally from the earthly perspective, however, is, "And Solomon slept with his fathers, and he was buried in the city of David his father."

Some years ago, "a woman of the world," as it were, boasted of the 1000 or so "affairs" which she had experienced, all with no real satisfaction and no "ultimate thrill," as she said. So, she advertised that she would pay handsomely anyone who could provide her with "a satisfying thrill." Whatever became of the piteous creature, I never knew. We can know, however, that "her brief life span" has ended. We can know, too, that "the thrills" of yesterday cannot last nor can they be recalled in actuality.

In all of this, we might note the word, "Only one life, it will soon be past. Only what is done for Christ will last." This may not be "Scripture," but it does dramatize in words the truth to which we speak.

Just recently the most competent Secretary that I had across some 35 years and more in the business world came to the end of her "brief life." I cannot

remember her age. Today, however, "age" seems so inconsequential.

In fact, time itself would seem to have very little meaning apart from the opportunity which it provides us to serve the Lord Jesus Christ and to fellowship with one another. It is no marvel then that Peter speaks of, "A day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years is as a day." In our humanity, we become bogged down, as it were, in time and in the things of time, but always God is directing our hearts and our minds to the things of eternity.

BELIEVE

(Continued from Page 1)

storm.

It was my privilege to serve in the United States Navy for four years. I had much sea sickness for nearly half of that time. I have been in seas that were very rough. I would not desire to be in any rougher, and yet I do not believe they were as bad as the one described in this chapter. Acts 27:20 says, "And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away." Beloved, that was a storm! In Acts 27:21 we are told that Paul was absent from the crew and passengers for some time. Where do you suppose Paul was? Where was Paul as the great waves rolled over the ship and beat upon it? Well, verse 23 tells us, "For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve." That's where Paul was, receiving instruction and comfort from the angel of God. Another tremendous declaration of faith is found here, uttered by the great apostle, "God, whose I am and whom I serve." Oh, for the faith of this giant of faith, Paul! Here were Paul's instructions, and words of comfort concerning his safe journey with the rest of the passengers to Rome. Remember God had promised Paul he would testify of Him in Rome (Acts 23:11).

Paul continues in verse 25 to say, "Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me."

What a tremendous testimony for the child of God, who in the midst of apparent doom was able to say, "I believe God." Of course, Paul knew that there would be no doom, because he was told so by the One whose he was, and Whom he served. Had he not known this One of whom he testifies, he would not have been able to make this bold declaration.

This is also the declaration of every blood-bought son of God, or should be. In the face of pending doom the child of God can say with Paul, "I believe God." He can also say, "God, whose I am, and whom I serve." Listen as we hear the three Hebrew children in Daniel 3:17-18, "If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." Here were three children of the heavenly King who believed God. Job believed God, "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though

after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me" (Job. 19:25-27). We should be able to say as Paul said in I Thessalonians 5:18, "In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." It testifies of our faith in God. It is easy to say, "I believe God," when the seas are calm, the sun shines and the stars glow from the heavens. But this was not the case with Paul, or the Hebrew children, or Job, or the heroes of faith mentioned in Hebrews chapter 11, or our Baptist fathers who were persecuted for their faith by the Catholic hierarchy, and their belief in immersion by the Protestants.

I am fully aware there are times in our lives when this is most difficult for some to do. I've been there myself, but I must say that the more mature I become in Christ, the more the Spirit of God enables me to testify of and for Him. But, you say, you haven't had the hardships, and heartache I have had. No doubt some of you can claim that as true. May I ask you, have you had the hardships and heartaches that the Apostle Paul had? Can we say we have had the hardships and heartaches the Lord Jesus had? Can we say with our Lord, "not my will be done, but Thy will?" Can we realize the truth of Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Paul's letter to the Christians in Rome is consistent with his actions as described in the book of Acts. In Romans 4:3 we read, "For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." And in verse 21 Paul writes, "And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able to perform." Now we may ask the question, does Paul actually believe God concerning the ship and its passengers after days of darkness, seasickness, and no hope by most that any would be saved? We can answer with an emphatic "yes," his testimony of verse 25, our text, verifies that fact.

Yes, Paul believed God. Abraham believed God. Job believed God. All the heroes of faith believed God. We, too, must believe God through Our Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit through Paul gives us instruction and comfort in I Corinthians 15:58, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." The Hymn writer has written, "Standing on the promises I cannot fall, Listening every moment to the Spirit's call. Resting in my Saviour as my all in all. Standing on the promises of God." do we believe God? Paul was standing on the promises of God when he said in verse 25, "It shall be even as it was told me." Beloved, it shall be for us even as it is told us in God's Word. His Word says, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (II Timothy 3:12).

Philippians 1:29, "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on

him, but also to suffer for his sake;" In the 5th chapter of Acts, we read of the apostles being beaten for teaching and preaching Jesus Christ. However, we read in the 41st verse, "And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name." Yet, they believed God, for in verse 42 we read, "And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ."

Once again listen to the great Apostle Paul, as he once again declares that he believes God. In II Timothy 4:18 he states, "And the Lord shall deliver me from evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." He believes God! Do we? Listen again to I Corinthians 10:13, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." Through every trial, through every temptation, through every heartache, God is there. God will provide, and Paul, and Abraham and all the heroes of faith believed God. Our precious Saviour will give us faith to believe, also. Praise His Holy Name! These, of course, are just a few of the promises and examples that are set before us, in the Blessed Book. May God give us the desire to study His Word, that we may say with Paul, "I believe God." May God bless every reader is my prayer!

EDITOR PREACHES IN FLORIDA

On Monday, January 16, Katie drove me through the snow to the Huntington airport. I flew to Pittsburgh and then to West Palm Beach, Florida. It was 12 degrees when I boarded the plane in Pittsburgh, but a warm 73 when I got off in Florida. It was like two different worlds.

Brother Richard Gast, Brother Harry Danner, and their fine wives met me at the airport and took me to Fort Pierce, Florida, where it was my honor and privilege to preach for the Missionary Faith Baptist Church of that city for a week.

I was royally entertained in the home of Brother Gast. His wife is surely a fine hostess, though she did succeed in driving me from my diet and adding pounds which I must now labor to get off. There were many staying at the Gast home. Brother Harry Danner and his wife from Tullahoma, Tenn. are members of our church and were there for the winter. It was great to fellowship with them this week. Harold Wells and family (The Gast's son-in-law) are staying there until their home is finished. Mrs. Gast's aunt and brother were also there. We had such a good time of fellowship with all these.

It was a high honor, a privilege, and a great blessing to me to preach at this fine church for this week of special meetings. I have many preacher friends in Florida (I hope???) but this was the first winter I have preached there since 1972. Looks like a preacher could

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It is better to meet God with tears in your eyes than weapons in your hand.

STUDIES IN EZEKIEL

Willard Willis, Monroe, Ohio

"And He said unto me..." Verse 1, chapter 2 of Ezekiel.

God speaks to us today in Son language, but He spoke to Israel, in the book before us, by way of Ezekiel. Ezekiel was to share with others that which God had conveyed to Him. The knowledge and wisdom which God gives us is also to be shared with others. We, through the Lord's church, are to go into all the world and share that which we have learned. The bee, when he locates pollen, notifies other bees of his find. We who have learned of the sweetness which is in our Lord Jesus Christ must not keep it a secret.

"Son of man..." v. 1. God, by terming Ezekiel, "son of man," placed him in the same category with the rest of us — the rest of us who are depraved, who are depraved from the top of our heads to the soles of our feet. Those who sort eggs have at least four grades — small, medium, large and extra large. All people, on the other hand, can be placed in one class. Each of us may be classed as "the son of man." We all fall into the class which is defined in Romans 3:10:

"As it is written, there is none righteous, no not one." "...stand upon thy feet..." v. 1.

Sitting carries with it the idea of rest or work that is finished. Standing, on the other hand, signifies the beginning of work. It also signifies a willingness to work. Perhaps the word "stand" is defined best in Ephesians 6:14:

"Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness." "...I will speak unto thee" (V. 1).

Standing, rather than sitting before God, gives recognition to the fact that God is great — that He merits our undivided attention when speaking unto us. Standing, then, has to do with giving attention, or standing at attention when He speaks.

"And the spirit entered into me when he spoke unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me" (V. 2).

This scripture verifies the fact that we, in our own strength, cannot perform to God's standard. We cannot stand and do good works unless we are enabled to do so by God the Spirit. The two following passages of scripture confirm that which we are stating:

"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13).

"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" (I Cor. 2:14).

"...that I heard him that spake unto me." This statement carries with it the same thought which is conveyed to us in I Corinthians 2:10-14.

"But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him... Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but

the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of



Willard Willis

God. Which things we also speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 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."

The above passages were as applicable to Ezekiel as they are to us. Ezekiel was the son of man — the son of man whom God revealed His word to — the son of man who was as dumb as the rest of us aside from the operation of the Holy Spirit in his life.

"And he said unto me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that hath rebelled against me: they and their fathers have transgressed against me, even unto this very day" (v. 3).

The term "son of man" carries with it the thought of failure. It places Ezekiel in the same class with all the others who had failed God. God, however, stated further, "I send thee." This fact removes all possibility of failure. All the power in heaven would be behind Ezekiel as he carried the Lord's message to Israel.

Large corporations, when they send people out to represent them, furnish what ever is needed to get the mission accomplished. God, in like manner, and on a much higher level, will enable His servants to accomplish His mission through them. This fact is brought out very clearly in Matthew 28:18-20.

"And Jesus came and spake unto them (His church), saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

"For they are inpatient children and stiffhearted. I do send thee unto them; and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God" (V. 4).

The word "impudent" means to be cocky, bold or in disregard of others. The word "stiffhearted" means to be unyielding. Israel therefore had become cocky. They had become old in their course

against God and they were unyielding or running head long in their downward trend. They had no regard for God's laws.

Ezekiel was to move against these impudent and stiffnecked people. He, as one man, was to change the course of a nation. It, of course, becomes obvious that his mission depended on God rather than on himself.

"And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, (for they are a rebellious house), yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them" (v. 5).

Ezekiel was not to count his success by the number of souls converted, but only by the fact that the people had been witnessed to. A farmer is only responsible for cultivating the fields and planting the crops. He is not responsible for the hills of corn which fail to germinate. It is our work to go but it is God's work to give the increase. This fact is stated clearly in I Corinthians 3:6:

"I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase."

"And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, through briers and thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions: be not afraid of their words, nor dismayed at their looks. Though they be a rebellious house" (v. 6).

Ezekiel was to go forth and be like a rock as far as their words and looks were concerned. Sharp words and sharp looks would be his daily diet, but these were not to deter his mission. They were not to dilute his stern message from God. Ezekiel, himself, was not to escape the effect of their opposition. Their opposition, in fact, would be as briers, thorns and scorpions, but he was not to turn back in word or in deed. Paul's summary of his own ministry, as stated in II Corinthians 6:1-10, could also apply to Ezekiel.

"And thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear or whether they will forbear: for they are most rebellious" (v. 7).

This passage finds its parallel in II Timothy 4:1-2 which states:

"I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine."

"But thou, son of man, hear what I say unto thee; Be not thou rebellious like that rebellious house: open thy mouth, and eat that I give thee" (v. 8).

We, if we would teach others, must be equipped with knowledge and wisdom. We must not enter the forest to cut down trees until we have sharpened our ax. We must study to show ourselves approved unto God if we would go on a mission for Him.

Ezekiel was to eat that which God had given him. He was also to digest it. The result would be nourishment for the many trials which lay ahead. His eating would also place the message deep within himself so that he could speak with deep conviction.

The main thought is that he was to eat that which Israel had refused to eat. He was to be obedient.

"And when I looked, behold, an hand was sent unto me; and, lo, a roll of a book was therein; and he spread it before me; and it was written within and without; and there was written therein lamentations, and mourning, and woe" (vs. 9-10).

We all prefer a diet which is pleasing to the flesh, but God's ways are not our ways. We, therefore, in order to glorify Him, must do many things which are contrary to the flesh.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

by Medford Caudill
Goshen, Ind.

"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour" (Exodus 20:16).

The third commandment dealt with our tongue sinning against God. This ninth commandment deals with our tongue sinning against our fellow man.



Medford Caudill

This commandment forbids all forms of slander. Slander is to lie about others in order to degrade them in some way. Men slandered Jesus Christ while He was on this earth. "False witnesses did rise up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not" (Psalm 35:11). Men will lie about anything. They think they build themselves up by their deceitful stories. They seek to escape the blame for their actions by denying what they have done. They seek to destroy those they believe to be their enemies by their slanders. They did this to Jesus Christ. "And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying, We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands. But neither so did their witness agree together" (Mark 14:57-59).

People still love to tell falsehoods. Preachers are one of their favorite targets. If they dare not lie outright, they will bend the truth so that it gives a false impression of what really happened. To mislead someone, purposely, is the same as a direct lie. We need to be careful to be absolutely truthful in all things.

This commandment not only forbids us to give false witness against our neighbor, but also forbids us to give false witness for our neighbor or ourselves. A

Missionary To
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Eld. Fred T. Halliman



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lie is a lie, no matter what end we may have in view when telling it. One of the favorite pastimes in America is cheating the government. How many lie on their income tax and do not report income they are liable for? How many lie or file false reports to obtain food stamps, welfare, housing, or other aid? How many times has the government lied to the American people? Falsehood and deception seem to be part of public life.

What are the results of lying. The liar is trapped in his attempts to deceive, for one lie always leads to another. There is no such thing as only one lie.

It is always necessary to tell a second lie to cover the first one or repeat a lie to someone else. One advantage to telling the truth is the fact that you never have to remember what you said. The liar gets in deeper and deeper. The more he lies, the more he must lie to continue his deception. Lying also makes us untrustworthy. Like the little boy who cried "wolf," someday we will tell the truth without being able to convince anyone to believe us.

The devil is the father of lies. He hates the truth and loves falsehood. When we lie we are acting in just the way the devil wants us to. Let us strive to tell the truth in all matters great and small. Let us strive to spread the truth throughout the world that Jesus Christ saves sinners, even those afflicted with the sin of lying.

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TUNE IN TO THE CALL TO CALVARY

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EDITOR

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have many winter meetings in Florida!

This church was at Hollywood, but is now in Fort Pierce. They are without a pastor, and have been so for some time. The fine spiritual condition of this church, evidenced by the soundness of the members and their attendance and attitude during the meeting, shot some holes in my theory as to a church needing a pastor. Of course, we all, including these fine people, bow to the Scripture's teaching as to the church and her pastor. This church needs and desires a good pastor. They have had some very sad experiences along this line in the past, and are understandably leery and cautious in this matter. Pray for them as to this matter.

Brother Richard Gast has done a very fine job of holding this church together, teaching them the Word of God, and leading them in the service of the Lord — better than many pastors are doing. Few men could do the job he has done as to this. I commend him and his wife for their faithfulness to the Lord and to the church. At great sacrifice, they have done a wonderful job here.

The members of this church were very faithful to the meeting. Seldom have I held a meeting where the total membership was more sound in doctrine, or more faithful in attendance. I commend every member of the church highly. I thank God for the privilege I had of getting acquainted with them. Each one was a special blessing to my soul.

Brother John Gilpin, Jr. and his wife were at services Wednesday and Thursday. They are members of our church here, but are spending the winter in Florida (a thousand curses upon Florida for all such). Brother Al Lyons, pastor in Arcadia, Fla. and his wife visited us Saturday night. It was a blessing to meet them and have brief fellowship with them. His church is a faithful supporter of our work. Brother Andy Proctor, a member in Winston Salem who is visiting in Florida (maybe Carol Pyle can explain this to us), Don Rieron and Carol Pyle, all from Ft. Myers visited with us Saturday night. Laura Faye Zamarron from Lakeland visited with us Saturday night and Sunday. Noel Davis and his wife from the great State of North Carolina were in the services Sunday morning. Truly, it was a great and added blessing to have these folk visiting with us during these special services.

We had fellowship each night after the services, all but one night at the church. Such fellowship added to the blessings of the time there. I will long remember the time I was privileged to fellowship with and preach to these wonderful saints of God.

I ask our readers to pray for this fine church, for Richard Gast as he leads the church dur-

ing the time they are without a pastor, and for each member of the church. Some preacher is going to be highly honored some day by being called to pastor this church. I already envy the man.

I greatly enjoyed my time in Florida, but one must return home; and I was glad when this time came. It was warm and nice (mostly) during my week in Florida. My home in Ashland, Ky. experienced the worst week of the winter so far. I could say that I hated this, but I won't. I left warm Florida on Monday, the 23rd and came home to snow laden Kentucky, but it was good to be back home with Katie and with the Calvary Baptist Church. Home is the best place of all. I shall long remember the blessed week in Florida with the Missionary Faith Baptist Church. I hope I might have the privilege of visiting them again some day. I hope many of those dear saints will visit our church here, especially for our Conference. Please pray for this church, and visit them if you are ever in their area. It will be a blessing to you to meet these fine people.

APPRECIATED LETTERS

Dear Brother Joe... I am writing this note especially in reference to four sermons in The Baptist Examiner of Jan. 14, 1984. The messages on The Believer: At Play, At Work, At Home. My wife especially enjoyed these three. I especially enjoyed the sermon on "The Kind of Church A Christian Should Join" by brother Ron Boswell. On the whole, we enjoy all the messages, but these four had an appeal to us. May God bless you as you edit T.B.E., and preach the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Elder Ed Dempsey
Johnson City, Tenn.

Dear Brother Wilson, Enclosed is a contribution towards the expense of publishing The Baptist Examiner. We look forward to receiving it... and thank you for sending it to us. We always know there will be good, sound

articles in it and we will be taught the truth. Praying daily for you and the work.

John Wolfe
Williamsport, Pa.

Dear Brother Joe, This is just a brief note to tell you that we at Calvary Baptist Church in Hagerstown, Md. have 170 names for The Baptist Examiner but we would like to know if you can give us a reduced rate on them.

Terri Lewis
Hagerstown, Md.

Editor's note: We will give a rate of \$1.00 per subscription for 50 or more subscriptions through the month of May, 1984.

Thanks, Brother Wilson for the Baptist Examiner. Such a blessing to our family. All articles were so uplifting. Love and prayers.

The Powers family
Eureka, Mo.

Dear ones in Christ: I want you to know that I love The Baptist Examiner and am happy to receive each issue. I am enclosing \$40. to be used for our precious Lord's service. Thank you for the many fine sermons that express the truth for His glory and our edification.

Opal Sawhill
Sandpoint, Ida.

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CORRECTION AND APOLOGY

In the December 17th, 1984 issue of The Baptist Examiner appeared the following typographical error. I wish to correct this and apologize for its appearing. On page eight, column five, four lines from the bottom of Brother Snell's article, the word "she" appears in reference to God. No one, knowing this sound brother could imagine that he would refer to God as "she." I am sorry for this error. I hope that it causes Brother Snell no embarrassment. I personally consider Brother Snell to be very, very sound in the faith.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

John A. Pruitt, A God-called preacher who preaches the truths of God's Word, is available for preaching wherever the Lord opens the door. You may contact Brother Pruitt at Rt. 1, Box 70, Bryan, Tex. 77803 or call him at 409-822-4693. From my contact with this brother, I feel free to recommend him as a sound and able preacher. I hope some pastorless church might contact this man.

The King's Addition Baptist Church of South Shore, Ky., will hold its annual Bible Conference again this year. Services will begin Friday, March 30, 1984 at 7:00 p.m. and go through Sunday, April 1st at 5:30 p.m. Meals will be provided. Plan now to attend. For additional information, write Elder James Hobbs, P.O. Box 634, South Shore, Kentucky, or call (614) 259-2402 after 10:00 a.m.

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