

WHY GOD BURNT SODOM

by Chuck Sandelin
Samuels, Ida.

"But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly." (Gen. 13:13). "If a man also lie with mankind as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them" (Lev. 20:13).

In our neighboring community they now have a church for homosexuals. A church that is advertised as such and accepted and promoted in the daily newspaper. This group has this to say of itself, "We really believe that God raised us up to help the established church remember to preach God's unconditional love for everybody." In their assembly they sing songs such as "How Great Thou Art" and read from the Bible!

It is 1984 — it is an hour when the world has made sin to be no sin. When wrong can be all right and the way of hell not to be spoken of. The world would shut the preacher's mouth if they could, but it is an hour when preachers are called upon to let the world know what sin is, and what God has to say about sin!

This sin is an abominable sin. Homosexuality is not just an ordinary sin; it carries with it, in the Bible, the declaration that this sin is an "ABOMINABLE" sin thus, giving a categorizing of its concern in the mind of God. The word abominable is described as meaning — "extreme disgust and hatred, to detest in the highest degree." So thus we see that the sin of sodomy is not to be taken lightly or just as some ordinary sin.

This sin brings destruction. First, this sin brings destruction to one's self. The individual that goes in this way of thinking and acting is on a downward road to themselves the moment they begin. There is nothing morally, spiritually, or physically lifting about the sin of homosexuality. Our Sovereign God has even proved of late His anathema upon sodomy by sending the disease of AIDS to those who indulge in this sin. (Some may say, well, AIDS is now reaching beyond just the sodomites into society). That brings up my second point. This sin brings destruction to our society. When a society gets lax with its laws against sin and justice, then God sends, in time, the inevitable consequence of not taking the right measures against such, and in the end the entire society will pay. Just an example is capital punishment. As the law of justice grows more lax; murder, rape, assault, and robbery increase; when capital

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THE ARK: A TYPE OF JESUS CHRIST

by Doug Newell
South Shore, Ky.

Genesis 7:1: "And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation." Many people believe that Jesus Christ is only taught in the New Testament, but I believe we can clearly see Jesus taught throughout the entire Old Testament. I believe that our text is one of the many types of Jesus Christ that are pictured in the Old Testament. I believe the Ark is a type of Jesus Christ. Both represent salvation, and surely salvation was needed in that day, as it is today.

Genesis 6:5-7: "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only

evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it



Doug Newell

grieved him at his heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me

that I have made them." God has poured out His wrath upon the earth once already. All flesh would have died in this wrath, if not for God's mercy and grace. Genesis 6:8: "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." God has prepared a way of salvation for Noah and his family. Genesis 6:13-14: "And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth. Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch."

God has prepared a way of salvation. Can we not see a picture of our Saviour Jesus Christ in the Ark? Jesus is our Saviour. Now before I go any further, let

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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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SECRET SINS

by C.H. Spurgeon
(Now in Glory)

"...Cleanse thou me from secret faults" (Psalm 19:12).

Self-righteousness arises partly from pride, but mainly from ignorance of God's law. It is because men know little or nothing concerning the terrible character of the divine law, that they foolishly imagine themselves to be righteous. They are not aware of the deep spirituality, and the stern severity of the law, or they would have other and wiser notions. Once let them know how strictly the law deals with the thoughts, how it brings itself to bear upon every emotion of the inner man, and there is not one creature beneath God's heaven who would dare to think himself

righteous in God's sight in virtue of his own deeds and thoughts. Only let the law be revealed to a man; let him know how strict the law is, and how infinitely just, and his self-righteousness will shrivel into nothing — it will become a filthy rag in his sight, whereas before he thought it to be a goodly garment.

Now, David, having seen God's law, and having praised it in this Psalm, which I have read in your hearing, he is brought, by reflecting on its excellency, to utter this thought, "Who can understand his errors?" and then to offer this prayer, "Cleanse thou me from secret faults."

In the Lateran Council of the Church of Rome, a decree was passed that every true believer

must confess his sins, all of them, once in a year to the priest, and they affixed to it this declaration, that there is no hope of pardon but in complying with that decree. What can equal the absurdity of such a decree as that? Do they suppose that they can tell their sins as easily as they can count their fingers? Why, if we could receive pardon for all our sins by telling every sin we have committed in one hour, there is not one of us who would be able to enter heaven, since, besides the sins that are known to us and that we may be able to confess, there are a vast mass of sins, which are as truly sins as those which we do observe, but which are secret, and come not

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The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

WHAT THE ELECT ALWAYS HAVE BEEN AND NEVER HAVE BEEN

"...Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee" (Jer. 31:3).

Three things have led my thinking along the line to this sermon: a question from a church member relative to the children of God and the children of the devil; a good tract by Bob McNeil on "Let's Look Again At John 3:16; a sermon by Wayne Cox giving me light on Ephesians 2:3. I consider this to be a very important subject. I believe a proper understanding of the subject will be an encouragement and a blessing to the children of God.

The elect have always been the elect, they have never been

reprobate or just in a neutral condition. The elect are those who have been chosen of God to be the recipients of salvation. By the word "neutral," I mean that the elect were never in a "non-elect" position. They were not just present to the mind of God, but not yet considered as elect or reprobate. Before one is saved, he cannot know if he is elect or not, but there has never been any question about this in the mind and purpose of God. There has never been a time when God had not yet made up His mind as to whether or not to elect a certain individual. By "reprobate: I mean those who are not the elect of God. I mean that, when God made up His elect family, he passed these

over, leaving them in their lost and undone condition. God of His own sovereign will chose some to be saved, and passed by the others. There is an "election" and there is the "rest" who were not elected, see Romans 11:7. Now, in this point, I am saying that the elect have always been the elect. They have never been in any other position before God.

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world..." (Eph. 1:4). Note that God's election is not in time, but before the foundation of the world. Now this does not mean one hour or one day or one week before the foundation of the

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BIBLE SANCTIFICATION

by Herbert Cade
Mansfield, La.

Throughout the Bible there are many things referred to as being sanctified or set apart. For example, Genesis 2:3 reveals that God sanctified the seventh day when He finished His work of creation. That doesn't mean that this day became sinless. It means the seventh day was set apart as a day of rest.

Exodus 13:2 tells us that all the first born of the children of Israel were sanctified: Listen, "Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine." Then in Numbers 7:1 we're told that the tabernacle and all the items in the tabernacle were sanctified: "And it came to pass on the day that Moses had fully set up the tabernacle, and had anointed it, and sanctified it, and all the instruments thereof, both the altar and all the vessels thereof, and had anointed them, and sanctified them." Then in Leviticus 27:14, 16 we are told that the Jewish houses and fields were all sanctified: "And when a man shall sanctify his house to be holy unto the Lord, then the priest shall estimate it, whether it be good or bad: as the priest shall estimate it, so shall it stand." "And if a man shall sanctify unto the Lord some part of a field of his possession, then thy estimation shall be according to the seed thereof: an homer of barley seed shall be valued at fifty shekels of silver."

The firstborn of the Jewish people were all sanctified or set apart for God's service. The tabernacle and the vessels in the tabernacle were all sanctified. The Jewish houses and fields were all sanctified. Sanctification did not change the nature or character of the things sanctified. The vessels in the tabernacle were not better vessels. The houses and the fields of the Jews were not better by being sanctified. Sanctification means that we are set apart for God's service. But it doesn't mean our service will be perfect.

Did you know that there is an Old Testament Scripture that shows which people were sanctified to do evil? In Isaiah 66:17 were people sanctified to do evil — sanctified to do unclean practices — sanctified to do things which were abominable in the sight of God. These people were sanctified to do evil. But God's people are sanctified to do good.

I Peter 3:15 is a wonderful verse. It says, "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." "Sanctify the Lord God in

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ELECT

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world. This expression "before the foundation of the world" is a Biblical way of speaking of that which is from all eternity. "...God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation..." (II Thess. 2:13). What a great verse is this! It teaches election; teaches that it is from eternity, teaches that it is personal, teaches that it is unto salvation, teaches that the means of the gospel and the effectual work of the Holy Spirit are included in election. This verse is a two-edged sword. With one edge it destroys Arminianism, and with the other edge it destroys Hardshell heresy of salvation without the Word of God. "...whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world..." (Rev. 17:8). God made up the roll-book of His elect from eternity. The names of the elect have always been there. It is utterly foolish, wicked, unscriptural, and anti-scriptural to sing "A New Name Written Down in Glory."

Surely, these Scriptures — and many more could be given — teach that the elect have always been the elect of God. They have, from eternity, been predestinated to salvation.

Of course, no man can know this about himself or anyone else, until the salvation experience. But so far as the facts are concerned, so far as the purpose and knowledge of God are concerned, the issue has never been in doubt. We look at an unsaved one. We wonder if he will ever be saved or not. We speak to him of his need of Christ and salvation. We tell him the gospel, how that Christ died, was buried, and rose from the dead. We urge him to repent and believe the gospel. We wonder if he will respond or not. We do not know. But God never looks on one in this way. It is an eternally settled fact, fully known to God, whether that one is elect and will be saved, or a reprobate who will never be sav-

ed. In actuality, the issue is never in doubt.

The elect have always been elect. They have always been special in the mind and heart of God. In the mind and purpose of God, the elect are as old as God. They have what we might call an "election existence" from eternity. Before the world began; before God created the earth, planted it with beautiful grass, flowers, and trees; before He prepared this world for man's habitation, God had chosen His people and predestinated them to eternal glory. We will never understand our salvation as we should until we realize that it had its begin-



Joe Wilson

ing in the mind, heart, and will of God from all eternity. We did not become elect in that hour when we repented and believed the gospel, nor by doing so. We were always the elect, and our repentance and faith is the result and not the cause of our election.

Secondly, the elect have always been the objects of God's love, they have never been the objects of His wrath or hatred. Men make many objections to a statement like this, though I cannot understand why any sovereign gracer would object to it. The sole and sufficient answer to all objections is to ask the simple question, If the elect were once the objects of God's wrath, and now they are not, when did God change? The immutability of God stands behind and guarantees the truthfulness of this statement. God cannot change. A man may change from love to hate or hate to love. A man may turn his emotions on and off. But God is unchanging in His will, His purposes, and His emotions. It is highly dishonoring to God to even imagine that He could change — that He could hate one today, and love that same one tomorrow.

Jeremiah 31:3, which heads this article, tells us that God's love for His own is everlasting. John 13:1 tells us, "...having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end." Since God is eternal and unchanging, how could it be any other way as to His love. God always has loved His elect, and He always will. The foundation of salvation and of security for the saved is laid on the bed-rock of God's eternal love. Can one be the object of God's love and of His hatred or wrath at the same time. Of course not. These emotions exclude one another. They cannot both exist in the same heart towards the same individual at the same time. It must, of necessity, be the one or the other. It cannot be both. Whom God loves today, He always has and always will love. Whom He hates today, He always has and always will hate. "...Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated" (Rom. 9:13). Notice the past tense "have." God always loved Jacob. He always hated Esau. He never changed and never will

change in His emotional attitude towards either of them. Was Jacob ever the object of God's hatred? Of course not. Was Esau ever the object of God's love? Certainly not, and this one statement of Scripture forever destroys the heresy of "God loves everybody" which is so popular with the religious world.

Someone will object to this part of my sermon, that Ephesians 2:3 tells us that the elect were, "by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Of course they were the children of wrath. But it is a matter of interpretation — a false interpretation at that — to say that this means they were the objects of God's wrath. Look at Ephesians 2:2, just preceding this, and certainly giving the true interpretation. There men are referred to as "children of disobedience." Does this mean the objects of disobedience? Of course not. It means that they were characterized by disobedience. "Children of Wrath" in the same context, then, means that the elect, before salvation, were characterized by wrath. It was their nature to be filled with wrath. Surely, the history of the world, and of every individual, is a commentary upon and illustration of this fact. Titus 3:3, "hateful and hating one another" is a perfect and inspired commentary on "children of wrath" in Ephesians 2:3. By what law of interpretation can one insist that "children of wrath" means the objects of God's wrath, when that interpretation contradicts the Scripture and dishonors the unchanging character of God?

Another will object to this position that John 3:36 says, "he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." Of course, it says this, but the objector misinterprets this Scripture and draws a false conclusion therefrom. The word "believeth" in this verse is in the present continuous tense and refers to one who continues and dies in unbelief. It does not refer to one who at present is in a state of unbelief, but will later on be brought to saving faith. This is easily proved by the fact that what is said of the unbeliever here is not true of one who does not now believe, but later will believe. You cannot say — the Bible does not say — that one who does not now believe, but will later believe, shall never see life. That one will see life. You cannot say that the wrath of God abideth on such a one, for the word "abideth" is in the present continuous tense, and means that that wrath will always abide on such a one. Surely, no reader believes that God's wrath will abide continually on one who is eventually brought to faith in Jesus Christ. It is the truth of John 3:36 that one is eventually brought to faith in Jesus Christ. It is the truth of John 3:36 that one who continues in unbelief will never see life, but eternally be under the abiding wrath of God. It is not true of one, who does not believe now but will eventually be brought to faith, that the wrath of God "abideth" on that one. The elect ones have always been the objects of God's love, they have never been the objects of His wrath or hatred. There is no Scripture which, properly interpreted, teaches otherwise, and such teaching is highly dishonoring to the character of God. It is utterly astounding that some sovereign grace believers would hold otherwise.

Thirdly, the elect have always

been the children of God, they have never been the children of the devil. There are many who teach that all men are, by nature, the children of the devil; and that, when one is saved, he ceases to be a child of the devil and becomes a child of God. This is utterly contrary to the Word of God. "And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad" (John 11:52). This verse is talking about the death of Christ and the saving effect of that death. We see here that men are called

the children of God before they are gathered to Christ in saving faith. "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal. 4:6). The work of the Spirit mentioned here is that of regeneration whereby one receives the experience of being sons of God. But note that the work of the Spirit proceeds from the fact that such are already considered the sons of God. They were sons of God by election — in the purpose of God — from eternity, before they

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FROM THE EDITOR

I recently received the following: Entitled, "What's Your Motive?" "Our people do not tithe — they give! I found that there is something better than law, duty, and religious requirements — it's love for Christ! I have found a better motive for Christian giving than "Tithe and God will bless you: — It's give because God has blessed you! If the love of Christ does not constrain us, motivate us, and encourage to holiness, generosity, and compassion towards one another, all the pledge cards, threats, and rules set forth are just so much wasted effort. One tenth of what I have does not belong to Christ — all that I have and am belongs to my Lord — for I am bought with the price of His blood."

The above is a perfect example of modern day Antinomianism, and is contrary to the Word of God. It is part of an effort to do away with the law of God as a rule of life for the believer. It really is an act of, and an encouragement to, direct rebellion against the Word of God.

The article says that one tenth does not belong to Christ. The Bible says, "...all the tithe... is the Lord's: it is holy unto the Lord" (Lev. 27:30). Will you believe and practice the Bible or what this article says? The article says, "Our people do not tithe — they give." I doubt that. I know from the Word of God that no one can give a penny until they pay their tithes. So, unless these people pay their tithes, and give in addition to that, they do not give at all.

The article says, "all that I have and am belongs to my Lord." This is certainly true, but when it is used in a context that opposes the law of tithing, it is a serious untruth used as a shield for disobedience. It is akin to the statement that, "Every day belongs to the Lord, not just the Lord's Day." This is usually used as a shield for disobeying the Fourth Commandment of God, and using the Lord's Day as one pleases. These two statements smack of the hypocrisy of pretended super-spirituality to me. The man who says, "all belongs to the Lord" does not give all to Him. This man buys beans and potatoes, has a car, pays on a house, etc., just like the rest of us. The man who says, "every day is the Lord's" does not give every day to God. He works and does necessary things on the six days of the week just like the rest of us. These statements make a pretence of spirituality, but are, in reality, (usually) used as excuses for robbing God of His tithe and desecrating the Lord's Day.

God gives us time to do what must be done. He requires one day as special for Him. He gives us the means for our daily life, but requires a tenth thereof as a recognition of His Lordship over, and providing of, such.

The article says, "I have found something better than law... it is love for Christ." The Bible says, "O how love I thy law" (Psa. 119:97). and, "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man" (Rom. 7:22). These verses show that the saved of the Old and New Testament have the same, and proper regard to the Law of God. If there is something better than the Law of God as a rule for the believer's life, I have not found it and the Bible does not declare it. The law of God is a perfect standard for life, and no one could ever get "better" than that.

The article completely ignores the distinction in human language between "motive" and "rule." Of course, love for Christ is the motive for the believer's obedience to the law. But motive and energy without a guide is a dangerous thing. The law of God is the guide by which the believer is to show his love for Christ. The engine is powered by fuel, but is guided by the tracks upon which it runs. The believer is powered by the love of Christ. This power moves him within the bounds of the track of God's law. Love does not tell one what he is to do. Law does that. Love causes one to do what law tells him to do.

I do wish that modern antinomians would tell us exactly what they mean when they decry the law of God, telling us that the believer has nothing to do with the law. I want them to tell me if I ought to obey the Ten Commandments or not. If not, I want them to tell me which ones I can break. If I should obey them, I want to know what they mean by saying that the law has nothing to do with the believer. I truly believe that many such, if they would face up to what they are really saying, would come back to the truths our Baptist forefathers taught as to the law of God.

The article says, "I have found a better motive for Christian giving than, 'tithe and God will bless you.'" Has the author improved on the Word of God? Would he dare to say such? The Word of God says, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse... and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing..." (Mal. 3:10). That sure sounds like "tithe and God will bless you, doesn't it?"

The writer of the above article, by teaching men to rob God of His tithes falls under the condemnation of Matthew 5:18, "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven..." I urge all readers to steer clear of such an attitude, which puts on an appearance of super-spirituality, but really is an attack on the Word of God.



Question: — What harlot's son ruled Israel six years?
 Answer: — Jephthah, Judges 11:1; 12:7. "Now Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty man of valour, and he was the son of an harlot:... And Jephthah judged Israel six years. Then died Jephthah the Gileadite, and was buried in one of the cities of Gilead."

ELECT

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became sons of God in experience and in time. Their experience proceeds from the fact that God already considered them as His sons. We are sons of God from eternity by election. We become sons of God in experience and in time by regeneration.

When Jesus said of some in John 8:44, "Ye are of your father the devil." He knew that they were reprobates and would never be saved. He is infallible. He knows from eternity who are the elect and who are reprobate. He knows His own sheep by name and calls them forth to the salvation experience. He knows who the reprobate are and does not give them that effectual call. When Paul calls Elymas the sorcerer, "thou child of the devil" in Acts 13:10, he was not teaching that all men are by nature the children of the devil, but God revealed to him that this man was one of the reprobate. When we are told in I John 3:10 that, "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother," he is telling us that a God-wrought righteous life and a God-wrought love are the evidences that one is a child of God. You see, some are the children of God and some are the children of the devil. When God works righteousness and love in one, it becomes manifest that that one is a child of God. God knew He was His child from eternity. But this is manifested by God-wrought righteousness and God-wrought brotherly love. There are no Scriptures which teach that the elect were ever children of the devil.

Fourthly, the elect have always been the people of God, they have never been otherwise. "...for I have much people in this city" (Acts 18:10). Paul had been preaching in Corinth for some time and many had been saved. Persecution had arisen. Paul was likely discouraged and contemplating moving to another city. The Lord encouraged him to remain in Corinth and continue preaching by telling Paul that He had much people in that city. They had not yet been saved, but they were the people of God. God was going to use the preaching of Paul to bring them to the salvation experience. Now there are those who object to election that, if some are elect, why preach the gospel. The inspired answer to such an objection is that election is an encouragement to the gospel preacher. Paul was encouraged to remain in Corinth and con-

tinue preaching because he now knew that God had some more elect in the city whom He was going to bring to salvation by Paul's preaching. We see this same truth — that election is an encouragement to the gospel preacher — in II Timothy 2:10, "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." The hardshell heretic will say that the elect will be saved whether they ever hear the gospel or not. Paul knew better than this. Bible believers know better than this. God uses the preaching and testifying of the gospel, in order for the elect to obtain the predestinated salvation.

"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power..." (Psa. 110:3). Here we see an elect people, an effectual power, and a predestinated time of salvation. Note that these do not become God's people because they are willing. But rather, they are God's people before they are made willing, and are made willing by the power of God, because they are already God's people. The elect have always been the people of God.

Fifthly, the elect have always been the sheep of the Lord, they have never been goats. There are those who teach that all men are goats by nature, and that some become sheep by the salvation experience. This is not the teaching of God's Word. "...it is he that hath made us and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture" (Psa. 100:3). The "made us" here is not God's physical creating or making of men. It is His making some to be His people and His sheep. "...and go after that (sheep) which is lost, until he find it?" (Lk. 15:4). Note that there are lost sheep and found sheep. The sheep in this parable was as much a sheep before it was found as after it was found. It was always a sheep. The Lord is not a goat herder. He is the good shepherd of His sheep. "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice..." (John 10:16). Note that they are called sheep before they hear His voice and are brought to Him in saving faith. Yes, the elect have always been the sheep of the Lord. He died for His sheep, and all of them will be found and brought to the heavenly fold, Praise the Lord!

These are some of the things the elect always have been and some things they never have been. From these truths we can learn many lessons of comfort and blessing. We learn that all the elect will be saved. Those who have always been elect, always objects of God's love, always God's people, always God's children, always God's sheep will surely be saved forever. No opposition of Satan, no rebellion of their own, no failure of man will cause a one of them to be lost. Arminian evangelists often seem to encourage men to witness for Christ by telling them that souls will be in hell because of their failure to witness, who otherwise would have been in heaven. Not so, beloved, not so. We should witness faithfully for Christ to the unsaved. But know that God has not made the salvation of His elect to depend upon the faithfulness of men. No one will be in hell who was elected by God to eternal salvation. God will see to it that all such hear the gospel and have

the salvation experience.

The Holy Spirit will be victorious. He will effectually call all the elect of God to saving faith in Jesus Christ. The Son will be satisfied when He sees, saved and in glory, all those for whom He died. The Father will be glorified in the salvation of all His elect. Brother, these matters of eternal importance are not left to chance or hazardness. They are eternally sure, secured by the will and power of God. The elect, the people of God, the sheep, the children of God, those loved by God will all be forever saved and glorified. Praise the Lord for these precious truths! Comments on this sermon will be welcomed and answered. God bless you all!

SECRET

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beneath our eye. Oh! If we had eyes like those of God, we would think very differently of ourselves. The sins that we see and confess are but like the farmer's small samples which he brings to market, when he has left his granary full at home. We have but a very few sins which we can observe and detect, compared with those which are hidden to ourselves and unseen by our fellow creatures. I doubt not it is true of all of us who are here, that in every hour of our existence in which we are active, we commit tens of thousands of unholinesses for which conscience has never reproved us, because we have never seen them to be wrong, seeing we have not studied God's laws as we ought to have done. Now, be it known to us all that sin is sin, whether we see it or not — that a sin secret to us is a sin as truly as if we knew it to be a sin, though not so great a sin in the sight of God as if it had been committed presumptuously, seeing that it lacks the aggravation of wilfulness. Let all of us who know our sins, offer this prayer after all our confessions: "Lord, I have confessed as many as I know, but I must add an et cetera after them, and say, 'Cleanse thou me from secret faults.'"

That, however, will not be the pith of my sermon this morning. I am going after a certain class of men who have sins not unknown to themselves, but secret to their fellow creatures. Every now and then we turn up a fair stone which lies upon the green sward of the professing church, surrounded with the verdure of apparent goodness, and to our astonishment we find beneath it all kinds of filthy insects and loathsome reptiles, and in our disgust at such hypocrisy, we are driven to exclaim, "All men are liars; there are none in whom we can put any trust at all." It is not fair to say so of all; but really, the discoveries which are made of the insincerity of our fellow-creatures are enough to make us despise our kind, because they can go so far in appearances, and yet have so little soundness of heart. To you, sirs, who sin secretly, and yet make a profession; you break God's covenants in the dark and wear a mask of goodness in the light — to you, sirs, who shut the doors and commit wickedness in secret — to you I shall speak this morning. O, may God also be pleased to speak to you, and make you pray this prayer: "Cleanse thou me from secret faults."

I shall, endeavour to urge upon all pretenders present to give up, to renounce, to detest,

to hate, to abhor all their secret sins. And, first, I shall endeavour to show the folly of secret sins; secondly, the misery of secret sins; thirdly, the guilty of secret sins; fourthly, the danger of secret sins; and then I shall try to apply some words by way of remedy, that we may all of us be enabled to avoid secret sins.

I. First then, THE FOLLY OF SECRET SINS.

Pretender, thou art fair to look upon; thy conduct outwardly upright, amiable, liberal, generous and Christian; but thou dost indulge in some sin which the eye of man has not yet detected. Perhaps it is private drunkenness. Thou dost revile the drunkard when he staggers through the street; but thou canst thyself indulge in the same habit in private. It may be some other lust or vice; it is not for me just now to mention what it is. But, pretender, we say unto thee, thou art a fool to think of harbouring a secret sin; and thou art a fool for this one reason, that thy sin is not a secret sin; it is known, and shall one day be revealed; perhaps very soon. Thy sin is not a secret; the eye of God hath seen it; thou hast sinned before His face. Thou hast shut to the door, and drawn the curtains, and kept out the eye of the sun, but God's eye pierceth through the darkness, the brick walls which surrounded thee were as transparent as glass to the eye of the Almighty; the darkness which did gird thee was as bright as the summer's noon to the eye of Him who beholdeth all things. Knowest thou not, O man, that "all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do?" As the priest ran his knife into the entrails of his victim, discovered the heart and liver, and what else did lie within, so art thou, O man, seen by God, cut open by the Almighty; thou hast no secret chamber where thou canst hide thyself; thou hast no dark cellar where thou canst conceal thy soul. Dig deep, ay, deep as hell, but thou canst not find earth enough upon the globe to cover thy sin; if thou shouldst heap the mountains on its grave, those mountains would tell the tale of what was buried in their bowels. If thou couldst cast thy sin into the sea, a thousand babbling waves would tell the secret out. There is no hiding it from God. Thy sin is photographed in high heaven; the deed when it was done was photographed upon the sky, and there it shall remain, and thou shalt see thyself one day revealed to the gazing eyes of all men, a hypocrite, a pretender, who didst sin in fancied secret, observed in all thine acts by the all-seeing Jehovah. O what fools men are, to think they can do anything in secret. This world is like the glass hives wherein bees sometimes work; we look down upon them, and we see all the operations of the little creatures. So God looketh down and seeth all. Our eyes are weak; we cannot look through the darkness; but His eye, like an orb of fire, penetrateth the blackness; and readeth the thoughts of man, and seeth his acts when he thinks himself most concealed. Oh! it were a thought enough to curb us from all sin, if it were truly applied to us — "Thou, God, seest me!" Stop thief! Drop thou that which thou hast taken to thyself. God seeth thee! No eye of detection on earth hath discovered thee, but God's eyes are now looking through the clouds upon thee. Swearer! scarce any for whom thou carest

heard thy oath; but God heard it; it entered into the ears of the Lord God of Sabbath. Ah! thee who leadest a filthy life, and yet art a respectable merchant bearing among men a fair and goodly character; thy vices are all known; written in God's book. He keepeth a diary of all thine acts; and what wilt thou think on that day when a crowd shall be assembled, compared with which this immense multitude is but a drop of a bucket, and God shall read out the story of thy secret life, and men and angels shall hear it. Certain I am there are none of us who would like to have all our secrets read, especially our secret thoughts. If I should select out of this congregation the most holy man, should bring him forward and say, "Now sir, I know all your thoughts, and am about to tell them." I am sure he would offer me the largest bribe that he could gather if I would be pleased to conceal at least some of them. "Tell," he would say, "of my acts; of them I am not ashamed; but do not tell my thoughts and imaginations — of them I must ever stand ashamed before God." What, then, sinner, will be thy shame when thy privy lusts, thy closet transgressions, thy secret crimes shall be gazetted from God's throne, published by His own mouth, and with a voice louder than a thousand thunders preached in the ears of an assembled world? What will be thy terror and confusion then, when all the deeds thou hast done shall be published in the face of the sun, in the ears of all mankind. O, renounce the foolish hope of secrecy, for thy sin is this day recorded, and shall one day be advertised upon the walls of heaven.

II. In the next place, let us notice THE MISERY OF SECRET SINS.

Of all sinners the man who makes a profession of religion, and yet lives in iniquity, is the most miserable. A downright wicked man, who takes a glass in his hand, and says, "I am a drunkard, I am not ashamed of it," he shall be unutterably miserable in worlds to come, but brief though it be, he has his hour of pleasure. A man who curses and swears, and says, "That is my habit, I am a profane man," and makes a profession of it, he has, at least, some peace in his soul; but the man who walks with God's minister, who is united with God's Church, who comes out before God's people, and abides with them, and then lives in sin, what a miserable existence he must have of it! Why? he has a worse existence than the mouse that is in the parlour, running out now and then to pick up the crumbs, and then back again to his hole. Such men must run out and then to sin: and oh! how fearful they are to be discovered! One day, perhaps, their character turns up; with wonderful cunning they manage to conceal and gloss it over; but the next day something else comes, and they live in constant fear, telling lie after lie, to make the last lie appear truthful, adding deception to deception, in order that they may not be discovered.

"Oh! 'tis a tangled web we weave, When once we venture to deceive."

If I must be a wicked man, give me the life of a roystering sinner, who sins before the face of day; but, if I must sin, let me

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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

Is there or can there be a time lapse between the time one is regenerated and the time that one exercises repentance and faith?

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This is a mooted question, but it is certainly not the bone of contention concerning regeneration which has polarized the great theological minds of the past and present time. The question most debated in this area, is: Does regeneration precede repentance and faith, or is it that repentance and faith are constituent elements of the new birth, and are instantaneously and simultaneously realized by and in Holy Spirit regeneration? This question has had its disputants all through the history of the church, and presently there stands on either side of it, two inexorable parties. While the two questions are related, the one before us is of a less polemic nature than the other, for the great majority agrees that once repentance and faith are in place, they are immediately exercised by the enlivened person.

In Scripture chronology repentance precedes faith (Acts 20:21; Heb. 6:1; Etc.), but this is not necessarily the case in the experience of regeneration. The historical Baptist position is, that repentance and faith are inseparable graces, instantaneously wrought by the Spirit in regeneration, and simultaneously realized by the person born of God. The interrogator by plain implication allows that the regenerate person is in possession of both repentance and faith, for a person cannot exercise that which he does not possess. The implication is a correct one, for if a person can be in a regenerate state apart from the gifts of repentance and faith, the person would for the time he is alien to the gifts of repentance and faith, be impenitent and faithless, but a Holy Spirit indwelt child of God. The Holy Spirit is the Grantor of repentance and faith, and all whom He indwells are the immediate grantees.

Regeneration cannot exist apart from repentance and faith, and vice versa. It is the Spirit that quickens, it is His direct work. The Holy Spirit's work in making a person positionally holy is instantaneous, it is not a sequel, with a number of subsequent and indirect developments.

Many who allow for a lapse of time between regeneration and the granting of repentance and faith by the Holy Spirit, teach that the hiatus is infinitesimal, so brief it cannot be measured, and is therefore inconsequential. While this concession is greatly appreciated yet it allows for the existence of a regenerate impenitent unbeliever, of which ex-

istence the Bible knows nothing.

The person who is regenerate is at once and the same time a penitent believer. It is not that he will repent and believe at some future date, be it ever so brief or prolonged, but in the sense of regeneration, repentance and faith can be spoken of in the past tense.

"It is a most serious error to suppose that after the Spirit of God has done His work in the sinner, it still remains for him to say whether he should be regenerated or not, whether he shall believe or not. All who are recipients of His supernatural operations are regenerated, effectually converted, and actually believe. It is not that the Spirit imparts the capacity to believe and then waits for the individual to exercise his will to believe: no, He works in the elect, "both to will and to do" (Phil. 2:13). A.W. Pink, *THE HOLY SPIRIT'S WORK IN SALVATION*, Tract - Pg. 12.

The reasoning power of the Christian, be it ever so sublime, will never be able to fully understand the new birth, yet many are so preoccupied with what is termed "the process of regeneration," that the power which produces it is shamefully neglected.

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Absolutely not. One of the people who believes that there is once said that it is conceivable that a person could be born again (or made alive) and go to heaven without ever being saved. That is preposterous. It is inconceivable, unacceptable and unscriptural.

All people are dead in sins. When the Spirit of God enters into a person and makes him alive that person immediately knows that he has a Saviour. When Ezekiel (Chapter 37) spoke to the dry bones they were dead, as soon as the Spirit entered into them they were alive and walked. When Jesus spoke to Lazarus he was dead, but when he was given life he came forth (John 11).

Jesus told Nicodemus, "...verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). When Jesus began preaching, He said, "...Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 4:17). Again He said, "I tell you, nay: but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). Jesus is not making two standards. You must be born again and repent. It is all one instantaneous happening. The gospel is what the Spirit of God uses to cause regeneration. "Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth..." (James 1:18). "...Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life" (Acts 11:18).

Brethren, let's stop this foolish running after every kind of doctrine and return to the truths that sound Baptists have stood for down through the years.

In the last few years some of our brethren have departed from the truths of God's Word and started following false heretical doctrines. (Regeneration without the Word of God, post-tribulation and universal churchism are examples of such doctrines). This time lapse heresy is another example of what happens when you depart from the Word. "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" (Rom. 16:17).

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Titus 3:5: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."

The teaching of a time lapse between regeneration and the exercising of repentance and faith, goes contrary to everything the Bible teaches about the salvation experience. To separate the two, not only is contrary to the Word of God, but is contrary to common reasoning. No, there is not a time lapse between regeneration and repentance and faith.

Let us make some observations about this question. It is a question, which needs to be dealt with by all those who believe in the doctrines of grace. There is a very good possibility that you will be faced with this question.

The life which the Holy Spirit gives is evidenced immediately by repentance and faith. The time lapse theory denies this. This theory creates a person that is foreign to the Word of God. It has a person that is regenerated, born again or made alive (however you wish to phrase it), yet he is not saved. This person has spiritual life; but he has never repented and is not a believer in Jesus Christ as his Lord and Saviour. This individual may not even know that there is a Jesus Christ, yet he still has spiritual life. This man may have never heard the gospel or the law or anything about spiritual matters, yet he could still have spiritual life. To me, this is an absurdity. I also wish to mention that we cannot allow even a second's difference in regeneration and the exercising of repentance and faith. If we allow for any time lapse; then we must allow for a long one as well as a short one. Beloved, repentance and faith are married to regeneration, and you cannot separate the two in time or in act. This time lapse

theory produces a person that has life, but does not know it. This goes contrary to what the Bible teaches about spiritual life. I believe an honest and prayerful study of what the Bible teaches about regeneration, repentance and faith will lead one to see the fallacy of the time lapse theory I urge you to shun this theory. Though there are those that hold to a time lapse theory, who are not yet hard-shell on the gospel; I fear the end result of this heresy is hard-shellism. May God bless you.

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Regeneration is the beginning of spiritual life or is the new birth spoken of by Jesus to Nicodemus when He told him, "...Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). He also told him, "—Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). Regardless of what the word "water" means here, the natural birth as some claim or the Word as others believe, other passages in the Bible show the connection between the Word and regeneration. In Titus 3:5, we are told that regeneration is a washing. In Ephesians 5:26 it is said that cleansing is brought about by the Word, "—with the washing of water by the word." In Psalm 119:50 David tells us, "This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me." The Apostle Paul told the Corinthian Christians, "—for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel" (I Cor. 4:15). In James 1:18 we find, "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, —". Peter tells us the same when he said, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (I Peter. 1:23). In verse 25 he tells us the Word is the gospel, "But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the Word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (I Peter 1:25).

From a study of these passages we see that the Holy Spirit is the One who brings about or produces the new birth or regeneration, "—that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3:6).

Our study also shows that the Holy Spirit uses the Word (the gospel) in regeneration. It is plain from this study that no sinner is regenerated (made alive) apart from the gospel.

In I John 5:10-12 we are told that those who have the Son have life and those who have the Son believe on Him. This is saying that only those who believe have life or none have life except believers. Therefore, as repentance and faith cannot be separated as to time, neither can regeneration be separated from repentance and faith. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:12).

As T.P. Simmons well said, "Hence it cannot be that there is ever a time when there is life without faith" (A Systematic study of Bible Doctrine, p. 268).

SECRET

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not act as a hypocrite and a coward; let me not profess to be God's, and spend my life for the devil. That way of cheating the devil is a thing which every honest sinner will be ashamed of. He will say, "Now, if I do serve my master, I will serve him out and out, I will have no shame about; if I make a profession, I will carry it out; but if I do not, if I live in sin, I am not going to gloss it over by cant and hypocrisy." One thing which has hamstrung the church, and cut her very sinews in twain, has been this most damnable hypocrisy. Oh! in how many places have we men whom you might praise to the very skies, if you could believe their words, but whom you might cast into the nethermost pit if you could see their secret actions. God forgive any of you who are so acting! I had almost said, I can scarce forgive you. I can forgive the man who riots openly, and makes no profession of being better, but the man who fawns, and cants, and pretends, and prays, and then lives in sin, that man I hate. I cannot bear him, I abhor him from my very soul. If he will turn from his ways, I will love him, but in his hypocrisy he is to me the most loathsome of all creatures. "Tis said the toad doth wear a jewel in her head, but this man hath none, but beareth filthiness about him, while he pretends to be in love with righteousness."

A mere profession, my hearers, is but painted pageantry to go to hell in; it is like the plumes upon the hearse and the trappings upon the black horses which drag men to their graves, the funeral array of dead souls. Take heed above everything of a waxen profession that will not stand the sun; take care of a life that needs to have two faces to carry it out; be one thing, or else the other. If you make up your mind to serve Satan, do not pretend to serve God; and if you serve God, serve Him with all your heart. "No man can serve two masters," do not try it, do not endeavour to do it, for no life will be more miserable than that. Above all, beware of committing acts which it will be necessary to conceal. There is a singular poem by Hood called "The Dream of Eugene Aram" — a most remarkable piece it is indeed, illustrating the point on which I am now dwelling. Aram has murdered a man and cast his body into the river — "a sluggish water, black as ink, the depth was so extreme." The next morning he visited the scene of his guilt:

"And sought the black accursed pool, With a wild misgiving eye;

And he saw the dead in the river bed, For the faithless stream was dry."

Next he covered the corpse with heaps of leaves, but a mighty wind swept through the wood and left the secret bare before the sun:

"Then down I cast me on my face, And first began to weep;

For I knew my secret then was one, That earth refused to keep;

On land or sea though it should be, Ten thousand fathoms deep."

In plaintive notes he prophesies his own discovery. He buried his victim in a cave, and trod him down with stones, but when years had run their weary round the foul deed was discovered and the murderer put

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to death. Guilt is a "grim chamberlain," even when his fingers are not bloody red. Secret sins bring fevered eyes and sleepless nights, until men burn out their consciences, and become in very deed ripe for the pit. Hypocrisy is a hard game to play at, for it is one deceiver against many observers; and for certain it is a miserable trade, which will earn at last, as its certain climax, a tremendous bankruptcy. Ah! ye who have sinned without discovery, "Be sure your sin will find you out;" and bethink you, it may find you out ere long. Sin, like murder, will come out; men will even tell tales about themselves in their dreams. God has sometimes made men so pricked in their consciences that they have been obliged to stand forth and confess the story. Secret sinner! If thou wantest the foretaste of damnation upon earth, continue in thy secret sins; for no man is more miserable than he who sinneth secretly, and yet trieth to preserve a character. Yon stag, followed by the hungry hounds, with open mouths, is far more happy than the man who is followed by his sins. Yon bird, taken in the fowler's net, and labouring to escape, is far more happy than he who hath weaved around himself a web of deception, and labors to escape from it day by day by making the toils more thick and the web more strong. Oh! The misery of secret sins! Truly, one may pray, "Cleanse thou me from secret faults."

III. But now, next, the guilt THE SOLEMN GUILT OF SECRET SIN.

Now, John, you do not think there is any evil in a thing unless somebody sees it, do you? You feel that it is a very great sin if your master finds you out in robbing the till — but there is no sin if he should not discover it — none at all. And you, sir, you fancy it to be very great sin to play a trick in trade, in case you should be discovered and brought before the court; but to play a trick and never be discovered, that is all fair — do not say a word about it Mr. Spurgeon, it is all business; you must not touch business; tricks that are not discovered, of course you are not to find fault with them. The common measure of sin is the notoriety of it. But I do not believe in that. A sin is a sin, whether done in private or before the wide world. It is singular how men will measure guilt. A railway servant puts up a wrong signal, there is an accident; the man is tried, and severely reprimanded. The day before he put up the wrong signal, but there was no accident, and therefore no one accused him for his neglect. But it was just the same, accident or no accident, the accident did not make the guilt, it was the deed which made the guilt, not the notoriety nor yet the consequence of it. It was his business to have taken care and he was as guilty the first time as he was the second, for he negligently exposed the lives of men. Do not measure sin by what other people say of it; but measure sin by what God says of it, and what your own conscience says of it.

Now, I hold that secret sin, if anything, is the worst of sin; because secret sin implies that the man who commits it has Atheism in his heart. You will

ask how that can be. I reply, he may be a professing Christian, but I shall tell him to his face that he is a practical Atheist, if he labours to keep up a respectable profession before man, and then secretly transgresses. Why, is he not an Atheist, who will say there is a God, yet at the same time thinks more of man than he does of God? Is it not the very essence of Atheism — is it not a denial of the divinity of the Most High when men lightly esteem him and think more of the eye of a creature than of the observation of their Creator? There are some who would not for the life of them say a wicked word in the presence of their minister, but they can do it, knowing God is looking at them. They are Atheists. There are some who would not trick in trade for all the world if they thought they would be discovered, but they can do it while God is with them; that is, they think more of the eye of man than of the eye of God; and they think it worse to be condemned by man than to be condemned by God. Call it by what name you will, the proper name of that is practical Atheism. It is dishonoring God; it is dethroning Him; putting Him down below His own creatures; and what is that, but to take away His divinity? Brethren, do not, I beseech you, incur the fearful guilt of secret sins. No man can sin a little in secret, it will certainly engender more sin; no man can be a hypocrite and yet be moderate in guilt; he will go from bad to worse, and still proceed, until when his guilt shall be published, he shall be found to be the very worst and the most hardened of men. Take heed of the guilt of secret sin. Ah, now if could I preach as Rowland Hill did, I would make some people look to themselves at home, and tremble, too! It is said that when he preached, there was not a man in the window, or standing in the crowd, or perched up anywhere, but said, "There, he is preaching at me; he is telling me about my secret sins." And when he proclaimed God's omniscience, it is said men would almost think they saw God bodily present in the midst of them looking at them. And when he had done his sermon, they would hear a voice in their ears, "Can any hide himself in secret places that I cannot see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord." I would I could do that; that I could make every man look to himself, and find out his secret sin. Come, my hearer, what is it? Bring it forth to the daylight; perhaps it will die in the light of the sun. These things love not to be discovered. Tell thine own conscience, now, what it is. Look it in the face; confess it before God, and may He give thee grace to remove that sin and every other, and turn to Him with full purpose of heart! But this know — that thy guilt discovered or undiscovered, and that if there be any difference it is worse, because it has been secret. God save us from the guilt of secret sin! "Cleanse thou me from secret faults."

IV. And note, next, THE DANGER OF SECRET SIN.

One danger is, that a man cannot commit a little sin in secret, without being by-and-by betrayed into a public sin. You cannot, sir, though you may think you can preserve a moderation in sin. If you commit one sin, it is like the melting of the lower glacier upon the Alps; the others must follow in

time. As certainly as you heap one stone upon the cairn today, the next day you will cast another, until the heap, reared stone by stone, shall become a very pyramid. See the coral insect, at work, you cannot decree where it shall stay its work. It will not build its rock just as high as you please, it will not stay until it shall be covered with weeds, until the weeds shall decay; and there shall be soil upon it, and an island shall be created by tiny creatures. Sin cannot be held in with bit and bridle. "But I am going to have a little drink now and then, I am only going to be intoxicated once a week or so. Nobody will see it; I shall be in bed directly." You will be drunk in the streets soon. "I am only just going to read one lascivious book; I will put it under the sofa-cover when any one comes in." You will keep it in your library yet, sir. "I am only going into that company now and again." You will go there every day, such is the bewitching character of it; you cannot help it. You may as well ask the lion to let you put your head into his mouth. You cannot regulate his jaws; neither can you regulate sin. Once you go into it, you cannot tell when you will be destroyed. You may be such a fortunate individual, that like Van Amburgh you may put your head in and out a great many times, rest assured that one of these days it will be a costly venture. Again, you may labour to conceal your vicious habit, but it will come out, you cannot help it. You keep your little pet sin at home; but mark this, when the door is ajar the dog will be out in the street. Wrap him up in your bosom, put over him fold after fold of hypocrisy to keep him secret, the wretch will be singing some day when you are in company; you cannot keep the evil bird still. Your sin will gad abroad; and what is more, you will not mind it some of these days. A man who indulges in sin privately, by degrees gets his forehead as hard as brass. The first time he sinned, the drops of sweat stood on his brow at the recollection of what he had done; the second time, no hot sweat on his brow, only an agitation of the muscle; the third time there was the sly, sneaky look, but no agitation; the next time, he sinned a little further; and by degrees he became the bold blasphemer of his God, who exclaimed, "Who am I that I should fear Jehovah, and who is He that I should serve Him?" Men go from bad to worse. Launch your boat in the current — it must go where the current takes it. Put yourself in the whirlwind — you are but a straw in the wind; you must go which way the wind carries you — you cannot control yourself. The balloon can mount, but it cannot direct its course; it must go whichever way the wind blows. If you once mount into sin there is no stopping. Take heed if you would not become the worst of characters, take heed of the little sins, they, mounting one upon another, may at last heave you from the summit and destroy your soul forever. There is a great danger in secret sins.

But I have here some true Christians who indulge in secret sins. They say it is but a little one, and therefore do they spare it. Dear brethren, I speak to you, and I speak to myself, when I say this — let us destroy all our little secret sins. They are called little and if they be, let us remember that it is the foxes, even the little foxes, that spoil

our vines; for our vines have tender shoots. Let us take heed of our little sins. A little sin, like a little pebble in the shoe, will make a traveller to Heaven walk very wearily. Little sins, like little thieves, may open the door to greater ones outside. Christians, recollect that little sins will spoil your communion with Christ. Little sins, like little stains in silk, may damage the fine texture of fellowship; little sins, like little irregularities in the machinery, may spoil the whole fabric of your religion. The one dead fly spoileth the whole pot of ointment. That one thistle may seed a continent with noxious weeds. Let us, brethren, kill our sins as often as we can find them. One said — "The heart is full of unclean birds; it is a cage of them." "Ah, but," said another divine, "you must not make that an apology, for a Christian's business is to wring their necks." And so it is, if there be evil things, it is our business to kill them. Christians must not tolerate secret sins. We must not harbour traitors; it is high treason against the King of Heaven. Let us drag them out to light, and offer them upon the altar, giving up the dearest of our secret sins at the will and bidding of God. There is a great danger in a little secret sin; therefore avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it and shun it, and God give thee grace to overcome it!

V. And now I come, in finishing up, to plead with all my might with some of you whom God has pricked in your consciences. I have come to entreat you, if it be possible, even to tears, that you will give up your secret sins. I have one here for whom I bless God; I love him, though I know him not. He is almost persuaded to be a Christian; he halteth between two opinions; he intendeth to serve God, he striveth to give up sin, but he findeth it a hard struggle, and as yet he knoweth not what shall become of him. I speak to him with all love: my friend, will you have your sin and go to hell, or leave your sin and go to Heaven? This is the solemn alternative: to all awakened sinners I put it; may God choose for you, otherwise I tremble as to which you may choose. The pleasures of this life are so intoxicating, the joys of it so ensnaring, that did I not believe that God worketh in us to will and to do. I should despair of you. But I have confidence that God will decide the matter. Let me lay the alternative before you: — on the one hand there is an hour's merri-ment, a short life of bliss, and that a poor, poor bliss; on the other hand, there is everlasting life and eternal glory. On the one hand, there is a transient happiness, and afterwards overwhelming woe; in this case there is a solid peace and everlasting joy, and after it overflowing bliss. I shall not fear to be called an Arminian, when I say, as Elijah did, "Choose you this day whom you will serve. If God be God, serve him; if Baal be God serve him." But, now, make your choice deliberately; and may God help you to do it! Do not say you will take up with religion, without first counting the cost of it; remember, there is your lust to be given up, your pleasure to be renounced; can you do it for Christ's sake? Can you? I know you cannot, unless God's grace shall assist you in making such a choice. But can you say, "Yes, by the help of God, earth's gaudy toys, its pomps, pageantries, gewgaws, all these I renounce?"

"These can never satisfy, Give me Christ or else I die."

Sinner, thou wilt never regret that choice, if God help thee to make it; thou wilt find thyself a happy man here, and thrice happy throughout eternity.

"But," says one, "Sir, I intend to be religious, but I do not hold with your strictness." I do not ask you to do so; I hope, however, you will hold with God's strictness, and God's strictness is ten thousand times greater than mine. You may say that I am puritanical in my preaching; God will be puritanical in judging in that great day. I may appear severe, but I can never be so severe as God will be. I may draw the harrow with sharp teeth across your conscience, but God shall drag harrows of eternal fire across you one day. I may speak thundering things! God will not speak them, but hurl them from His hands. Remember, men may laugh at hell, and say there is none; but they must reject their Bibles before they can believe the lie. Men's consciences tell them that:

"There is a dreadful hell, and everlasting pains;

Where sinners must with devils dwell, In darkness, fire and chains." Sirs, will ye keep your secret sins, and have eternal fire for them? Remember it is of no use, they must all be given up, or else you cannot be God's child. You cannot by any means have both; it cannot be God and the world, it cannot be Christ and the devil; it must be one or the other. Oh! that God would give you grace to resign all; for what are they worth? They are your deceivers now, and will be your tormentors forever. Oh! that your eyes were open to see the rottenness, the emptiness and trickery of iniquity. Oh! That God would turn you to Himself. Oh! may God give you the grace to cross the Rubicon of repentance at this very hour; to say, "Henceforth it is war to the knife with my sins; not one of them will I willingly keep, but down with them, down with them: Canaanite, Hittite, Jebusite, they shall all be driven out."

"The dearest idol I have known, Whate'er that idol be;

Help me to tear it from its throne, And worship only thee." "But, oh! sir, I cannot do it; it would be like pulling my eyes out." Ay, but hear what Christ says: "It were better for thee to enter into life with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire." "But it would be like cutting my arm off." Ay, and it would be better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, than to be cast into hell fire forever. Oh! when the sinner comes before God at last, do you think he will speak as he does now? God will reveal his secret sins: the sinner will not then say, "Lord, I thought my secret sins so sweet, I could not give them up." I think I see how changed it will be then. "Sir," you say now, "you are too strict;" will you say that when the eyes of the Almighty are glowering on you? You say now, "Sir, you are too precise;" will you say that to God Almighty's face? "Sir, I mean to keep such-and-such a sin." Can you say it at God's bar at last? You will not dare to do it then. Ah! when Christ comes a second time, there will be a marvellous change in the way men talk. Me thinks I see Him:

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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

Is there or can there be a time lapse between the time one is regenerated and the time that one exercises repentance and faith?

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This is a mooted question, but it is certainly not the bone of contention concerning regeneration which has polarized the great theological minds of the past and present time. The question most debated in this area, is: Does regeneration precede repentance and faith, or is it that repentance and faith are constituent elements of the new birth, and are instantaneously and simultaneously realized by and in Holy Spirit regeneration? This question has had its disputants all through the history of the church, and presently there stands on either side of it, two inexorable parties. While the two questions are related, the one before us is of a less polemic nature than the other, for the great majority agrees that once repentance and faith are in place, they are immediately exercised by the enlivened person.

In Scripture chronology repentance precedes faith (Acts 20:21; Heb. 6:1; Etc.), but this is not necessarily the case in the experience of regeneration. The historical Baptist position is, that repentance and faith are inseparable graces, instantaneously wrought by the Spirit in regeneration, and simultaneously realized by the person born of God. The interrogator by plain implication allows that the regenerate person is in possession of both repentance and faith, for a person cannot exercise that which he does not possess. The implication is a correct one, for if a person can be in a regenerate state apart from the gifts of repentance and faith, the person would for the time he is alien to the gifts of repentance and faith, be impenitent and faithless, but a Holy Spirit indwelt child of God. The Holy Spirit is the Grantor of repentance and faith, and all whom He indwells are the immediate grantees.

Regeneration cannot exist apart from repentance and faith, and vice versa. It is the Spirit that quickens, it is His direct work. The Holy Spirit's work in making a person positionally holy is instantaneous, it is not a sequel, with a number of subsequent and indirect developments.

Many who allow for a lapse of time between regeneration and the granting of repentance and faith by the Holy Spirit, teach that the hiatus is infinitesimal, so brief it cannot be measured, and is therefore inconsequential. While this concession is greatly appreciated yet it allows for the existence of a regenerate impenitent unbeliever, of which ex-

istence the Bible knows nothing.

The person who is regenerate is at once and the same time a penitent believer. It is not that he will repent and believe at some future date, be it ever so brief or prolonged, but in the sense of regeneration, repentance and faith can be spoken of in the past tense.

"It is a most serious error to suppose that after the Spirit of God has done His work in the sinner, it still remains for him to say whether he should be regenerated or not, whether he shall believe or not. All who are recipients of His supernatural operations are regenerated, effectually converted, and actually believe. It is not that the Spirit imparts the capacity to believe and then waits for the individual to exercise his will to believe: no, He works in the elect, 'both to will and to do' (Phil. 2:13). A.W. Pink, THE HOLY SPIRIT'S WORK IN SALVATION, Tract - Pg. 12.

The reasoning power of the Christian, be it ever so sublime, will never be able to fully understand the new birth, yet many are so preoccupied with what is termed "the process of regeneration," that the power which produces it is shamefully neglected.

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Absolutely not. One of the people who believes that there is once said that it is conceivable that a person could be born again (or made alive) and go to heaven without ever being saved. That is preposterous, it is inconceivable, unacceptable and unscriptural.

All people are dead in sins. When the Spirit of God enters into a person and makes him alive that person immediately knows that he has a Saviour. When Ezekiel (Chapter 37) spoke to the dry bones they were dead, as soon as the Spirit entered into them they were alive and walked. When Jesus spoke to Lazarus he was dead, but when he was given life he came forth (John 11).

Jesus told Nicodemus, "...verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). When Jesus began preaching, He said, "...Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 4:17). Again He said, "I tell you, nay: but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). Jesus is not making two standards. You must be born again and repent. It is all one instantaneous happening. The gospel is what the Spirit of God uses to cause regeneration. "Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth..." (James 1:18). "...Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life" (Acts 11:18).

Brethren, let's stop this foolish running after every kind of doctrine and return to the truths that sound Baptists have stood for down through the years.

In the last few years some of our brethren have departed from the truths of God's Word and started following false heretical doctrines. (Regeneration without the Word of God, post-tribulation and universal churchism are examples of such doctrines). This time lapse heresy is another example of what happens when you depart from the Word. "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" (Rom. 16:17).

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Titus 3:5: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."

The teaching of a time lapse between regeneration and the exercising of repentance and faith, goes contrary to everything the Bible teaches about the salvation experience. To separate the two, not only is contrary to the Word of God, but is contrary to common reasoning. No, there is not a time lapse between regeneration and repentance and faith.

Let us make some observations about this question. It is a question, which needs to be dealt with by all those who believe in the doctrines of grace. There is a very good possibility that you will be faced with this question.

The life which the Holy Spirit gives is evidenced immediately by repentance and faith. The time lapse theory denies this. This theory creates a person that is foreign to the Word of God. It has a person that is regenerated, born again or made alive (however you wish to phrase it), yet he is not saved. This person has spiritual life; but he has never repented and is not a believer in Jesus Christ as his Lord and Saviour. This individual may not even know that there is a Jesus Christ, yet he still has spiritual life. This man may have never heard the gospel or the law or anything about spiritual matters, yet he could still have spiritual life. To me, this is an absurdity. I also wish to mention that we cannot allow even a second's difference in regeneration and the exercising of repentance and faith. If we allow for any time lapse; then we must allow for a long one as well as a short one. Beloved, repentance and faith are married to regeneration, and you cannot separate the two in time or in act. This time lapse

theory produces a person that has life, but does not know it. This goes contrary to what the Bible teaches about spiritual life. I believe an honest and prayerful study of what the Bible teaches about regeneration, repentance and faith will lead one to see the fallacy of the time lapse theory I urge you to shun this theory. Though there are those that hold to a time lapse theory, who are not yet hard-shell on the gospel; I fear the end result of this heresy is hard-shellism. May God bless you.

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Regeneration is the beginning of spiritual life or is the new birth spoken of by Jesus to Nicodemus when He told him, "...Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). He also told him, "—Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). Regardless of what the word "water" means here, the natural birth as some claim or the Word as others believe, other passages in the Bible show the connection between the Word and regeneration. In Titus 3:5, we are told that regeneration is a washing. In Ephesians 5:26 it is said that cleansing is brought about by the Word, "—with the washing of water by the word." In Psalm 119:50 David tells us, "This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me." The Apostle Paul told the Corinthian Christians, "—for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel" (I Cor. 4:15). In James 1:18 we find, "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, —". Peter tells us the same when he said, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (I Peter. 1:23). In verse 25 he tells us the Word is the gospel, "But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the Word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (I Peter 1:25).

From a study of these passages we see that the Holy Spirit is the One who brings about or produces the new birth or regeneration, "—that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3:6).

Our study also shows that the Holy Spirit uses the Word (the gospel) in regeneration. It is plain from this study that no sinner is regenerated (made alive) apart from the gospel.

In I John 5:10-12 we are told that those who have the Son have life and those who have the Son believe on Him. This is saying that only those who believe have life or none have life except believers. Therefore, as repentance and faith cannot be separated as to time, neither can regeneration be separated from repentance and faith. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:12).

As T.P. Simmons well said, "Hence it cannot be that there is ever a time when there is life without faith" (A Systematic study of Bible Doctrine, p. 268).

SECRET

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not act as a hypocrite and a coward; let me not profess to be God's, and spend my life for the devil. That way of cheating the devil is a thing which every honest sinner will be ashamed of. He will say, "Now, if I do serve my master, I will serve him out and out, I will have no shame about; if I make a profession, I will carry it out; but if I do not, if I live in sin, I am not going to gloss it over by cant and hypocrisy." One thing which has hamstrung the church, and cut her very sinews in twain, has been this most damnable hypocrisy. Oh! in how many places have we men whom you might praise to the very skies, if you could believe their words, but whom you might cast into the nethermost pit if you could see their secret actions. God forgive any of you who are so acting! I had almost said, I can scarce forgive you. I can forgive the man who riots openly, and makes no profession of being better, but the man who fawns, and cants, and pretends, and prays, and then lives in sin, that man I hate. I cannot bear him, I abhor him from my very soul. If he will turn from his ways, I will love him, but in his hypocrisy he is to me the most loathsome of all creatures. "Tis said the toad doth wear a jewel in her head, but this man hath none, but beareth filthiness about him, while he pretends to be in love with righteousness." A mere profession, my hearers, is but painted pageantry to go to hell in; it is like the plumes upon the hearse and the trappings upon the black horses which drag men to their graves, the funeral array of dead souls. Take heed above everything of a waxen profession that will not stand the sun; take care of a life that needs to have two faces to carry it out; be one thing, or else the other. If you make up your mind to serve Satan, do not pretend to serve God; and if you serve God, serve Him with all your heart. "No man can serve two masters," do not try it, do not endeavour to do it, for no life will be more miserable than that. Above all, beware of committing acts which it will be necessary to conceal. There is a singular poem by Hood called "The Dream of Eugene Aram" — a most remarkable piece it is indeed, illustrating the point on which I am now dwelling. Aram has murdered a man and cast his body into the river — "a sluggish water, black as ink, the depth was so extreme." The next morning he visited the scene of his guilt:

"And sought the black accursed pool, With a wild misgiving eye;

And he saw the dead in the river bed, For the faithless stream was dry."

Next he covered the corpse with heaps of leaves, but a mighty wind swept through the wood and left the secret bare before the sun:

"Then down I cast me on my face, And first began to weep;

For I knew my secret then was one, That earth refused to keep;

On land or sea though it should be, Ten thousand fathoms deep."

In plaintive notes he prophesies his own discovery. He buried his victim in a cave, and trod him down with stones, but when years had run their weary round the foul deed was discovered and the murderer put

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SECRET

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to death. Guilt is a "grim chamberlain," even when his fingers are not bloody red. Secret sins bring fevered eyes and sleepless nights, until men burn out their consciences, and become in very deed ripe for the pit. Hypocrisy is a hard game to play at, for it is one deceiver against many observers; and for certain it is a miserable trade, which will earn at last, as its certain climax, a tremendous bankruptcy. Ah! ye who have sinned without discovery, "Be sure your sin will find you out;" and bethink you, it may find you out ere long. Sin, like murder, will come out; men will even tell tales about themselves in their dreams. God has sometimes made men so pricked in their consciences that they have been obliged to stand forth and confess the story. Secret sinner! If thou wantest the foretaste of damnation upon earth, continue in thy secret sins; for no man is more miserable than he who sinneth secretly, and yet trieth to preserve a character. Yon stag, followed by the hungry hounds, with open mouths, is far more happy than the man who is followed by his sins. Yon bird, taken in the fowler's net, and labouring to escape, is far more happy than he who hath weaved around himself a web of deception, and labors to escape from it day by day by making the toils more thick and the web more strong. Oh! The misery of secret sins! Truly, one may pray, "Cleanse thou me from secret faults."

III. But now, next, the guilt THE SOLEMN GUILT OF SECRET SIN.

Now, John, you do not think there is any evil in a thing unless somebody sees it, do you? You feel that it is a very great sin if your master finds you out in robbing the till — but there is no sin if he should not discover it — none at all. And you, sir, you fancy it to be very great sin to play a trick in trade, in case you should be discovered and brought before the court; but to play a trick and never be discovered, that is all fair — do not say a word about it Mr. Spurgeon, it is all business; you must not touch business; tricks that are not discovered, of course you are not to find fault with them. The common measure of sin is the notoriety of it. But I do not believe in that. A sin is a sin, whether done in private or before the wide world. It is singular how men will measure guilt. A railway servant puts up a wrong signal, there is an accident; the man is tried, and severely reprimanded. The day before he put up the wrong signal, but there was no accident, and therefore no one accused him for his neglect. But it was just the same, accident or no accident, the accident did not make the guilt, it was the deed which made the guilt, not the notoriety nor yet the consequence of it. It was his business to have taken care and he was as guilty the first time as he was the second, for he negligently exposed the lives of men. Do not measure sin by what other people say of it; but measure sin by what God says of it, and what your own conscience says of it.

Now, I hold that secret sin, if anything, is the worst of sin; because secret sin implies that the man who commits it has Atheism in his heart. You will

ask how that can be. I reply, he may be a professing Christian, but I shall tell him to his face that he is a practical Atheist, if he labours to keep up a respectable profession before man, and then secretly transgresses. Why, is he not an Atheist, who will say there is a God, yet at the same time thinks more of man than he does of God? Is it not the very essence of Atheism — is it not a denial of the divinity of the Most High when men lightly esteem him and think more of the eye of a creature than of the observation of their Creator? There are some who would not for the life of them say a wicked word in the presence of their minister, but they can do it, knowing God is looking at them. They are Atheists. There are some who would not trick in trade for all the world if they thought they would be discovered, but they can do it while God is with them; that is, they think more of the eye of man than of the eye of God; and they think it worse to be condemned by man than to be condemned by God. Call it by what name you will, the proper name of that is practical Atheism. It is dishonoring God; it is dethroning Him; putting Him down below His own creatures; and what is that, but to take away His divinity? Brethren, do not, I beseech you, incur the fearful guilt of secret sins. No man can sin a little in secret, it will certainly engender more sin; no man can be a hypocrite and yet be moderate in guilt; he will go from bad to worse, and still proceed, until when his guilt shall be published, he shall be found to be the very worst and the most hardened of men. Take heed of the guilt of secret sin. Ah, now if could I preach as Rowland Hill did, I would make some people look to themselves at home, and tremble, too! It is said that when he preached, there was not a man in the window, or standing in the crowd, or perched up anywhere, but said, "There, he is preaching at me; he is telling me about my secret sins." And when he proclaimed God's omniscience, it is said men would almost think they saw God bodily present in the midst of them looking at them. And when he had done his sermon, they would hear a voice in their ears, "Can any hide himself in secret places that I cannot see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord." I would I could do that; that I could make every man look to himself, and find out his secret sin. Come, my hearer, what is it? Bring it forth to the daylight; perhaps it will die in the light of the sun. These things love not to be discovered. Tell thine own conscience, now, what it is. Look it in the face; confess it before God, and may He give thee grace to remove that sin and every other, and turn to Him with full purpose of heart! But this know — that thy guilt discovered or undiscovered, and that if there be any difference it is worse, because it has been secret. God save us from the guilt of secret sin! "Cleanse thou me from secret faults."

IV. And note, next, THE DANGER OF SECRET SIN.

One danger is, that a man cannot commit a little sin in secret, without being by-and-by betrayed into a public sin. You cannot, sir, though you may think you can preserve a moderation in sin. If you commit one sin, it is like the melting of the lower glacier upon the Alps; the others must follow in

time. As certainly as you heap one stone upon the cairn today, the next day you will cast another, until the heap, reared stone by stone, shall become a very pyramid. See the coral insect, at work, you cannot decree where it shall stay its work. It will not build its rock just as high as you please, it will not stay until it shall be covered with weeds, until the weeds shall decay; and there shall be soil upon it, and an island shall be created by tiny creatures. Sin cannot be held in with bit and bridle. "But I am going to have a little drink now and then, I am only going to be intoxicated once a week or so. Nobody will see it; I shall be in bed directly." You will be drunk in the streets soon. "I am only just going to read one lascivious book; I will put it under the sofa-cover when any one comes in." You will keep it in your library yet, sir. "I am only going into that company now and again." You will go there every day, such is the bewitching character of it; you cannot help it. You may as well ask the lion to let you put your head into his mouth. You cannot regulate his jaws; neither can you regulate sin. Once you go into it, you cannot tell when you will be destroyed. You may be such a fortunate individual, that like Van Amburgh you may put your head in and out a great many times, rest assured that one of these days it will be a costly venture. Again, you may labour to conceal your vicious habit, but it will come out, you cannot help it. You keep your little pet sin at home; but mark this, when the door is ajar the dog will be out in the street. Wrap him up in your bosom, put over him fold after fold of hypocrisy to keep him secret, the wretch will be singing some day when you are in company; you cannot keep the evil bird still. Your sin will gad abroad; and what is more, you will not mind it some of these days. A man who indulges in sin privately, by degrees gets his forehead as hard as brass. The first time he sinned, the drops of sweat stood on his brow at the recollection of what he had done; the second time, no hot sweat on his brow, only an agitation of the muscle; the third time there was the sly, sneaky look, but no agitation; the next time, he sinned a little further; and by degrees he became the bold blasphemer of his God, who exclaimed, "Who am I that I should fear Jehovah, and who is He that I should serve Him?" Men go from bad to worse. Launch your boat in the current — it must go where the current takes it. Put yourself in the whirlwind — you are but a straw in the wind; you must go which way the wind carries you — you cannot control yourself. The balloon can mount, but it cannot direct its course; it must go whichever way the wind blows. If you once mount into sin there is no stopping. Take heed if you would not become the worst of characters, take heed of the little sins, they, mounting one upon another, may at last heave you from the summit and destroy your soul forever. There is a great danger in secret sins.

But I have here some true Christians who indulge in secret sins. They say it is but a little one, and therefore do they spare it. Dear brethren, I speak to you, and I speak to myself, when I say this — let us destroy all our little secret sins. They are called little and if they be, let us remember that it is the foxes, even the little foxes, that spoil

our vines; for our vines have tender shoots. Let us take heed of our little sins. A little sin, like a little pebble in the shoe, will make a traveller to Heaven walk very wearily. Little sins, like little thieves, may open the door to greater ones outside. Christians, recollect that little sins will spoil your communion with Christ. Little sins, like little stains in silk, may damage the fine texture of fellowship; little sins, like little irregularities in the machinery, may spoil the whole fabric of your religion. The one dead fly spoileth the whole pot of ointment. That one thistle may seed a continent with noxious weeds. Let us, brethren, kill our sins as often as we can find them. One said — "The heart is full of unclean birds; it is a cage of them." "Ah, but," said another divine, "you must not make that an apology, for a Christian's business is to wring their necks." And so it is, if there be evil things, it is our business to kill them. Christians must not tolerate secret sins. We must not harbour traitors; it is high treason against the King of Heaven. Let us drag them out to light, and offer them upon the altar, giving up the dearest of our secret sins at the will and bidding of God. There is a great danger in a little secret sin; therefore avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it and shun it, and God give thee grace to overcome it!

V. And now I come, in finishing up, to plead with all my might with some of you whom God has pricked in your consciences. I have come to entreat you, if it be possible, even to tears, that you will give up your secret sins. I have one here for whom I bless God; I love him, though I know him not. He is almost persuaded to be a Christian; he halteth between two opinions; he intendeth to serve God, he striveth to give up sin, but he findeth it a hard struggle, and as yet he knoweth not what shall become of him. I speak to him with all love: my friend, will you have your sin and go to hell, or leave your sin and go to Heaven? This is the solemn alternative: to all awakened sinners I put it; may God choose for you, otherwise I tremble as to which you may choose. The pleasures of this life are so intoxicating, the joys of it so ensnaring, that did I not believe that God worketh in us to will and to do. I should despair of you. But I have confidence that God will decide the matter. Let me lay the alternative before you: — on the one hand there is an hour's merri-ment, a short life of bliss, and that a poor, poor bliss; on the other hand, there is everlasting life and eternal glory. On the one hand, there is a transient happiness, and afterwards overwhelming woe; in this case there is a solid peace and everlasting joy, and after it overflowing bliss. I shall not fear to be called an Arminian, when I say, as Elijah did, "Choose you this day whom you will serve. If God be God, serve him; if Baal be God serve him." But, now, make your choice deliberately; and may God help you to do it! Do not say you will take up with religion, without first counting the cost of it; remember, there is your lust to be given up, your pleasure to be renounced; can you do it for Christ's sake? Can you? I know you cannot, unless God's grace shall assist you in making such a choice. But can you say, "Yes, by the help of God, earth's gaudy toys, its pomps, pageantries, gewgaws, all these I renounce?"

"These can never satisfy, Give me Christ or else I die."

Sinner, thou wilt never regret that choice, if God help thee to make it; thou wilt find thyself a happy man here, and thrice happy throughout eternity.

"But," says one, "Sir, I intend to be religious, but I do not hold with your strictness." I do not ask you to do so; I hope, however, you will hold with God's strictness, and God's strictness is ten thousand times greater than mine. You may say that I am puritanical in my preaching; God will be puritanical in judging in that great day. I may appear severe, but I can never be so severe as God will be. I may draw the harrow with sharp teeth across your conscience, but God shall drag harrows of eternal fire across you one day. I may speak thundering things! God will not speak them, but hurl them from His hands. Remember, men may laugh at hell, and say there is none; but they must reject their Bibles before they can believe the lie. Men's consciences tell them that:

"There is a dreadful hell, and everlasting pains;

Where sinners must with devils dwell, In darkness, fire and chains." Sirs, will ye keep your secret sins, and have eternal fire for them? Remember it is of no use, they must all be given up, or else you cannot be God's child. You cannot by any means have both; it cannot be God and the world, it cannot be Christ and the devil; it must be one or the other. Oh! that God would give you grace to resign all; for what are they worth? They are your deceivers now, and will be your tormentors forever. Oh! that your eyes were open to see the rottenness, the emptiness and trickery of iniquity. Oh! That God would turn you to Himself. Oh! may God give you the grace to cross the Rubicon of repentance at this very hour; to say, "Henceforth it is war to the knife with my sins; not one of them will I willingly keep, but down with them, down with them: Canaanite, Hittite, Jebusite, they shall all be driven out."

"The dearest idol I have known, Whate'er that idol be;

Help me to tear it from its throne, And worship only thee." "But, oh! sir, I cannot do it; it would be like pulling my eyes out." Ay, but hear what Christ says: "It were better for thee to enter into life with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire." "But it would be like cutting my arm off." Ay, and it would be better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, than to be cast into hell fire forever. Oh! when the sinner comes before God at last, do you think he will speak as he does now? God will reveal his secret sins: the sinner will not then say, "Lord, I thought my secret sins so sweet, I could not give them up." I think I see how changed it will be then. "Sir," you say now, "you are too strict;" will you say that when the eyes of the Almighty are glowering on you? You say now, "Sir, you are too precise;" will you say that to God Almighty's face? "Sir, I mean to keep such-and-such a sin." Can you say it at God's bar at last? You will not dare to do it then. Ah! when Christ comes a second time, there will be a marvellous change in the way men talk. Me thinks I see Him:

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SECRET

(Continued from Page 5)

there He sits upon His throne. Now, Caiaphas, come and condemn Him now! Judas! come and kiss Him now! What do you stick at, man? Are you afraid of Him? Now, Barabbas! go; see whether they will prefer you to Christ now. Swearer, now is your time; you have been a bold man; curse Him to His face now. Now drunkard; stagger up to Him now. Now infidel; tell Him there is no Christ now — now that the world is lit with lightning and the earth is shaken with thunder till the solid pillars thereof do bow themselves — tell God there is no God now; now laugh at the Bible; now scoff at the minister. Why men, what is the matter with you? Why, can't you do it? Ah! there you are; you have fled to the hills and to the rocks — "Rocks hide us! mountains fall on us; hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne." Ah! where are now your boasts, your vauntings, and your glories? Alas! alas! for you, in that dread day of wonders.

Secret sinner, what will then become of thee? God out of this place unmasked; go out to examine thyself, go out to bend thy knee, go out to weep, go out to pray. God give thee grace to believe! And oh, how sweet and pleasant the thought, that this day sinners have fled to Christ, and men have been born again to Jesus! Brethren, ere I finish, I repeat the words at which so many have cavilled — it is now or never, it is turn or burn. Solemnly in God's sight I say it; if it be not God's truth I must answer for it in the great day of account. Your consciences tell you it is true. Take it home, and mock me if you will; this morning I am clear of your blood: if any seek not God, but live in sin, I shall be clear of your blood in that day when the watchman shall have your souls demanded of him; oh, may God grant that you may be cleared in a blessed manner! When I went down these pulpit stairs a Sabbath or two ago, a friend said to me words which have been in my mind ever since — "Sir, there are nine thousand people this day without excuse in the day of judgment." It is true of you this morning. If you are damned, it will be not for want of preaching to you, and it shall not be for want of praying for you. God knoweth that if my heart could break of itself, it would, for your souls, for God is my witness, how earnestly I long for you in the bowels of Christ Jesus. Oh, that He might touch your hearts and bring you to Him! For death is a solemn thing, damnation is a horrible thing, to be out of Christ is a dreadful thing, to be dead in sin is a terrific thing. May God lead you to view these things as they are, and save you, for His mercy's sake! "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."

"Lord, search my soul, try every thought; Though my own heart accuse me not

Of walking in a false disguise, I beg the trial of thine eyes.

Doth secret mischief lurk within? Do I indulge some unknown sin?

O turn my feet whene'er I stray, And lead me in thy perfect way."

ARK

(Continued from Page 1)

me be understood, that the ark is only a picture of Jesus Christ. Noah was not saved by gopher wood. His salvation from the wrath of God, is a picture of our salvation from God's wrath. Any one that has ever been saved, or ever will be saved, will all be saved in the same manner. Ephesians 2:8: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."

Beloved, outside of the Ark, there was no salvation, all perished. Outside of Jesus Christ, there is no salvation. Outside of Jesus Christ, there is only death and destruction. Thus, we begin to see the Ark as a type of Jesus.

II. No security in the world.

There were in the world at that time mighty men, men of renown. I'm sure that these men, that had warrior skills and wealth, were trusting in themselves for their security. Then God poured out His awesome wrath and destroyed all of man's security. Genesis 7:19-20: "And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered. Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered." God completely destroyed all of man's security. One might say, what about boats? I say, what about them? Beloved, this was not just a rain storm, this was the wrath of God being poured out. A man's boat could not withstand it. Only the Ark could give man salvation. Only in the Ark could one escape the wrath of God. Only in Jesus, only in the Son of God can we be saved. John 3:17: "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."

III. The Ark was mocked, just as Jesus was mocked.

Luke 17:26-27: "And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the Ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all." Can you not hear the mockery? Can you not hear them cry at Noah, "What are you building, you old fool? What are you going to do with that big boat, Noah?" Then when Noah told them about God's wrath to come, they laughed it off. I can almost hear them as they tell Noah that God loves them all, and that God wouldn't destroy the world. Doesn't this sound familiar? Preach Jesus today and people have the same attitude. People have a carefree attitude about the wrath of God. They don't believe it.

The Ark was seen by man, just as Jesus was seen. The Ark was visible to man, but he didn't believe it was the saviour of man. Jesus Christ also was seen by multitudes of people that are now in hell. The world has an expression, "Seeing is believing." This might be true in some instances, but certainly not in this case.

IV. Man was saved by grace.

1. Noah and his family were totally depraved. We read in Genesis 6:5: "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." I do not

believe that Noah and his family were chosen to be saved from the wrath of God because they were sinless, because they weren't. They were saved because of God's mercy and grace. We find that God saw Noah and his family as being righteous. Genesis 7:1: "And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the Ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation." Noah and his house were seen righteous because of their faith. Hebrews 11:7: "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." How does this make Noah depraved? It makes him depraved because the faith that he had was not of himself. Ephesians 2:8: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." Noah would never have built the Ark, had it not been for God giving him the faith. Had it not been for God's mercy, we would not have faith. Ephesians 2:4-5: "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, by grace ye are saved."

2. Noah and his family were unconditionally elected unto salvation. It was previously stated that all men were sinners, and that all of men's hearts were upon evil continually. We saw that Noah and his family did not deserve to be saved. They weren't even aware of the need of it until God warned them. They were elected unto salvation because God says He is the potter and mankind is the lump of clay. They were elected because God says in Romans 9:18: "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth."

This all holds true with our salvation. There are no new names written in heaven, as the synagogues of Satan sing. God chose and elected, we that are saved, a long, long time ago. Ephesians 1:4: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."

3. The recipients of God's salvation were limited. Genesis 7:12-16: "And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights. In the selfsame day entered Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, into the ark; they and every beast after his kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind, every bird of every sort. And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein is the breath of life. And they that went in went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him: and the Lord shut him in."

We find that God called a limited number to be the recipients of His grace. The world teaches and believes, that it is left up to the individual whether one will be saved or not. I believe the ark pictures a limited atonement. We read in Genesis 6:14-15: "Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and

shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. And this is the fashion which thou shalt make it of: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits." We find that God knew what He was doing when He gave Noah the dimensions of the ark, he was to build. God had chosen those who would be in the ark, and the ark would save those God had chosen. The ark was prepared with room only for the elect.

Can we not see our Saviour in this picture? Matthew 1:21: "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." Acts 13:48: "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."

4. Those that entered the ark did so irresistibly.

Genesis 7:16: "And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him; and the Lord shut him in." We find at the appointed time, the elect entered into the ark. They didn't ask questions. They didn't have to pray their way in. Neither were they judged for their works. They entered in because they were elected unto salvation and at the appointed time, the Holy Spirit led them to the ark. Note that God's grace is irresistible. There are no decisions to be made. Jesus said in John 10:27: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."

God's grace cannot and will not be resisted. Those that entered the ark did so irresistibly, as those who trust in Jesus for salvation.

5. Those that entered the ark were preserved.

Genesis 7:6: "...and the Lord shut him in." Beloved, Noah did not shut himself in, but rather Almighty God shut him in. Now that makes a difference. Today many people are trying to shut themselves in, by their works, but we find in our text, the only ones that were saved, were sealed by God. Nothing has changed. It is the same today, as it always has been. You must be sealed by God. We're told in Eph. 4:30: "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." God's elect cannot become lost. Just as Noah was sealed in the ark, we are sealed. Just as it was impossible for one of those in the ark to fall out and lose their salvation, it's impossible for us to lose our salvation. We're told in John 10:29: "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." What comforting words... "AND THE LORD SHUT HIM IN."

Finally, beloved, let's note one last thing about the ark. Genesis 6:16: "A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it."

The Ark had an open door. The door of the ark remained open until all of the elect entered in. This also pictures our Saviour Jesus Christ. John 10:9: "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." Just as the ark had an open door for the

elect to enter in, so is the way with Jesus. The door of the ark was wide open for all of the whosevers that are spoken of in John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

I believe we can see a complete picture of our salvation in the ark — The Ark being a true type of the Lord Jesus Christ. May the Lord bless you richly!

BIBLE

(Continued from Page 1)

your hearts" means let the Lord have His way in your heart; let your heart or desires be separated to Him.

From Genesis through Revelation the word "sanctification" or "sanctify" means to be set apart or to be separate. But nowhere does sanctification mean to be sinless or perfect. And God does the sanctifying; in fact. He did it before any of us were ever born. For instance, God told Jeremiah, 1:5 "Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nation." What a glorious truth! To think that our salvation and sanctification were in the mind of God before we ever came into this world.

I can look back over my life and see that God had His hand on me even when I was a boy, while I was still in the darkness of Judaism. I can see that God caused certain things to happen in my life. He directed the circumstances of my life for one purpose — to bring me to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. That's why I believe so strongly in predestination.

Imagine, before God created the world, before He caused the grass to grow, before He made the rocks and mountains. He predestinated our salvation and our service. Ephesians 1:4: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him." Christ said to His disciples in John 15:16: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name he may give it you." Beloved, He is talking to us, the elect.

By what Christ has done for us, we are set apart as God's personal property the moment we believe the Gospel. Thessalonians 2:13, "but we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: "Beloved, God saves whom He will. Think of it! From the day God saved us, He separated us to Himself. Of course, it was all in the plan of God before we were saved, but it became a reality the day we were born again.

When the Lord Jesus prayed for the disciples and for the world of all believers, He said in John 17:19, "And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." Certainly our Lord Jesus didn't mean that

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Hypocrites may have a luster shining from their profession that dazzles the eyes of the beholder, but no oil in their lamp.

STUDIES IN EZEKIEL

Willard Willis, Monroe, Ohio

"Moreover he said unto me, Son of men, eat that thou findest; eat this roll, and go speak unto the house of Israel" (3:1).

The word "eat" means to use up or devour. Ezekiel was to devour the roll wherein was written lamentations, mournings and woe (2:10).

The word "lamentation" means to express sorrow, while mourning is an expression of grief and woe has to do with calamity or God's judgment because of their sins.

Ezekiel, then, in eating the roll, was to have knowledge of Israel's condition and he was to feel within himself or to be burdened with the feelings of their infirmities. Such reminds us of Matthew 8:17.

"That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses."

"So I opened my mouth, and he caused me to eat that roll" (v. 2).

A doctor, before doctoring, must study and take to heart that which he or she has learned. Those who do not follow this procedure are quacks. Ezekiel would also have been a quack prophet had he not been fully acquainted with the problem and filled with the desire to correct it.

"And he said unto me, Son of man cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels with this roll that I give thee. Then did I eat it; and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness" (v. 3).

It is not enough to have a head knowledge of God's Word and only a head desire to fulfill His word. We must have God's Word in the marrow of our bones. It is as stated in Jeremiah 20:9:

"Then I said, I will not make mention of Him, nor speak any more in His name. But His word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay."

Ezekiel was to endure a great fight of affliction, therefore, his goal had to be far greater than the will of his flesh to resist.

Those who sought gold in California during the great gold rush days, gave up nearly all their possessions in order to reach the gold fields. They, because of their desire to reach the gold fields, overcame a multitude of obstacles. Ezekiel was to experience a similar thing in that he was to suffer many hardships in reaching his people. This was what the eating of the roll was saying to Him. Ezekiel, in fact, was much like Paul relative to the things he suffered. The following passage refers to Paul's experience, but it could have also been written relative to Ezekiel's experience:

"But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto me, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24).

"And he said unto me, Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak with my words unto them" (v. 4).

You will observe that God's command to "go" did not come until proper preparation had

been made. It was not that Ezekiel was merely to "go," but he was to go with God's message. He, in fact, was commissioned by the Lord to go and "speak with my words unto them." Let me add that the proof of Ezekiel's calling and mission hinged upon whether or not he spoke God's Word or fables to the people. This fact is borne out clearly in John 3:34:

"For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him."

"For thou art not sent to a people of a strange speech



Willard Willis

and of an hard language, but to the house of Israel; Not to many people of a strange speech and of an hard language, whose words thou canst not understand. Surely, had I sent thee to them, they would have hearkened unto thee" (vs. 5, 6).

Our work here in America falls in the same category as the work of Ezekiel and our message is not rejected because people do not understand our language. The problem lies much deeper than a speech barrier. The problem, in fact, involves the heart or will of men. It involves that fact that they love darkness rather than light. It is as stated in the following passage:

"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:19).

Ezekiel would be rejected by his own people, but so was the Lord from glory when He came to His own.

"He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (John 1:11).

"But the house of Israel will not hearken unto thee; for they will not hearken unto me: for all the house of Israel are impudent and hardhearted" (3:7).

We see from this passage that those who rejected Ezekiel, in reality, rejected God, since Ezekiel was God's ambassador, speaking God's Words. The same truth holds true today. Men reject God rather than us when they reject the message which God has given us.

"Behold I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy forehead strong against their foreheads. As an adamant harder than flint have I made thy forehead: fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house" (vs. 8, 9).

The face and forehead of Ezekiel against their face and foreheads reminds me of a manager of a baseball team arguing with an umpire. The two of them stand face to face

and eyeball to eyeball. The face of the umpire, however, is always stronger. His forehead is harder than flint. Ezekiel, in like manner, was to stand face to face and eyeball to eyeball before the house of Israel. God promised that He would stand with him and take quick action if and when such was needed.

"Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, all my words that I shall speak unto thee receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears" (v. 10).

The key word in this passage is the word "all". We pick tomatoes and place them in a basket. We are always careful so that we only pick the good tomatoes. There, however, is no picking and choosing relative to God's Word. It is all good, therefore, God's Word to Ezekiel and to us is —

"...Son of man, all my words that I shall speak unto thee receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears."

"Every Word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his Words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar" (Prov. 30:5, 6).

"And go, get thee to them of the captivity, unto the children of thy people, and speak unto them, and tell them, thus saith the Lord God; whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear" (v. 11).

Ezekiel was to "go," "speak" and "tell" the people regarding God's Word to them. He was not to become perplexed or frustrated if no one heeded his admonitions. His responsibility was entirely fulfilled when he presented the Lord's message to the people. He, in other words, was not responsible for any results.

"Then the spirit took me up, and I heard behind me the voice of a great rushing, saying, Blessed be the glory of the Lord from his place" (v. 12).

This passage makes it very clear that the "glory of the Lord" was to be the golden thread that was to mark Ezekiel's every word and action. He was never to seek his own glory. He was never to seek any applause for himself. This fact is brought out clearly in the following passages:

"For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it: for how should my name be polluted? And I will not give my glory unto another" (Isa. 48:11).

"I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images" (Isaiah 42:8).

"I heard also the noise of wings of the living creatures that touched one another, and the noise of the wheels over against them, and a noise of great rushing" (v. 13).

You will observe that the wheels are mentioned immediately after God's glory is set forth. The reason God's glory and the wheels are brought together is because the wheels have to do with God's sovereignty in bringing about His glory and honor.

"So the spirit lifted me up, and took me away, and I went in bitterness, in the heat of my spirit; but the hand of the Lord was strong upon me" (v.

14).

The word teaches us that God's ways are not our ways and His thoughts are not our thoughts. Ezekiel, in the passage before us, found such to be very true. He had to be made willing by the power of God.

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

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen" (Heb. 13:20, 21).

It is to be noted carefully that the Spirit lifted Ezekiel up. We, too, must rely fully on God the Holy Spirit. This fact is made very clear in the following passage which the Lord made to His church:

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26).

"Then I came to them of the captivity at Telabib, that dwelt by the river Chebar, and I sat where they sat, and remained there astonished among them seven days" (v. 15).

The word "astonished" means that Ezekiel remained in a state of wonder — wonder because of that which had happened to him. We can be sure that it was a time for reflection for Ezekiel. It was time for him to stop and weigh in his heart and mind that which had occurred. Ezekiel's reflections lasted seven days. We can be sure that during these seven days he thought upon the greatness of his God and how much he would need Him in the days that were before him. We, too, should take time out to take stock of our own lives and to lay a strong claim to the promises which God had made to us in His Word.

"And it came to pass at the end of seven days, that the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word of my mouth, and give them warning from me" (vs. 16, 17).

It is to be carefully noted immediately after God informed Ezekiel that He had made him a watchman, He informed him to "hear the Word of my mouth." God's watchmen must know what to watch for, therefore, they must study to show themselves approved unto God. They must know the difference between God's doctrine and the devil's doctrine, otherwise, they won't know what to watch for. God's watchmen today, for example, watch the Lord's Supper so as to be sure that it is observed properly. They watch baptism so as to be sure that it is performed in accordance with the Word of God.

We would have not said enough if we neglected to note that it was God who made Ezekiel His watchman. All God's minister's are chosen by Him. They have all been ap-

Missionary To New Guinea Eld. Fred T. Halliman



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pointed to their posts. None are there by chance. Our Lord Jesus made this fact very clear relative to those He had chosen to carry on the work which He had begun.

"When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; The same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand" (v. 18).

The responsibility of the watchman is the theme of this passage. He must speak relative to that which he sees and not keep quiet. It is not an easy task to face the wicked "forehead to forehead" as Ezekiel was admonished to do. John the Baptist lost his head for doing this very thing. Ezekiel, however, was not to mince words or draw back from his assignment relative to warning the house of Israel. The result of his efforts would be like walking through briars, thorns and scorpions (2:6-7), but he was to fear no one but God. He was to speak out and if he did not, God would hold him accountable for the blood of those for whom he was responsible.

The Lord's churches today are also responsible. They, in fact, are to go into all the world and preach the gospel. We, too, will encounter briars, thorns and scorpions, but such must not deter us. The Lord has promised that He will be with us. I would rather be among briars, thorns and scorpions with Him than to be in a palace without Him. We can be sure that the palace would be more dangerous than the briars, thorns and scorpions. The three Hebrew children and Daniel proved such to be true.

"Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul" (v. 19).

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THE BAPTIST EXAMINER
MARCH 24, 1984
PAGE SEVEN

TUNE IN TO THE CALL TO CALVARY

Station: WEMM, Huntgn., W. Va. Time: Sun.—7:30-8:00 a.m. Dial: 107.9 Watts: 50000 FM

EZEKIEL

(Continued from Page 7)

This passage points out that our responsibility is limited to sowing and not to harvesting. We have no ability to change the will of men. The new birth, for example, is a resurrection or new creation. It is a passing from death unto life. We, therefore, are to preach to the lost, but God must change them. We are to preach the great truths of God's Word, but God the Spirit must cause men and women to believe them.

"Again, When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand" (v. 20).

Our responsibility is not only to the wicked, but to those who have the truth. They, too, must be cautioned so that they are aware of Satan's devices. God's Word regarding this matter is as follows:

"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall be turned into fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" (II Tim. 4:2, 5).

"Nevertheless, if thou warn the righteous man, that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul" (v. 21).

Ezekiel, if he witnessed, would be a sure winner, no matter what the result was. Obedience, then, is the theme of this passage. There are some today who feel that they are not qualified to witness. Perhaps, the feeling is that you will not express yourself as you would like to. Here, again, you are excused by speaking and not on the basis of whether or not you used good grammar. God the Spirit is not limited by good or bad grammar. He will make your message effective.

"And the hand of the Lord was there upon me; and he said unto me, Arise, go forth into the plain, and I will there talk with thee" (v. 22).

God could have spoken with Ezekiel where he was, but there must be obedience first. Ezekiel must go to the appointed place if he would speak with his God. We must arise from our soft chairs and join and serve with the Lord's church if we would commune with our God. Those who fail to hear and heed this admonition will miss much more than they can begin to imagine.

"Then I arose and went

forth into the plain: and, behold, the glory of the Lord stood there, as the glory which I saw by the river of Chebar: and I fell on my face" (v. 23).

Obedience to God will always result in a full and rich reward. We will always be very happy for that which we have done. We will say, "I'm glad that I heeded His command."

Ezekiel would have missed this great blessing had he not gone to the plain. Those who remain outside our Lord's New Testament churches cannot possibly know what they are missing.

"Then the spirit entered into me, and set me upon my feet, and spake with me, Go, shut thyself within thy house" (v. 24).

One would have thought that Ezekiel's obedient trip to the plain would have been enough. We, however, cannot rest on past achievements and feel that we have done enough. God may add work on top of work. He, however, will also add more grace. He will not ask us to go from here to there without supplying that which is needed to arrive at our destination.

"But thou, O son of man, behold, they shall put bands upon thee, and shall bind thee with them, and thou shalt not go out among them: And I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, that thou shalt be dumb, and shalt not be to them a reprover: for they are a rebellious house" (vs. 25, 26).

This passage makes it very obvious that Ezekiel is God's instrument. It was God who planned and managed the entire program for Ezekiel. God, in fact, would make his instrument to speak or to be dumb. All depended on God. May we also know that without Him we can do nothing. We only beat the air when we go in the energy of the flesh. Our hands and feet are tied and our tongue cleaves to the roof of our mouth if the Lord does not assign us our work and bless our efforts.

The things, however, which befell Ezekiel, were types of those things which had happened to the house of Israel. God, in other words, used more than the mouth of Ezekiel to speak to Israel. He used such things as are noted in the passages before us and those things which we shall study in later chapters.

Israel, by their disobedience, had placed bands upon themselves so that God would not honor them with His blessings. Their tongues cleaved to the roof of their mouths in that God would not hear their prayers or accept their worship.

"But when I speak with thee, I will open thy mouth, and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God: He that heareth, let him hear; and he that forbeareth, let him forbear: for they are a rebellious house" (v. 27).

The Lord Jesus, while He was among us, also said, in essence, "He that heareth, let him hear, and he that forbeareth, let him forbear." those of us therefore who represent the Lord Jesus today send forth the same message. We are to preach the Word and pray that people will hear and heed, but if they will not, then let them forbear.

BIBLE

(Continued from Page 6)

He made Himself sinless; He was already sinless. He was the only perfect man that ever lived. He simply meant that He set Himself apart to do the will of God. Christ was so sanctified and so dedicated to the services of His Father that He gave His blood for our redemption.

The basis of our sanctification is the precious blood of Jesus Christ because His blood cleanses us from all sin. 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." It's His blood that gives us a perfect standing before God. Hebrews 13:12, "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." The blood is the basis of our sanctification. That's what God sees when He looks upon us — the blood of His dear Son.

The cross is the place where our sanctification took place. It is the cross that separates us from the world. The people of the world can't understand this. They think we are fanatics and extremists in religion. But it's the cross that makes us different from the world. The cross is the basis of our sanctification, for it separates us from the world.

Our standing before God is 100 percent perfect — not because of what we have done, but because of what the Lord Jesus has done for us. We've been redeemed by His precious blood, poured out at the cross of Calvary. And we're sanctified once for all by the one offering of the body of Jesus Christ. If you've been saved by the blood of Jesus Christ, you're sanctified. It's wonderful to think that God looks down upon us today, as weak and feeble as we are in the flesh, and sees us in Christ. Hebrews 10:14, "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." When the Lord saves us, He doesn't save us for a few days, or for a few months, or for a few years; Praise God He saves us forever. You can't be saved in January and lost in July. Scripture says, He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Beloved, men can get people to profess, but bless God! It is the Holy Spirit that causes one to Confess. That is Biblical Sanctification.

Beloved, in closing, God's Word teaches Salvation by Grace. False religion teaches salvation by works. God's Word teaches that we're baptized because we have been saved. False religion teaches that we're baptized in order to be saved. You bury a man because he has died to sin. If you are not saved, might it please my Lord to save you at this time! Ephesians 2:8, "For by Grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." God bless you, is my prayer till He comes!

WHY

(Continued from Page 1)

punishment is enforced, the opposite is the result. In the Old Testament, good kings killed the sodomites or drove them out of the land. (Read I Kings 15:11-12). The bad kings did not listen to God's prophets and let the homosexuals practice their sin. Then the destruction came to their entire society. Our congressmen and senators need to be reminded of this. Thirdly, this sin is a destruction to one's

nation and country. One needs only to read Genesis 18 and 19 about God's destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah to understand the ultimate result any nation will come to that takes the people's money and gives it to the sodomites. They make laws that the sodomite can teach your child in the state schools. God says, "Unto whom much is given, much shall be required." No nation has ever had the churches, the Bibles, the preachers, the presses, the books to enlighten them in God's way as this United States has had. Jesus Christ in Luke Ch. 10 spoke so clearly of this, saying that if the mighty works He did and were witnessed had been done in Tyre and Sidon they would have repented long ago. "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell." And to those who turn away God's preachers who warn them, "it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city" (Luke 10:12). Truly the sin of sodomy will bring destruction.

This sin is a sign of the time. When Christ's disciples asked Him when the end of the age would be and what would be some of the signs of that time, His answer was that one of these would be, "As it was in the days of Lot." Lot was Abraham's nephew who went down to Sodom. When God's messengers came into town to get Lot out before God burnt it, the Sodomites (homosexuals) came up around Lot's house to take the men (messengers) and abuse them. Sodomites came out of hiding a few years back and now they demand Congress, the President, our Legislation, etc., to grant them money and wrongful rights. They want acceptance as a "CHURCH" in the organization of the National Council of Churches. It is today as it was in the days of Lot. We are praying that our departure out of Sodom is at hand; for the fire is sure to follow.

This sin is spoken of in the New Testament. A full page issue in the "Spokesman

Review" concerning the homosexuals and their "church," states that Jesus Christ said absolutely nothing in the New Testament about this sin. First, we know that, "all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable..." (II Tim. 3:16). We know that all Scripture includes the 27 New Testament books. We know that what the Apostle Paul or Peter or others penned they did so by the Holy Spirit of God. Second, we see that in Romans 1:26-27 God's word says "...for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet."

In the Old Testament our same Lord and God said to rid the land of this sin by condemning to death those practicing such. (Read Lev. 20:13). Those who are homosexuals are listed with the others who will not go to heaven. They are listed as the "unrighteous" in I Corinthians 6:9. Therein it says, "be not deceived." These people are deceived. It goes on to say, "neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind. Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."

The answer to the problem is "Repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ." God can save to the uttermost and has saved some from all kinds of sin, but the saved do not continue in them. Why did God burn Sodom? "And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an example unto those that after should live ungodly" (II Peter 2:6).

KING'S ADDITION BAPTIST CHURCH BIBLE CONFERENCE SOUTH SHORE, KY.

Friday, March 30, 1984 — 7:00 p.m.

The Church Member Gordon Buchanan
The Pastor TBA
The mission work of the church TBA

Saturday, March 31, 1984 — 9:30 a.m.

Living Godly in Christ Bob Allard
Contending for the faith Fred Beard
Women's place in the church TBA

2:00 p.m.

The role of the Jewish nations in the last days John Lenegat
Why did Temple worship and Animal sacrifice cease Joe Wilson
Chosen of God David West
The family circle James Hobbs

7:00 p.m.

The work of the Holy Spirit Carl Barnette
Revival Peter Halliman
Sinners Payday Dan Phillips

Sunday, April 1, 1984 — 9:30 p.m.

Sunday School Don Pennington
Christ and His Bride Chuck Sandelin
Should a church have deacons Sammy West

2:00 p.m.

The altar Gene Kiger
Perseverance & preservation of Saints Jim Grace
Irresistible Grace Alvin Green
The Atonement Sam Wilson