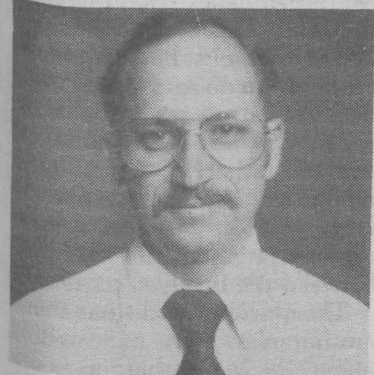


THE LORDSHIP OF GIVING

by John Pruitt
Ellaville, Ga.

One thing that must be made clear from the very beginning is this, it is not necessary, nor is it required for a lost person, or any non-member of a local assembly to give unto the Lord's work here, whether it be of their time or of their resources. If you are a member of an assembly then your obligation is to that assembly. If you are a lost person, then you must understand that though GOD MAY USE YOUR MONEY OR TIME, it shall benefit you nothing. It certainly will not aid in your salvation or any other favor of God. Salvation is wholly by His



John Pruitt

sovereign grace and nothing else, except the work of Jesus Christ on the cross of sacrifice, matters to Him in redemption and the forgiveness of sins. Unto you who are saved and a

(Continued on Page 4 Column 5)

A NEW DOCTRINE IN OUR MIDST

by The Editor

There is a new doctrine in our midst which threatens to cause much trouble, disruption, and many problems among us. God knows that we do not need any more divisions among our kind of Baptists, but this new doctrine will likely cause much division. The doctrine has been promulgated by two recent books by the same author. They are, "Baptism; Preacher Or Church Ordinance," and a second book with the same title with the addition of "Second Treatise." I feel that the author of these two books does not truly desire to cause strife and division among us. However, the new doctrine that he teaches in these books will, almost of necessity, do this. I cannot speak as highly of some who follow him in this new doctrine, for some have manifested a very bitter and unchristian spirit in defending and propagating this new doctrine.

It behooves us to be very clear in stating just what this new doctrine is. The title to the two books mentioned above do not truly set forth the doctrine in question. In fact, the title of the books, deliberately or otherwise, imply a matter that simply is not true. That title implies that those of us who differ with the author do not believe that baptism is a church ordinance — that we believe it is a preacher

(Continued on Page 2 Column 5)

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The Baptist Examiner

Baptist Is Our Middle Name

Paid Circulation in All States and in Many Foreign Countries

"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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STANDING BEFORE THE KING

by Ron Boswell

Rt. 1 Box 495

Smithsburg, Md. 21783

"So the king returned..." (II Samuel 19:15). Now this is talking about King David coming back to Jerusalem. You understand that a little while earlier, David had to flee and his men with him. They had to go out in the wilderness because Absalom, with his army, was marching upon Jerusalem. The rebels eventually occupied the capital city. David was in exile. Then eventually there was a battle fought. After this battle, we come to our text, as King David came back, his army victorious.

You understand this is very much like the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is very much like it, in that three people came to meet David as he returned. These three people that stood before David when he returned are very characteristic of three classes of individuals that shall

some day stand before the Lord Jesus Christ at His appointed time. All of humanity will one day fall into one of these three classes.

David was met by one that pleaded for his life. This is a type of the lost individual. Then he was met by one that met him



Ron Boswell

with an excuse. This will be typical of so many in that day, saved, but with an excuse on their lips when they stand before

the Lord Jesus Christ. Then there was one that met him as a faithful servant. They will be few, but there will be a few like this individual. And so we notice the King's return.

I. The Lost Individual. First of all, notice the very first individual that came to meet David, a man named Shimei. Listen: "And there went over a ferry boat to carry over the king's household, and to do what he thought good. And Shimei the son of Gera fell down before the king, as he was come over Jordan; And said unto the king, Let not my lord impute iniquity unto me, neither do thou remember that which thy servant did perversely the day that my Lord the king went out of Jerusalem, that the king should take it to his heart. For thy servant doth know that I have sinned: therefore,

(Continued on Page 6 Column 1)

CHURCH AUTHORITY AND BAPTISM

by Fred Halliman

Having spent the greater part of the past twenty-five years on the mission field, preaching the gospel, baptizing the saved, organizing them into churches, and teaching them the "all things" that Christ commanded, I have been blessed beyond measure. One of those blessings is that I have not had to live with and constantly be hounded and bombarded with the new theological ideas that spring up from time to time. Beloved, I am an orthodox Baptist and when the Bible is plain on any

subject I believe in adhering to the Scriptures without any deviation whatsoever. But, at the same time, I believe a person



Fred Halliman

or church can get so far out in left field, so far out on a tangent, that they lose sight of the circumference of the circle.

I have noted over the past quarter of a century that, not too unlike little brush fires that start up here and there and burn for a while and then die out, new ideas spring up from time to time among Independent Baptists run their course and then when someone else comes up with something new—the former soon goes into oblivion and little to nothing more is

(Continued on Page 8 Column 3)

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

THE REPROBATE'S MEASURE OF SIN

"...to fill up their sins away: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost" (I Thess. 2:16).

There is a Biblical record with two sides. On one side is the blessed and glorious doctrine of sovereign election. Oh, how I love to play this record. I delight to hear and tell that before the world began, God chose a people unconditionally, and predestinated them to be the recipients of saving grace. I play this record often, but praise God, I have never worn it out. But there is another side to the record. It may not be as blessed to hear, but it is a most solemn truth. We need to hear the other side, it is the truth of God's sovereign reprobation. The

thesis of my message is: There is a reprobate people. They have a predestinated measure of sin which God will allow them to fill. They are busily engaged in filling this measure. When the measure is full they will die and go to hell.

There is a reprobate people. They are vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, (Romans 9:22). God passed them over when He elected His people. He left them as they were, in their sins. This is an act of sovereignty on the part of God. They were not passed by because they were worse than others. In fact, there will surely be some in heaven whose catalogue of sins committed is much larger than that of some who will be in hell. God

sovereignly chose some to be saved, and just as sovereignly passed others by and did not choose them.

The reprobate are a people ordained to hell. This is because of their sins. It is an act of God's holiness and justice. God does not ordain men to hell without respect to the matter of their sin and guilt. This would be a horrible blasphemy on the justice of God. As God will not punish, except justly for their sins, so He will not ordain them to punishment but for their sins. A careful student of the Bible will learn that both election and reprobation take into consideration the matter of sin, and that God does consider man as a sinner in elec-

(Continued on Page 2 Column 1)

ARE YOU A CHRISTIAN?

by John Alber
Commerce City, Col.

The other day, my pastor asked me if I would teach my father-in-law's Sunday School class while he was out of town on a preaching engagement. Of course, what preacher would not jump at such a wonderful opportunity, and especially when one has not preached in a few weeks, perhaps a couple of months. That brought me to my subject: Are you a Christian? In-



John Alber

asmuch, as I had not preached in this particular church in over fifteen years, there were many new people that I did not know; either by face or name. On that account alone, I felt it important to deal with this all important subject: Are you a Christian? Furthermore, it dawned upon this preacher that many people read this great paper who do not know the Lord as their personal Saviour. Over the years, I have read short comments of people who came to know the Lord because of The Baptist Examiner, and for that we must praise the Lord.

Beloved, how do you know that you are a Christian? In the present world that we live in, most people would claim to be Christians; but for the most part, most of them do not understand what we mean by being "Born Again" by the Spirit of God! There are many lies of the Devil - six of them this preacher would like to consider and then, to look at what the Word of God has to say about the issue in question.

First, the old Devil has invented the lie that man is basically a good person. If I have heard that once, I have heard it hundreds of times over the past twenty-five years of my Christian life. Oh Beloved, but what does the Word of God say about that issue: Is man a good person? I wish that I could tell you that he is a good man, but that is not the case. The Bible teaches us that man is a sinner; yea, the Bible teaches that man is a sinner by (1). Birth; (2). Choice; and, (3). Practice. There are so many places in the Word of God to confirm that fact: but no place is as clear as Romans 3:10-23. Verse twenty-three says, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Listen to me for one brief moment. Our text (Romans 3) is most clear on the

(Continued on Page 6 Column 3)

See Page 9...For very important information relative to Fred Halliman and New Guinea Mission Work.

Men have no liberty nor ability to do the will of God; but are shut up and sold under sin.

The Baptist Examiner

THE BAPTIST PAPER FOR
THE BAPTIST PEOPLE
JOSEPH M. WILSON, EDITOR

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SIN

(Continued from Page 1)

tion and reprobation. Election is unto salvation, and thus considers man as a sinner in need of salvation. Reprobation to hell likewise considers man as a sinner.

For each reprobate there is a predestinated measure of sin. This is determined by God, and He will allow the said reprobate to go this far and no further in sin. We might illustrate this by Job 38:10, 11 where God sets a decreed place for the waves of the sea, and says, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." So it is with the raging waves of the sins of the reprobate. Now, God is absolutely sovereign in this predestinated measure of sin. He allows some to sin more, much more than others. Some may be cut off in early life and plunged into the flames of hell. Others may live many years in sin before they fill up the measure of sin appointed them by God. Some may live fairly decent and moral lives judged by human standards, and may never plunge into the depths of sins as others do. Others may sin with a terrible and abandoned intensity. Oh, how this is seen in our day. There are young men and women in our day who have gone to depths of sin which our grandparents never dreamed of in all their years. But God has appointed this measure of sin to each one as it pleases Him.

When each reprobate has filled up his measure of sin, he will die and go to hell. Wrath will come upon him to the uttermost. Not a moment before or a moment after, but exactly when that measure is filled up. More about this later.

We observe God permitting one to go to great lengths of sin and terrible depths of sin without intervention by God. Oh, the long suffering of God.

We have watched some men sin in great wonderment that God did not at once cast them down to hell. We have shuddered in our souls at times at the audacity of men in their sins. At times we have almost expected to see such drop from our midst right into hell. When we observe such as this, it may be that such a one is one of God's elect, and that God is going to magnify His grace eventually in saving the chiefest of sinners. There are those who have been given up by man, who have even yet been saved by grace. The woman at the well. The woman who was a sinner, Luke 7. The thief on the cross, Luke 23. Saul; the murdering, self-righteous, persecuting Pharisee who became the great worker for Christ.



Joe Wilson

Then, when we see one going great lengths in sin, and going on and on, and God not stopping such — it may be that such is given a large measure of sin to fill up, and is predestinated to be an outstanding example of the power and wrath of God. Pharaoh was such a one. God allowed him to go on and on ever deeper and deeper. "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth" (Romans 9:17). Pharaoh thought he was running without restraint from God. But Pharaoh was doing what God had determined to be done before the world began. Pharaoh was filling up the large measure of sin which God had appointed for him. God could have stopped him sooner. Don't you ever think that God is helpless. Don't ever think that God is unable to stop a man in the course of that man's sin and rebellion. God stopped Paul in saving grace. God stopped Pharaoh in judgment, killed him in the Red Sea and sent him to hell.

When we see the unsaved cut off early in life, it is that they have early filled up the predestinated measure of their sin. It may be an act of mercy on the part of God delivering one from the terrible degree of punishment in hell to which they would have attained had God spared their lives longer. But either way: a long life or a short one, deep in sin or not so deep, it is all in the sovereignty of God, and each reprobate fills the predestinated measure of sin appointed him.

The elect will live until he has finished his testimony on the earth, Revelation 11: 7. The reprobate will live until he has finished his appointed measure of sin.

While the reprobate lives, he is busily and continually engaged in filling up his measure of sin. He begins as soon as he is born, going astray from the womb speaking lies. (Psa. 58:3). He works at this

task daily and hourly. Every moment he is sinning in desire or thought or speech or action. All that he does is sin in God's sight. Oh, how busy at sin is the unbeliever. Oh, that God's children were even partly as busy in serving God. Think on this my unsaved friend. Every sin you commit is adding to the filling up of that measure appointed by God. When this predestinated measure is full, wrath will come on you to the uttermost. You will immediately die and go to hell. Oh, unsaved friend, your next weekend of terrible sin may fill your measure, and before you have finished your planned activities for the weekend, you may be in hell. Oh, unsaved friend, your next act of sin may fill the measure. It may be your last one. I urge you who are unsaved to think on this terrible matter. Repent of your sins and believe the gospel.

Understand that I am not saying one can hurry and fill his measure of sin and die before his predestinated time. Just as God has given each one a predestinated measure of sin, so has God given each reprobate a predestinated time to live upon the earth. The predestinated measure will fill up and the predestinated time will run out at exactly the same moment. Hurrying at sin and going deep in sin does not mean that one will fill his measure any earlier in life, but means that he has a large measure appointed to him. A predestinated measure of sin and a predestinated time to die are two ways of saying what amounts to the same thing, though they are different. This uttermost wrath will be without restraint. God's wrath of sorts comes upon the earth and its inhabitants even now. But it is restrained wrath. But in hell, God will pour out His wrath without restraint. Your sins are building up in God a volume of just and holy wrath against you. See Romans 2:5. But when you reach the end of your measure and end of your time, God will release all the pent up wrath upon you without any restraint. This uttermost wrath is without mercy. Revelation 14:10 tells of the wine of the wrath of God being poured out without mixture. There have been sore judgments of God upon the earth many times. But they have always heretofore been tempered with mercy. In the great flood, in Sodom and Gomorrah, in the Red Sea, God has shown a measure of mercy. But, oh! my unsaved friend, there is no mercy in hell—no mercy in hell!

This uttermost wrath will be an everlasting wrath, Matthew 25:46. Never a letting up, and certainly never an end. A man is in the hospital. He is suffering. He calls for the nurse. He asks and receives a shot that eases his pain for awhile. But in hell, there will be no restful sleep, there will be no shots for pain. On and on—forever and forever the terrible agonizing pain will be felt. Men will weep, and wail, and gnaw their tongue for very pain. No mercy in hell. No rest in hell. No relief in hell. Everlasting torment in hell. Horrible beyond imagination will be the wrath that will come on the reprobate when he fills up his appointed measure of sin.

Ah! but I have a note of hope: I have a glimmer of light for you. No man can know in this life that he is a reprobate. No man can know that another is a reprobate. The most wicked man on the face of this earth —

whom ever he is — wherever he is — may be one of God's elect, and if he is, God will yet bring him to the glorious salvation experience. The elect are made known by the salvation experience. No man can know before this effectual and irresistible work of the Holy Spirit that he is one of God's elect. The reprobate are made known when they die unsaved and plunge into hell. This cannot be known otherwise. Dear unsaved friend, you may be one of God's elect, you may yet be saved.

I urge upon the unsaved to consider these things. Consider your awful condition. Your terrible sins that cry out to heaven for vengeance thereupon. You are a vile worm of the earth and deserving of God's wrath. Consider the number of your sins and consider the enormity of each one of them. Consider, unsaved one, the terror of God's wrath to the uttermost. I ask you in the language of Ezekiel 22:14, "Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be strong, in the days that I shall deal with thee? I the Lord have spoken it, and will do it." I have heard the wicked boast that they were not afraid of God, they were not afraid to die. They will be, yes, they will be. Unsaved one, consider the great danger you are in. So far as you know your next sin may be your last: your next breath may be into the grave and into hell.

Therefore, unsaved one, I urge you to flee to Jesus Christ. As the man-slayer in the Old Testament fled to the city of refuge, so I urge you to flee to Christ. There is safety. There is refuge. The wrath of God will never fall on you there. For it has already been poured out in its last full measure upon the Blessed Substitute. Wrath has already exhausted itself, it has spent its full fury upon the Son of God. Any and all who flee to Christ to lay hold on the refuge

set before them will be saved for evermore. May the Lord bless you.

—Copied from
The Baptist Armour

A NEW DOCTRINE

(Continued from Page 1)

ordinance. This implication is simply not true relative to the parties who oppose the author of these books.

The question between us is not one of Church Authority. All parties concerned in this discussion do most assuredly believe in Church Authority. Be it assuredly known that the editor of The Baptist Examiner certainly believes in, and has long taught and practiced Church Authority.

The question is not as to whether or not baptism is a church ordinance. All parties concerned believe that this is so. Not one of us would baptize a person without having church authority to do so. Not one of us believe that a preacher can administer baptism without church authority. So, I make bold to say, that the title of these two books is a misrepresentation of the question between the involved parties.

The question — the one that I am interested in, and writing about — is whether or not a church can authorize a non-member to administer baptism for her. Please understand that I am in agreement with the above mentioned books in believing that the administrator of baptism does not have to be an ordained man. Know clearly that the questions discussed in this article relate solely to the matter of a church authorizing a non-member to administer baptism for her. The two mentioned books say that a church cannot do this, and that a baptism thus administered is null and void or invalid. Please note this last

(Continued on Page 3 Column 1)

FROM THE EDITOR

There are several articles in this issue relative to the new issue that has risen among us, and that threatens to be the most divisive thing to come into our midst for some time. Please read them all carefully and prayerfully. Please give much thought to this matter before you come out with a stand that threatens to cause so much trouble among us.

I cannot tell our readers how heavy my heart is over this issue. It is one of the two things that have caused me the most heart ache of many such things since I came to this position. I have hurt over it. I hurt over it even now. I have lost sleep over it. I have prayed over it. I have ignored it, hoping it would go away. I have finally felt compelled to write about it. Oh, how I wish it had died at birth. We have had so much trouble, so much battling, so much division, so much strife. We surely do not need any more. Frankly, I wonder just how much more we can take, and still survive. But I know that God is able and that His grace is sufficient. I know that we will survive, but oh, the cost — the horrible cost — of these divisions among us.

Most of you will bear witness that I have, in the main, sought to avoid strife among our kind since coming here. I daresay that some have been surprised at my attitudes and actions in this respect. I daresay that some suspected that I would really start — or continue — some fighting as soon as I got here. I have tried to keep from this. I have fought some things. I have stood against some things. I have stayed in the same "old paths" that The Baptist Examiner has trod through its history. But, my long time readers will bear witness that, in the main, I have tried to keep from battle, strife, and trouble.

But one cannot be silent forever. One must speak out. When a great storm is brewing, one must sound forth the warning. Please know that I am, in this baptism administrator controversy, carrying on the teaching and practice that this church and this paper has always done. I have not changed. T.B.E. has not changed. Some who supported us for years will do so no longer. But they have changed. We remain the same.

Let us all give thought, study, and prayer to this matter. If at all possible let us come to a peaceable and harmonious agreement on the matter. If not this, at least let us manifest a good spirit of Christian love for one another. Comments on this subject will be welcomed and prayerfully considered.

A NEW DOCTRINE

(Continued from Page 2)

statement very carefully. It is not a question of which is the ordinary or the best way. The author of the above books is teaching that a church can not authorize a non-member to administer baptism for her, and that any baptism so administered is invalid.

I have entitled this article, "A New Doctrine..." I assure you that this is a true and correct title. The doctrine I am opposing in this article is a new doctrine in our midst. It is contrary to the teaching and practice of Baptists for hundreds and hundreds of years. I read widely. Of course, I realize that I have not read everything and make no such pretence. But I do say that, in all my reading of the books of men, I have never seen even a hint of this new doctrine until I read it in the above books. I will not say, for I do not dogmatically know, that such a doctrine has never been in print before. I do say that I have never seen it. Frankly, I sincerely doubt that anyone else has seen such a doctrine in print until these two mentioned books. I stand ready to be corrected on this, if it can be done. I think I can say most dogmatically that such a doctrine has not been prominently and frequently taught among Baptists — if it ever has — until now. So I say, without fear of successful contradiction, that this is a new doctrine.

It is a new doctrine relative to the following facts of Baptist history and practice. 1. Most missionaries, I feel sure, remain members of their home church. Yet these men frequently baptize for churches on the mission field. Brother Fred Halliman has practiced this for nearly twenty-five years and has baptized nearly 6,000 New Guinea converts in this way. Yet, men who supported him for many of these years, who lifted him up as a great missionary, who never once spoke against what he was doing, are now saying that these baptisms are invalid. See Brother Halliman's article on this elsewhere in this paper.

2. In past Baptist history, especially in the early days of this country, and even now; many preachers have pastored more than one church. Such preachers have been members of one of those churches, but have administered baptism for all of them. Say what you will about one man pastoring more than one church, the fact remains that this has long been, and still is, a Baptist practice. Now, according to this new doctrine, all the baptisms administered by such preachers for the churches of which they were not members are invalid. Please note also, that this practice would produce churches where most if not all of the members had this kind of baptism. And the author of the above mentioned books would say that such were not true churches.

3. Throughout Baptist history, it has been a frequent practice of Baptist churches that, when without a pastor or when her pastor was disabled, a church would authorize another preacher to administer baptism for her. This is just so. We have many such members in many of our churches today.

4. Many times throughout Baptist history, when people have been saved in a revival, the church would invite and authorize the visiting preacher to administer or assist in ad-

ministering baptism. See Brother Cox's statement in this paper. Now, I do adamantly state that these four things that have been long practiced by many Baptist Churches do certainly prove that the doctrine I am opposing is a new doctrine among Baptists.

Now, please notice the almost terrifying consequences of this new doctrine. Please understand that, if this doctrine is according to the Bible, we should obey and teach it regardless of the consequences. But I think that we would all agree that one should, in preaching a doctrine, give some considerations to the necessary consequences thereof. Surely, if one is going to teach a new doctrine, he should carefully and prayerfully consider the consequences. Now note some of these consequences. You might read again the four things I have mentioned just prior to this as things that have certainly been practiced a long time by many Baptists, and are still being practiced. 1. Missionaries baptizing for churches on the mission field while remaining members of their home church. 2. Preachers pastoring more than one church, being a member of one of them, but administering baptism for all of them. 3. Churches without pastors, or with disabled pastors, using other nonmember preachers to administer baptism for them. 4. Churches inviting the visiting preacher to administer or assist in administering baptism to the converts of a meeting. Now it goes without saying, I suppose all parties will admit that, according to this new doctrine, all these baptisms are invalid. I suppose that all parties will further admit that where such baptisms relate to a large majority or maybe all of the membership of a church, that church would be invalid — not a true church. Let us see where we have now arrived. According to this new doctrine, thousands of people are unbaptized and hundreds of churches are unchurched. Please note that we are not talking about non-Baptist churches. We are not talking about so-called Baptist churches that preach little Baptist truth. We are talking about churches that are true and sound in every point except that such have authorized non-members to baptize for them. So, by one stroke of his pen, the author of the above mentioned books has unbaptized thousands and unchurched hundreds of churches. If the author is right, if the doctrine taught in his books is true, so be it. Let us abide by the consequences. But I do want everyone involved in this controversy to see very clearly the consequences involved. I do want everyone who agrees with the author of these two books to know all that is involved therein. I would ask each reader, are you ready, for the sake of a new doctrine which saw the light of day only recently, or for the sake of personal friendship, to stand behind such terrifying consequences as these?

Let me state again exactly what this new doctrine is. It is that a church cannot authorize a non-member to administer baptism for her. This doctrine is taught in two recent books as mentioned already. Now please note this: there is not one verse of Scripture given in those two books — and there cannot be one given — that will support this new doctrine. Not one — search and see. I challenge anyone to

show me — not two or three — just one verse of the Bible which teaches this doctrine. Now, don't show me a verse teaching church authority. I know the Bible teaches that, and I believe it. Don't show me a verse teaching that baptism is a church ordinance. I know that the Bible teaches that, and I believe it. I ask the author of the mentioned books, or any other living man, to show me one verse teaching that a church cannot authorize whom she pleases to administer baptism for her. Brethren, it would seem to me that a new doctrine, and one with such terrifying, disruptive, divisive consequences, should have some Bible to back it up. This one does not. Search and see. Prove me wrong. I throw down the challenge for anyone to do so.

Now, as to what the Bible does teach, I invite attention to Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 16:32-34; and I Corinthians 1:14-17. The first Scripture is that which we refer to as the Great Commission. We learn that the church is commissioned and authorized to do three things: Make converts by preaching the gospel, baptize them, and teach the baptized converts the truths of God's Word. Now, this new doctrine divides this commission as I have here. I should say dis-joints, rather than divides. This new doctrine says that a church can invite and authorize a non-member to perform the first and third parts of this commission; but if the same church invites the same preacher to perform the second or middle part for her, that part becomes invalid. This is absolutely absurd. This dis-jointing of the commission in this way is totally without Biblical authority. The author of the mentioned books labors hard, but unsuccessfully, to answer this argument. It cannot be answered. Either a church can invite a man to do all three of the parts of the Great Commission for her, or she cannot invite him to do any of them. There is absolutely no Scriptural authority for this treatment of the Commission. A church can invite me to come, hold a meeting, preach to the unsaved, and hopefully souls will be saved. A church can invite me to come and hold teaching series for the church on some doctrines or portion of the Word. But that church cannot invite me to administer baptism for her. Brethren, there is no warrant for such teaching and such actions. I suggest that the churches who hold this new doctrine cease inviting other men to perform any ministry for them, or leave this new doctrine and walk in the "old paths" of Baptist doctrine and practice.

As to Acts 16:32-34. Who baptized the Philippian jailor? Into what church was he baptized? I admit that the record does not dogmatically answer this. But I respectfully suggest that, apart from this new doctrine, one would have thought that either Paul or Silas baptized him into the church at Philippi.

As to I Corinthians 1:14-17. Into what church did Paul baptize these? I admit that the record does not specifically say, but I respectfully submit that, prior to this new doctrine, one would have thought, into the Corinthian church. I assure you that it is only assumption that will square these Scriptures with the new doctrine that a church cannot authorize a non-member to administer baptism for her. I assure you that prior to this new doctrine, most Bible readers

would have thought that Paul, a member of the church at Antioch, baptized the Philippian jailor into the church at Philippi; and that he baptized those mentioned in the Corinthian Scripture into the church at Corinth. One might, under the influence of this new doctrine, argue with the suggested interpretation of the latter two Scriptures, but I do not see how anyone not blinded by prejudice can divide the Great Commission into three parts — allow a church to use a non-member for two of these, but invalidate it if the other part is so performed.

It has been suggested in opposition to my position that, if a church can authorize a non-member to administer baptism for her, she could authorize that same person to partake of the Lord's Supper and vote in church business. The question has been asked, if the one, why not the other? The answer is very, very simple in the extreme. Partaking in the Lord's Supper and voting in church business are limited by the Word of God to the members of that church. A church certainly cannot authorize contrary to the Word of God. A church cannot authorize one to do that which the Bible forbids. But the Bible does not forbid (if it does, show me where) a non-member to administer the ordinances. The argument that if one can administer the ordinance that same one could partake of church membership privileges is absurd, foolish, null and void, and without reasonable, and certainly without Scriptural foundation. This is simply an invented bugaboo argument to scare people off from the church using a non-member to administer the ordinance.

This new doctrine is very likely to be the most disruptive thing to come into our midst in a good while now. It is very likely to cause more damage to our kind of Baptists than anything for some time now. I am totally heart-sick over the whole matter. God knows we have had enough trouble, enough fighting, enough division. I had hoped it would be a long, long time before something else came up to divide us. I was utterly bowed down to the earth in great sorrow when this thing arose in our midst. With the coming of the first book on the subject, I kept silent. I hoped it would go away. I hoped it would not divide us. But with the coming of a second book, and some other events, I felt that I must speak out on this subject.

Already, because of the disruptive power of this new doctrine, I have seen the following. 1. We have received a letter from a long-time supporting church that she could no longer support, or even pray for, New Guinea Mission work. Can you believe that? It is true. I fear that this will not be the last such letter. I fear that future letters will include our church and The Baptist Examiner as well as this preacher. 2. A life time subscriber (and T.B.E. has not changed on this, he has) has cancelled his subscription, and I am told that he urged people to "burn their TBE's." 3. I have received many calls and letters relative to this matter, and relative to trouble being caused by this new doctrine. Oh, I fear that what we have seen is just the tip of the iceberg as to what we will see as to the destructive force of this new doctrine.

Now, I have shown that this is a new doctrine. I have shown that it is contrary to Baptist

teaching and practice of the past and present. I have shown that there is not one verse in the Bible to support this new doctrine. I have shown that there are Scriptures which can be used to support the contrary to this new doctrine. I have shown that this new doctrine leaves us with some awful and terrifying consequences. I have shown that this new doctrine has already been productive of division among us. I predict that it will get much worse before it gets better.

I believe that there are many who, because of the "at first sight" attractiveness of this new doctrine, and because of the great and wide influence of its chief teacher, have been attracted to this doctrine. I, however, believe that many of these, when they really examine the matter carefully, prayerfully, and thoroughly will come back to the true position on the subject. I would urge all the brethren to give much study, thought, and prayer to this subject before they adopt this new doctrine, and thus enter on a course that is bound to cause great trouble to and division among our kind of Baptists.

I have tried — I hope I have succeeded — to manifest a good, loving, Christian spirit in this article. I shall sincerely desire to do so throughout this controversy. I have felt it necessary that I deal with this subject: because it is unscriptural, and because it is causing (and will likely cause more) great hurt to our kind of Baptists. It is my sincere desire that we might keep all disruption over this new doctrine to a very minimum. Let us love one another. Let us pray for one another. Let us treat one another in true Christian love as to this matter. One brother, not the author of the books, has already violated this as to his treatment of me, but I let that pass. I believe that the author of the two mentioned books would join with me in pleading for as much Christian love as can possibly be shown in this matter.

I say one other thing. I fear it greatly. I fear that, today, men are saying that baptism performed by a non member is invalid. I fear that, tomorrow, men will say that churches practicing such are not true churches. Oh, that it may not be, but I fear that it will.

Let me add one other, maybe the most serious of all, thing to this article and I will close. I mentioned that, due to the practice through much of Baptist history especially in our country; of one preacher pastoring more than one church — being a member of one, but baptizing for the others — many churches would come to be composed of a majority or maybe all with such a baptism. This new doctrine says that such baptisms are invalid, and of course, such churches would be invalid. I ask this question, what church among us can be sure that we do not have one or more such churches in the link-chain of our history? Let me illustrate. One brother who is adamantly for this new doctrine pastors a church which was at one time pastored by a man who pastored other churches. This church also descended from churches in a similar situation. Now, does this brother have a true church according to this new doctrine, which he espouses? If not, and here is the

(Continued on Page 4 Column 3)

He whose life's object is to accumulate money is not a Christian.

The Baptist Examiner Forum I

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT

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

If the gospel is necessary to regeneration, how are dying infants regenerated?

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On some things the Bible is very plain without room for argument. One is that no one enters the kingdom of God apart from regeneration (the new birth). Jesus told Nicodemus, "—Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. — Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (John 3: 3, 4).

It is also very plainly taught in the Word that the Holy Spirit uses the Word (gospel) in regeneration. In Ephesians 5:26 we are told concerning the church, which is made up of regenerated people, "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." In James 1:18 it is said, "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures." Again the Scripture tells us, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. — And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (I Peter 1: 23, 25). The apostle Paul told the church at Corinth, "—for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel" (I Cor. 4:15).

The Bible also teaches that dying infants will be with the other saved, for we find in II Samuel 12:23 King David saying of his dead child, "But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." Also we find that babies that die will be at rest, which means they will be in heaven, for Job tells us that if he had died at birth, "—then had I been at rest" (Job 3:13).

From this study we see that the gospel is necessary for regeneration and as dying infants are regenerated the gospel is used in their regeneration. How this is brought about I do not find that God has revealed unto us. This seems to be one of the secret things of God: "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law" (Deut. 29:29).

T.P. Simmons said concerning dying infants: "—since they have a sinful nature, we must believe that it will be necessary for them to be regenerated and thus brought to faith in Christ.

The Bible makes it clear this is necessary before one is fit for the presence of God. But it does not tell us when it will take place with reference to infants and imbeciles. We are of the opinion that it will take place at the time of the separation of the spirit from the body in the hour of death" (Systematic Study of Bible Doctrine, p. 153).

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II. Samuel 12:23: "But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."

Job 3:11: "Why died I not from the womb? why did I not give up the ghost when I came out of the belly?"

I believe the two verses used in our text, at the very least, imply that babies dying in infancy are saved and go to heaven. I know that these two verses may not seem like a lot of evidence to support such a belief, but I believe they are sufficient. This is a subject that I would not make an issue over. If you want to believe that some babies are elect and go to heaven while others go to hell, that is fine with me. We will not break fellowship over this, I hope. If we do, it will be of your doing. David could not have known he would see his dead baby again unless he knew his baby was going to heaven. We do have proof that at least some babies who die in infancy are saved. Job could not have wished to die as an infant except he knew he would have gone to heaven. There is definite evidence of at least one baby going to heaven. There is no Bible evidence that a dying infant ever went to hell.

The second thing I want to mention is that I am a firm believer in the gospel being used in salvation. Don't falsely accuse me of believing in gospel regeneration without the work of the Holy Spirit. I believe the Holy Spirit takes the preached word and makes it effectual in the heart of the elect. The Bible is very clear on the subject of the gospel being used in salvation.

Now to answer the question at hand. I do not deny that this is a difficult question to answer. There are many questions that have clear Bible answers and there are others that bring about speculation. I do think certain things must be considered in answering this question. First, and I believe most important, is the fact that God has only one way of salvation. If adults are saved by hearing the gospel, then I am convinced infants are saved the same way.

I may not be able to explain all the details but I am convinced that somehow the dying infant is made to hear the gospel. I would not rule out the thought of angels being used to preach to them. We do know that in the

tribulation period angels will declare the "everlasting gospel." I do not doubt God's ability in the least in bringing dying infants to Christ in this manner. The question asks how are they regenerated? My answer is, they are regenerated the same way adults are with the exception of human instrumentality in the preaching of the gospel to them. I do believe they are caused to hear the gospel and the Spirit uses that gospel in bringing them to Christ. May God bless you all.

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First, let's correct one thing about the question. There is no "if" to it. Either you accept the plain, clear teaching of God's Word or you reject it. That plain, clear teaching is that God uses the gospel in regeneration. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever... But the word of the Lord endureth for ever, and this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (I Pet. 1:23-25). Yes, the gospel is necessary in regeneration — without question and without doubt.

The next question is the one relative to dying infants. Are they saved? "And he said, while the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." Are they saved? Yes, on the basis of this plain, clear teaching, I can say they are saved.

How do they hear the gospel? I don't know. Probably somehow through the angels during the process of death. Surely you know the angels can and have preached the gospel? Perhaps by some other way, but rest assured somehow they receive the gospel.

A NEW DOCTRINE

(Continued from Page 3)

rub, where will he go to get a sure and certain authority with which to start a true church? As to this matter, also see the article containing historical information furnished by Clyde Everman in this issue.

May the Lord bless you all. Let us give thought and prayer to this very, very serious matter. Let us seek with all our might to maintain a true and proper spirit of Christian love in this matter.

A COMMON BAPTIST PRACTICE

The following constitutes excerpts from a letter from Wayne Cox, a very respected Baptist

preacher in our circle.

Dear Brother Joe, I trust that you and yours are enjoying the blessings of our kinsman redeemer... As to... position (this new doctrine that a church cannot authorize a non-member to administer baptism for her). My position is and has always been this, The Lord gave the authority to baptize to His church, and since a church is a democratic body, then it is the church's prerogative to get any one they wish to administer the ordinance of baptism. The church, and only the church, has this authority. I have administered the ordinance of baptism for any number of churches. Brother Halliman could administer baptism for any of the churches in New Guinea. Since a church is a democratic body, and since the church and the church only has the authority to baptize, then it follows that a church can authorize any one to administer the ordinance for them. I trust that this brief answer will at least let you know how I stand. Yours under the blood. Wayne Cox.

A COMMON BAPTIST PRACTICE

A statement from David West, a very sound Baptist preacher. "My father pastored two or more Baptist churches all of his ministry. He was a member of only one of them, but administered the ordinances for all of them." David West also tells me of a time in his own ministry when he pastored two churches. He was a member of one of them, but administered the ordinances for both of them.

Brethren, when we pit this new doctrine that a church cannot authorize a non-member to administer baptism for her against this undoubted historical Baptist practice, we are going to have a very difficult time of it. We are going to unbaptize thousands and unchurch hundreds of churches. We are going to leave ourselves hard pressed to be sure that we ourselves have a true church.

SOME KENTUCKY BAPTIST HISTORY

Letter From Clyde Everman

Dear Brother Joe, From a research of Kentucky history of Baptists, I found that it was very common for preachers to be pastors of more than one church, therefore it can be concluded that they baptized for churches of which they were not members. The following was taken from "A History of Kentucky Baptists, by J.H. Spencer. It covers a period from 1769 to 1885.

Thomas Reynolds, 1785 — 1851. About 1840 became pastor of Union (Unity) and Bethel in Kentucky and in South Point, Ohio. In 1846 he moved to Pike county and there became pastor of three or four churches.

Thomas Kelley Reynolds, 1815-?. Son of Thomas Reynolds. After his ordination in 1845, he became pastor of New Salem, Bethel, Union, and Friendship churches. He has baptized 1,147 persons, and on account of his failing health, secured the services of other ministers to baptize about 500 others who were converted under his ministry. In the prime of his ministry he served five

churches, preaching to one of them on week days for a period of six years. For this he received only two dollars and fifty cents.

Matthew Floyd, 1718-?. Ordained and became pastor of Old White Oak Baptist church. Pastor there for 51 years, and while there also pastored Monticello, New Salem, Big Spring, and Beaver Creek.

Edward Darnaby, 1793-1852. While pastor of Bryant's Station, also supplied for Paris, Upper Howard's Creek, Mt. Pleasant, Indian Creek, and Mt. Olivet.

Cadwellader Lewis, 1811-1882. From 1848 to 1858 pastor of Versailles and Glens Creek, preaching two Sundays each per month.

Lyman Seely, 1814-?. From 1852 to 1858, pastor of Washington, Fewsburg, and Flemingsburg in Kentucky and Aberdeen in Ohio.

John L. Smith, 1821-?. In 1855 he became pastor of Nicholasville and Mount Pleasant in Jessamine County.

Charles H. Stuleville. Pastor of Rock Creek, Bacon Creek, and perhaps Concord from 1818 to 1839.

The following taken from "Baptists in Kentucky," 1920.

In Allen County there were four preachers that pastored two churches each and one that pastored four churches. This was 60% of the churches in Allen County.

In Belle County. One preacher pastored two churches. Two preachers pastored three churches. One preacher pastored six churches. This was 42% of all churches in Belle County.

In Campbell County. Two preachers pastored two churches. One pastored three. This was 100% of all churches in the County.

In Graves County. Seven preachers pastored two churches. Two preachers pastored three churches. This was 74% of the churches.

In Greenup County. Two preachers pastored two churches. One pastored three churches. 41% of the churches.

Tygart's Valley. Three preachers pastored two churches. One pastored four.

This is only a few samples of conditions in the churches of former days. In the samples given for the year 1920, the churches that shared their pastor with other churches run almost 60% of the total churches. With this being true for one year, what is the possibility of finding a true church today by the standards of this new doctrine that a church cannot authorize a non-member to administer baptism for her? The same thing being practiced in all the other States, what is the possibility of finding a true church anywhere by the standard of this new doctrine. One of His sheep, C.T. Everman.

GIVING

(Continued from Page 1)

member of one of the Lord's churches, I say that you are both required and obligated to give both of your time and of your resources to the Lord, and His work in that assembly. It is a direct commandment of God that a member of His assembly give to His work. Also, let me point out that by not giving you are in direct disobedience to the will and commandment of God. (Mal. 3:10; Deu. 14:22; I Cor. 16:1).

If you are having trouble in

The Baptist Examiner Forum II

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT

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

Explain I Tim. 5:24-25.

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In verse twenty-two Paul instructs Timothy to lay hands suddenly on no man, that is for the purpose of ordination.

The judgment spoken of in verse twenty-four does not have reference to some future judgment but the judgment of the church for the purpose of ordaining someone to be an elder.

The expression "some men's sins are open beforehand," means that their sins are open, and many know about their sins and therefore they were to be rejected for ordination. They would not have to be brought before the church for the purpose of questioning them to see whether they qualified for the ministry. Sometimes such men, though open sinners in some ways, yet they exercise much influence over others. If they were rejected to start with there would not follow trouble later.

And the statement, "And some men they follow after." That is their sins are not known, they have kept them secret until questioned by the men of the church, and then they are brought out in the open. Or this could have reference to not being sound in the faith and this was not learned until coming before the judgment of the church. To follow after, does not mean that their sins will be found out at the judgment seat of Christ or at the great white throne judgment, though this will be true; but the meaning is that their sins were hid and were brought to light by the questioning of the men of the church.

Now, in the same sense, as verse 25 teaches, good works are known beforehand. They are manifest, that is declared, proven, made known by their being faithful to work in the church for Christ and for God. Their works were seen by others. Such men are sound in the faith. They are men of good character, and therefore men the church can count on to stand true to the Word of God.

Now, the phrase, "And they that are otherwise wise cannot be hid." That is sooner or later their sins will come to the light. Their secret sins will be found out. This is why it is good to wait for awhile to ordain a man to the ministry. Let them first prove themselves. It is not right, even though some may have some gift, to use means to force a church to hasten his ordination. This ought to be a free, joyful and unconstrained act of the church. Such would be an indication of an obstinate, self-willed person, who would not be willing to prove himself in every way: his faithfulness to the church in attendance, in support, and in every other way in the activities of the church.

Besides it is no honor to one who may be endowed with some fine gifts which will be helpful to

the ministry of the Word, if such an one will not exercise his gifts upon trial without ordination.

It will be running a risk if the church ordains anyone, who if in any wise offended, behaves strangely and leaves the church and goes to some other church. How can a church find out the regular behavior, and if they are sound in every way or not if there is not a considerable time of trial? That is what is meant when Paul said to lay hands suddenly on no man. And this is what is meant by the works being manifest beforehand. Find out what kind of men that are to be ordained before the judgment of the church. This is the judgment the Scripture is speaking of in verses twenty-four and twenty-five.

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I Timothy 5:24, 25, "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after. Likewise also the good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid."

Here we have two classes of people. Those that are redeemed and follow after righteousness, and those that are still in their sins, under the bondage of the law and sin.

The Bible teaches that all sin must be judged. "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Ecclesiastes 12:14). Sin's penalty is death. "For the wages of sin is death;" (Romans 6:23a) Not mere physical death, but the second death, eternal dying. "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death" (Revelation 20:12-14). The second death is eternal separation from God and the blessings of eternal life. This is sin's penalty.

Those in the verse in question, whose sins go beforehand, are those whom Christ redeemed by bearing their sins upon Calvary's cross. Their sins were judged beforehand in Him; they shall never come into judgment for sin, however they shall be judged at the judgment seat of Christ for their works as servants of God in order to determine their rewards. Read I Corinthians 3:10-15. This is the first

class of people spoken of in the verses in question. The others are those whom Christ shall judge at the great white throne we read of in Revelation chapter 20. Their sins shall follow them into this judgment, and they shall be judged according to their works to determine their degree of punishment in the lake of fire. Remember, God is Holy and executes justice in all His dealings, and in all His ways.

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I believe that this has to do with the sins of God's people, and of course of those who have made a profession that are not children of God. First the sins of the children of God. The Bible makes it clear that saved people are to please Him. Ephesians 3:21 says, "Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end." This teaches that our Sovereign God saved us in order to get glory from our lives through the Church. God does not save us just in order to keep us out of Hell, but rather to serve Him. In order to serve Him properly and to be rewarded for our service we must do it through the church. Hebrews 10:25 says, in the Amplified version, "Not forsaking or neglecting to assemble together (as believers), as is the habit of some people, but admonishing, warning, urging and encouraging fully as you see the day approaching." Revelation 2:7 says, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." This is mentioned seven times in the second and third chapters of Revelation. Surely God commanded us, who are saved, to go to church, to be an active member thereof that we might grow in grace and be of help to others. In our faithfulness, if the church teaches the Word; we grow to maturity and are no more a novice, but are able to defend the faith, and to be a strong Christian as well as a Baptist. Beloved, what I am trying to get over is this. It is a sin to be saved and not attend church regularly unless one is providentially hindered. It is a sin not to pray. The Bible has much to say about the children of God talking in prayer to the Father. How would our earthly father feel if we very seldom spoke to him? Our heavenly Father would have us to be on speaking terms with Him. We are to pray for the sick, our enemies, our loved ones; the lost, and to repent of our sins daily in order to be in fellowship with our heavenly Father. Jesus said in Matthew 26:41, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit in-

deed is willing but the flesh is weak." Sin is not graded. Sin is sin regardless of how it is committed. There are no big sins or small sins. Sin is sin. I have pointed out some sins that are practiced by Christians all the time but are hardly considered sins today. These sins are open to the public and most likely will follow the Christian to the Judgment seat of Christ. Now on the other hand there are those who are lost that are members of churches who have high pressured them into making a profession of faith. These people are miserable; trying, acting, and fooling the people of God and sometimes living better lives than some Christians. Their good works will not keep them out of Hell, but rather they will be judged at the Great White Throne Judgment. That is, their sins that have been hid will be exposed at this last Judgment and they will be cast into Hell.

Verse twenty-five changes somewhat and tells us that the good works of the Christian is no secret, but rather is manifested. Everyone can see the good works of a Christian, produced by the Holy Spirit and one's love for God and the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now let us analyze this verse. There are some who do good works to be seen of men or to get praise. This is manifest beforehand. There are others that love the Lord and are doing what they can and not trying to make a name for themselves. They will be noticed likewise and will be accepted as special in the mind and eyes of the church, but more so by our Lord.

God Bless.

GIVING

(Continued from Page 4)

your own mind with this doctrine, that is, if you to this point in your Christian life have not yet been convinced that GOD requires, yea commands, that you give unto Him, then there can only be two reasons in general for the way you feel. One reason may be that you have not been educated from the Word of God on the subject, or two, you have not come to the point of surrendering this area of your service to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

I. Have Not Been Educated: If you have not been educated on the subject of Scriptural giving and tithing, I trust after reading this article you will do some study on your own and may God give you grace and faith to follow Him in this commandment. If your pastor has not properly instructed you and the rest of your church on giving and tithing, then shame on him and you can tell him that I said so. He has deprived you of many spiritual, and material blessings and led you into disobedience. If your pastor has taught you and you have rejected his teaching of the Word of God, then shame on you. You are out of the will of God.

II. Have Not Submitted: I realize that this second reason could be related to the first reason in that you have not submitted to the Lord in this matter because you have never understood His commandment on the issue. Notwithstanding, we shall have more to say on the second than the first. We must first nail down one very important fact on the matter. No one can surrender to Christ as Saviour without surrendering also to Him as LORD. There

are four words used in the New Testament for the word LORD. Each one of them is somewhat related but not altogether. The one most frequently used is the word KURIOUS which means "Having power, or authority." This is the word that Paul used in Romans 10:9 where he said, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

It is very common to hear a preacher exhort his people, "now that you have been saved you must make Jesus your Lord of your life." There is no such exhortation in the Word of God. We do not make Him Lord over our lives, before, after, or during our salvation experience. As the Lord was preparing to ascend into heaven He announced to His disciples, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth..." Paul said in Philippians 2:11 that in the last days "that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of the Father." Jesus Christ is Lord because He is Lord. When He comes back to set up His kingdom on this earth He will be wearing the name KING OF KINGS and LORD OF LORDS!! When a person comes to Jesus Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit, Christ becomes that person's Lord. So, in that respect the question is not whether He is your Lord, but is He your Saviour and Lord? Then after that issue is settled the next question is, "How do I surrender to His Lordship?"

We hear a lot today about "Christian liberty." This is probably one of the most abused aspects of christianity that there is. There is no liberty that leaves the Christian to live, act, and walk as the world. In this country we have liberty as a citizen of the United States, but that does not make every man a law unto himself. Christian liberty means that, we have been liberated from sin's penalty and power. Sin no longer has dominion over the child of God. We have been made free from the law of sin and death. "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: Whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead, and living" (Romans 14:7-9).

The question remains, "have you surrendered to His Lordship?" "Have you submitted to Him in this particular area of your christian service?" Notice I Corinthians 8:7, "Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also." You may have surrendered to the Lord in your attendance, your prayer life and many other areas of the Lord's work. All these are very important, not only to you personally, but to the assembly and the Lord's work. But not any more important than your surrender to Him as Lord of your resources. Every thing that we have belongs to God. You can-

(Continued on Page 6 Column 1)



QUESTION: — What prophet foretold of an eclipse?

ANSWER: — Amos, Amos 8:9. "And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day." It is interesting to note that a complete eclipse of the sun, visible at Jerusalem, occurred June 15, 763 B.C., which was during Amos' lifetime.

GIVING

(Continued from Page 5)

not name one thing that does not belong to Him. He can just as easily take it away as He gave it. We find this illustrated in the book of Job. We only use what God has intrusted in us. I said use, not abuse. I feel sure that none of you would intentionally rob God if you really believed that was possible. However, He has told us that if we do not surrender our tithes and offerings to Him we are robbing Him (Malachi 3:8). May God help you to surrender to His Lordship in your giving. Amen.

THE KING

(Continued from Page 1)

behold, I am come the first this day of all the house of Joseph to go down to meet my lord the king" (II Samuel 19:18-20).

Here was an individual that hated David as he was fleeing from Jerusalem. When the King returned he fell on his knees and pleaded for his life. In fact, we read what happened when David was leaving the city, and notice how Shimei's conduct was at that time.

"And when King David came to Bahurim, behold, thence came out a man of the family of the house of Saul, whose name was Shimei, the son of Gera: he came forth, and cursed still as he came. And he cast stones at David, and at all the servants of king David: and all the people and all the mighty men were on his right hand and on his left. And thus said Shimei when he cursed. Come out, come out, thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial. The Lord hath returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned; and the Lord hath delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom thy son: and, behold, thou art taken in thy mischief, because thou art a bloody man."

As David was leaving the city with his followers, here came Shimei cursing and throwing stones at the followers of David, and cursing David himself. There are some religious but lost church members in this class. They live like the world through the week. During the week, when they are with the devil's crowd, they deny the Lord Jesus Christ. They ridicule His followers, yet on Sunday morn-

ing, they go to worship. The only time they use His name is to swear and curse. They are like Shimei, religious but lost. Someday they will have to stand before the King.

Now, I said that there are many like Shimei, religious, but lost. In II Timothy 3:5, we read of some church members that have, "...a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."

In Titus 1:16, we read this, "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." There are those that profess that they know Him, but they do not show it in their life.

Shimei is a type of the lost individual, even the lost individual that makes a profession of faith. Someday you are going

to have to own the fact that Jesus is Lord. Listen: "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:10, 11). Someday every lost individual is going to fall down before Jesus, just as Shimei fell down before David. They will plead for their life, but it will be too late. The judgment of the lost will take place 1,000 years after Jesus returns. The results are seen in Revelation 21:8: "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."

II. The Saved Man With A Good Excuse. The second individual that came to meet David, was a man named Mephibosheth. Listen: We find here, a man that had a good excuse for not following the king, for not going out when the King went out. He had a very good excuse. He was lame on both of his feet. His servant, Ziba, no doubt deceived him. But listen, he had a little more time than you might think. This thing was planned. David's people had to get ready to go. There was much hustle and bustle, and there were other servants beside Ziba that could have made a way for Mephibosheth to have gone. If only he had made some preparations. It would have been different, had he not left it to the very last second to go. When he stood before the king, he stood before him with a good excuse.

Those today that compromise on the Word of God have a good excuse, but it is nothing more than an excuse. Might you and I realize that as Mephibosheth stood before his King, all that he had was an excuse even though it was a good one. Today we have the same thing with those that compromise on the Word of God. What do you think those preachers are going to say, that encourage their women to speak in church contrary to what the Bible teaches? In I Corinthians 14:34, we read this, "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak..." Notice verse 35, the latter part, "...for it is a shame for women to speak in the church." Yet there are many preachers who privately will tell you that the Word of God does teach just that, but who in public will encourage their

women to speak aloud during the church service, lead in prayer and to do other things which are contrary to the Bible. They have a good excuse. It would cause trouble in their church. It might split the church if they stood for the Word of God.

What about those that deny the doctrines of God's Free and Sovereign Grace. They know that they are laid down in the Word of God. They refuse to teach them saying that they are too hard for the people to understand. They just would not understand that God has chosen a number that no man can number from before the foundation of the world, that Jesus came and redeemed each and every one of those people by His atoning death on Calvary. It is taught in the Bible but it is too hard for the people to understand. That is a good excuse, but it is nothing more than an excuse.

Then what about the individual who refuses to preach the gospel and to do or to support mission work? There are some individuals who say, "Why I believe that God is absolutely Sovereign," and I believe that too. They say, "God does not need us," and He does not. They say, "God will save them any old way at all, He will just reach down and save them without the preaching of the Word of God." That is not true, He will not do it that way. He could, but He will not. They refuse to preach that glorious gospel of which the Bible says in Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth..."

Do you know who had an attitude like that? Jonah. If you want to read about a man in the Bible that had an attitude like that, it was Jonah. God called

(Continued on Page 10 Column 2)

ARE YOU A CHRISTIAN

(Continued from Page 1)

matter: (1). The Judge of the Universe (and that being God) has declared man totally and completely unrighteous - verses 10-12; (2). The great Physician (and that also being God) has given man a physical examination and His conclusion of the matter is this: man is sick from the top of his head to the bottom of his foot - verses 13-15; (3). The Historian (and that is God) has very carefully written down the works of man and He has come to the conclusion that man's works only condemn him - verses 16-19. The truth of the matter is simple, man is not basically a good person.

Second, the old Devil has suggested to man that God will overlook his sin and never bring it up. Beloved, I wish that that were true, but it is not and can not ever be true. Again, you see, the truth of the matter is this: the Bible teaches us that the penalty of sin is death - both physical and spiritual death, separation from a Holy God. "For the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). This is not a pretty picture, but our God hates sin and will not ever let it into Heaven. Our sin has separated us from God! God can not overlook our sin, furthermore, He will not. Sin must be paid for, and bless God, in the person of our lovely Lord Jesus Christ, the sin of God's people was paid in full. Our Lord went to that Roman tree and there between

Heaven and Earth, paid the ransom price that God the Father required. The Sovereign God of the universe can not overlook sin. He made His only Son pay in full the price of the elect's redemption.

Third, the old Devil has suggested that if man would at least attempt to do right, surely a loving God would let him into Heaven. The old Devil just does not give up, but the truth of the matter is this: NO man has or can ever achieve the perfection that Almighty God requires. Listen, "For all have sinned" Romans 3:23. Furthermore, the Apostle Paul taught us that we are saved by "Free Grace" and never by our own works. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8-9).

Fourth, the old Devil has suggested that if man would only have FAITH in himself, surely God would see the merit of that and accept him into Heaven. But what does the Word of God say, "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," not ourself. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:30).

Fifth, the old Devil has out done himself in this next lie: for therein, many have believed his report - for they say, "I've always been a Christian since I can remember." The first time I ever heard this was when my mother made the statement twenty years ago when asked about her personal salvation. Thank our God, several weeks later, she was wonderfully saved and placed into God's Family. Nevertheless, many folk have that general thought - never giving a second thought to the reality or truth of such a statement. The Bible teaches us that one becomes a believer, a Christian - and that only after or when we put our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus the Bible teaches, we are "Born Again" and that not of ourselves, but of God. Beloved, pick up your Bible and read John 3:36 and I Peter 1:23. I am not suggesting as some, that you have a part in your salvation, for "Salvation is of the Lord" (Jonah 2:9).

Sixth, the old Devil then has suggested, that NO one can really know for sure that they are going to Heaven, that is until they finally make it. Oh, but what does our Bible say about a "know so salvation?" Listen, the Holy Scriptures are very clear on this one issue: we can know and that right NOW! Let's look at some glorious verses of Scripture. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1). "The Spirit itself (Himself) beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Rom. 8:16). "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God" (I John 5:13).

Up to this point, we have considered a number of lies that the old Devil has suggested to mankind in general. Then, in a limited way, we have attempted to show from the precious Word of God, why these lies will not hold water. Before I go any further in our present study, let me ask you an all-important soul searching question: Are you a Born Again Christian? Can you honestly say, yes I am? If you

answered my question in the affirmative, then what I have to say next ought to be very important to you. If you could not honestly say yes, will you not now consider this man Jesus?

Next beloved, there are some wonderful evidences of your salvation. Do you have doubts from time to time? Most people do! That is most normal in the process of growing in the Lord. Nevertheless, there are some evidences of a work of grace being done in your heart by the Holy Spirit. Thus, I would like to take the time and discuss some of those evidences of your glorious salvation; and then, ways in which you can strengthen your new found faith in Jesus Christ. Over the years, this preacher has come to the understanding that most people do not know how to grow in the grace and knowledge of their Lord and Saviour. Perhaps, that is one of the reasons our Lord has established His church and given us the responsibility of attending the House of the Lord on a regular basis.

First, let us consider one of those evidences: A new love for God's precious Word - The Holy Bible. "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (I Peter 2:2). Oh beloved, if the Holy Spirit of God has brought about a work of God in your heart, there must be a love for God's Word that burns within your heart. You show me someone who does not love the precious eternal Word of God, and this pastor will show you someone who does not know the Author of the Holy Scriptures. Now, if there is that love, how do you strengthen that desire. May I suggest that you can only do that as you read your Bible on a regular daily basis. May I also suggest that for the most part if not all together that you use your King James Bible. Read it for yourself! Read it with your family! Oh, But above all else, read the Word of God daily and be consistent. So many have found other things to take the place of God's precious Word. That ought not ever be the case. This paper, as great as it has been and still is, should never take the place of God's Word. God's Word should be held high above all - why? Because God Himself so respected the Word during His life time and still does.

Secondly, let us consider another of those evidences: there ought to be a new awareness of what is right and wrong. "For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Heb. 5:13-14). Now, stop and think for a brief moment; visualize what our God is saying here.

God said it... and that settles it whether you or I believe it... yea, whether or not you and I put it to action in our own personal life. Thus, you and I ought to begin to memorize the Word of God. Again, the Bible will keep you from sin, or sin will keep you out of the Bible. Which is the case in your personal life? The power which you and I have, is the Word itself; yea, that is what the Holy Spirit of God uses to work in the heart of His dear people. The Holy Spirit does not use that which

(Continued on Page 8 Column 2)

STUDIES IN EZEKIEL

Willard Willis, Monroe, Ohio

"Again the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, speak to the children of thy people, and say unto them, When I bring the sword upon a land, if the people of the land take a man of their coasts, and set him for their watchman: if when he seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the people; then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning; if the sword come, and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head. He heard the sound of the trumpet, and took not warning; his blood shall be upon him. But he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul. But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand. So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me" (Ezek. 33:1-7).

We have, in these passages, a hypothetical case of a sword being drawn and brought upon a land. We have a guard upon the wall whose duty it is to warn the people of the approaching danger. The guard's warning is to be based upon that which he hears from the mouth of God. The failure of the guard to sound the alarm means that the blood of the slain will be upon the head of the guard; otherwise, the blood will be upon the head of the one who heard but did not heed.

It was customary in those days to place a guard on the wall of the city so as to guard against a surprise attack. We have an example of such a case in the following passage: "And there stood a watchman on the tower in Jezreel, and he spied the company of Jehu as he came, and said, I see a company. And Joram said, Take an horseman, and send to meet them, and let him say, Is it peace?" (II Kings 9:17).

We may say that President Reagan, by the way of the vote of the American people, has been assigned to stand on the wall that surrounds this nation. He is to warn us of any dangers which may be at our door. He is to take whatever action is necessary to make sure that we, the people, are protected. This same rule applies to every business and every home. There are those who are to stand at the wall and watch.

Our text can also be applied to our spiritual well being. It is as stated in the following passage: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you" (Heb. 13:17).

The pastor of a church, through the means of the Holy Spirit, presents God's Word to the flock and it becomes the responsibility of the flock to hear and heed. The pastor, if he faithfully proclaims the Word, is not held responsible for those who do not hear and heed. The

pastor, however, is held responsible by the Almighty if he neglects to faithfully proclaim the entire counsel of God.

The pastor and the flock are also responsible to stand on the wall and warn the lost to flee the wrath of God which is yet to come. The church, in fact, is to stand on the wall in that she heeds the great commission which commands us to go into all the world and preach the gospel.

Our text, however, is directed primarily to Israel and Ezekiel as their watchman. The sword, in fact, which was to be brought



Willard Willis

upon the land was literal. It was Ezekiel's responsibility to warn the people of the wrath of God which was pending against the city of Jerusalem. We know, of course, that Ezekiel was a faithful watchman and that the blood of those who perished was not on his head. "When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand" (Ezek. 33:8).

The responsibility of the Lord's church is very great because she alone knows the state of man and his needs. The world has no light. They walk about in gross darkness, but we have light in that we have God the Spirit to reveal the things of God to us. We are to be very careful so that we do not hide our light under a bushel. It is as stated in the following passages: "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:14-16). "Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul" (Ezek. 33:9).

We cannot do better than to quote Romans 14:12 when dealing with the passage before us. The passage reads: "So then every one of us shall give an account of himself to God." "Therefore, O son of man, speak unto the house of Israel..." (Ezek. 33:10). It is "Therefore... speak" and not be silent, since the day will soon come when our mouths will be closed by the stroke of death. It is as stated in the following passage: "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: thenight cometh, when no man can work" (John 9:4). "Therefore, O thou son of man, speak unto the house of Israel; Thus ye speak, saying, If our trans-

gressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how should we then live?" (Ezek. 33:10).

Israel felt that their doom was sealed, and as the result, they were slowly pining away, that is, rotting in their transgressions and sins. The Jews, at the first, would not hear the prophecies of Ezekiel. His prophecies now, however, were being fulfilled and this caused the people to wonder if there was any hope for them.

It is common for those who are under severe chastisement to think that there is no reason to go on, since they are pining away. Our Father, however, in verse eleven, sets the record straight, "Say unto them, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" (Ezek. 33:11).

God, in this passage, acknowledges that Israel's condition was desperate, but not hopeless. He, in fact, admonishes them to turn and live. He advised them that they were destroying themselves.

It is natural for the bee to produce honey. It only stings when being provoked. God, in like manner, is a merciful God. He only vents His wrath when being provoked.

Some of our trials are like Paul's thorn in the flesh. They are to keep us from being exalted above measure. Other trials are the result of disobedience. We therefore must be sure that we are walking in the narrow way lest we be chastened with His rod.

"Therefore, thou son of man, say unto the children of thy people, The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression: as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall thereby in the day that he turneth from his wickedness; neither shall the righteous be able to live for his righteousness in the day that he sinneth. When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousness shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it" (Ezek. 33:12, 13).

These passages expound upon verse eleven and show that our God is not unequal in the dispensing of His mercy or judgment. He simply requires that we be obedient day by day. He will not accept our past righteous acts as sufficient for righteous acts today. He expects us to live according to the Scriptures each and every day. We, on the other hand, will find Him very forgiving if we confess our sin and turn from our evil way.

It is an obvious fact that the food we ate yesterday is not sufficient for today. We need to eat on a daily basis. Godly living is to be carried out in the same way. I, of course, am not referring to regeneration, but to the walk of the believer. It is as stated in the following passage: "And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and

take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23). "Again, when I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right; If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die. None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him: he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live" (Ezek. 33:14-16).

These kind of passages remind one of a price tag on a new car. We observe the tag and then reply, "Who can afford to buy a car with a price tag like that? We, of course, cast our eyes of faith toward our Lord Jesus when we are made to see that which God requires of us. He, alone, is able to meet God's requirement and this He has already done in our behalf. He, alone, has bridged the gulf between God and ourselves. He, alone, can say, "I have done no sin. I have not deviated to the right or to the left." It is as stated in the following passage: "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth" (I Peter 2:22).

We, when looking at our text from the angle of our walk, must conclude that God expects us to strive toward excellence. We are to strive toward excellence in doctrine and morality. We must never suppose that the new birth gives us a license to sin. It is as stated in the following passages: "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid" (Rom. 6:14, 15).

"Yet the children of thy people say, The way of the Lord is not equal: but as for them, their way is not equal. When the righteous turneth from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, he shall even die thereby. But if the wicked turn from his wickedness, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall live thereby. Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. O ye house of Israel, I will judge you every one after his ways" (Ezek. 33:17-20).

The Jews felt that God's ways in dealing with them were not equal. They, in other words, were suggesting that God was partial in His proceedings and that He was a respecter of persons. They also believed that He treated sin with too great a severity. God, however, in the above passages, set the record straight.

"And it came to pass in the twelfth year of our captivity, in the tenth month, in the fifth day of the month, that one that had escaped out of Jerusalem came unto me, saying, The city is smitten" (Ezek. 33:21). This passage is the fulfillment of Ezekiel 24:26 which states: "That he that escapeth in that day shall come unto thee, to cause thee to hear it with thine ears?" Ezekiel, for years, had been warning the people to flee the wrath of God which was to fall upon Jerusalem. He warned them over and over again of the

sad consequences which would be theirs if they failed to hear and heed his warning. A messenger now arrives with the confirmation of all that Ezekiel had prophesied.

"Now the hand of the LORD was upon me in the evening, afore he that was escaped came; and had opened my mouth, until he came to me in the morning; and my mouth was opened, and I was no more dumb" (Ezek. 33:22). Ezekiel had been stricken dumb for about two years from the commencement of the siege of Jerusalem until the fall of the city. His dumbness, however, related only to the prophecies relating to the Jews. He, in the interim, prophesied regarding God's dealings with other nations. Ezekiel, after the hand of the Lord was upon him, and his mouth was opened, took up where he left off and began speaking to Israel again. His first words were those of verse one through twenty of this chapter. "Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, they that inhabit those wastes of the land of Israel speak, saying, Abraham was one, and he inherited the land: but we are many; the land is given us for inheritance" (Ezek. 33:23, 24).

The people who escaped the fall of Jerusalem lay claim to the land because of their numbers and because of the covenant which God had made with their father Abraham. They failed to consider the fact that God had placed conditions upon their inheritance of the land-conditions which required them to hear and obey. They, however, had only heard, but had neglected obedience. This fact is evident from the following passage which states:

"Wherefore say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Ye eat with the blood, and lift up your eyes toward your idols, and shed blood: and shall ye possess the land? Ye stand upon your sword, ye work abomination, and ye defile every one of his neighbour's wife: and shall ye possess the land?" (Ezek. 33:25, 26).

Those who escaped the fall of Jerusalem wanted God to accept their ways and not expect them to conform to His ways. God's way was that the blood be withdrawn from the flesh before it was eaten and that they live by right and not violence. God's way also was that they not lust after their neighbor's wife. The Jews, however, wanted God to pour out His blessings upon them in spite of their evil ways.

"Say thus unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; As I live, surely they that are in the wastes shall fall by the sword, and him that is in the open field will I give to the beasts to be devoured, and they that be in the forts and in the caves shall die of the pestilence. For I will lay the landmost desolate, and the pomp of her strength shall cease; and the mountains of Israel shall be desolate, that none shall pass through. Then shall they know that I am the LORD, when I have laid the land

(Continued on Page 8 Column 1)

EZEKIEL

(Continued from Page 7)

most desolate because of all their abominations which they have committed" (Ezek. 33:27-29).

These passages relate back to verses twenty five and twenty six where God's charge against Israel was that they ate blood, shed blood, lifted up their eyes toward their idols, stood upon their own sword (relied on their sword), worked abomination and defiled every one his neighbor's wife. The result being that which is recorded in verses twenty-seven through twenty-nine; that is, those who were in the wastes of battle would also fall by the sword. Beasts would be assigned to devour those who were in the open fields. Those who had fled to caves and forts would die as the result of pestilence (plague). Their sins were great thus their destruction was to be great. God, in fact, was to make the land most desolate.

Israel, to this day, is still suffering the consequences of that which is before us. She, however, is on the way back and one day her desert will bloom as a rose. Her desolation, in other words, will be a thing of the past. "Also, thou son of man, the children of thy people still are talking against thee by the walls and in the doors of the houses, and speak one to another, every one to his brother, saying, Come I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh from the LORD. And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And, lo, thou art unto them, as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not. And when this cometh to pass, (lo it will come,) then shall they know that a prophet hath been among them" (Ezek. 33:30-33).

The word "also" in verse thirty, removes the subject from those in the land of Israel to those, who with Ezekiel, had been taken captive down into the land of Babylon. They were hearing Ezekiel's prophecies with eagerness, but they were making light of him behind his back.

It is to be noted from the above that our God takes special note of all that is done against His ministers. He also takes special note of that which is done for them. The people recognized the fact that Ezekiel was God's spokesman or prophet. They, however, refused to act on that which God spoke to them through Ezekiel. God informed Ezekiel that the people sat before him as "my people." They, in other words, pretended to be God's true saints, but they were no more than actors or hypocrites. We have, in the following passages, that which fits these hypocrites very well. "Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far

from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. 15:7-9).

We have, in our own day, multitudes who claim to be God's people as was true in the time of Ezekiel. I refer to those who pretend to be avid followers of our Lord, yet they refuse to hear and heed the great doctrines of our faith. They, in fact, despise the great truths of the Holy Scriptures. I, for example, heard Jimmy Swaggert condemn all the five points of Calvinism. He took each one of these great truths and trampled upon them in the worst way. We will honor our Lord and lay up treasures in heaven only as we hear and abide by the Word of our God. Let us, therefore, study to know the Word and then follow it as the Holy Spirit gives us the ability.

ARE YOU A CHRISTIAN

(Continued from Page 6)

the believer has not already been made aware of, whether it be by personal reading or listening to the preaching of God's Word. Would you read James 4:7-8? One thing becomes evident, God's Word teaches us that as His children, we are not to yield to temptation. In this passage of Scripture, we are told what to do: "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded" (James 4:7-8).

Thirdly, let us again very briefly consider another evidence: there should be a new desire to be like the Lord Jesus Christ. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29). The child of God ought to learn how to take the Word of God and personalize it. Read Matthew 5:1-12 (the Beatitudes) and Galatians 5:22-24 (the fruit of the Spirit) and ask yourself, what is God trying to tell me? What can I learn from these verses, or any verses, that will change my life? Beloved, ask the question, How can these verses of Scripture that I am reading, make me more like the Master: the Lord Jesus Christ? Yes, what would God have me to know or learn about Himself or His creation? What should I change about my life in light of the truth of God's Word that I have just read?

Fourthly, let us consider the next thing: A new awareness of others and their relationship to you and of your new life in Christ Jesus. "For the time past of our life many suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries: Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you." Beloved, you should somewhat expect to suffer some for your faith in Christ Jesus. If you are going to show any Scriptural growth in your Christian life, there will always be some who will bring about persecution. Therefore, be prepared for that which is ahead of you. How? by the continual memorizing of the Word of God.

Yes, even by learning how to pray for those who would hurt you. May I go one step further, by forgiving them the wrong they have done you, yes, even as your Heavenly Father has forgiven you. You may not like what I am going to say, but unless you learn this principle, you will never have complete freedom in your Christian life. Now, I did not say you had to agree with them, or their sin; God hates sin and so should the believer. There is so much more that could be said about this, but time and space does not permit; perhaps one of the writers of The Baptist Examiner would pick up that theme in another article in the future.

Fifthly, let us consider the next evidence of your faith in Christ Jesus: there will be a new desire to share the Lord Jesus Christ with others: saved and unsaved alike. "Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily" (Col. 1:28-29). There ought to be a balance here: many would neglect this wonderful truth - soul winning. But if you are a Christian, you should want to share the Lord with others. Just remember, don't you do the work of the Holy Spirit? Yes, be ready to give an answer of the hope that is yours, but beloved, you must understand that it is only God that can save a poor lost soul. This is a very important subject and should be practiced by every child of God within the guide lines of the Holy Scriptures.

Lastly, let us consider the sixth evidence of our new life in Christ: A new love for others, and especially the household of faith. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death" (I John 3:14). What am I saying: the believer is going to want to have fellowship with God's dear people. Where and when? First, at the meeting house; the place where the church of our God meets. Beloved, the child of God will want to be in the house of the Lord when the doors are opened and the preaching of God's wonderful Word goes forward. Shame on us when we do not attend the Lord's services. God's people should want to have fellowship and will therefore want to be in attendance whenever and wherever God's people assemble. May the Lord take these words and help you to continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of His Word. May God bless you.

BAPTISM

(Continued from Page 1)

heard of it. These so-called new doctrines must of necessity be new for I consider anything formulated or inferred as a Bible doctrine any later than the close of the first century, when the last Book of the Bible was written, to be out-dated and rejected as being false.

These new doctrines and ideas are springing up so fast in these last days that it is hard to keep up with them, and I stand to be corrected if I am wrong, but insofar as I know the latest one has to do with church authority which logically involves baptism.

What do we mean by the

word authority? We mean the power and/or the legal right to command and enforce obedience. We mean that, when one has been delegated this power or authority by a legally constituted government, he has the permission and right to exercise and use such power and/or authority.

What do we mean by Church Authority? We mean just what the Bible says in Matthew 28:18-20. "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying. All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

Beloved, understanding what we do about authority, and then applying this to Jesus and what He said to His Church there can be no more or no higher power and/or authority than what He has given to His church. He said that He had all power. This constitutes complete power or authority in every respect. No more can be added to this, nor nothing taken away. This was the Lawmaker Himself speaking. Nothing could be more legal and authoritative than the authority that Jesus gave to His church and neither angels in heaven nor puny man can change this by trying to add to or restrict this in any way. "And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what doest thou?" (Dan. 4:35).

Beloved, there are some today that would try to put a limit on what God has already said was limitless in its sufficiency and off limits to anyone who would tamper with His sovereign power. These eminent brethren, in their zeal and ardour for the Lord and through fear of being censured by Him for failing to please Him, have taken upon themselves the task of dividing the authority the Lord gave His church; and in so doing they have put a limit on this limitless authority as pertains to baptism by saying that a church cannot authorize whom she desires to administer the ordinance of baptism.

To whom did the Lord give this authority? It is obvious that He gave it to His church. Was the Law-giver in a legal position to give this authority? There is no higher power or authority than a sovereign. Then the voice of the church is just as authoritative as the voice of Him who commanded her to baptize.

In a book on "7 Questions and Answers as to Church Authority," reprinted from The Baptist Examiner, page 11, in answer to a question on church authority Elder James Hobbs says, "Not only do we understand the church to be the proper administrator because of the commission, but we also understand it because of the purpose of baptism. I do not mean, at this time, the symbol of baptism. I mean because baptism happens to be the only entrance into the church. 'For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body...' I Corinthians 12:13. The only way that one can become a member of a church is through the waters of baptism. Obviously, the church should be the one to administer baptism.

Now, we realize that the church is an institution and as such cannot administer baptism. But the church as an assembly, can designate and authorize someone to represent it. The Lord Jesus authorized the disciples to baptize (John 4:1-2)."

Beloved, if church authority means anything at all it means that a church has the power, right, and authority to appoint anyone whom she desires to perform the ordinance of baptism for her. I believe that all things should be done decently and in order and that when possible a church should use her pastor to perform this ordinance; but if in the providence of God it becomes necessary for her to perform the ordinance of baptism when the church might be without a pastor or when her pastor is unable to do so for whatever reason, the church is within perfectly Scriptural grounds to appoint someone else, by a vote of the church, to perform the ordinance for her. If, due to the lack of power or authority, the church cannot do this, she cannot do anything else the Lord commanded her for the same reason. If the Lord had all power, and He did, when He gave this commission to the church; then that means that the church is clothed with sovereign power from the Sovereign of the universe and sovereign power cannot be limited to a partial power in any phase of its work, otherwise sovereignty becomes a puppet to its own power which would eliminate its own authority.

When a church authorizes someone outside of her own membership to perform the ordinance of baptism, that baptism is just as valid as if her own pastor performed the ordinance or some other male member of the church performed it. The authority lies within the church and not within the individual, any individual, that performs the act.

Since I have been serving the Lord in Papua New Guinea there have been multiplied thousands of people that have been saved, I have personally baptized about six thousand of these people and there have been over 50 churches organized and some 35 to 40 preachers ordained. I am being told now that all but the first church that I organized is unscriptural, at least 5,989 of the baptisms invalid and all the ordinations. I have a question to ask all who are now saying that I have wasted about 23 years of my ministry in Papua New Guinea. Why have they waited so long to tell me so? I ask this especially in view of the fact that most, if not all have told me many times that they loved me, that I was doing a great work and until recently almost all of them have supported my work with their prayers and finances and have led their churches to do so. There is only one of two ways that this can be answered. Either these brethren held this same position all along and have been dishonest with themselves and their churches wanting to pump me up like a hot balloon and then let the air out and see me fall, or else it is something they have come up with of recent date.

Due to my position there have been few, if any, preachers that have traveled more widely over the U.S.A. than I have. There has been one and the same cry heard in almost every church that I have visited, "What is

(Continued on Page 9 Column 1)

He who really loves his Lord will not trifle with the least jot or tittle of his Lord's will.

BAPTISM

(Continued from Page 8)

happening to our churches, the attendance is falling off and there seems to be no interest anymore?"

Beloved, let me tell you what is happening to Sovereign Grace Independent Baptist Churches. They are drying up due to a dry orthodoxy. When a pulpit dries up due to a dry orthodox preacher, this will produce a dried-up church. Any kind of drought over a period of time will produce nothing but death. If there is to be expected any showers of blessings in our churches, there must first be some rain clouds starting from the pulpit rather than the blasting heat of a dry orthodox ministry all the time. Most Sovereign Grace preachers act like they are scared to death every time they preach, afraid they will speak a tender word of compassion and some one will get saved that God did not elect to be saved. Or if they get into a church that is alive and going well they start dismantling it piece by piece.

Beloved, I feel that the present issue over baptism is uncalled for, and that it will serve to drive the wedge, that is already too deep, deeper yet and further separate us. Independent Baptists have become far too independent already. If the present situation continues as is and unchecked, in less than twenty years there will be but very, very few of "our kind" of churches in existence.

Inasmuch as Paul was writing to the church at Corinth in I Corinthians 1:2, I believe we can safely say that Crispus and Gaius as well as the household of Stephanas I Corinthians 1:14, 15, were baptized by Paul into the church at Corinth. I challenge any of you to prove by the Scriptures that Paul was a member of the church at Corinth at the time or ever for that matter. I think it would be much easier to prove that he was a member of the church at Antioch at the time he baptized these people into the church at Corinth. Would you say then that the baptisms of missionary Paul were invalid? Further, since there is no mention of a pastor at the church at Corinth at the time, it would be expected that the Corinthian church voted for Paul to baptize for them. Personally, I do not feel that over six thousand people that missionary Halliman has baptized in New Guinea is invalid, for he has had church authority for each of these.

Brethren, may God grant us grace to work together and not against each other. May the Lord be pleased to continue to bless our ministry.

AN IMPORTANT LETTER FROM FRED HALLIMAN

Dear friends,

For well over a quarter of a century I have been writing for The Baptist Examiner. I have always found it a joy to be able to write for the paper. As I start this article, however, I find it everything but a joy. This article is to announce my retirement from the mission field in Papua New Guinea.

This has not been an easy decision to reach and it is with much reluctance and with a heavy heart that I do so at this time. There are some two or three things that have played a major role in my coming to this

decision.

One thing that has caused me to reach this decision is the matter of my wife. For several years now there has always been from all to at least one of my children here to help her and sort of care for her in my absence. Now all of the kids have married except Peter and he will soon be going to New Guinea (he may already be there by the time this appears in the paper) as a missionary so there is no one left to stay with her.

No doubt the thought has already entered many of your minds, "Why doesn't your wife go back with you and that would solve everything? That is easier, much easier, said than done. We have had our property up for sale here for something over a year now and not one single offer have we had. To just move off and leave it, hoping it would sell sometime, would be inviting problems. We could give you other reasons why but that is not the purpose of this article.

Then there is the matter of my health and age. I have never fully recovered from the serious automobile wreck I was involved in in January of 1983 in Papua New Guinea. There are some doubts as to whether I will ever completely recover from that ordeal. Also, over the years malaria has taken a heavy toll upon my body. It is chronic with me now and some of the attacks are quite severe. Several times in the past three years I have lapsed into unconsciousness when I would have an attack and be up to a week recovering. Then the bad spell of sickness that I had in December of 1984 and the first two months of this year took quite a heavy toll on me. This does not mean that I am saying that I am almost an invalid, far from it, but it does mean that at 69 years of age and with all of these things behind me it would no doubt be wise to consider slowing down a bit.

What will happen to the mission work in Papua New Guinea? The mission work will continue on as it has in the years past. Peter will carry on the work and with his young mind and body we feel that the work will benefit from that.

I would like to ask each of you to stand behind Peter with your prayers and financial support as you have me over the years. Peter is a good preacher and is sound in the faith, he is a hard worker and is able to figure things out for himself and that is extremely important on a mission field such as Papua New Guinea. There is nothing more discouraging though for a missionary than to feel let down by the folk back home. Beloved, let us never let Peter feel that he has been let down. Let us pray for him often and continue to support him financially.

What about my future? Only our precious Lord knows the answer to that question. I have got to find my new station in life. I am still a missionary at heart and expect that I will always be. I have no definite plans at this writing. I do not know what I will do to support myself and my wife but for the past 33 years I have had no set salary but have depended solely upon the Lord to supply my needs. He has done a marvelous job. It is to Him that I look for my future needs and wait upon Him to direct me as to what He would have me to do. Should any of you have any suggestions it might be that the Lord would be pleased to speak to me through you.

I am prepared, and would be

very happy, to make a tour of America visiting churches to give a final report and summation of my 25 years work in Papua, New Guinea.

I feel that you, as supporters, are entitled to know, first hand, what has been accomplished. I am prepared to visit any church that is now or has ever supported the work. You do not have to be a supporting church at this time, but if you have ever supported the work and desire me to visit your church to give a final report I will be happy to visit with you. I would especially be interested in visiting any church that has never supported the work but would be interested in considering doing so.

Several of the supporting churches have never seen my slides on the New Guinea mission work. I would be happy to bring the slides along and show them to any church that is interested in seeing them. I do not have many slides of the work in the Huli area, as when my house burned in October of 1983 all of my recent slides went with the house. I can assure you though that I can offer you an hour, or whatever time you desire, of the most interesting film that you have ever looked at.

While I am ready and willing to visit any church and give a final report on the work, show slides etc, I do not push myself on any church and beg for an audience. I like to be wanted and invited before I come to a church. If you desire a visit to your church please let us know immediately so that I can work out an itinerary. It would take perhaps three weeks to a month after this appears in The Baptist Examiner before we would be ready to start on the itinerary. I will be touring the entire U.S.A. reporting on the work so please do not expect me to visit with your church on a Sunday or Wednesday only. I could be well over a year getting around doing this and this would be too expensive and time consuming. I will take the churches in order as I come to them be that whatever day it falls on. All you have to do is to write either to me or Calvary Baptist Church and make known your wishes, or if you prefer, you may call.

If you desire to write to me my address is HC 76 Box 1825, Garrison, Kentucky 41141. My phone number is (606) 473-5447.

Please remember that I do not want to pass anyone by that desires that I pay them a visit, however I do not wish to impose upon anyone so unless we hear from you we will assume that you do not want me to visit your church. Regardless of what the outcome may be we will be praying for each of you. May the Lord bless each of you.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR RELATIVE TO NEW GUINEA

It is a time that we all knew must eventually come, but it is surely a sad time. I refer to the retirement of Brother Fred Halliman from the mission work in Papua New Guinea. This work has been a highlight in the spiritual life of many of us for the past twenty-five years. I know that this has been true of myself. Many times through these years, when it seemed that I was doing almost nothing in

the Lord's work, it has been a great blessing and encouragement to my soul that I was having a small part in the work God was doing through Fred Halliman in Papua New Guinea. I am sure that this has been true of many. I do, here and now as I frequently have in the past, praise God for allowing me to have a part in this great mission work.

Brother Fred Halliman has been greatly blessed of and used by God in this work. It surely is one of the greatest mission works in the history of missions. How many of us have thought and said that over the last several years! Brother Fred is retiring, but the mission work will go on. We truly thank God for the great work He has done through Brother Fred Halliman. Over 8,000 New Guinea natives have professed faith in Christ, been baptized, and joined true churches during this work. Fifty or more true Baptist Churches have been organized through this mission work. The gospel has been preached to many thousand who had not heard the good news of God's Son before. Yes, Brother Fred Halliman has been mightily used of God in Papua New Guinea.

I do not think that any of us can or will object to Brother Fred's retirement. Many have wondered at his faithfully going on in the difficult work against and under tremendous pressure and obstacles. Many have thought he would retire before now. The conditions and reasons he mentions in his letter of retirement are surely sufficient.

I want to take this opportunity to personally thank the individuals and churches who have stood behind Brother Fred Halliman and this mission work through the years. Our church thanks you. We thank you for your prayers and your financial support. We do verily know that this work could not have been carried on without the help of the many who have faithfully given thereto. May God richly reward each one of you — and He will.

Brother Fred carried on the work in Papua New Guinea against almost overwhelming difficulties. I wonder who else among us could have accomplished the almost superhuman work that he has done. Of course, we and he, give God all the glory; but it is true that Fred has done an amazing work in this mission work. The problems he has faced, and by God's grace overcome, are legion. The criticism, the opposition, the degrading speech of many would have long since discouraged any ordinary man, and I am sure that only God's grace enabled Brother Fred to continue the work. I have known Fred for some years. I have supported this work ever since he went to the mission field. I have led every church I have pastored during these years in this support, and have been enabled to enlist other churches in support of this mission work. I have been, and am, totally committed and dedicated to the support of this great mission work. I count it one of the blessings of my life to have been associated with Fred Halliman and this great work. Let me say that, during all my acquaintances with this man and in all that I have seen him undergo, I have yet to hear a word of murmuring, bitterness, or complaint from him. I consider his attitude in all that he has gone through

to be a miracle of the grace of God.

I have two very, very important things to ask of our readers, especially of those who have and are supporting this mission work. Please give these your prayerful consideration. First. The mission work in Papua New Guinea is going on. Peter Halliman should, God willing, be already on the field when you read this. I write this on Sept. 17th. Peter is making plans to leave for New Guinea in October. Financial support will be needed as much, if not more, than it ever has in order to carry on this great mission work. I am sure that, with rising costs, and with increasing opportunities to expand this mission work, we will need even more financial support than we have in the past. I will say that I believe God is in and over all things, even this sad retirement of Fred Halliman. We just have not received anywhere near enough support for Peter Halliman, especially designated for him, to support him in the work in New Guinea. Had Fred remained on the field, and Peter joined him there, it would have been extremely difficult to support them both. We would have tried. They would have done what they could, but it would have been difficult.

I am asking those who are supporting this mission work—some send for New Guinea Mission work and others for Fred Halliman—I am asking that you will just continue the support you have been giving, and the money will go to this mission work, with Peter Halliman carrying on the work. In other words, I am asking those of you who have been supporting Fred Halliman to keep sending in that support only now for the support of Peter Halliman. The truth of the matter is that, if we should lose the financial support that has been coming for Fred Halliman, we could not support Peter Halliman in his carrying on this mission work. Some of you have marked your gifts for New Guinea Missions. Keep sending this, we will simply use it for the support of Peter Halliman. Some of you are already sending some support for Fred Halliman and some support for Peter Halliman. I ask, even urge, that you will continue sending this total amount, only now send the total for the support of Peter Halliman. I can not tell you how very important, even essential, it is that we continue to receive the support we have been receiving in order for this mission work to go on.

I want to make the following matter very, very clear. The financial set-up with Peter Halliman is going to be very different than that of the New Guinea Mission work in the past. We will be setting a salary for Peter Halliman. The amount has not yet been determined. This salary will be his to do with as he sees fit. He will be expected, as all men are, to pay tithes and give an offering. He will not be asked to give any report on how he spends this salary. The rest of the money given for this mission work will go to Peter Halliman to use in mission work. He will make a rather detailed financial report as to how this is used. This report will, to the best of his

(Continued on Page 10 Column 1)

LETTER

(Continued from Page 9)

ability, be required to be satisfactory to our church and to the supporters of this work. Each supporter will be given a report as to the money received for New Guinea Mission work each month, and as to how that money is spent. Any supporter may ask any question he or she desires about the work, and each will receive an honest and courteous answer.

We do plan to pay, out of mission funds, an insurance policy for Peter with a retirement plan. We do plan to pay in the same way for a medical insurance policy. The details of our financial set-up have not all been ironed out. We will let all supporters of the work know all the details of our plans, and any supporter will be at liberty to have full information concerning these things.

I do apologize to our supporters as to the failure to provide proper reports concerning this work for some time now. Things have been in quite a turmoil as we have worked towards getting Peter to the mission field, and as Brother Fred has sought to know what his missionary plans should be. I do personally assure each individual and church that as soon as we can get all details ironed out, and by the time Peter begins his New Guinea mission work, we will give detailed, proper, adequate, satisfactory, and regular financial reports concerning this work. You may feel free to ask me anything relative to these matters.

Now, a second, and very important matter. Fred Halliman is retiring as a missionary. The only income, so far as I know, that he will have upon that retirement will be a very small Social Security. We made a serious mistake in not setting up some form of retirement income for Brother Fred. We do not plan to make the same mistake concerning Brother Peter. We plan to have an insurance with a retirement plan for him. We do not want Peter to ever face the situation his father now faces.

Brother Fred has labored twenty-five years on the mission field. God has blessed him and used him to do a great work. He has been our missionary - yours, you who have supported him, and ours. He does not have the retirement income that many of you do and/or will have. He does not have the retirement income that he could have had, had he been in public and secular employment.

Our church had a couple of plans in mind to present to our readers as a means of providing some retirement income for Brother Fred Halliman. Brother Halliman has told me that he does not wish, at the present time, that we implement either of these plans. I feel that I must bow to and act according to his wishes in this matter. Brother Fred did not ask me to say anything about this matter. Please know this. He has agreed to my saying what I have said and presenting the following. If any church or individual should want to help provide some retirement income for Brother Fred Halliman; he, she, or they are to send such directly to him. The matter will then be entirely between those who do this and

Brother Halliman. Calvary Baptist Church, The Baptist Examiner, and New Guinea Missions will not be involved in this in any way at all. I personally urge all who have supported this man in his mission work to prayerfully consider this matter and to do whatever you desire concerning it. Unless Brother Fred changes his mind, and decide to agree to one of the plans our church had been thinking over, this is all I plan to say about this matter. The matter will be totally between Brother Fred Halliman and any who desire to help him in this matter. It is my hope and prayer that God will provide for our Brother in this way and that he will suffer no financial hardship.

Brother Fred will receive the money that has been going to Sister Halliman for expenses at home, plus an added \$400. for Fred's added personal expenses, through the month of November. At the end of November, all this will cease. All the money we receive for this work will then go directly into the work of Peter Halliman in the New Guinea mission work. As I have already said, details of this financial set up are being worked out and will be made fully known to all supporters.

Brother Fred Halliman has suggested that he make a tour of churches, telling of the work God has done through him in Papua New Guinea during these twenty-five years. I hope that many will respond to this. I feel that such would prove a great blessing, and would also be a help in promoting interest in and support for Peter Halliman in this work. Let me add that Brother Halliman will surely be available for preaching as the Lord opens the door. I feel that it is likely that he would be eventually available to pastor some church here. I leave that to him, any interested church, and the Lord. I just add that, in my opinion, he would make some church a mighty fine pastor. Let me urge our brethren to use this man in preaching as opportunity arises. Our prayer here is that God will provide for Brother Halliman and his wife, that God will bless them in every way, and that God will lead and use Brother Fred to His glory in the time left to him upon this earth. May God bless you all.

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(Continued from Page 6)

him to go to Nineveh and preach, but Jonah went the opposite way. Jonah's attitude was this: "God will save them without preaching because God is sovereign. He will save them without doing any preaching, without sending me to preach. He will save them without the gospel." That is not true. He will not save them without the gospel. It is true that God is sovereign, but He will save them His appointed way. So then those that are hard-shell on the Gospel have a good excuse, but it is nothing more than an excuse.

Mephibosheth had a good excuse. So do those that refuse to tithe their income to the Lord. In fact, some refuse to tithe it, and some give it to some TV preacher or someone else. The Bible says that you ought to put it in God's storehouse which is the House of God. In Malachi 3, we read that the temple was the House of God and that is where the tithe was to be put.

In the book of I Timothy (3:15), we read that Paul calls the church, that local visible

body founded by the Lord Jesus Christ, the house of God. Listen, ten percent of anything that comes into your hand ought to be put into the treasury of a New Testament Baptist Church. Tithe it and tithe it God's way.

I knew a man one time and he said, "I do not believe the Bible teaches tithing." He had what he considered a good excuse, he said the Bible did not teach it. Someday he is going to find that it is nothing more than an excuse for him to keep his money. I would sure hate to be here with God's money in my bank account if Jesus came tonight.

Mephibosheth had an excuse, but he was still saved and he was looking for the coming of his Lord. I believe that there are many saved people that are looking for the coming of the Lord, but someday they are going to meet Him with an excuse. Mephibosheth did not complain when David took half of the land and gave it to Ziba. There are going to be people in the judgment seat of Christ, which is not a judgment unto condemnation, but is merely the handing out of rewards) who will be like Mephibosheth. People who will not object when they do not receive any reward. One brother I knew could think up very good excuses for everything he did. They all sounded very plausible. They sounded good to men, but that is entirely different than presenting an excuse to the Lord Jesus Christ when He comes again.

III. The Saved Man That Was Faithful. The third individual that met the king when he returned was Barzillai. Listen: "And Barzillai the Gileadite came down from Rogelim, and went over Jordan with the king, to conduct him over Jordan. Now Barzillai was a very aged man, even fourscore years old: and he had provided the king of sustenance while he lay at Mahanaim; for he was a very great man. And the king said unto Barzillai, Come thou over with me, and I will feed thee with me in Jerusalem" (II Samuel 19:31-33).

Here was a man that could have made a good excuse. He was fourscore years old, but do you know what he did? David was fleeing the city, going into the wilderness with a multitude of people and his army. They did not have anything to eat. They were out in the wilderness with no food. Here was an individual who when he heard that David was out there, got together a supply of food and sent it to him. He did this and it could have brought great trouble to his own household. Yes, he could have made an excuse and done nothing for his Lord. Notice something else about Barzillai, He risked everything for David the king. In other words, the capital city had already fallen to Absalom and the rebel forces. Here is Barzillai and he says, "I am going to feed this army of the king at all costs, I am not going to pay any attention to the rebel army." He got his food together, and at very great risk to his own personal life and the life of his whole family, he fed King David and his men. He served David under the hardest of circumstances. This is how you and I ought to be. We ought to be like Barzillai and risk everything for the Lord Jesus Christ.

The only reason he served David like this, was out of love. In fact, if you notice in verses

33, 34 and 35 of II Samuel 19, you will find that David wanted to reward Barzillai. He wanted to bring him to Jerusalem. He wanted to provide for his every need. Barzillai said, "No, I am an old man David, I do not want to go up there, I want to return home where I am going to die." Do you understand? What he did for David, he did not do for gain. He did not want one single thing in return for what he did for David. He served David simply because he loved him. That is the way that you and I ought to serve the Lord Jesus Christ.

As the result of this service and devotion, David honored Barzillai in front of all. In verse 39, we read this: "And all the people went over Jordan. And when the king was come over, the king kissed Barzillai, and blessed him; and he returned unto his own place."

In front of everyone, David bestowed upon Barzillai a token of his affection. In other words,

THE PERPETUITY OF THE LAW OF GOD

by C.H. Spurgeon

"For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." (Matthew v. 18).

It has been said that he who understands the two covenants is a theologian, and this is, no doubt, true. I may also say that the man who knows the relative positions of the law and of the gospel has the keys of the situation in the matter of doctrine. The relationship of the law to myself, and how it condemns me: the relationship of the gospel to myself, and how if I be a believer it justifies me - these are two points which every Christian man should clearly understand. He should not "see men as trees walking" in this department, or else he may cause himself great sorrow, and fall into errors which will be grievous to his heart and injurious to his life. To form a mangle-mangle of law and gospel is to teach that which is neither law nor gospel, but the opposite of both. May the Spirit of God be our teacher, and the Word of God be our lesson-book, and then we shall not err.

Very great mistakes have been made about the law. Not long ago there were those about us who affirmed that the law is utterly abrogated and abolished, and they openly taught that believers were not bound to make the moral law the rule of their lives. What would have been sin in other men they counted to be no sin in themselves. From such Antinomianism as that may God deliver us. We are not under the law as the method of salvation, but we delight to see the law in the hand of Christ, and desire to obey the Lord in all things. Others have been met with who have taught that Jesus mitigated and softened down the law, and they have in effect said that the perfect law of God was too hard to imperfect beings, and therefore God has given us a milder and easier rule. These tread dangerously upon the verge of terrible error, although we believe that they are little aware of it. Alas, we have met with authors who have gone much further than this, and have railed at the law. Oh, the hard words that I have sometimes read against the holy law of God! How very unlike to

it was equivalent to a, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

Three individuals came to meet the king: the lost individual, the saved individual that had an excuse and the faithful servant who served under the most terrible circumstances. If you are a saved individual you ought to do everything you can to be like Barzillai. Remember that every excuse can look good on the surface. If you are lost, let me point out that salvation is by the grace of God. Works cannot attain or lose salvation. Mephibosheth had an excuse, but he would still eat at the King's table all the days of his life because he was saved by grace. That is the only salvation there is. The Lord Jesus Christ died on calvary's cross, was buried and God raised Him from the dead. He made peace with God. Trust Him today as your only hope for heaven. May God richly bless you!

those which the apostle used when he said, "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." How different from the reverent spirit which made him say, - "I delight in the law of God after the inward man." You know how David loved the law of God, and sang its praises all through the longest of the Psalms. The heart of every real Christian is most reverent towards the law of the Lord. It is perfect, nay, it is perfection itself. We believe that we shall never have reached perfection till we are perfectly conformed to it. A sanctification which stops short of perfect conformity to the law cannot truthfully be called perfect sanctification, for every want of exact conformity to the perfect law is sin. May the Spirit of God help us while, in imitation of our Lord Jesus, we endeavour to magnify the law.

I gather from our text two things upon which I shall speak at this time. The first is that the law of God is perpetual: "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law." The meaning is that even in the least point it must abide till all be fulfilled. Secondly, we perceive that the law must be fulfilled: Not "one jot or one tittle shall pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." He who came to bring in the gospel dispensation here asserts that he has not come to destroy the law, but to fulfil it.

I. First: The Law of God Must Be Perpetual. There is no abrogation of it, nor amendment of it. It is not to be toned down or adjusted to our fallen condition; but every one of the Lord's righteous judgments abideth forever. I would urge three reasons which will establish this teaching.

In the first place our Lord Jesus declares that he did not come to abolish it. His words are most express: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." And Paul tells us with regard to the gospel, "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law" (Rom. iii. 31). The gospel is the means of the firm establishment and vindication of the law of God.

(Continued on Page 11 Column 1)

LAW OF GOD

(Continued from Page 10)

Jesus did not come to change the law, but he came to explain it, and that very fact shows that it remains, for there is no need to explain that which is abrogated. Upon one particular-point in which there happened to be a little ceremonialism involved, namely, the keeping of the Sabbath, our Lord enlarged, and showed that the Jewish idea was not the true one. The Pharisees forbade even the doing of works of necessity and mercy, such as rubbing ears of corn to satisfy hunger, and healing the sick. Our Lord Jesus showed that it was not at all according to the mind of God to forbid these things. In straining over the letter, and carrying an outward observance to excess, they had missed the spirit of the Sabbath law, which suggested works of piety such as truly hallow the day. He showed that Sabbath rest was not mere inaction, and he said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." He pointed to the priests who laboured hard at offering sacrifices, and said of them, "the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless." They were doing divine service, and were within the law. To meet the popular error he took care to do some of his grandest miracles upon the Sabbath-day; and though this excited great wrath against him, as though he were a law-breaker, yet he did it on purpose that they might see that the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath, and that it is meant to be a day for doing that which honours God and blesses men. O that men knew how to keep the spiritual Sabbath by a ceasing from all servile work, and from all work done for self. The rest of faith is the true Sabbath, and the service of God is the most acceptable hallowing of the day. Oh that the day were wholly spent in serving God and doing good! The sum of our Lord's teaching was that works of necessity, works of mercy, and works of piety are lawful on the Sabbath. He did explain the law in that point and in others, yet that explanation did not alter the command, but only removed the rust of tradition which had settled upon it. By thus explaining the law he confirmed it; he could not have meant to abolish it or he would not have needed to expound it. In addition to explaining it the Master went further: he pointed out its spiritual character. This the Jews had not observed. They thought, for instance, that the command "Thou shalt not kill" simply forbade murder and manslaughter; but the Saviour showed that anger without cause violates the law, and that hard words and cursing, and all other displays of enmity and malice, are forbidden by the commandment. They knew that they might not commit adultery, but it did not enter into their minds that a lascivious desire would be an offence against the precept till the Saviour said, "He that looketh upon a woman to lust after her committeth adultery with her already in his heart." He showed that the thought of evil is sin, that an unclean imagination pollutes the heart, that a wanton wish is guilt in the eyes of the Most High. Assuredly this was no abrogation of law: it was a wonderful exhibition of its far-reaching sovereignty and of its

searching character. The Pharisees fancied that if they kept their hands, and their feet, and their tongues, all was done, but Jesus showed that thought, imagination, desire, memory, everything, must be brought into subjection to the will of God, or else the law was not fulfilled. What a searching and humbling doctrine is this! If the law of the Lord reaches to the inward parts who among us can by nature abide its judgment? Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults. The ten commands are full of meaning — meaning which many seem to ignore. For instance, many a man will allow in and around his house inattention to the rules of health and sanitary precaution, but it does not occur to him that he is trampling on the command, — "Thou shalt not kill," yet this rule forbids our doing anything which may cause injury to our neighbour's health, and so deprive him of life. Many a deadly manufactured article, many an ill-ventilated shop, many a business with hours of excessive length, is a standing breach of this command. Shall I say less of drinks, which lead so speedily to disease and death, and crowd our cemeteries with untimely graves? So, too, in reference to another precept: some persons will repeat songs and stories which are suggestive of uncleanness, — I wish that this were not so common as it is. Do they not know that an unchaste word, a double meaning, a sly hint of lust all come under the command, "Thou shalt not commit adultery"? It is so according to the teaching of our Lord Jesus. Oh, talk not to me about our Lord's having brought in a milder law because man could not keep the Decalogue, for he has done nothing of the kind. "His fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor." "Who may abide the day of his coming? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap." Let us not dare to dream that God had given us a perfect law which we poor creatures could not keep, and that therefore he has corrected his legislature, and sent his Son to put us under a relaxed discipline. Nothing of the sort. The Lord Jesus Christ has, on the contrary, shown how intimately the law surrounds and enters into our inward parts, so as to convict us of sin within even if we seem clear without. Ah me, this law is high; I cannot attain to it. It everywhere surrounds me; it tracks me to my bed and my board; it follows my steps and marks my ways wherever I may be. No moment does it cease to govern and demand obedience. O God, I am everywhere condemned, for everywhere thy law reveals to me my serious deviations from the way of righteousness and shows me how far short I come of thy glory. Have thou pity on thy servant, for I fly to the gospel which has done for me what the law could never do.

"To see the law by Christ fulfill'd, And hear his pardoning voice, Changes a slave into a child, and duty into choice."

Our Lord Jesus Christ, in addition to explaining the law and pointing out its spiritual character, also unveiled its living essence, for when one asked him "Which is the great commandment in the law?" he said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second

is like unto it; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." In other words, he has told us, "All the law is fulfilled in this: thou shalt love." There is the pith and marrow of it. Does any man say to me, "You see, then, instead of the ten commandments we have received the two commandments, and these are much easier." I answer that this reading of the law is not in the least easier. Such a remark implies a want of thought and experience. Those two precepts comprehend the ten at their fullest extent, and cannot be regarded as the erasure of a jot or tittle of them. Whatever difficulties surround the ten commands are equally found in the two, which are their sum and substance. If you love God with all your heart you must keep the first table; and if you love your neighbour as yourself you must keep the second table. If any suppose that the law of love is an adaptation of the moral law to man's fallen condition they greatly err. I can only say that the supposed adaptation is no more adapted to us than the original law. If there could be conceived to be any difference in difficulty it might be easier to keep the ten than the two; for if we go no deeper than the letter, the two are the more exacting, since they deal with the heart, and soul, and mind. The ten commands mean all that the two express; but if we forget this, and only look at the wording of them, I say, it is harder for a man to love God with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his mind, and with all his strength, and his neighbour as himself than it would be merely to abstain from killing, stealing, and false witness. Christ has not, therefore, abrogated or at all moderated the law to meet our helplessness; he has left it in all its sublime perfection, as it always must be left, and he has pointed out how deep are its foundations, how measureless are its length and breadth. Like the laws of the Medes and Persians, God's commands cannot be altered; we are saved by another method.

To show that he never meant to abrogate the law, our Lord Jesus has embodied all its commands in his own life. In his own person there was a nature which was perfectly conformed to the law of God; and as was his nature such was his life. He could say, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" and again "I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love." I may not say that he was scrupulously careful to keep the law: I will not put it so, for there was no tendency in him to do otherwise: he was so perfect and pure, so infinitely good, and so complete in his agreement and communion with the Father, that he in all things carried out the Father's will. The Father said of him, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Point out, if you possibly can, any way in which Christ has violated the law or left us unfulfilled. There was never an unclean thought or rebellious desire in his soul; he had nothing to regret or to retract: it could not be that he should err. He has thrice tempted in the wilderness, and the enemy had the impertinence even to suggest idolatry, but he instantly overthrew the adversary. The prince of this world came to him, but he found nothing in him.

"My dear Redeemer and my Lord, I read my duty in thy Word; But in thy life the law appears Drawn out in living characters."

Now, if that law had been too high and too hard, Christ would not have exhibited it in his life, but as our exemplar he would have set forth that milder form of law which it is supposed by some theologians he came to introduce. Inasmuch as our Leader and Exemplar has exhibited to us in his life a perfect obedience to the sacred commands in their undiminished grandeur, I gather that he means it to be the model of our conversation. Our Lord has not taken off a single point or pinnacle from that up-towering alp of perfection. He said at the first, "Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart," and well has he justified the writing of the volume of the book. It is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart," and well has he justified the writing of the volume of the book. "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law"; and being for our sakes under the law he obeyed it to the full, so that now "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth."

Once more, that the Master did not come to alter the law is clear, because after having embodied it in his life he willingly gave himself up to bear its penalty, though he had never broken it, bearing the penalty for us, even as it is written, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." "All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." If the law had demanded more of us than it ought to have done, would the Lord Jesus have rendered to it the penalty which resulted from its too severe demands? I am sure he would not. But because the law asked only what it ought to ask — namely perfect obedience; and exacted of the transgressor only what it ought to exact, namely, death, as the penalty for sin, — death under divine wrath, therefore the Saviour went to the tree, and there bore our sins and purged them once for all. He was crushed beneath the load of our guilt, and cried, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death," and at last when he had borne —

"All that incarnate God could bear, With strength enough, but none to spare." He bowed his head and said, "It is finished." Our Lord Jesus Christ gave a greater vindication to the law by dying, because it had been broken, than all the lost in hell can ever give by their miseries, for their suffering is never complete, their debt is never paid; but he has borne all that was due from his people, and the law is defrauded of nothing. By his death he has vindicated the honour of God's moral government, and made it just for him to be merciful. When the lawgiver himself submits to the law, when the sovereign himself bears the extreme penalty of that law, then is the justice of God set upon such a glorious high throne that all admiring worlds must wonder at it. If therefore it is clearly proven that Jesus was obedient to the law, even to the extent of death, he certainly did

not come to abolish or abrogate it; and if he did not remove it, who can do so? If he declares that he came to establish it, who shall overthrow it?

But, secondly, the law of God must be perpetual from its very nature, for does it not strike you the moment you think of it that right must always be right, truth must always be true, and purity must always be purity? Before the ten commandments were published at Sinai there was still that same law of right and wrong laid upon men by the necessity of their being God's creatures. Right was always right before a single command had been committed to words. When Adam was in the garden it was always right that he should love his Maker, and it would always have been wrong, that he should have been at cross-purposes with his God; and it does not matter what happens in this world, or what changes take place in the universe, it never can be right to lie, or to commit adultery, or murder, or theft, or to worship an idol God. I will not say that the principles of right and wrong are as absolutely self-existent as God, but I do say that I cannot grasp the idea of God himself as existing apart from his being always holy and always true; so that the very idea of right and wrong seems to me to be necessarily permanent, and cannot possibly be shifted. You cannot bring right down to a lower level; it must be where it always is: right is right eternally, and cannot be wrong. You cannot lift up wrong and make it somewhat right; it must be wrong while the world standeth. Heaven and earth may pass away, but not the smallest letter or accent of the moral law can possibly change. In spirit the law is eternal.

Suppose for a moment that it were possible to temper and tone down the law, wherein would it be? I confess I do not know and cannot imagine. If it be perfectly holy, how can it be altered except by being made imperfect. Would you wish for that? Could you worship the God of an imperfect law? Can it ever be true that God, by way of favouring us, has put us under an imperfect law? Would that be a blessing or a curse? It is said by some that man cannot keep a perfect law, and God does not demand that he should. Certain modern theologians have taught this, I hope, by inadvertence. Has God issued an imperfect law? It is the first imperfect thing I ever heard of his making. Does it come to this that, after all, the gospel is a proclamation that God is going to be satisfied with obedience to a mutilated law? God forbid. I say, better that we perish than that his perfect law perish. Terrible as it is, it lies at the foundation of the peace of the universe, and must be honoured at all hazards. That gone, all goes. When the power of the Holy Ghost convinced me of sin I felt such a solemn awe of the law of God, that I remember well, when I lay crushed beneath it as a condemned sinner, I yet admired and glorified the law. I could not have wished that perfect law to be altered for me. Rather did I feel that, if my soul were sent to the lowest hell, yet God was to be extolled for his justice and his law held in

(Continued on Page 12 (Column 1))

LAW OF GOD

(Continued from Page 11)

honour for its perfectness. I would not have had it altered even to save my soul. Brethren, the law of the Lord must stand, for it is perfect, and therefore has in it no element of decay or change.

The law of God is no more than God might most righteously ask of us. If God were about to give us a more tolerant law, it would be an admission on his part that he asked too much at first. Can that be supposed? Was there, after all, some justification for the statement of the wicked and slothful servant when he said, "I feared thee, because thou art an austere man"? It cannot be. For God to alter his law would be an admission that he made a mistake at first, that he put poor imperfect man (we are often hearing that said) under too rigorous a regime, and therefore he is now prepared to abate his claims, and make them more reasonable. It has been said that man's moral inability to keep the perfect law exempts him from the duty of doing so. This is very specious, but it is utterly false. Man's inability is not of the kind which removes responsibility: it is moral, not physical. Never fall into the error that moral inability will be an excuse for sin. What, when a man becomes such a liar that he cannot speak the truth, is he thereby exempted from the duty of truthfulness? If your servant owes you a day's labour, is he free from the duty because he has made himself so drunk that he cannot serve you? Is a man freed from a debt by the fact that he has squandered the money, and therefore cannot pay it? Is a lustful man free to indulge his passions because he cannot understand the beauty of chastity? This is dangerous doctrine. The law is a just one, and man is bound by it though his sin has rendered him incapable of doing so.

The law moreover demands no more than is good for us. There is not a single commandment of God's law but what is meant to be a kind of danger signal such as we put up upon the ice when it is too thin to bear. Each commandment does as it were say to us, "Dangerous." It is never for a man's good to do what God forbids him; it is never for man's real and ultimate happiness to leave undone anything that God commands him. The wisest directions for spiritual health, and for the avoidance of evil, are those directions which are given us concerning right and wrong in the law of God. Therefore it is not possible that there should be any alteration thereof, for it would not be for our good.

I should like to say to any brother who thinks that God has put us under an altered rule: "Which particular part of the law is it that God has relaxed?" Which precept do you feel free to break? Are you delivered from the command which forbids stealing? My dear sir, you may be a capital theologian, but I should lock up my spoons when you call at my house. Is it the command about adultery which you think is removed? Then I could not recommend your being admitted into any de-

cent society. Is the law as to killing softened down? Then I had rather have your room than your company. Which law is it that God has exempted you from? That law of worshipping him only? Do you propose to have another God? Do you intend to make graven images? The fact is that when we come to detail we cannot afford to lose a single link of this wonderful golden chain, which is perfect in every part as well as perfect as a whole. The law is absolutely complete, and you can neither add to it nor take from it. "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law." If, then, no part of it can be taken down it must stand, and stand for ever.

A third reason I will give why the law must be perpetual is that to suppose it altered is most dangerous. To take away from the law its perpetuity is first of all to take away from it its power to convince of sin. Is it so, that I, being an imperfect creature, am not expected to keep a perfect law? Then it follows that I do not sin when I break the law; and if all that is required of me is that I am to do according to the best of my knowledge and ability, then I have a very convenient rule indeed, and most men will take care to adjust it so as to give themselves as much latitude as possible. By removing the law you have done away with sin, for sin is the transgression of the law, and where there is no law there is no transgression. When you have done away with sin you may as well have done away with the Saviour and with salvation, for they are by no means needful. When you have reduced sin to a minimum, what need is there of that great and glorious salvation which Jesus Christ has come to bring into the world? Brethren, we must have none of this: it is evidently a way of mischief.

By lowering the law you weaken its power in the hands of God as a convincer of sin. "By the law is the knowledge of sin." It is the looking-glass which shows us our spots, and that is a most useful thing, though nothing but the gospel can wash them away.

"My hopes of heaven were firm and bright,

But since the precept came
With a convincing power and light,
I find how vile I am.

"My guilt appear'd but small before,
Till terribly I saw
How perfect, holy, just, and pure,
Was thine eternal law.

"Then felt my soul the heavy load,
My sins reviv'd again,
I had provok'd a dreadful God,
And all my hopes were slain."

It is only a pure and perfect law that the Holy Spirit can use in order to show to us our depravity and sinfulness. Lower the law and you dim the light by which man perceives his guilt. This is a very serious loss to the sinner rather than a gain, for it lessens the likelihood of his conviction and conversion.

You have also taken away from the law its power to shut us up to the faith of Christ. What is

the law of God for? For us to keep in order to be saved by it? Not at all. It is sent in order to show us that we cannot be saved by works, and to shut us up to be saved by grace; but if you make out that the law is altered so that a man can keep it, you have left him his own legal hope, and he is sure to cling to it. You need a perfect law that shuts man right up to hopelessness apart from Jesus, puts him into an iron cage and locks him up, and offers him no escape but by faith in Jesus; then he begins to cry, "Lord, save me by grace, for I perceive that I cannot be saved by my own works." This is how Paul describes it to the Galatians: "The Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." I say you have deprived the gospel of its ablest auxiliary when you have set aside the law. You have taken away from it the schoolmaster that is to bring men to Christ. No, it must stand, and stand in all its terrors, to drive men away from self-righteousness and constrain them to fly to Christ. They will never accept grace till they tremble before a just and holy law; therefore the law serves a most necessary and blessed purpose, and it must not be removed from its place.

To alter the law is to leave us without any law at all. A sliding-scale of duty is an immoral invention, fatal to the principles of law. If each man is to be accepted because he does his best, we are all doing our best. Is there anybody that is not? If we take their words for it, all our fellow-men are doing as well as they can, considering their imperfect natures. Even the harlot in the streets has some righteousness, — she is not quite so far gone as others. Have you never heard of the bandit who committed many murders, but who felt that he had been doing his best because he never killed anybody on a Friday? Self-righteousness builds itself a nest even in the worst character. This is the man's talk: — "Really, if you knew me, you would say, I have been a good fellow to do as well as I have. Consider what a poor, fallen creature I am; what strong passions were born in me; what temptations to vice beset me, and you will not blame me much. After all, I dare say God is as satisfied with me as with many who are a great deal better, because I had so few advantages." Yes, you have shifted the standard, and every man will now do that which is right in his own eyes and claim to be doing his best. If you shift the standard pound weight or the bushel measure, you will certainly never get full weight or measurement again. There will be no standard to go by, and each man will do his best with his own pounds and bushels. If the standard be tampered with you have taken away the foundation upon which trade is conducted; and it is the same in soul matters — abolish the best rule that ever can be, even God's own law, and there is no rule left worthy of the name. What a fine opening this leaves for vain glory. No wonder that men talk of perfect sanctification if the law has been lowered. There is nothing at all remarkable in our

getting up to the rule if it is conveniently lowered for us. I believe I shall be perfectly sanctified when I keep God's law without omission or transgression, but not till then. If any man says that he is perfectly sanctified because he has come up to a modified law of his own, I am glad to know what he means, for I have no longer any discussion with him: I see nothing wonderful in his attainment, sin is my want of conformity to the law of God, and until we are perfectly conformed to that law in all its spiritual length and breadth it is idle for us to talk about perfect sanctification: no man is perfectly clean till he accepts absolute purity as the

standard by which he is to be judged. So long as there is in us any coming short of the perfect law we are not perfect. What a humbling truth this is! The law shall not pass away, but it must be fulfilled. This truth must be maintained, for if it goes, our tacklings are loose, we cannot well strengthen the mast; the ship goes all to pieces; she becomes a total wreck. The gospel itself would be destroyed could you destroy the law. To tamper with the law is to trifle with the gospel. "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."

(Continued Next Issue)

ANNOUNCEMENT

The editor will be preaching in revival services at the Grace Baptist Church of Stanleyville, N.C. November 6th through the 10th. The editor pastored this fine church for nearly twenty years, and he looks forward with great joy to this meeting. The services will be at 7:30 nightly. We urge our readers in this area to visit with us during this time. The church is pastored by Gene Kiger. I will then preach on Monday night at the home of

Sister James at 901 W. Haven Blvd. in Rocky Mount, N.C. You may call her at (919) 446-2585. This will be on Nov. 11th. I will then preach at the Victory Baptist Mission meeting in the home of Frank Parrish in Courtland, Virginia on the nights of Nov. 12-14. You may call him at (804) 653-2616. I would be so happy to meet any of our readers at any of these places. Please pray for these services.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Paul Mowris, son of Wayne and Lillian Mowris died Saturday in Ft. Smith, Ark. Brother Mowris is a missionary to Canada under the authority of the King's Addition Baptist Church. Brother and Sister Hobbs and Ruth Connelly attended the funeral services. Pray for Brother and Sister Mowris, that God will comfort them at this time.

FROM A PREACHER'S NOTEBOOK

by Gordon Buchanan

"The Believer and Christian Service"

John 21:1-14

I. Introduction: Give exposition of the above scriptures.

1. The literal interpretation of the passage.

2. The practical application of the passage.

A. God direct all believers to their place of service. Verse 1-2; Matt. 28:10 & 16.

B. The believer working without God's direction fruitless. Verse 3.

C. The believer must stay close to God to be able to recognize his will for his life. Verse 4.

D. God wants the believer to acknowledge his fruitlessness. Verse 5.

E. The believer has results only in following God's leadership. Verse 6.

F. The believer is to acknowledge the Lord's blessings and leading. Verse 7.

G. The believer is to finish what he starts. Verse 8.

H. The believers needs are provided by the Lord. Verse 9.

I. The believer is used as means to get God's work done. Verse 10.

J. Numbers do make a difference and those who are saved are secure. Verse 11.

K. Fellowship with Jesus Christ is the most important objective in the believers life. Verses 12-14.

II. Biblical truths as to Christian Service:

1. We were redeemed to the praise of the glory of God's grace. Eph. 1:6.

2. We were redeemed to do God's pre-ordained work. Eph. 2:10.

3. We have difficulty in knowing God's will for our lives.

4. The grace needed to wait on the Lord. Isaiah 40:31; Acts 1:3-5; Ps. 27:14.

5. More blunders have been made by not waiting on the Lord than possibly any other thing in the Christian life. (Waiting too long can also be a problem.)

6. An example of waiting on the Lord at a crucial moment. Ex. 14:13-14.

WHAT I'LL DO FOR MY PASTOR

One day I may have the opportunity to sit under a Pastor's care... I'll call to cheer him,
Help those near him.
I won't misuse or abuse him,
Speak evil or accuse him.
I'll always be there,
I'll show him I care,
And help him his burdens to bear!
I won't be mean,
Won't even make a scene.
Close attention I'll always pay.
For I know what he goes through each and every day.
He preaches the word, he's instant in season and out of season.
He reproves, he rebukes, he exhorts with all long-suffering and doctrine.
He looks o'er my soul and keeps me in the fold.
I'll do all these things because I know what it means to live a Pastor's life... Because I'm a Pastor's wife!

Mrs. William H. Peacock
Mansfield, Louisiana