

THE CHURCH OF YOUR CHOICE

by Bob Belanger
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1 Timothy 3:15 "...the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."

Pet phrases are some of the things that are said when it is considered by those who use them, that they lack knowledge of a matter or are at a loss for a

to your own dictates." However such statements as these are not only expressive of gross ignorance and blindness, but they lack even sound reasoning regarding the whole matter of God.

Are we as professing Christians, to go about collaring everyone one with, "God loves you"? Is this the example that Christ left us? Though we are to go into all the world with the Gospel, we find that Christ in His dealings with men was selective; and this because unlike us, He is omniscient. We are not to be selective, but we are not to go around telling everyone to smile because God loves them. Our words are not to be, "God loves you," but "repent and believe" lest you die in your sins.

What about the plea to "accept Christ," is this scriptural? Accept means to receive with favor, willingness or consent. Certainly such is a term readily agreeable to free-will doctrine for such is the implication of the word. But you will not find it so with the Word of God, for there we find that the decision to "ac-

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Luke 23:39-45 "And one of the malefactors who were hanged railed at him, saying, If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us. But the other, answering rebuked him saying, Dost not thou fear God seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds. But this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise."

Do you think the dying thief was a Baptist? Come, now preacher, I know some living Baptists that

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

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MINISTERIAL CONFESSION PART II

Following, is the second part of an article taken from "Words to Winners of Souls" by Horatius Bonar, Baker Book House. May God-wrought repentance be granted to each of His servants.

CONFESSING OUR SHORTCOMINGS: Let us, as they did, deal honestly with ourselves. Our confessions ought to be no less ample and searching.

1. We have been unfaithful. The fear of man and the love of his applause have often made us afraid. We have been unfaithful

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WHY THE CHURCH DID NOT START AT PENTECOST

by Chuck Sandelin
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"In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." (Heb. 2:12b). "I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18b).

There are a multitude of Christians in the world who have been taught that the church was started at Pentecost. Pentecost was fifty (penta) days after the passover when Jesus Christ was crucified as our passover Lamb. Pentecost came ten days after the ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ from this

earth. Either Christ started His church during His earthly ministry as Baptists have always claimed, or those daughters of



Chuck Sandelin

Rome known as Protestants are right in claiming that His church is a spirit church, started by the Holy Spirit on the day of pentecost.

Friend, what I have to say may not be of much value to you; but what you do concern-

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THE TRIUMPH OF THE CRUCIFIED

by Wil Bang
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"For thou, LORD, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands... Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the saviour of his knowledge by us in every place" (Psa. 92:4; II Cor. 2:14).

It is my understanding that there is a book written by Eric Sauer which bears "The Triumph of the Crucified" as its inscription. Still and yet, we



Wil Bang

thought it most appropriate to use this same title for this article.

Triumph equals victories, to gain mastery, success, or even jubilation. The word "triumph" has in its definition, absolute efficacy — it knows nothing except exalted articulation. The

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AMEN TODAY

by Robert E. McNeill

are thieves, but after all, this was almost 2,000 years ago. This thief was probably a Jew similar to Barabbas that escaped the death of crucifixion because the crowd demanded the death of Christ. The Son of God was spiked to the middle cross in the place of Barabbas and the two thieves beside him were murderers and insurrectionists. A Baptist? Why Baptists were not known until many years after this incident.

No, I'm serious. I realize the dying thief was in all probability a Jew, but in the matter of his salvation, did he not stand for, and represent, all the Baptists have advocated down through the years? If there was ever a

place in the Bible that sets forth the doctrine of Divine sovereign grace this is it! If there was ever a place in God's Word that Baptists should be familiar with in illustrating their position this is it! This is one great citadel of Divine truth against the heresies that have sprung up down through church history, inventions of men that have supplanted the plain declarations of Holy Writ. Yes, the incident of the dying thief should be memorized, studied, loved and proclaimed by every person who claims to be a Baptist.

Dr. Charles R. Erdman said that "The story of the penitent thief was the most surprising,

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The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

HOW TO PREACH ON HELL

"The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day nor night..." (Rev. 14:10-11). There is some difficulty in choosing a text for this sermon; not that there are not enough texts, but that there are a multitude from which to choose. The Bible has much to say about hell. I might suggest that one rule a preacher should apply to his preaching is to make an effort to adjust the proportion of what he preaches to the proportion of what the Bible

says about the subject. In other words, we should somewhat preach on different subjects according to the amount of Bible given to those subjects. I suggest that following such a rule would greatly increase most preacher's preaching on hell. The Bible has much to say about hell, the average pulpit says little. In this sermon I not only want the preacher to study the subject, but each Christian to consider how he or she should think about hell and talk to others about hell. Oh, that God might use this sermon to cause all of us to be more faithful in warning the lost of the imminent peril of eternal hell, and telling them of the salvation that is in Jesus Christ for all who repent and believe the gospel. Though I will use the term "preach" and emphasize the preacher, let every

reader apply the sermon to himself.

1. Preach on hell as if you believed what the Bible teaches about it. My friend, I suggest that we do not often preach as if we really believed in hell. The Bible teaches that hell is. It is not a myth. It is not a story made up to scare people into doing good. Hell is a burning, eternal reality. Across the path of every unsaved man there is the awful possibility of the next step plunging him into hell fire. Do we preachers really believe in hell? Let us then preach and act as if we do. Hell is awful beyond description. No matter what terms the preacher might use in attempting to describe hell, he comes far short of the reality. Jonathan Edwards was accused of making hell too real and vivid

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FAITH:

TRUE OR FALSE

by Chester Powell
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James 2:19, "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe and tremble." James, writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, warns his readers about a false faith, as opposed to true saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Verses



Chester Powell

14-17 of this chapter distinguish the two very well. Saving faith such as Abraham and Rahab displayed was far different from the counterfeit faith James speaks of in verses 14-20. The counterfeit faith spoken of is no more than a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. It is a faith that is easy to come by, and worthless. It is a faith that many deluded souls claim, even today. Ask a man or a woman if they are trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, and most will tell you that they are. "All right," they believe in God. Some put faith in their baptism, or Church membership. Some in a decision. That is what James is talking about. In verse 14 he writes, "What doth it profit,

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THE BAPTIST PEOPLE
JOSEPH M. WILSON, EDITOR

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HOW TO

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in his preaching. But I assure you that the reality will be far more horrible than any sermon ever preached. Let the preacher preach with all his might, let him make hell as horrible as he possibly can. Still, when the sinner who has heard that preacher arrives in hell, he will say that the half was never told.

Hell is a place of various torments. The multiplicity and variety of the horrible torments of hell defy human calculation. One will never know how awful hell really is unless he goes there — then he will know the truth thereof — but it will be forever too late. Hell is eternal. There will never be any lessening of its torments. There will never be any cessation to its agonies. Of all the horrors of hell, the most horrible is the fact of its eternality.

Now do we really believe these things? Do we believe that many whom we know and love are in imminent danger of going to hell? Do we believe that it is our duty to be intensely concerned and continually active in the business of souls being saved from hell? Do we believe that it pleases God to use the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ in saving men from hell? Now, a very important question; do we act as if we really believe these things? We should preach on hell as if we actually believed all that the Bible teaches on the subject.

2. We should preach on hell as if we were thankful for being saved therefrom. Preacher brethren, we deserve to go to hell — as much, and maybe more so than many who are already there. Let us think of our sins and of the hell we deserve. Let us realize that it is only by the mercy, grace, and power of our sovereign God that we will never know by experience the horrors of hell. It may be that you have been saved and living for the Lord a long, long time. But don't forget what you were and where you were, and that it is only God's

Gold is tried by fire; brave men by adversity.

grace that delivered you from the hell you deserve. But we will never go to hell, praise God!

We may suffer much in this life. Many sorrows may befall us ere our journey ends. Great heartaches and great sadnesses may come our way. We may be called upon to suffer great pain in our closing days on the earth. But, no matter what we might suffer here, we will never suffer that far more terrible suffering of eternal hell. Oh, how light the



Joe Wilson

greatest sorrow and pain really is when compared with hell fire. When my oldest son died, I went home and knelt by the couch and prayed. I said something like this, "Oh, God, this hurts so bad, but I thank you that I will never know that greater hurt, that awful hurt of hell." Let us preach on hell as if we were grateful that God has saved us therefrom.

3. Let us preach on hell as if we really love the unsaved and truly desire to see them saved from going to hell. Psalm 142:4 is a sad verse. I wonder how many of your friends and loved ones, and how many of those with whom you are well acquainted can say this verse. It says, "I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul." Brother preacher, so we care if people go to hell? Does our life, our prayers, our actions, our preaching give evidence that we really care about the unsaved and their danger of eternal hell. Oh, that we might preach on hell as if we really cared.

4. Preach on hell as if you had observed someone whom you loved actually suffering in hell for the last 24 hours. Think of someone that you love dearly, maybe more than you love anyone else. Think of your wife, your mother, your son, your daughter, your grandchild, or some dear friend. Imagine as best you can that you had been in an observatory room looking on, and that you had seen and heard them as they agonized and screamed in the flames of a burning hell. See your loved one there. See the flames burning on them. See them glowing white hot in the furnace of fire. Hear them scream. See them gnash their teeth in pain. Look. Look. Look again. Then go to the pulpit and preach on hell. Most of us have stood by the bed of a sick loved one. We have heard the moans and groans. We have seen the evidence of suffering on their face. We have felt each pain in our own heart as we have suffered with them. But, oh, imagine such a one in hell forever and ever. Let us think on this as we prepare to preach on hell.

5. Preach on hell as if you had just come from 24 hours in hell yourself. Oh, I know that this is impossible. But it might help us to just try to think like this as best we can. Imagine that you have been in hell for 24 hours. You have felt the agony of the flame. You thought you were

there forever. You knew all the reality of its horrible agony. My friends, my preacher friends, a few hours in hell would transform our ministry. We would never be the same after such an experience. How earnest we would be. How compassionate we would be. How involved we would be in seeking to win souls to Christ. How we would yearn and endeavor to bring men to Christ in saving faith. Well, we cannot have this experience, but we can read about hell in the Bible, and meditate on the subject, and ask God to help us to feel as we should about this most important matter.

6. We should preach on hell with a burdened heart, with tears. We should not preach on hell as a cold, dry, intellectual belief. God forbid that we should preach on hell as if it were just another Bible doctrine that we should preach now and then in order to be well-rounded in our preaching. We should not preach on hell as if we were glad for such a place and glad that men were headed for hell. We should preach on hell with a burning passion. We should preach on hell with tears. Dear preacher friend, where are our tears, yours and mine? Jesus preached with compassion. Jesus preached, I believe, with tears. I know that He wept over Jerusalem. Paul preached with tears — day and night with tears. Our forefathers preached with tears and with compassion and with a burdened heart. Where are our tears? Where are our tears? Oh, you say that we have gotten away from such unbecoming emotionalism. You say that we are too manly, and too scholarly, and too sound to manifest such a womanly weakness as to cry in the pulpit. Well, maybe we are, but along with getting away from our tears, we have lost our power and we are not seeing souls saved. God forbid that a preacher should ever manufacture tears as an actor does. God forbid that a preacher should ever put on a show of tears that are not real. God deliver us from "crocodile" tears. But, oh that we had a burdened heart, a compassionate soul, and that the tears would flow from such a heart manifesting a genuine love for lost souls. Our tears are gone. Our tears are gone. And so is our power. And souls are going to hell. And we have no tears.

7. Preach on hell as if you had just come from Calvary. My friend, my preacher friend, go to Calvary and stand awhile at the foot of the old rugged cross. Observe the awful agony of the Saviour as He suffered there to save men from hell. Who is suffering there? The virgin born Son of the Living God is suffering. The One who never sinned in thought, word or deed. The One who always did those things that pleased His Father. What is He suffering? He is suffering the exact equivalent of the eternal hell that all for whom He suffers would have suffered had He not suffered for them. There is no lessening of the pain because of whom is doing the suffering. God the Father has added up the sum total of the deserved hell of all the elect and has poured that out upon His dear Son.

Why is He suffering? He is suffering because of His great love for those for whom He is dying. Oh, how He loved them. Oh, how great was His compassion. He is willing to die in their room and place. Let us seek to enter in part into the Saviour's

compassion for the lost. Let us have compassion for them and seek to win them to the Saviour. Let us preach on hell as if we had just come from Calvary.

8. Preach on hell with a deep prayer that God would use your preaching to save souls from hell. Is not this one of the major purposes of preaching? Are we not Missionary Baptists? Do we not believe that it pleases God to save men by the preaching of the gospel? Who among us was ever saved without someone giving us the gospel? Not one. Even a saved Hardshell heretic must admit to this. Someone told you about Jesus. Someone preached the gospel to you. God used that in bringing you to the salvation

experience. Now, it behooves us to tell others the good news from a far country. And, as we tell it, as we preach it, let us do so with an earnest prayer in our soul that God will use it in saving sinners.

Let us pray before we preach. Let us pray as we search for a sermon, and as we prepare the sermon. Let us pray just prior to our preaching. The Great B. H. Carroll said in words like these, "I never but once, which exception I profoundly regret, entered the pulpit to preach without first prostrating myself before the great and awful God and imploring Him to bless me this one time." Let us pray, even while

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FROM THE EDITOR

Now hear a parable. Once upon a time a preacher was called to pastor a church. This preacher believed that he should not be expected to live by the same financial rules as did other people. Consequently, this preacher placed the following matter before his church for a church vote. "All the money that comes into the church shall be given to the pastor. He is to do with it whatever he sees fit. He will pay the church bills out of this money, purchase things needed for the church, etc. In other words, the preacher will have sole authority over all the money that comes into the church. Everything that is purchased by this money will belong to the pastor. This includes the property, the building, everything in the building, in short; all the property will belong to the pastor, including the parsonage. The church should not call the pastor if they do not trust him. If they do trust him they should give him all the money that comes in and allow him to do as he sees fit therewith." The pastor then called for a church vote on this matter. You guessed it. The church voted against this. The church continued its policy of giving the pastor a salary, and of using the rest of the money as directed by a church vote, with all of this being properly reported on by the treasurer of the church.

Now, hear the application of this parable. I suppose that nearly every reader of this paper will agree that the above pastor was wrong in desiring such, and that the church did the right thing in its vote. Now, I ask the question, why should a missionary be a man apart from ordinary men in such a situation? Some people feel that all the money given to a church for its mission work should go to the missionary as his money. That the missionary should be allowed to spend this money as he sees fit. Some missionaries and a few pastors seem to feel this way. Why should a missionary be treated any differently than a pastor in this matter? Most people who send money to a church for a certain missionary of that church are giving the money for that mission work. This, of course, includes a good and proper support of the missionary. But most who give to support the mission work of a church feel that this is the proper way of doing mission work. They want the missionary to be properly taken care of. They want the rest of the money to be used in mission work and properly reported on. Why should a missionary receive all the money that comes in for the work he is doing and be allowed to do as he pleases with it? Why should the missionary own all the property that is purchased with this money given for missions? Why should the missionary be treated any differently than the pastor in this respect. Most of the people who believe that the missionary should have all the money to do with as he sees fit, and should own all property purchased with that money, would not at all agree that the pastor should be treated the same way. Now, I want someone to tell me why?

Let me give what I believe is the proper way of handling mission money. Of course, I believe that the missionary is to be under the authority of one true Baptist church. I believe that all money for the support of that missionary and his mission work should be sent to that church for that work. The missionary should be given a fair and proper salary out of this money. This money would be his for him to do with as he sees fit. Of course, he should give a tithe and offering out of this to his church. Be assured that I believe that the missionary should be properly taken care of as to his financial needs to the best of the ability of the authorizing church, and according to the amount given for the mission work. The missionary should not be given all the money to do with as he pleases. He should have his salary for that purpose. The rest of the money given by supporters for that mission work should be used in that mission work, and reported on in detail. Each supporter should have this report as to what is being done with his mission money.

The property purchased by this mission money should belong to the authorizing church, not to the missionary. That church should have the total say so over these things. If the missionary resigns, that property and that mission work should remain under the control of the authorizing church. This church could then turn it over to another church, or send another missionary to continue the work. It should never be at the option of the missionary or another church to just take over that mission work.

Now, I would like for any who disagree with this to write me and tell me why they disagree. Tell me why a missionary should be treated so differently from the pastor. Tell me why the missionary should have sole control of all the money given for that mission work. Tell me why the missionary should own all the property purchased by mission money. Tell me why the business of missions should be run on such an unbusinesslike fashion. I believe that mission finance carried out as I have suggested would be the proper and Biblical way of doing mission work. This would also silence the criticisms that many make to the financial method of some mission works. I am sure that nearly every reader will agree with me on this. I will be glad to hear any comments anyone might have on this editorial.

HOW TO

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we preach, "Oh, God give me power. Oh, God, make this sermon effective. God, speak to that man yonder. Speak to that woman. Oh, God make this sermon effective. Save someone as I preach." Let us pray when we have finished our sermon that God will even yet use it for good, especially to the salvation of the unsaved.

My friend, my preacher friend, is not prayer the missing note in our lives, in our sermon selection, in our sermon preparation, and in our preaching? How can one preach well if he has not first prayed well? We must become men of prayer ere we will ever be men of power. Surely, we should preach on hell with the prayer that God will use our preaching to save souls.

9. Preach on hell as if the saving of souls was the most important business in all the world, especially the most important business of the pulpit. Oh, we don't do this.

God forgive me, I don't do this. Yes, we desire to glorify God. Yes, we desire to preach the whole counsel of God. Yes, we desire to teach the saved all the things of God. Let us never forget these things. But dear friend, preacher friend, think with me a moment. It is good to bring a saved person to baptism and church membership. It is good to preach a Methodist, a Campbellite, a Holy-roller, etc. out of his error and into Baptist and Bible truth. Oh, I would do much to lead folk from false churches to a true church. It is good to lead one from being a weak, ignorant Baptist to becoming strong in the faith and wise in the truth. All these things are good. To indoctrinate our people is good. We should make much of all these things in our ministry.

But think with me awhile. Would you rather see a Methodist become a Baptist or see a sinner get saved? Which is more important? A man can be a Methodist, a Campbellite, a Holy-roller, etc., and still be saved and go to heaven. But the man who is never saved must spend eternity in hell. Is not the saving of a soul more important than the teaching of the saved. Yes, it is. I am not pleading for a neglect of an important part of our task — that of teaching the whole counsel of God. You who know me and read after me should know that. I am not pleading for a neglect of any of our priorities. I am simply pleading that we get our priorities in proper order.

Look at it this way. All the saved will eventually know all the truth. There will be no heretics in heaven, for all there will have been taught the whole counsel of God. If the saved do not come to the truth on earth, they will in heaven. This does not mean that we should not be diligent in teaching the saved. But, now look at this. The unsaved have only this life in which to be saved. If not saved here and now, they will never be saved. Note: the saved will eventually learn all the truth even if not in this life. The unsaved, if not saved in this life, will never be saved. Let us preach on hell as if men being saved from hell was the most important thing in the world.

10. Preach on hell with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven (I Pet. 1:12). Oh, this is our need. This is the answer, the only answer. We cannot do the work of the ministry in the

power of the flesh. Educated flesh cannot do it. Man-pleasing flesh cannot do it. Oratorical flesh cannot do it. Only the power of the Holy Spirit can make our ministry effective. My preacher friend, let us do the very best we can. Learn and use all the education you can. Speak as correctly as you possibly can. Seek to improve in these things throughout your ministry. Do not neglect even the most minute thing in your ministry. Try to speak properly. Learn how to use your voice as effectively as you can. Cultivate and improve all that is involved in the art of public speaking. But, know this, that the power of preaching does not lie in these things but in the power of the Holy Spirit of God. Get all the education, training, and polish you can get. But above all things else, get the power of the Holy Spirit on your preaching. With the Holy Spirit, the most uneducated and unpolished preaching will be with power. Without the Holy Spirit, all other parts of public speaking are as nothing. Preach on hell with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven.

11. Preach on hell more often than you do. Adjust your preaching, as to what you preach, to the Bible. How much does the Bible say about hell? How much do you preach on hell? I think that I am safe in saying that the vast majority of preachers do not preach enough on hell. You will say, as I have said, all of our audience or most of them anyway, are saved. Preach on hell anyway. It may be that some professed church member in your audience is headed for hell. Preach on hell anyway. The saved will be brought to be more grateful for being saved therefrom, and will become better Christians. Preach on hell anyway. It may be that the saved will be touched by such preaching, will become more concerned about the unsaved, will pray more for lost ones, and will become more faithful in witnessing for Christ. Preaching on hell is a part — a large part of your commission. We, most of us anyway, need to preach more on hell.

Oh, that I might heed this sermon. I hope God will use it to influence others. But, if no one else needs such a sermon, I surely do. Oh, that I might preach on hell more as I have set forth in this sermon. Oh, that it might please my dear Lord to use me and my preaching to save lost sinners from going down to an awful, burning, eternal hell. Preaching, it might revolutionize your ministry (and mine) if you will heed this sermon. I urge you to preach on hell as I have set forth in this sermon. Pray for me that I will also do this. May God bless you all.

Editor's note: The Baptist Examiner is eminently a doctrinal paper. I do not want to change that. So long as I am its editor, this paper will send forth the doctrines of the Word of God. In addition to this, it is my desire that this paper have a little more of an evangelistic flavor. I think that the sermons of The Baptist Examiner Pulpit will witness that I have tried to instill evangelism into my T.B.E. ministry. I would like to ask my preacher brethren to send me some evangelistic sermons. Sermons showing the need of Christians witnessing. Sermons to the unsaved. Sermons of a revival and evangelistic nature. Do not stop the doctrinal sermons. Keep them coming. We are, and will

remain, a doctrinal paper. But, for my part, I would like to add a little more of a devotional, practical, and evangelistic emphasis to The Baptist Examiner. To do this I need the help of my preacher brethren. Comments on this sermon and this note will be welcomed and prayerfully considered.

FAITH

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my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?" Look at the part again that says, "though a man say he hath faith." See that word "say"? Talk can be cheap. In this instance it is. What a pity, the most important thing in all the world, spoken of so lightly, with no thought of the consequences. He says, "I have faith in God," or more correctly, "I believe God is one." However, faith is more than just an assent to a fact. True faith gives evidence that one trusts Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

The one who gives lip service only to a belief in the Lord, aptly fits the description of the saying of the day, "After all is said and done, more is said than done." Faith produces good works, always, without exception. There may come a sliding back, but the truth still stands, true saving faith produces good works. Even after a sliding back, God will be glorified, either through repentance or an act of our Sovereign God which could mean His calling us out of this world. Some may not agree with this statement, but I know of no biblical example where this is not true. Some will no doubt point to the thief on the cross with Jesus. They will claim that he had no time to produce good works. Let us see if that is true. Turn to the Gospel of Luke Chapter 23. We read verses 39 and 40. "And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?" What a wonderful testimony, a work of faith, to declare Jesus to be God, and rebuke the unbeliever. It was a warning to him to repent. It was a declaration of his faith in the Son of God. It is also a witness down through the ages until the end of the age that it is never too late to trust in the Living Christ. Moreover the Bible declares in Ephesians 2:10 "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" Dare we call God a liar? No!

Verses 18 through 20 of James the second chapter are a complete thought. The man in verse 18 who gives no evidence of works for his self proclaimed faith, is told in verse 19 that the demons believe in God. The demons have as much if not more faith than the man of verse 18. The demons also have enough sense to recognize their state, and tremble. The vast majority of people today who claim to believe in God do not have that much sense. Satan and his demons, quote the scriptures, and recognize Jesus. See Matthew, chapter four, Acts 19:11-15, Mark 1:24, Matthew 8:29 for a few examples.

Simply to believe intellectually in God does not qualify as

saving faith. Believing the Bible to be true does not bring salvation. What about good works? Does good works apart from faith save? Certainly not! Judas, who we know was not saved, was sent out with the twelve to perform miracles of casting out evil spirits, healing all manner of sicknesses and all manner of diseases, Matthew chapter ten. Saving faith is more than being able to perform the miracles described in the Bible. Faith healers take warning! Works without faith is dead, as surely as faith without works is dead.

Dear reader, may I ask you what kind of faith do you possess? Is it a devil's faith? It may impress men, but does it save? If you do have saving faith that has enabled you to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, what are some of the works that you can perform as evidence to the world of that faith? May I suggest that first, you confess Him before men. Then if at all possible seek out a true church of the Lord Jesus Christ, a Sovereign Grace Landmark Missionary Baptist Church, and in obedience to Christ, be Scripturally baptized, and become a member of that church. Next, work through that Church. Ephesians chapter three, verse 21 states, "Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." May God richly bless you all is my prayer.

WHY

(Continued from Page 1)

ing this vital subject will determine your rewards and state of servitude in that era to come, which we call eternity where "time is no longer to be." Either Christ has a local, visible body He calls His church and you are told to join one to serve Him; or there is only this mystical "body of Christ," as they term it, which everyone who is saved is in. If the latter be true, then the former is unimportant. This, of course, is what I have termed "the attack upon the church." The universal, invisible, mystical "body in Christ" theory — claiming that the church started at Pentecost — has been very effectively used by the devil and his agents to cause Christians to believe the local church is secondary — that it is not His only kind of a church. It has taught Christians that baptism is "not that important." That God is not a God of specifics as to where His tithe is to be put, or where you are to assemble, or that free-lance works are more important than the Lord's churches, etc. etc. So let's study and see if these things be so.

I. Jesus said He would build it. First, the plain fact is that our Lord said He was going to build His church, and not the Holy Spirit. He said, "I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18). It is proof from the Word of God that He "set first in the church the apostles" (I Cor. 12:28). So indisputably the first ones He put in His church were His apostles. What morning was that? — Luke chapter six verses 12-16 tells us that after all night in prayer to the Father, He called His disciples (taught ones) and of them He chose 12 which He surnamed Apostles. When

did He start His church? That's when! That is the morning He set forth His apostles and that was the beginning of His church. And Friend, that was a long, long time before Pentecost.

II. The word He used was Assembly. The usage of the word EKKLESIA denotes it was and is an assembly. A universal, invisible church is not an EKKLESIA for it cannot, will not, and has not assembled. In Acts 19:32 the word EKKLESIA is rendered "assembly." That which Jesus Christ built had to assemble, so that makes it a literal, visible body of people. People called out from their dwellings to assemble as a body or assembly. So the word EKKLESIA says that what Jesus started was not an invisible something.

III. It is a local body. God's Word specifically, and purposefully set forth the fact that His church at Corinth was "the body of Christ." (I Cor. 12:27). His church at Samuels, Idaho, is "The body of Christ." Wherever He has planted a Scriptural church — it is "The body of Christ" in that area or locality — just as there is one Bible, just as there is one faith, just as there is one baptism, there is one body. That is very plain and easy to understand — that is, there is only one kind or type. If there were more than one there would be confusion. (And God is not the author of confusion). Thus we read in Ephesians 4:4, "There is one Body." That is, one type or kind — a local, visible, tangible body. Did you ever see any other kind of a body? Man, it is no strange how these mystical bodyites can't seem to understand that a body has to have a body; it can't be a ghost and be a body. Yes, there are either two bodies (one visible, one invisible) or there is as Ephesians 4:4 says, "There is one body." Either the local, visible church at Corinth was, as Paul says, "Ye are the body of Christ." (I Cor. 12:27) or this ghost of a spirit church is as they say, the mystical body of Christ. Judge it yourselves.

IV. Because it was added to. There is no way you can add to something if it is not already in existence. The Scriptures state that on the Day of Pentecost, "the Lord added to the church." (Acts 2:41). There is plain proof that the church already existed.

Should you be given some money from a friend, you could not add it to your savings account if you did not already have a savings account. So you see the Lord was only continuing the perpetuity of that which already existed and also the beginning of the fulfillment of that promise that the gates of hell would not prevail against it.

V. Because it was told to discipline its members. Now the Lord's churches discipline their members as He gave instruction in Matthew 18:17, "Tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."

If a member has a grievance against another and is instructed to tell it unto the church, surely there must be a tangible, visible, real body of people to talk to. One could not walk out into the air or space and start talking to

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The Baptist Examiner Forum I

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT

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

Explain I Timothy 5:11-12 in the light of I Corinthians 7:39 as to the remarriage of a widow?

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Due to the length of the verses in question, I will not write them out but would urge you to open your Bible and read them for yourselves. I think it will be a great help in understanding the answer to this question if you will read I Timothy 5:1-16. We need to study the context and then interpret it in light of other Scripture. I honestly believe a proper understanding of the verses mentioned in Timothy will answer this question without any reference to I Corinthians 7:39.

I feel very strongly that Paul is speaking here of the Church's responsibility to take care of the widows in the church who cannot take care of themselves. I think verses 8, 9, and 16 will bear this out. The age of these widows is given as sixty years old. John Gill says that the age of sixty was considered the beginning of old age to the Jews of that day. The reason for the church's support was that they were often too old to work and their chances for remarriage were very slim. There is no place in these verses where these widows are forbidden to marry. I Corinthians 7:39 without question gives a widow or widower the right to remarry. There are no contradictions in God's Word. Paul does not contradict himself in I Timothy. There is nothing in Timothy forbidding marriage. The point Paul is making is that the church has a responsibility to those widows who have taken care of many physical and spiritual things in the past for the church. The church is to repay them in their old age by helping them with their material necessities.

Let me also make a comment on verse 11. Paul here sets a different standard for those younger widows. His reasoning on this point is indeed valid. It would benefit our government to follow the same reasoning. The younger widow was able to work and make her own living. Paul realizes that to be given everything on a silver platter is not the answer to one's problems. The context of verses 11-14 teach us that they should be working or should remarry and bear children because not doing so will lead to sin. Remember the old adage "idleness is the devil's workshop." There is a lot of truth in that adage. Paul instructs us that this adage has a Scriptural backing. The teaching is that the older widows are to be taken care of by the church but the younger widows or unmarried women are to either work for their living or

marry in the Lord.

I make no further comment on I Corinthians 7:39. I feel the proper interpretation of the verses in I Timothy sufficiently answer any seeming contradictions. I repeat, there is no mention in I Timothy about a widow being forbidden to marry. May God bless you all.

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"But the younger widows refuse for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry; Having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith."

In this chapter we have instructions as to how the church was to care for the widows of the church who had no other means of support. Verses nine and ten tell us that those over sixty and were of good report were to be taken in the number who were to be provided for. Verse eleven tells us why the younger widows were not to be included in that number. The verse is saying that the young widows, because of their natural desires would soon want to marry, thereby incurring condemnation upon themselves because they set aside their pledge to serve Christ. The word "damnation" does not mean a future punishment, but means judgment or condemnation, a continuous reproach. Wuest's Word Studies translates it, "they determine to marry, having judgment because they have nullified their first faith."

This is not saying for the younger widows not to marry, but is giving the reason for the church not to support them, for if they were provided for it is said, "And withal they learn to be idle, wondering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking reproachfully" (I Tim. 5:13). By verse 14 as well as I Corinthians 7:39 we see that there is nothing wrong for a young widow to marry again, that is as long as it is, "in the Lord."

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Before I answer this question, let me apologize for not being in the last three issues.

Many people think that the number mentioned in verse 9 relative to widows is speaking of church membership. No, my friends, it is not speaking of membership but of the number of widows being cared for by the church. We are told in verse 3 to

"honour widows that are widows indeed." Verses 4-8 is showing that a widow with family should not be left uncared for. Her family, children or nephews, are to provide for her. If people cared for their family today as they should there would be no need for so many nursing homes.

Some think that the widows "in the number" were working for the church to pay for their upkeep. Whether that is true or not, I don't know, but they were being provided for by the church. The church, however was to be particular about it and not take just anyone in. They were to be 60 years old or older, without relatives, and have a godly reputation.

Younger widows were to be refused on the grounds that they would probably marry. I Corinthians 7:39 says that they can. "The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord." As you can see when they marry it is to be "in the Lord." Paul is pointing out that many of them do not wait on the Lord and therefore marry outside of the Lord. When they do this they neglect their duties to the church and they cause themselves trouble for not serving God as they should.

WHY

(Continued from Page 3)

a universal, invisible nothing or they might get picked up and sent to the looney house. Really now — come clear and clean you mystical bodyites and explain the dilemma that you have gotten yourself into here. The truth of the very matter lies right where we are. The universal, invisible churchite does not want to join a local, visible church for fear of church discipline, so to keep from living as God sets forth His people to live. This cop-out excuse of a universal church satisfies the flesh very well. They can live like the world, look like the world, dress and talk like the world, and answer to no one, here. It is a very convenient system for disobedient Christendom.

VI. Things it did before Pentecost. Here are some of the things the Lord's church did before Pentecost. There are certain functions that a church does in order to say that it is a church and doing the work of a church. So if the church was in existence before Pentecost (and it was) those duties had to have been done previous to that day.

1. They had the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Mk. 1:1). 2. They authoritatively went forth preaching the word. (Lk. 10). 3. They were rightfully ordained. (Mk. 3:14). 4. They were scripturally baptized. (John 4.). 5. They had a membership role. (Lk. 6). 6. They were God-given the Great Commission. (Mk. 16, Matt. 28, Jn. 20). 7. They had lawfully observed the Lord's supper. (Matt. 26:26). 8. They had a

meeting house. (Acts 1:13). 9. They held a business meeting. (Acts 1.). 10. They all had Baptist baptism. (Acts 1:20-21; Lu. 7:29).

There are numerous more; however, these should suffice to say that the purpose and functions were in effect long before the Day of Pentecost. Pray tell me you "mystical-body churchites," where do you claim you received your commission or authority? The Scriptures very plainly show that the Great Commission, as we call it, was given to eleven Baptist, baptized apostles. The Scriptures tell us plainly that they were His first church. (I Cor. 12:28). Where do you hold the Lord's supper? The only place that a "mystical-body churchite" observes such is in an unscriptural local, visible, assembly. (And they usually do so with unscriptural elements). You know, it's a marathon that could go on forever! Once it is mystical, there is nothing the fertile mind of an heretic can't think up. The universal, invisible, mystical body of Christ is this absurdity. The astounding thing that baffles me is how it can be pulled over the eyes of so many who claim to believe the Bible.

How they can take the text of I Corinthians 12:13 and build a mountain upon it in ignorance to the some 115-plus other usages of the word "church" (EKKLESIA) and the use of the word, "body." But greater still, how some who call themselves Baptists can jump behind this name to claim they have baptism, and then defend such Baptist murderers as Martin Luther, Zwingli, etc. Read your history of these "Great Roman Reformers" who protested the Great Whore and set up the "Protestant" ranks as harlot daughters. These Protestant daughters of Rome are the enemy and haters of our Lord's churches, as they have always been. The next time you so called Baptists feel like printing something about Protestantism, you need to print what the early reformers (like "the Morning Star," Luther, etc.) did to the Baptists or Ana-Baptists. Don't brag on them until you know them and expose them. There are a lot of people who have been led to believe that Protestantism is okay, but it is not! Protestantism is an attack upon the church of our Lord Jesus Christ. Baptist are not Protestants, nor have they ever been. It is only some of those Protestants who put our name upon their meeting houses, and teach their damnable universal, invisible church theory, that would cause a world to be deluded and stumble into thinking that Baptists are Protestants. Baptists are that sect of Christendom which have their origin with "a man sent from God whose name was John" (John 1:6). He was the first to walk this earth and there has never been a time since, that there weren't Baptists in church capacity.

VII. Now for a sure cincher to prove the church started long before Pentecost, we give you this.

It was prophesied long back in Psalm 22 that when Jesus Christ did come He would sing in His church. Scripture accounts only one incident of Christ ever singing and that was the night He instituted His supper about fifty days before Pentecost. Here are the words from Hebrews 2:12, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the

church will I sing praise unto thee." The word of God says He was in the midst of His church (Ekklesia) when He sang that night. Will you still try to say there was no church before Pentecost now? You can not without saying you disbelieve the Bible. The Universal Church hoax is for those Protestants to try to justify their right of existence. It is so that Christians do not have to be baptized with Baptist baptism like they were told to (Luke 7:29), and like Christ received to show all others the way. This Protestantism theory is an attack upon all of God's churches. They teach men to err. (Read. Matt. 5:19).

Now what did happen at Pentecost — She (His Ekklesia) "shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you;" (Acts 1:8). Jesus Christ said it was needful for Him to go away in John Chapter 16 that He might send the Holy Spirit. While He was here there was no need to send the Holy Spirit. However, after He left, He sent the Holy Spirit and He baptized His church in (or with) the Holy Spirit. Now unbeknown to many, God the Holy Spirit, resides in His churches. He does not reside in those other religious assemblies. People do not get this because they think that all there is to the Holy Spirit's work is regeneration and dwelling in the heart of a born-again person. Thus, they think that God is wherever the born-again person is. So if there is one born-again person in a Protestant assembly on Sunday morning, (or even worse, Saturday) then God is in it. Let us show you the absurdity. If there is one born-again person in the booze hall Sunday morning, and there is, then that makes it God's assembly or EKKLESIA or church. Don't they know the verse of scripture, "The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (Prov. 15:3). The Shechinah Glory is in "the house of God which is the church of the living God the pillar and ground of the truth." (I Tim. 3:15). It's as hard to get some people to believe that, as it is to get them to believe that it takes the preached Gospel to save sinners. (I Cor. 1:21). God has always had a place where He meets with His people and always will. Once it was in the garden; once it was on the ark; once it was in the tabernacle; once it was in the temple; now it is in "the house of God." It will be in the New Jerusalem, then, in the new world.

God is not mystical, neither is His bride. God is a God of particulars. (Read the book of Leviticus.) He has no love for those disobedient to His commands — "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46). "And this is love, that we walk after His commandments" (II John 6).

AMEN

(Continued from Page 1)

the most suggestive, the most instructive incident in all Gospel narrative." Now we are aware that there were great miracles connected with the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ but we forget this one. Everyone who reads the Bible knows there was a miraculous darkness that covered the land

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Absences are a good influence in love and keep it bright and delicate.

The Baptist Examiner Forum II

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT

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

Who are the seven Spirits of Revelation 3:1?

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This question is rather hard to answer, but I will give it a try. Instead of who are the seven Spirits of Revelation 3:1, perhaps we should ask, what are the seven Spirits of Revelation 3:1. In keeping this in its context, I think that it is speaking of the one Holy Spirit working through seven pastors of seven churches as the Comforter as our blessed Saviour promised His Church in John 14:16, "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever."

We might find out how He works by looking in the Old Testament in Isaiah 11:2 "And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord."

Here we notice seven attributes of the Spirit. The Spirit of the Lord, the Spirit of wisdom, the Spirit of understanding, the Spirit of counsel, the Spirit of might, the Spirit of knowledge, the Spirit of fear.

If this does not answer your question, perhaps my friends on the forum can supply you with the right answer.

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The "Seven Spirits of God" mentioned in verse one of chapter three is also mentioned in verse four of chapter one and in verse six of chapter five. These places where the seven Spirits are mentioned have reference to the same Person in each place. This does not mean that God has seven Spirits. The third Person in the Trinity is one with God. God is one God, but there are three persons in the Trinity: God the Son, spoken of as the second Person in the Trinity; God the Holy Spirit, spoken of as the third Person in the Trinity.

The "Seven Spirits of God" mentioned in (Rev. 3:1) does not mean saints who have died and gone to heaven. Neither does it refer to some high order of angels. Neither does the Scripture mean that God has seven Holy Spirits; but is a representation of the perfect work of God. The number seven in Scripture represents completion, or perfection, or finishing of a certain thing.

God's work is a perfect work. When God sets out to do a thing

He does not stop short of completing what He intends to do. God is not a God that is trying to do something and cannot carry out His intentions. He is an all wise and all powerful God. It is represented here that God is able to know everything and to be everywhere at the same time. As the Scripture states in (Rev. 5:6) the seven Spirits of God are sent throughout all the earth. So God is aware of everything that goes on in the earth. Not only that, but He is in control of everything. It is said in Rev. 3:1 that He hath the seven stars, or messengers which are the seven ministers or pastors of the seven churches. In (Rev. 1:16) it is said that the seven stars are in the right hand of Jesus. They are in His control and guided by His hand. So these seven Spirits are seven eyes going everywhere. These seven Spirits belong to God and the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the teaching that God has an all seeing eye. Read again (Rev. 5:6). It means that there is nothing hid from the eyes of God. There is no hiding place from the storms of life but in the Lord Jesus Christ, flee to Him.

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The term seven Spirits of God are mentioned three times in the book of Revelation and one time as seven Spirits only. In chapter four, verse five, seven lamps (torches) are said to be the seven Spirits of God. In chapter five, verse six, seven horns and seven eyes are said to be the seven Spirits of God. In chapter one, verse four, the seven Spirits are before His throne.

These terms are not to serve as answers, but only extend the question as to what they mean. By looking at and understanding some scriptures in both the Old and New Testament I believe we can determine who these seven Spirits are. The word seven is used to preface the word Spirit. Seven is used extensively throughout the Bible. It comes from the Greek word HEPTA and is used as an expression of fullness or completeness. The word Spirit comes from the Greek word PNEUMA and primarily denotes the wind. The wind describes the Holy Spirit and His work in John 3:8, "The wind bloweth where it listeth (wills) and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

The seven lamps (torches) would not be able to burn if they were not fed with oil. Oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. The horn is an emblem of might, strength, or power. I Samuel 2:10; "The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall be

thunder upon them: the Lord shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall be thunder upon them: the Lord shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed." The eyes are discerning in their operation upon all created things. Zechariah 4:10; "For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven; they are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth." These characteristics refer only to the triune Godhead and to the Spirit in particular as He is representative of the Father in the world at this time.

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Church at Corinth concerning spiritual gifts. In that letter I believe, he sheds some light on the question before us. Look at I Corinthians 12:4-6; "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all." There is one God, one Lord, one Spirit. I do not believe that seven Spirits are meant, but that it means one Spirit with diverse manifestations.

Those diverse manifestations are mentioned in Isaiah 11:2; "And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord;" John also wrote in his gospel that a Comforter, the Holy Ghost, would come and teach and bring all things to our remembrance. In John 16:8-14 we have detailed information of the different manifestations of the Spirit.

APPRECIATED LETTERS

Dear Brother Joe, I really appreciate the Baptist Examiner. All the articles are written by men who know and love the Lord. The ones written by... are especially wonderful. I do not want to miss a single copy. Please renew my subscription for one year.

Carl M. Davis
Erwin, Tn.

Dear Brother Wilson, The only food we get is through the tapes and The Baptist Examiner. Keep up the good work. We are sending a check for... to use for whatever you want to put it on. We do not have sound preaching close to us... Only in Ireland, W. Va. It takes us two hours to get there... Here are 60 names for The Baptist Examiner. I know that if they read these papers, they will really get the Word of God. I hope that God shows them the truth.

Wilbur Moore
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AMEN

(Continued from Page 4)

from 12 noon until 3 p.m.; that the great vail of the temple was rent in two from the top to the bottom; that there was an earthquake on Calvary's hill, that graves were opened, that there were undisturbed grave clothes in the tomb, that the dead bodies of saints came forth from graves and appeared to many in the city of Jerusalem after Christ's resurrection, but what about the miracle of the dying thief's salvation? Let me ask again, was there anything more startling, more surprising or miraculous than the salvation of a murderer and thief at the hour when the Son of God was dying? Most people overlook the miraculous here, because they do not believe that a miracle takes place every time a dead, lost, depraved sinner is saved.

One reason I know and am convinced that this particular portion of God's Word, is important is the very word that Luke records that Christ spoke to the thief. When the thief had rebuked his fellow companion in crime, and asked to be remembered by Christ, the very first word that Christ uttered was "Amen!" I know your King James Bible has the word "Verily," but the Greek text says, "Amen!" Here is another place where I wonder seriously whether the translators of the Bible have helped us very much. What does "verily" mean to 99 readers out of a hundred? Nothing, they read right on as if the word was not there. I believe the Greek word "amen" should have been translated "amen" just like the Hebrew word "amen" was translated "amen" in Numbers 5:22; Deut. 27:15; I Kings 1:36; Nehemiah, Chronicles, Jeremiah and numerous places in the Psalms. In fact it would have been better to transliterate or to translate the word "Truly, truly, so be it, or as one Bible expositor has said, "it is fixed, it cannot be changed."

This Greek word "Amen" appears 150 times in the New Testament and the most important place it is found is the double use of the word in John's Gospel. The Holy Spirit must have greatly impressed John with the way his blessed Lord emphasized things, for 25 times in John's Gospel we find this word used doubly, verily, verily, and it is only found that way in John's Gospel. The classic example of this is found in John 3:3 and John 3:5 where Christ is setting forth the doctrine of regeneration.

Luke does not use the word "verily" very often in his gospel, but in Christ's reply to the thief, he makes it certain that everyone including the thief himself would know that he would be with the Lord Jesus that very day in paradise. Let us examine this text closer to see how it is one of the greatest Baptist texts in all the Word of God. A study of the thief in his need of salvation reveals that he was saved by faith with no money, no pious works, no God pleasing character, no religion, no sacraments, no wild emotions, and no human merit. What a blessing to learn that God's saving grace operates despite lack of all these! The Mosaic Law looked for a perfect man to bless and never found one.

This miracle of Sovereign Grace looks for the worst man, even the chief of sinners, and over the centuries it has found and brought to salvation

millions of sinners who were utterly destitute of anything to merit salvation.

This miracle of Sovereign Grace demonstrates what vital theology really is, and strikes the death blow to some of the most dangerous and persistent heresies of the ages. First, (1) Sacramentalism was refuted — down goes baptismal regeneration, for the thief was saved without baptism. Good-bye to any saving virtue in the so called sacraments such as the Lord's Supper, Church membership or any good works. Second, (2) The dogma of purgatory was refuted, for this vile sinner was instantly transformed into a saint and made fit for paradise apart from his personal expiation of a single sin. Third (3) The teaching of Universalism was refuted, for only one of the two thieves, and only one of whole crowd was saved of all who might have been saved. The Lord Jesus did not say, "Today ye shall be with me in paradise," but "Today thou shalt be with me in paradise." Fourthly (4) The false doctrine of soul-sleeping was refuted, for the clear implication of the entire incident is that the redeemed thief would be in conscious fellowship with his Saviour in Paradise, even while his body disintegrated in some grave. Fifth (5) Separation of Church and State or the heresy of a state religion is certainly refuted here. Christ was being crucified by Romans but at the request of the Jewish religionists. In fact there was a sign over His cross, "This is Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews" — Jews were crucifying their King, but we see no rabbi giving the last rites or praying with the Lord or with the thieves — yet the thief went to Heaven with the Son of God. So much for some of the false doctrines, this incident refutes. Let us notice some of the marvelous things it sets forth.

1.

The Thief Demonstrates The Sovereignty of God And His Electing Grace.

Two malefactors were crucified together. They were equally near to Christ. Both of them saw and heard all that transpired beneath the cross of Calvary. Both were notoriously wicked; both were suffering acutely, both needed forgiveness; both were dying. One of them died in his sins, died as he had lived, hardened, impenitent, while the other repented of his wickedness, believed in Christ, called on Him for mercy and went to Paradise. How can this be explained? Now in case someone has the wild idea that there was something different in the character of the dying thief that was saved, Scripture refutes such speculating. How glad we should be for Matthew's account of this same incident for we read in Matthew 27:44, "The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth." Notice the word is plural. When the whole procession arrived at Calvary's hill, both thieves were reviling Christ, they were both guilty of being sent straight to hell.

How, then, does one thief believe and receive Christ? Simply because God granted unto him the gift of repentance and the gift of faith. If ever Ephesians 2:8-9, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God — Not of works,

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QUESTION: — Who saw God's back, but not his face?

ANSWER: — Moses, Exodus 33:17-23. "And the Lord said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name. And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory... And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me and live. And the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of a rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see by back parts: but my face shall not be seen."

AMEN

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lest any man should boast," was ever demonstrated, here it is. Who wrote Ephesians 2:8-9? The apostle Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, and if anyone should have known by experience what that verse meant it was Paul after his Damascus Road experience. How gracious of God to give us example after example as well as plainly tell us what salvation is all about. Here again is a perfect example of Acts 13:48 which says, "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord; and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."

Please remember that we are not only saved by the sovereign grace of God, we are also kept by it. Many people believe that if we change our ways, make ourselves more respectable, attend church, do many other things, then God is obligated to save us. In other words, we must improve our character before we are acceptable with God. But how the incident of the dying thief refutes this idea! Others believe we are tentatively placed on probation after He saves us and unless we bring forth a certain quality of good works we "shall fall from grace and be lost." But the dying thief had no good works before or after conversion, hence God shuts us up to the conclusion that if saved at all, he was saved by God's sovereign grace.

II.

The Thief Demonstrated The Righteousness Of God.

Some find it very hard to believe that a man killing, stealing, cursing, living in sin all his life could go to Heaven just a few hours before he dies. This is what salvation is all about. Substitutionary Atonement. It is very simple — the thief's sins were placed on an innocent victim that was hanging just a few feet from him. Isn't this exactly what the Bible teaches? Listen to II Corinthians 5:21 "For he hath made him, who knew no sin, to be sin for us, that we might be made the

righteousness of God in him." In the 3rd chapter of Romans, verse 21 we are told, "But now the righteousness of God apart from or without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets, even the righteousness of God which is by faith in Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference. For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus." Romans 4:5 says, "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Wasn't the dying thief a perfect illustration of Romans 5:20, 21? "Moreover, the law entered, that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." This thief was guilty of breaking nearly all the God-given laws — his offenses abounded — but how much more did grace abound!

III.

The Thief Demonstrates How To Come To Christ.

Scripture does not teach that if God has elected a certain soul to be saved, that that person will be saved whether he believes or not. That is a false conclusion drawn by those who reject truth. No, the Bible teaches that the same God who predestined the means, the God who decreed the salvation of the dying thief fulfilled His decree by granting unto him a faith by which to believe. This is the plain teaching of II Thessalonians 2:13 "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."

The thief came to Christ through God-given wisdom. This wisdom was evidenced by his saying to his companion in crime, "Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?" We are told in Proverbs 9:10, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the holy is understanding." Coming to Christ the thief confessed personal guilt. He stated that he and his companion were under condemnation and that justly. He submitted to God's dealing with his sin, especially God's justice in punishing it. While publicly confessing his need of a Saviour, he also confessed Christ's sinlessness, Christ's deity, Christ's death, resurrection, ascension and kingship and His right to judge. Although dying, he believed the Lord Jesus would rise bodily from the dead.

This unworthy thief was made worthy before God through Jesus Christ. There is no doubt he went to Heaven; Christ said he did. He went to Heaven because he received Jesus Christ as Saviour. All should profit by his actions and remember that to be saved they

should come to Christ Jesus in like manner. He came personally, directly, definitely, publicly, sincerely and just as he was. He came relying upon God's grace in Jesus Christ apart from any human merit.

There is much evidence that the thief received Christ. He had a changed life while he hung on the cross. This thief's mockery was changed to prayer, his defiance of Jesus to submission, his denial to confession, his rejection to reception. He wanted to be identified with a crucified, dying King, but notice he even was attempting to be a soul-winner on the cross.

IV.

The Thief Demonstrates Spiritual Illumination.

In I Corinthians 2:14 we read, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." At 9 o'clock when the thief went to Golgotha he was a natural man; at 3 p.m. he was a saint going to Heaven. In a few hours his spiritual progress was absolutely amazing. Some people think you have to go to church, to theological seminaries, be raised in a Christian atmosphere or at least be in Christian work to get spiritual illumination but it is God given. Watch this thief's spiritual growth! He believed in a future life, (Dost Thou not fear God). He sees his own depravity, (we are in condemnation justly). He confesses Christ's sinlessness, (This man hath done nothing amiss). He confessed Christ's deity, (Lord — Judas never called him Lord). He confessed Christ's Saviourhood, (Lord, remember me). He confessed his belief in Christ's Kingship, (when Thou comest into thy kingdom). He believed in the Resurrection and 2nd Coming, (When thou comest — Christ was dying, He would have to rise, ascend and come again). If there ever was an illustration of Christ's words to Peter in Matthew 16:17, here they are: "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father, who is in Heaven." This natural man became a spiritual man in a few moments of time because the Father chosen to reveal some marvelous spiritual truths to him. Surely the Devil must have thought this was one time the Son of God was going to be thwarted. If this lost depraved sinner had been given to the Son by the Father before the world began, here he was dying spiked to a cross and he would be dead in a few hours. But the eternal Word has declared, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Now that verse does not say what time in our little, fleeting earthly life we will come, but if we have been given by the Father to the Son (John 17:2, 6, 7, 9, 11, 18, 24) we will come. The thief came in the last few hours of his life and God has used the incident to bless millions down through the centuries.

Conclusion: Do you believe in death bed repentances? Yes, but be careful. There is no recorded death-bed repentance in the Bible. This is the closest thing to it. The thief wasn't dying in bed, he was spiked to a cross. Years ago an evangelist was preaching in the outdoors in England and he was urging the claims of the gospel upon the audience. He was warning men and

women to receive Christ before it was too late, before they died. He reminded the audience that not many people repented on their deathbed, that people were snatched out of this life many times suddenly.

A heckler who had been bothering him all through his message when he heard this statement shouted out, "Ah, what about the dying thief?" The evangelist shot back immediately, "Which One?" Yes, two thieves were crucified with Christ that day. One went to Heaven, one went to Hell. This incident is given to us that no one may despair, but this is the only incident, that none presume!

CHURCH

(Continued from Page 1)

cept" Lies in the hands of the Lord Almighty. The Word of God, however, admonishes us to "receive" the Lord Jesus Christ. We receive sound by the ears, sight by the eyes, yet these senses were not of our own doing. They are gifts of God. Likewise we "receive" Christ as the gift of God through grace by faith wherein the will was made subject to His Spirit. The receiving is done in grave necessity and not by the will of the flesh.

As is often repeated, man is verily by nature an Arminian, as Brother Graves so aptly put it. However, man is not by nature a true atheist because of the overwhelming evidences of creation which express fully the existence of a Divine Being, and also because of that "small voice" called conscience. Man would desire to be an atheist and believe there is no God, and though he claim to be an atheist, it is because he would like to be such and cannot. Man has by nature a desire to worship something; whether it be self or self-made objects, or things of creation, he will worship. Hence the cause for all manner of religions and gods in this "present evil world." But it stands to reason that if there be a God we must in some way, have been introduced to Him. We must have in existence on earth something by which He has made Himself known to us. Since He is God it necessarily follows that He is a God of all power, knowledge and ability. He must be perfect and unchanging, for to be otherwise would cause Him to cease to be God. There is no place on earth that declares such a God to us except the Bible, a truly divine revelation of Himself. Nowhere on earth exists such holy perfection except the Bible itself and the Spirit of Him that wrought it. Without doubt the Word of God is an accurate, faithful, unerring, revelation of the Creator, the ever-living and true God. Yet man as always, is not satisfied with this Divine revelation, the Bible, for he would rather be left alone to the dictates of his own utterly depraved heart to continue in self-will worship.

Now, the Billy Graham fans of today boast of his great wisdom, but he has been the greatest influence in our time in leading many astray by his beliefs in free-willism, and in the "church of one's choice." Our text declares the Church to be "of the living God." That is, the Church belongs to God, was created by Him for His purposes and honor. He, as Lord, has declared the Church to be "the pillar and ground of the truth." It is from the Church of the Lord that all true beliefs of religion must proceed by the

"rightly dividing the word" of God. For it is here where the Word of God must be faithfully and truthfully proclaimed, for thus has the Lord given the charge.

Recently, I was attempting to discuss with one of Billy Graham's supporters, the doctrine of church perpetuity. He, being a devout follower of Mr. Graham and Arminianism, became infuriated when I asked, "after one is supposedly saved under your ministry, where do you send or take them that they might be taught to 'observe all things' of Christ?" His answer was, "it's not our business to decide on a church for them. We leave that with the Lord." Well, this Lord he has sends the saved to any denomination they choose even though he knows they all don't agree; even though they all claim to be Christian and lay claim to using the Bible as their guide. Yet through His grace, even before the Lord showed me church truth by His Word, I was hounded by the question: "If all the denominations use the same Bible how is it that they do not agree to its teachings?" If these are all Christian churches why must they be varied in their practices? Surely since God is "not the author of confusion" and rather a God of precise order and discipline, He could in no wise have established such a form of confused religion. It seemed to me that since we have but one Bible, we should have but one true religion based upon its teachings. Therefore, is one church really as good and sufficient as another? Are these the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Head and Founder of Christianity? Since "grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" who declared Himself to be "the way, the truth, and the life," we can but rest assured that there is but one church established by Him as the "ground of truth." Many may deem such statements as these and others that follow, as very narrow minded, but need I remind them that the whole way to glory is a narrow way "and few there be that find it."

Suppose by way of example, I was to start my own business. Before I started, I would first have to "count the cost." I would need to invest of myself and my goods in order to begin. Next, I would need a suitable location. One that would insure prosperity in investment return. Next, I would need to establish guidelines and operating procedures that would reduce the operating costs and yield return to the benefit of my employees and myself. I would need to hire employees to do the work with the common understanding that these employees would work according to the established rules of my business. Failure for them to do so would mean that they are stealing my wages, and not earning them. Failure to follow the order would in effect ruin my business and result in the closing of my doors with the loss of all jobs.

Now man understands such a system for he is aware that serving an employer in the wrong manner, i.e. not complying to established methods can mean injury, lost time, and little or no profit. Christ has ordered His worship and method of Christian service. If we declare that we do the work of the Lord by His authority, then we must prove exactly that! If we say we do the work of the Lord, where

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STUDIES IN EZEKIEL

Willard Willis, Monroe, Ohio



Willard Willis

"Therefore, thou son of man, prophesy against Gog, and say, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal: And I will turn thee back, and leave but the sixth part of thee, and will cause thee to come up from the north parts, and will bring thee upon the mountains of Israel: and I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand, and will cause thine arrows to fall out of thy right hand" (Ezek. 39:1-3).

The text before us declares that God is to be against Russia. God, of course, doesn't change, which also means that He is against Russia today. It, however, doesn't appear that our God is against Russia today, since she is like a tall green tree or she is like the fig tree before our Lord cursed it. Russia has reached nearly to the top rung of the ladder as far as world power, influence and human glory are concerned. She is respected like the great whale as she swims through earth's waters. Her power, influence and glory, however, are to be short lived. Russia, the tall green tree is to be cut down. She is to fall on the mountains and plains of Israel. God is to put hooks into her mouth so that she cannot resist His will. The hooks God use may relate to a particular need which Russia will have — a need which can only be met by an invasion of Israel. The need could be that of oil.

Russia, then, according to our text, is to go head to head with the one who hung the stars in place. She, in fact, will go against Him when His "fury" shall come up in His face. Russia, of course, will go away from the fight with her tail between her legs. She will lose all but one sixth of her army. God will spare one sixth so that there will be those to tell the story regarding God's power. I'm sure that the one sixth who are left will concur with the following passage of scripture: "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 say his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou" (Da. 4:35).

The fact that our God will destroy five sixths of the Russian army and turn the other one sixth back, should cause you and me to be convinced that our Father is able to supply all of our needs. We should be convinced that nothing is too difficult for Him. There, in fact, is no disease that He cannot heal. There is no problem too difficult for Him to solve. You and I therefore should hear and heed the following passage of scripture: "Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass" (Psa. 37:5).

We learn from Isaiah 54:17 that no weapons formed against God's people will prosper. This fact is realized when, as our text states, the bow shall fall from

the left hand and the arrow from the right hand. The hands are the instruments of the mind. Russia, in other words, will not be able to accomplish her own will. Her plans will fall through. The strategy of the generals will be futile. "Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy bands, and the people that is with thee: I will give thee unto the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field to be devoured. Thou shalt fall upon the open field: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD" (Ezek. 39:4, 5).

Perhaps the key word in these passages is the word "fall." One who falls is one who fails. Our God has never fallen. The Lord Jesus, during His stay among us, never fell once. His purpose was fully realized. He had come to seek and to save those that the Father had given Him and we can be positive that not one of them will be lost.

Russia and her allies will plan to feast upon God's Israel. They, however, will become a feast for the ravenous birds and the beasts of the field. Is there a possibility that the events which we have been considering will not occur? Is there a possibility that Russia will invade and defeat Israel? The answer is that there will be no shadow of turning with God, since, as our text states, "I have spoken it."

I recall one morning when I was a boy that my dad advised me before he left for work that he would whip me when he returned home that evening. That was one of the most miserable days of my life, because I knew how hard he whipped and I knew that he would keep his word. He, in fact, did keep his word. God, in like manner, will keep His word. All has been predestinated and it shall be done. It is as stated in the following passage: "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" (Num. 23:19).

"And I will send a fire on Magog, and among them that dwell carelessly in the isles: and they shall know that I am the LORD" (Ezek. 39:6). The word for "isles" in this passage should be rendered "coasts." God, therefore, is not only to destroy the invading forces except for one-sixth, but He is to send a fire on their home base. He is not only to destroy the hornets, but He is to burn their nest. He, in other words, who planned to plunder others, will find that his own dwelling has been plundered. The robber will find that he, himself, has been robbed, or he that planned to set his neighbors house on fire, found that his own house had been set on fire.

"So will I make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel; and I will not let them pollute my holy name any more: and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, the Holy One in Israel" (Ezek. 39:7). God is to publicize His name in Israel. He, in fact, will do so by the devastation which He will vent upon the invading forces. He will also publicize His name

among the heathen by means of the devastation He will send upon them. We, by throwing a small rock into the water, make a few small waves. We, however, by casting a large rock into the water, make large waves. God's action against Russia and her allies will be like casting a mountain into the sea. All the large waves will be waves of honor and praise to God's holy name. The waves will reach even to the heathen lands. Their effect will be that the heathen will acknowledge that God is the "Holy One in Israel."

"Behold, it is come, and it is done, saith the Lord God; this is the day whereof I have spoken" (Ezek. 39:8).

The meaning of this passage is not that the invasion and the defeat have already occurred, but that they are as sure to occur as if they had already occurred. The events of the future are under God's complete control. There, in fact, is nothing that man can add or take away which will alter God's program for the ages to come. It is as stated in the following passages: "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me. Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it" (Isa. 46:9-11). "And they that dwell in the cities of Israel shall go forth, and shall set on fire and burn the weapons, both the shields and the bucklers, the bows and the arrows, and the handstaves, and the spears, and they shall burn them with fire seven years: So that they shall take no wood out of the field, neither cut down any out of the forests; for they shall burn the weapons with fire: and they shall spoil those that spoiled them, and rob them that robbed them, saith the Lord GOD" (Ezek. 39:9, 10).

Israel will heat their homes and run their factories for seven years by using that which the Russians and her allies will leave on the mountains, hills and fields of Israel. It will require many thousands of gallons of oil and gas for the invasion. This oil and gas will, no doubt, be utilized by Israel. They will also use the weapons for fuel.

The fact that the burning is to last for seven years seems to place the time of the invasion at the beginning of the Great Tribulation — the Great Tribulation which is to last for seven years. We are to see then that our God will completely alter Russia's plans. Russia will come to destroy Israel, but God will alter Russia's plans so that she will bring Israel enough fuel to last for seven years. Russia, today, thinks she is preparing to invade Israel, but what she is really preparing to do is to bring them a seven year supply of fuel. This fact reminds one of the following passage: "There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that

shall stand" (Prov. 19:21).

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will give unto Gog a place there of graves in Israel, the valley of the passengers on the east of the sea: and it shall stop the nose of the passengers: and there shall they bury Gog and all his multitude: and they shall call it The valley of Hammon-Gog" (Ezek. 39:11). God will cause Israel to choose the Jordan valley on the east side of the Dead Sea as the burial ground for Gog and his army. It is the custom of armies to bury their own dead, but there won't be enough men left to bury the great multitude which are to fall on the mountains, hills and fields of Israel. Israel therefore will assign a place for burial and then search the land for corpses until all are found and buried. The burial ground is to be called "Hammon-gog, or the multitude of Gog."

"And seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them, that they may cleanse the land. Yea, all the people of the land shall bury them; and it shall be to them a renown the day that I shall be glorified saith the Lord GOD" (Ezek. 39:12, 13).

It will require seven months to locate and bury the dead. The majority will probably be buried in much less than seven months, but it will take up to seven months to locate the very well concealed corpses and bury them. The locating and the burying of the dead is to be a community effort. Every eye, in fact, is to be looking for corpses or any part of a corpse. This action will be taken so that the land can be cleansed. The act of locating and burying the invaders will be a renown in Israel, that is, each person who participates will be widely acclaimed and honored. Every person, in fact, who located another dead body, will be cheered.

"And they shall sever out men of continual employment, passing through the land to bury with the passengers those that remain upon the face of the earth, to cleanse it: after the end of seven months shall they search. And the passengers that pass through the land, when any seeth a man's bone, then shall he set up a sign by it, till the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamon-gog. And also the name of the city shall be Hammonah. Thus shall they cleanse the land" (Ezek. 39:14-16).

It will require seven months, or a little over one half of a year to bury the invading forces. Then, after seven months, there will be men employed for the sole purpose of locating and burying any remaining carcasses or parts thereof. The objective will be to cleanse the land. The land will need to be cleansed because, according to Numbers 35:33, blood defiles the land.

"And, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord GOD: speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh, and drink blood. Ye shall eat the flesh

of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams of lambs, and of goats, of bullocks, all of them fatlings of Bashan" (Ezek. 39:17, 18).

There is a scripture in Psalm 145:15 which reads as follows: "The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season." The meat which God will give to the birds and to the beasts will be that of the mighty and of the princes. Their flesh and blood, in fact, will be likened unto the flesh and blood of rams, lambs, goats and bullocks of Bashan. Bashan was famous for its excellent pastures and well fed cattle.

We see from the scriptures before us that our God is to prepare a table for the feathered fowl and the beasts of the field. It will be a feast made up of the mighty and the princes. The birds and the beasts will be told to "assemble... and come" to God's table.

You will observe that this sacrifice is different in that God calls it "my sacrifice," that is, God's sacrifice which He will sacrifice for the birds and the animals. Russian generals, captains, etc., yea, those who have learned well the art of war, will find that God has out maneuvered them. They, in fact, who thought to drain the blood from God's Israel, will find that birds and beasts are feasting on their blood while Israel goes about their daily tasks.

The counsel of the Russians and her allies will be based upon years and years of schooling. Their equipment will be the result of intense testing. God, however, will bring their counsel to nought. It is as stated in the following passages: "The LORD bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought; he maketh the devices of the people of none effect. The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations. Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD; and the people whom he hath chosen for His own inheritance" (Psa. 33:10-12).

"Thus shall ye be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and with all men of war, saith the LORD GOD" (Ezek. 39:20).

We see that God is definitely against Russia. He is against him because they are against Him and His people. The Scythians (the progenitors of modern Russia) were a nomadic people of a blood thirsty nature. They, in fact, sacrificed one out of every one hundred prisoners to their god. They even drank the blood of their enemies and made vases of their skulls and doilies of their scalps.

A Red conspirator once said: "Brethren, I come to announce unto you a new Gospel, which must penetrate unto the very ends of the world... the old world must be destroyed and replaced by a new one... the lie must be stamped out and give way to truth... the first lie is God, the second lie is right..."

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EZEKIEL

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and when you have freed your minds from the fear of God and from that childish respect for the fiction of right, then all the remaining chains that bind you, and which are called science, civilization, property, marriage, mortality and justice, will snap asunder like threads... let your own happiness be your only law."

God, then, is against Russia and will serve them on His table because of their ideologies. He is also against them and will serve them on His table because they are against His people. It is as stated in the following passage: "and curse him that curseth thee" (Gen. 12:3). "And I will set my glory among the heathen, and all the heathen shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon them. So the house of Israel shall know that I am the LORD their God from that day and forward" (Ezek. 39:21, 22).

The might of Russia will have been publicized and feared around the world before their invasion of Palestine. All nations however will observe God's judgment and the hand which He will lay upon them. The heathen nations therefore will be convinced that God is truly Israel's God; and that He is their protector. Israel will not only know that God delivered them, but they will know that He is "the Lord their God from that day forward."

"And the heathen shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity: because they trespassed against me, therefore hid I my face from them, and gave them into the hand of their enemies: so fell they all by the sword. According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions have I done unto them, and hid my face from them" (Ezek. 39:23, 24).

The above facts are confirmed by the following passages: "Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear... For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in" (Rom. 11:20-25).

"Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel, and will be jealous for my holy name: After that they have borne their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against me, when they dwelt safely in their land, and none made them afraid. When I have brought them again from the people, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations; Then shall they know that I am the LORD their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen: but I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there. Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out

my Spirit upon the House of Israel, saith the Lord GOD" (Ezek. 39:25-29).

CHURCH

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do we work? By what authority do we work?

If a certain company sends out a representative to you, how can he prove that he represents that company? He must have a means of identifying himself as such. He must have properly authorized credentials, for if he does not, his work is in doubt. Suspicion and fear is aroused and caution refuses him entrance into your home for he has in no wise proven he is sent under authority. Likewise, who would be so foolish as to allow another to perform surgery on him that has never proven himself a physician? Or would you allow someone to defend you in court who knew nothing of the law? What I am seeking to emphasize is that man does not operate the systems of the world without seeking to insure that those given charge have the proper qualifications, authority, and ability. In all aspects of life this is so, except in the field of religion. The world is careless in this, the gravest and most sincere of all situations, and as a result is unconcerned for their own souls, spiritual well being, and what is right, proper and true. Even those who profess Christianity care not for the commands of Christ, the proper and true worship of Him. The "church of your choice" and "worship to the dictates of conscience" has never been the command of the Lord Jesus Christ. Such statements and thoughts as these are unscriptural, Christ denying, self-serving doctrines proceeding from the very mouth of Satan. Such attitudes as these were in the very heart of Adam as he sewed his fig leaves, and in Cain as he brought the works of his own hands from a cursed earth before God. God rejected their methods, coverings and offerings because they were of their own choice.

"Attend the church of your choice" is the supposed theme of religious liberty for America. But in reality it is man shaking his clenched fist towards heaven and proclaiming, "my will, my will be done!" Never, but among the sound in doctrine is it said, "attend the church Christ established." But rather, by the masses it is said, "do not see Christ as the One who has all power given unto Him." Freedom of worship is indeed one of the great blessings of America for the true church, but also it is a curse to our land, for it has caused the land to reek with the stench of idolatry; idolatry in man's self-will, works salvation, image and man worship. All totally contrary to the Word of God and the express commands and will of the Lord Jesus Christ.

There is yet another view to worshipping to the "dictates of one's own choice." Let us consider, beloved, that salvation is described as a "new birth," and a new child of God is then a "babe in Christ." What mother would bring forth a child and immediately abandon it to seek its own way? Yet such is what is promoted today in the spiritual aspect by the mystical body and universal church people. The idea is not only ridiculous and absurd, but the very thought of it is horrifying. In the religious realm, the idea as applied to a

new babe in Christ is most acceptable. That attitude is none other than the "blind leading the blind!" The idea of the "church of your choice" is direct rebellion against the Word of God. It is saying that Christ is not Lord over you after all! It is saying to Christ, "we will not have you to reign over us. You may save us, but you will not lead us!"

Acts 10:36 declares Christ "Lord of All." Again in Matthew 28:18 He declares, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." In Revelation 1:11, 18 He tells us, "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last... and have the keys of hell and death." Are these not sure and certain declarations of His Lordship over all things? Many speak of making Christ "Lord of your life" but refuse to obey His smallest word Ephesians 1:22 speaks concerning the Lord Jesus Christ and tells us that the heavenly Father "gave him to the head over all things to the church." Any diligent and faithful student of the Word of God is aware that this or any verse that uses "Ekklesia" (trans. church) in no wise refers to a mystical body or universal church. Any honest student of the Word of God knows that the church spoken of here is a local, visible gathering of Baptized believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. This church, the church which Christ established, is the church over which He is head. The local visible church alone is the "body of Christ." A body which is totally subject to its Head in all things, since it is the Head that governs and not the body. The human body receives direction from its head and obeys the commands of the head. The example is quite clear and easy to follow if many would but put away the commands and doctrines of men. The church established by Christ during His personal ministry is the church of His choice. It is where the babe in Christ receives his substance and where the aged in Christ come to feast on His Word. Yet the diet must be proper, and it must be true.

If it is to be the "church of your choice," if it is to be that you will rebel against the Word of God and join with man made churches, why then did the Lord Jesus Christ establish His own? Was it so that we might have a better choice? Was it so that we could choose His or man's at our whims? I think and know not! The Word of God declares that Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it. His personal, local visible institution meant so much to Him that He gave His very life for it. He tells us as He told His disciples this sure promise, "I will build my church." He did just that during His own personal ministry. The Catholics, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Methodists, Mormons, Russelites, Cambellites, Pentecostals, and so on were not even heard of at this founding of the true church. But a Baptist had already come and gone and all the apostles had been his disciples first. John the Baptist believed fully in the church Christ established for it was his divinely ordained mission to prepare a people for the Lord. Christ gathered these people together unto Himself as Baptists, for there were no others who had the right nor authority from God to baptize except John and the Apostles. And to this hour none others have the right or authority to baptize except

true Baptists. If Billy Graham, who claims to be a Baptist, followed the example of His Master, he would not be the traitor to the Baptists that he is. Did Christ send His baptized believers back to the synagogues? No! He kept them and nourished them in His church. Christ did not teach nor believe in the "church of your choice." The same authority that He gave John the Baptist, He gave to His church. In Matthew 28:19 He first tells His church "Go ye therefore" because in v. 18 He proclaimed He had the power and authority to send them. What did He send His church to do? "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations." He commanded His church alone to carry the gospel forth. He gave the authority to none other save His own church. Luther, Calvin, and others were non-existent at this time; but the Baptists were there! What? You say Baptists did not exist then either? Was not John a Baptist preacher? Did not John baptize? Were not the apostles preachers and did they not baptize? "Go ye therefore" was not Christ's words to some universal invisible body. Christ commanded His church to go "and teach all nations." What was and is His church to teach? Modern day heresy; a social gospel which is no gospel; the exalting of man's will? In Matthew 28:20 Christ clarified what His church is to teach. "Teaching them; (i.e. the saved) to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded." The Word of God is full with the commands of Christ, and no where did He command the establishment of other churches. No where did He command to work salvation through penance, indulgences, baptismal regeneration. He established no popes priests or nuns. He sent no angels with other gospels, nor ordained women to the ministry. He built no basilicas or cathedrals, nor gave allowance to worship of his earthly mother or the apostles. He gave no command to worship or make images. He gave no authority to any to establish churches, preach the Gospel, administer the ordinances, except to His own church! None of these things commanded He. There are none who can prove otherwise. Yet there be many who speak of giving the glory to God who will not see that, if they seek to work apart from the truth, they disobey His command and that He has not sent them. Untold millions have given their very lives in order that they may obey their Lord instead of man made churches. This alone is a Biblical and historical fact to the testimony of the truths which we unworthily echo here.

Today the idea is to compromise with any to get folks saved. The only ones who truthfully seek to "get folks saved" in the scriptural manner are those churches that will preach the full truth. True Baptist churches are the only Christians who do not teach works for salvation. We, by His grace, go forth and speak of sin as utter depravity in man. We do not soften sin as little failures or certain sicknesses. We seek to see sin as our Lord saw it, and go forth with weeping. We do not go forth telling everyone that God loves them, for we have no idea whom the Lord has set His love upon since He is "angry with the wicked every day." We go forth and declare that God commandeth all men everywhere to repent and

believe the Gospel. We look for a true religious experience with fruits meet for repentance. God wrought sorrow over sin, not human emotionalism that many seek to stir up within by their long invitations and "praying through," etc. I once knew a lovely woman who professed to be saved, and when I asked her how she was saved, she said, "I walked the aisle and felt good all over." Never did she say she saw her deep need, as a sinner, for the Lord Jesus Christ. These are the kinds of Christians produced by those fishing without a license. The Lord honors His Word when His Word is honored. When His Word is obeyed it will be Spirit guided, led, and "will accomplish that whereunto he has sent it."

The sun must rise in the east and set in the west. It is obedient to the will of God for it follows the paths and laws He has established for it. The child of God who would truly serve His Lord must follow the path and command of His Lord if he is to shine in this world. It must be under His commands, His established ways, in His established church, through His Word. How can we call Him "Lord" if we do not what He commands. Search the Scriptures and see if these things are not so. May it please the Lord to bless the honest seeker.

TRIUMPH

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Triumph connotes the Victory, the victory of the crucified.

To announce that Jesus Christ was totally triumphant in all that He did will, for the most part, be acknowledged by all the redeemed. Surely, God the Son epitomized consecrated devotion and perfect adherence to the will of His Father. To contemplate less than perfection in Christ Jesus is inadmissible and should be abandoned with fervent disdain. What Jesus accomplished was immersed in perfection. Many be the devices of Satan, as he seeks to lure and draw us away from the exploits of Christ. When our hearts and desires are focused upon the excellencies of God's Son, we cannot be disappointed in the slightest manner. It is when that cancer of hell mingles his camouflaged sewage from the satanic sewer with the pure streams of Deity's Fountain that the saint staggers. Satan's aim is to lift up the elect with pride—little by little he injects self-confidence and self-satisfaction, until man becomes a self-adoring, self-advancing, self-seeking arrogant religious Pharisee.

All unregenerated people fit the qualifications just enumerated; but how pathetically sad it be that many of us, who are redeemed by the blood of Christ, are so proud of abstentions and cessations, which in our arrogance, only distort the work of Christ the Lord. If we could but remember that Christ died for the ungodly, we might not become so elated by our own Christian functions. Little do we know of the enormity of the depravity that still cleaves to our being. So permeated are we with pollution, that it is an every day practice to expel our religious convictions with self-eulogizing pride. Scrape off all the veneer and there will be realized — just rotten wood.

Much of what we call spiritual is just a vent in which we magnify our own position.

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TRIUMPH

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God help us to understand that man in his best state is altogether vanity (Psa. 39:5). Let us consider what we are by nature and practice, then it will be most desirable to advance what we are become by mercy and truth (Prov. 16:6). After rightful assessment of ourselves, even in spiritual matters, it will be most agreeable with our findings to state — man is what he is by the grace of God. "The scope of the section under consideration is to show that salvation by the deeds of the law is impossible, and that if men are to be saved at all, there must be some method of justification altogether different from that to which the human heart is so much wedded." (Commentary on Romans, William S. Plumer). We now turn our attention to "The Triumph of the Crucified."

God in His infinite wisdom desired to elevate a people, a chosen portion, a fixed number to such an exalted state that they, in finality, must be forever designated "the righteousness of God in Christ." These people whom God foreknew are the vessels of mercy that He has predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son. So radiant will be the eternal luster of the elect that the appropriate declaration of their being will reflect the victorious attributes of a glorified Christ.

Jesus Christ, by the perfect will of God, as well as His own desire to please His Father, decreed in harmony that the first love of Jehovah would die for the elect. "What shall we then say to these things? If (since) God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?... Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father" (Rom. 8:31-32 and Gal. 1:4). "Who delivered up Jesus to die? Not Judas, for money; or Pilate, for fear; not the Jews, for envy; — but the Father, for love!" ("No Condemnation in Christ Jesus," Octavius Winslow).

Human reasoning can never reconcile the death of Christ as triumph, nor is man able to ascertain how the crucified Saviour effectuated a glorified saint. Nonetheless, the only begotten Son is "the triumph of the crucified." By His death, burial, and resurrection there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting or ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Col. 2:12-15).

Jesus Christ was delivered up by His Father for the sins of His Father's elect. "...and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53:6). The holy and magnificent obedience of Christ is rendered the obedience of His chosen. We have become

the recipients and possessors of a God-righteousness which beautifies the eternal throne of the Almighty. Jesus became what we are by nature so that we might become what He is by eternal existence — infinitely holy, and imputed righteousness which has God only as the Judge of its grandeur. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (II Cor. 5:21). The only begotten Son of God was truly crucified; but who are the crucified? Yes, praise God — tis those loved by God the Father through Christ Jesus our Lord. What was done by Christ was done for His brethren and attributed to their estate. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God (Rom. 6:6-11).

In the victorious Christ, the chosen of God are dead to sin; that is "The Triumph of the Crucified," and who are the crucified? "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in

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CONFESSION

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to our own souls, to our flocks, and to our brethren; unfaithful in the pulpit, in visiting, in discipline, in the church. In the discharge of every one of the duties of our stewardship there has been grievous unfaithfulness. Instead of the special particularization of the sin reproved, there has been the vague allusion. Instead of the bold reproof, there has been the timid hint. Instead of the uncompromising condemnation, there has been the feeble disapproval. Instead of the unswerving consistency of a holy life whose uniform tenor should be a protest against the world and a rebuke of sin, there has been such an amount of unfaithfulness in our walk and conversation, in our daily deportment and intercourses with others, that any degree of faithfulness we have been enabled to manifest on the Lord's Day is almost neutralized by the want of circumspection which our weekday life exhibits.

Archbishop Ussher's examples: Few men ever lived a life so busy and so devoted to God as Ussher, Archbishop of Armagh. His learning, habits of business, station, friends, all contributed to keep his hands every moment full; and then his was a soul that seemed continually to hear a voice saying: "Redeem the time, for the days are evil." Early, too, did he begin, for at ten years of age he was hopefully converted by a sermon preached on Romans 12:1: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies of living sacrifice..." He was a painstaking, laborious preacher of the

Word for fifty-five years.

Yet hear him on his death-bed! How he clings to Christ's righteousness alone, and sees in himself, even after such a life, only sin and want. The last words he was heard to utter were about one o'clock in the afternoon, and these words were uttered in a loud voice: "But, Lord, in special forgive me my sins of omission." It was omissions, says his biographer, he begged forgiveness of with his most fervent last breath — he who was never known to omit an hour, but who employed the shred ends of his life for his great Lord and Master! The very day he took his last sickness, he rose up from writing one of his great works and went out to visit a sick woman, to whom he spoke so fitly and fully that you would have taken him to have spoken of heaven before he came there. Yet this man was oppressed with a sense of his omissions!

Reader, what think you of yourself — your undone duties, your unimproved hours, times of prayer omitted, your shrinking from unpleasant work and putting it on others, your being content to sit under your vine and fig tree without using all efforts for the souls of others? "Lord, in special forgive me my sins of omission!"

Hear the confession of Edwards, in regard both to personal and ministerial sins: "Often I have had very affecting views of my own sinfulness and vileness; very frequently to such a degree as to hold me in a kind of loud weeping, sometimes for a considerable time together, so that I have often been forced to shut myself up. I have had a vastly greater sense of my own wickedness, and the badness of my heart, than ever I had before my conversion. My wickedness, as I am in myself, has long appeared to me perfectly ineffable, swallowing up all thought and imagination. I know not how to express better what my sins appear to me to be than by heaping infinite upon infinite, and finite upon infinite, and multiplying infinite by infinite. When I look into my heart and take a view of my wickedness, it looks like an abyss infinitely deeper than hell. And yet it seems to me that my conviction of sin is exceedingly small and faint: it is enough to amaze me that I have no more sense of my sin. I have greatly longed of late for a broken heart, and to lie low before God."

2. We have been carnal and unspiritual. The tone of our life has been low and earthly. Associating too much and too intimately with the world, we have in a great measure become accustomed to its ways. Hence our tastes have been vitiated, our consciences blunted, and that sensitive tenderness of feeling which, while it turns not back from suffering yet shrinks from the remotest contact with sin, has worn off and given place to an amount of callousness of which we once, in fresher days, believed ourselves incapable.

Perhaps we can call to mind a time when our views and aims were fixed upon a standard of almost unearthly elevation, and, contrasting these with our present state, we are startled at the painful changes. And besides intimacy with the world, other causes have operated in producing this deterioration in the spirituality of our minds. The study of truth in its dogmatical more than in its devotional form has robbed it of its freshness and power; daily, hourly occupation in the routine of ministerial

labor has engendered formality and coldness; continual employment in the most solemn duties of our office, such as dealing with souls in private about their immortal welfare, or guiding the meditations and devotions of God's assembled people, or handling the sacramental symbols — this, gone about often with so little prayer and mixed with so little faith, has tended grievously to divest us of that profound reverence and godly fear which ever ought to possess and pervade us. How truly, and with what emphasis, we may say: "...I am carnal, sold under sin" (Rom. 7:14). The world has not been crucified to us, nor we unto the world; the flesh, with its members, has not been mortified. What a sad effect all this has had, not only upon our peace of soul, on our growth in grace, but upon the success of our ministry!

3. We have been selfish. We have shrunk from toil, difficulty and endurance, counting not only our lives dear unto us, but even our temporal ease and comfort. We have sought to please ourselves, instead of obeying Romans 15:2: "Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification." We have not borne "one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2). We have been worldly and covetous. We have not presented ourselves unto God as "living sacrifices," laying ourselves, our lives, our substance, our time, our strength, our faculties — our all — upon His altar. We seem, altogether to have lost sight of this self-sacrificing principle on which even as Christians, but much more as ministers, we are called upon to act. We have had little idea of anything like sacrifice at all. Up to the point where a sacrifice was demanded, we may have been willing to go, but there we stood; counting it unnecessary, perhaps calling it imprudent and unadvised, to proceed further. Yet ought not the life of every Christian, especially of every minister, to be a life of self-sacrifice and self-denial throughout, even as was the life of Him who "pleased not himself"?

4. We have been slothful. We have been sparing of our toil. We have not endured hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Even when we have been instant in season, we have not been so out of season; neither have we sought to gather up the fragments of our time, that not a moment might be thrown idly or unprofitably away. Precious hours and days have been wasted in sloth, in company, in pleasure, in idle or desultory reading, that might have been devoted to the closet, the study, the pulpit or the meeting! Indolence, self-indulgence, fickleness, flesh-pleasing, have eaten like a canker into our ministry, arresting the blessing and marring our success.

It cannot be said of us, "...for my name's sake (thou) hast laboured, and has not fainted" (Rev. 2:3). Alas! we have fainted, or at least grown "weary in well-doing." We have not made conscience of our work. We have not dealt honestly with the church to which we pledged the vows of ordination. We have dealt deceitfully with God, whose servants we profess to be. We have manifested but little of the unwearied, self-denying love with which, as shepherds, we ought to have watched over the flocks committed to our care. We have fed ourselves, and not the flock.

5. We have been cold. Even when diligent, how little warmth and glow! The whole soul is not poured into the duty, and hence it wears too often the repulsive air of routine and form. We do not speak and act like men in earnest. Our words are feeble, even when sound and true; our looks are careless, even when our words are weighty; and our tones betray the apathy which both words and looks disguise. Love is wanting, deep love, love strong as death, love such as made Jeremiah weep in secret places for the pride of Israel, and Paul speak "even weeping" of the enemies of the cross of Christ. In preaching and visiting, in counseling and reproving, what formality, what coldness, how little tenderness and affection. "Oh, that I was all heart," said Rowland Hill, "and soul, and spirit, to tell the glorious gospel of Christ to perishing multitudes!"

AFRAID TO TELL THE WHOLE TRUTH:

6. We have been timid. Fear has often led us to smooth down or generalize truths which if broadly stated must have brought hatred and reproach upon us. We have thus often failed to declare to our people the whole counsel of God. We have shrunk from reproving, rebuking and exhorting with all long-suffering and doctrine. We have feared to alienate friends, or to awaken the wrath of enemies. Hence our preaching of a free gospel has been yet more vague, uncertain and timorous. We are greatly deficient in that majestic boldness and nobility of spirit which peculiarly marked Luther, Calvin, Knox, and the mighty men of the Reformation. Of Luther it was said, "Every word was a thunderbolt."

7. We have been wanting in solemnity. In reading the lives of Howe or Baxter of Brainard or Edwards, we are in company with men who in solemnity of deportment and gravity of demeanor were truly of the apostolic school. We feel that these men must have carried weight with them, both in their words and lives. We see also the contrast between ourselves and them in respect of that deep solemnity of air and tone which made men feel that they walked with God. How deeply ought we to be abased at our levity, frivolity, flippancy, vain mirth, foolish talking and jesting, by which grievous injury has been done to souls, the progress of the saints retarded, and the world contented in its wretched vanities.

PREACHING SELF INSTEAD OF CHRIST:

8. We have preached ourselves, not Christ. We have sought applause, courted honor, been avaricious of fame and jealous of our reputation. We have preached too often so as to exalt ourselves instead of magnifying Christ, so as to draw men's eyes to ourselves instead of fixing them on Him and His cross. Nay, and have we not often preached Christ for the very purpose of getting honor to ourselves? Christ, in the sufferings of His first coming and the glory of His second, has not been the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, of all our sermons.

9. We have used words of man's wisdom. We have forgotten Paul's resolution to avoid

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the enticing words of man's wisdom, lest he should make the cross of Christ of none-effect. We have reversed his reasoning as well as his resolution, and acted as if by well-studied well-polished, well-reasoned discourses, we could so gild and beautify the cross as to make it no longer repulsive, but irresistibly attractive to the carnal eye! Hence we have often sent men home well satisfied with themselves, convinced that they were religious because they were affected by our eloquence, touched by our appeals or persuaded by our arguments. In this way we have made the cross of Christ of none effect and sent souls to hell with a lie in their right hand. Thus, by avoiding the offense of the cross and the foolishness of preaching we have had to labor in vain, and mourn over an unblest, unfruitful ministry.

10. We have not fully preached a free gospel. We have been afraid of making it too free, lest men should be led into licentiousness; as if it were possible to preach too free a gospel, or as if its freeness could lead men into sin. It is only a free gospel that can bring peace, and it is only a free gospel that can make men holy. Luther's preaching was summed up in these two points — "that we are justified by faith alone, and that we must be assured that we are justified;" and it was this that he urged his brother Brentius to preach; and it was by such free, full, bold preaching of the glorious gospel, untrammelled by works, merits, terms, conditions, and unclouded by the fancied humility of doubts, fears, uncertainties, that such blessed success accompanied his labors. Let us go and do likewise. Allied to this is the necessity of insisting on the sinner's immediate turning to God, and demanding in the Master's name the sinner's immediate surrender of heart to Christ. Strange that sudden conversions should be so much disliked by some ministers. They are the most scriptural of all conversions.

TOO LITTLE EMPHASIS ON GOD'S WORD:

11. We have not duly studied and honored the Word of God. We have given a greater prominence to man's writings, man's opinions, man's systems in our studies than to the WORD. We have drunk more out of human cisterns than divine. We have held more communion with man than God. Hence the mold and fashion of our spirits, our lives, our words, have been derived more from man than God. We must study the Bible more. We must steep our souls in it. We must not only lay it up within us, but transfuse it through the whole texture of the soul.

12. We have not been men of prayer. The spirit of prayer has slumbered amongst us. The closet has been too little frequented and delighted in. We have allowed business, study, or active labor to interfere with our closet hours. And the feverish atmosphere in which both the church and nation are enveloped has found its way into our closet, disturbing the sweet calm of its blessed solitude. Sleep, company, idle visiting, foolish talking and jesting, idle reading, unprofitable occupations,

engross time that might have been redeemed for prayer.

TIME FOR EVERYTHING BUT PRAYER:

Why is there so little anxiety to get time to pray? Why is there so little forethought in the laying out of time and employments so as to secure a large portion of each day for prayer? Why is there so much speaking, yet so little prayer? Why is there so much running to and fro, yet so little prayer? Why so much bustle and business yet so little prayer? Why so many meetings with our fellow-men, yet so few meetings with God? Why so little being alone, so little thirsting of the soul for the calm, sweet hours of unbroken solitude, when God and His child hold fellowship together as if they could never part? It is the want of these solitary hours that not only injures our own growth in grace but makes us such unprofitable members of the church of Christ, and that renders our lives useless. In order to grow in grace, we must be much alone. It is not in society — even Christian society — that the soul grows most rapidly and vigorously. In one single quiet hour of prayer it will often make more progress than in days of company with others. It is in the desert that the dew falls freshest and the air is purest. So with the soul. It is when none but God is nigh; when His presence alone, like the desert air in which there is mingled no noxious breath of man, surrounds and pervades the soul; it is then that the eye gets the clearest, simplest view of eternal certainties; it is then that the soul gathers in wondrous refreshment and power and energy.

And so it is also in this way that we become truly useful to others. It is when coming out fresh from communion with God that we go forth to do His work successfully. It is in the closet that we get our vessels so filled with blessing, that, when we come forth, we cannot contain it to ourselves but must, as by a blessed necessity, pour it out withersoever we go. We cannot say, as did Isaiah: "...My Lord, I stand continually upon the watch tower in the daytime, and I am set in my ward whole nights;" (Isa. 21:8). Our life has not been in lying-in-wait for the voice of God. "...speak LORD; for thy servant heareth..." (I Sam. 3:9), has not been the attitude of our souls, the guiding principle of our lives. Nearness to God, fellowship with God, waiting upon God, resting in God, have been too little the characteristic either of our private or our ministerial walk. Hence our example has been so powerless, our labors so unsuccessful, our sermons so meager, our whole ministry so fruitless and feeble.

SEEKING THE SPIRIT'S STRENGTH:

13. We have not honored the Spirit of God. It may be that in words we have recognized His agency, but we have not kept this continually before our eyes, and the eyes of the people. We have not given Him the glory that is due unto His name. We have not sought His teaching. His anointing — the "...unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things" (I John 2:20). Neither in the study of the Word nor the preaching of it to others have we duly acknowledged His office as the Enlightener of the understanding, the Revealer of the truth, the Testifier and glorifier of Christ. We have grieved Him by the dishonor

done to His person as the third person of the glorious Trinity; and we have grieved Him by the slight put upon His office as the Teacher, the Convincer, the Comforter, the Sanctifier. Hence He has almost departed from us, and left us to reap the fruit of our own perversity and unbelief. Besides, we have grieved Him by our inconsistent walk, by our want of circumspection, by our worldly-mindedness, by our unholiness, by our solemnity, by a life and conversation so little in conformity with the character of a disciple or the office of ambassador.

An old Scottish minister thus writes concerning himself: "I find a want of the Spirit — of the power and demonstration of the Spirit — in praying, speaking, and exhorting; that whereby men are mainly convinced, and whereby they are a terror and a wonder unto others, so as they stand in awe of them; that glory and majesty whereby respect and reverence are procured; that whereby Christ's sermons were differentiated from those of the Scribes and Pharisees; which I judge to be the beams of God's majesty and of the Spirit of holiness breaking out and shining through His people. But my foul garments are on! Woe is me! The crown of glory and majesty is fallen off my head: my words are weak and carnal, not mighty; whereby contempt is bred. No remedy for this but humility, self-loathing and a striving to maintain fellowship with God."

TOO LITTLE IMITATION OF CHRIST:

14. We have had little of the mind of Christ. We have come far short of the example of the apostles, much more of Christ; we are far behind the servants, much farther behind the Master. We have had little of the grace, the compassion, the meekness, the lowliness, the love of God's eternal Son. His weeping over Jerusalem is a feeling in which we have but little heartfelt sympathy. His "seeking of the lost" is little imitated by us. His unwearied "teaching of the multitudes" we shrink from as too much for flesh and blood. His days of fasting, His nights of watchfulness and prayer, are not fully realized as models for us to copy. His counting not His life dear unto Him that He might glorify the Father and finish the work given Him to do, is but little remembered by us as the principle on which we are to act. Yet surely we are to follow His steps; the servant is to walk where His Master has led the way; the undershepherd is to be what the Chief Shepherd was. We must not seek rest or ease in a world where He whom we love had none.

MOURNER'S BENCH

by Joseph M. Wilson

For many years sound Baptists have wondered what a mourner's bench is good for. At Grace Baptist Church, we have found an answer. When we moved into our present building, we found a nice carpeted mourner's bench left by the previous occupants. We could not long leave that there, so I preached this sermon shortly after, and at the close of the service, the men removed the mourner's bench from the building. (Taking idols out, you might call it). However, we soon found a good use for this demoted mourner's bench.

There is a ditch in front of our church, and one muddy day we placed the mourner's bench across the ditch for people to walk across, without getting in the mud and water of the ditch. Did I say demoted? I should have said promoted, for now this piece of wood, instead of being an idol god, was serving a useful God-honoring purpose. I trust you will agree, that, here at last is a good use for a mourner's bench.

Now, the mourner's bench is a very popular institution among a large class of religious people. So popular, that many of them think there is no salvation apart from a mourner's bench. Many look on it as dangerous, modernistic heresy not to have a mourner's bench. It is never popular to oppose that which is popular. It

brings reproach and persecution upon one. But, beloved, the preacher's obligation is to preach the truth of God's Word, no matter what popular idol of the masses he must oppose. No matter what it might cost us in fame, acceptance with the crowds, or financially, we are to preach the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. So let us look awhile at the heresy of the mourner's bench.

I. The mourner's bench is not old fashioned. This is the popular terminology of the religious world. How many times have we heard of "The old-fashioned mourner's bench." Now this is nothing but the language of ignorance. No man who knows the Word of God or the history of the mourner's bench could ever call it old-fashioned. In fact, one of the reasons I oppose the mourner's bench is because it is not old fashioned enough.

It is not as old as the Scriptures. Beloved, Baptists are an old-fashioned people. They insist on getting their doctrines and practices from the Word of God. Anything that is not as old as the Bible is just not old-fashioned enough for Baptists.

"And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed" (Acts 13:48).

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31).

The Scripture says nothing at all about the mourner's bench as the way to be saved. These verses teach that some have been ordained to eternal life, and that they will believe. When Paul was asked what to do to be saved, he did not say "Go to the mourner's bench and pray through;" but "believe." Now this is the Bible way of salvation. We might call it the old-fashioned Bible way. It is surely much older than the mourner's bench. There is not one verse of Scripture anywhere that even remotely suggests, infers, or implies that we should use, have or countenance a mourner's bench. Until its advocates come forth with some Bible proof, sound Baptists will continue to reject and oppose the mourner's bench. The mourner's bench is a recent innovation. It was started by man and is over 1700 years too young to be the New Testament way of leading sinners to Christ.

II. The mourner's bench is often confused with the Old Testament altar. Sinners are invited to come to an "old-fashioned altar of prayer." Brethren, the Old Testament altar was not a place of prayer — a place where sinners wept

their way through to God — but a place of sacrifice. It was where the slain animal, or part thereof, was burned as an offering to God. The New Testament fulfillment of the altar is not a mourner's bench, but the cross where Christ died for the sins of His elect people. It is true, that one must come in faith to trust in the death of Christ and the Christ who died — it is true that "The way of the cross leads home" — but this has nothing at all to do with the mourner's bench. People who use this terminology and try to connect man's mourner's bench with God's altar are either inexcusably ignorant or deliberate deceivers.

III. Let us notice some of the many heresies that are the foundation of the mourner's bench. I tell you frankly and emphatically, that no man can believe the truth about how God saves sinners and believe in the mourner's bench.

The mourner's bench heresy is based upon a denial of the Biblical doctrine of total depravity. The Bible teaches again and again that man is a totally depraved creature — that from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot there is no soundness in him — that every faculty and every part of man is filthy, vile, wicked and utterly depraved in God's sight.

"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1).

Now man, in his total depravity, is utterly dead — yes, even as dead as a door nail — as far as the things of God are concerned. Now, how can a dead man come to a mourner's bench when such coming implies that he has a thirst, a hunger for, and a desire to seek God's salvation? Who ever saw a dead man that was hungry and thirsty? If we believe what the Bible teaches about the lost man's nature and condition, we would know that it is utterly useless to invite him to come to a place to seek salvation. Actually, if the mourner's bench was what it claims to be, the sinner would have to have life before he would come to the bench and thus would not need to come. If the sinner had what he needed to cause him to come to what the mourner's bench claims to be, then he would not need to come; so either way the mourner's bench would be useless. The preacher who preaches and practices the mourner's bench just does not believe in total depravity, no matter what he claims about it.

The mourner's bench heresy is based upon a denial of the Biblical teaching that God heareth not sinners.

"Now we know that God heareth not sinners" (John 9:31). "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord" (Prov. 15:8).

These verses clearly teach that God does not hear sinners. That if the sinner does go to the mourner's bench and stay ever so long, and cry out ever so loud, and all the congregation go and help him, still God will not go contrary to His own Word — He will not hear. Prayer is the peculiar privilege of the child of God. It is not the privilege of all men. Are we going to say that a man can reject Jesus Christ, trample on the blood of the Son of God, rebel against God's revealed way of salvation; and yet be saved in a way contrary to that of God's appointing. If man believes in Christ, he is already saved and

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MOURNERS

(Continued from Page 10)

does not need a mourner's bench. If he doesn't believe in Christ, he can stay at the mourner's bench until the last trump sounds, and then go to Hell. No amount of time or intensity of effort at the mourner's bench will avail for the Christ rejector, and the one who receives Christ is already saved without a mourner's bench. Those few Scriptures that the advocates of "praying through" use, simply teach that prayer is the evidence and result of God-given faith, and not the procuring cause of said faith. This truth that God hears not sinners should stop you from teaching your unsaved children to say their prayers or ask the blessing. Teach them that they are lost, totally depraved sinners, and that God will not hear their prayers until they are born-again children of God. Urge them to trust Jesus Christ as their Saviour, but do not teach them to pray until they are saved. After all, prayer is one of the very greatest of the privileges of a child of God and if one can have this privilege without salvation, what is the use of being born again?

The mourner's bench heresy is based upon a false impression of God's love for His elect. The impression given by the mourner's bench is that God doesn't want to save a person, but if the sinner will pray long enough and hard enough and get others to help him, that they will overcome God's reluctance and get God willing to save man. Now, beloved, if this is not heresy, what in the world is it? God has an elect people. The Holy Spirit using the Word at the appointed time gives the elect the desire to be saved and causes him to trust in the Saviour. The sinner's desire to be saved is the result of the love of God and the work of the Spirit. Certainly, God will eternally save every one in whom He places that desire. There can be no greater heresy as to how God saves a sinner than that which is clearly implied in the mourner's bench. The mourner's bench is a slam on the character of God Almighty. The man who believes in the mourner's bench has a false opinion of the God of the Bible.

The mourner's bench heresy is based upon the idea that others can help in a man's salvation. How often the believers in the congregation are urged to come and help the man pray through. And the preacher gets very angry if others will not follow his heresy and confirm the sinner in his error and help the poor sinner pray through. But, beloved, salvation is a matter between the individual and the Saviour. I can witness to a man. I can pray for him. That's all I can do. I can't save or help save him.

The mourner's bench heresy is based upon the idea that works can save or help save the soul. That if a man will work long enough and hard enough he will get saved. Brother, mourner's benchism is not a thing in the world but works for salvation. And sometimes it is hard work. I have seen them hollering, sweating and laboring, spending much time, going back again and again until finally they felt like they were saved. "Hold on, sister, don't let go." "Promise God that if He will save you, you will do anything." "Let go, sister, just let go." "Do you feel like you are saved?"

What rubbish! What heresy!

The mourner's bench heresy is based upon a denial of salvation by grace. Beloved, a man is saved by the sovereign, predestinating, effectual, eternal grace of God. Grace only and grace completely, is the Bible way of salvation. No man who believes in a mourner's bench believes in salvation by grace. He may talk about it, and he may sing about it, but he does not believe it. In fact, when a church puts in a mourner's bench, they ought to tear "Amazing Grace" out of their song books and Ephesians 2:8, plus many others out of their Bibles.

The mourner's bench leads men to trust in something other than Christ and His finished work on the cross for salvation. Now this is a sure road to hell. Christ is the one and only way of salvation. Anything that comes between the sinner and Christ and leads the sinner away from Christ is certainly not of God and is an exceedingly wicked and dangerous heresy.

The mourner's bench gives a false basis of assurance for salvation. "Do you feel like you are saved?" This is the stock question around the mourner's bench. Who among us can tell exactly how it feels to be saved? What verses can we use to show the characteristics of that feeling that one is saved that would distinguish between a true and a false feeling. How ridiculous? Our assurance is based upon the Word of God.

"These things have I written to you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life" (1 John 5:13).

Yes, we believe in assurance. Thank God for assurance. We are not Hardshells with their "hope so." But our assurance is based on the sure, eternal, unchangeable Word of God, and not on changeable feelings of the flesh.

The mourner's bench robs God of the glory that is due Him in salvation. God says that His glory He will not give to another, and He surely is not going to give it to a piece of wood called the mourner's bench. God will save a man in such a way as to get all the glory or God will let man go to Hell. These ways devised by man are all planned so as to give all or part of the glory to man. This is the sure evidence that they are not of God, for whatsoever God does, He does for His own glory. How men glory in the experience they had at the mourner's bench! How they sing and testify about the mourner's bench! This robbing God of His glory is sure evidence that the mourner's bench is not of God, but is a wicked heresy of man.

The mourner's bench will lead many into Hell while they trust in a false god for salvation. The man who is trusting his mourner's bench experience is not trusting in Christ and is not saved. Yes, the mourner's bench is an idol god. Just as much so as the idols of heathen lands to which the heathen pray. In my Bible reading today, I read, "Thou shalt not put a stumbling block before the blind" (Lev. 19:14). How wicked it would be to see a blind man walking along and deliberately put a stumbling block before him. This is exactly what every preacher and practitioner of the mourner's bench does. The sinner is blind. The false preacher puts before this blind sinner the mourner's bench and the blind sinner stumbles over that into Hell unless enlightened by

God's sovereign and irresistible grace. Mourner's benchism is a clear case of "The blind leading the blind."

What should true believers do relative to this heresy? They certainly should see to it that the mourner's bench is removed from their churches. If you are a sound Baptist, you should seek to have such a heresy removed from your church. If you can't get this done, you should leave such church and find one where this heresy is not practiced. No sound Baptist should be a member of a church with a mourner's bench in it. But more than this, I wonder if you are a sound Baptist if you are a member of such a church. I wonder if you should remain in such a church even if they removed the idol god, because I wonder how sound they could have been if they had it, to start with. Sound Baptists should take a strong stand against this heresy. We should use strong language and not keep silent even though it costs us dearly. Let Rome and her harlot daughters have their idol gods fashioned by the hands of men, but let Baptists ever be true to God's precious Word. Sound Baptists should take a strong, uncompromising stand for the doctrines of God's sovereign saving grace. Mourner's bench heresy cannot survive with the strong preaching of God's grace. One or the other will soon be gone. God bless you all.

—Copied from an old T.B.E.

BOOK REVIEW

We have a book in our book store. It is the "Home Bible Study Commentary." It is by James M. Gray. I have long studied and appreciated some of James Gray's writings. He excels in a survey type of Bible teaching — one which appeals greatly to me. This book is a brief — very brief commentary on the whole Bible. Of course, there is no such thing as a complete commentary on the Bible in one volume. However, the author does give much help as he goes through the whole Bible in this one book. It would be a good book to use in just getting fairly well acquainted with the Bible. It is of a devotional and practical nature. I think that we need to help our people get acquainted with the whole Bible. I find a great neglect of this in the pulpit and in the pew. This book would help one in this area of Christian knowledge and teaching. This is a paperback book of over 400 large pages. It sells for \$12.95. Order from our book store, and remember that the profit goes into our ministries.

We have in our book store a paper back book of over 150 pages. It sells for \$7.95. It is "Classic Sermons on Faith and Doubt" compiled by Warren W. Weirsbe. Surely these two subjects are of great interest to the child of God. We all have our

difficulties with doubting. We all come short in the living, triumphant, victorious faith we ought to have in our life and service for the Lord. These sermons are by different authors on this matter, and are designed to be of great help and encouragement to those of a doubting cast of mind, and those of little faith. Order from our book store, and remember that the profit goes into our ministries.

We have a book available in our book store on a subject that is very important for our day. It is a paper back of over 125 pages. It sells for \$5.95. It is "Let The Bible Speak About Tongues." The fact of the matter is that the gift of tongues are not for our day. No one today ever has, does, or will speak in tongues in the Biblical sense of that special gift. All so-called tongues speaking of our day is of the devil, or is put on by man in a hysterical exhibition of the flesh. This book does a good job of dealing with this question that is surely an important one of our day. In this day of the Charismatics, one needs to know the truth on this subject so as to not be deceived by these heretics. To be fortified with and in the truth is the greatest defense against the false. Order from our book store, and remember that the profit goes into our ministries.

THE SAME SCRIPTURES

by Hubert Sapp

Text: Acts. 8:35:

Here we have the account of Philip going to the Ethiopian eunuch as he was commissioned by our Lord. In verse 30 we see that the Lord's work requires haste. Philip ran thither to him. Also in this verse we have Philip asking the eunuch a question, "understandest thou what thou readest?" In verse 34, we have the eunuch asking Philip a question, "of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself or of some other man?" Then we come to our text, verse 35, "Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." This man had just left Jerusalem, the place of worship. No doubt he had heard some of the truth about the Lord, yet it would seem that the truth was not made very clear unto him. The natural man has no desire for the things of God. This is set forth many places in God's Word. Yet on the other hand we as God's preachers should be very clear in giving out the Gospel so that we don't confuse those who hear us. I like Philip's way of dealing with this man. "He began at the same Scripture." This, in my mind, is the best way. Now let's see how Philip is going to deal with this sinner. Go with me to the 53rd chapter of Isaiah. Here we can see Philip at work, preaching unto him Jesus.

Verse 1: The Searching One. "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" The eunuch was reading this chapter and trying to understand it. This is more than many are doing today. The trouble nowadays is that most people wait for the preacher or the Sunday School teacher to do all their searching for them, and then they don't believe half of what they hear. Preacher: don't ever think that your people swallow all of your report. I have talked to some church members who have sat under sound preaching



Hubert L. Sapp

for years, but they don't know the first thing about what their church or pastor believes. Make it plain, spell it out if you have to; but make it clear. Don't take it for granted that your people are taking it all in. They have not searched it out as you have. So make it clear, and drive it home to them if you can. Don't preach over their heads.

Verse 2: The Sensitive One. In this verse Philip explains to the eunuch about the tender plant. No doubt he tells the eunuch about the virgin birth of Christ. This is very important. If Christ were not virgin born, then he was no better than any other man. One may not have to understand all about the virgin birth to be saved, but you can rest assured, one cannot deny this great truth and be saved.

Verse 3: The Sorrowing One. Here we are told that He was a man of sorrows. You will never read anywhere in the Bible that Christ ever laughed. It is true that we are told in the book of Proverbs 1:26 that there is a day coming when God will laugh at those who don't obey him. But surely our Lord was a man of sorrow. He came into his own, and his own received him not (John 1:11). His own world, his own nation, his own city, his own people, and they wanted nothing to do with him. On one occasion Christ said, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His

head. This sounds like man of sorrow to me.

Verse 4: The Smitten One. This verse tells us that he was smitten of God. It's one thing to be smitten by an enemy, but it is something else to be smitten by God himself. Yet we know this was God's plan before the foundation of the world. We will have more to say about this as we move on through this chapter.

Verse 5: The Suffering One. He was wounded for our transgressions. Philip told the eunuch no doubt about the cat-of-nine tails they used on His back. They pierced His hands and feet. They speared Him in the side. They marred His face. We are told in Isaiah 52:14 that His visage was so marred more than any man and His form more than the sons of men. Not only did He suffer from a physical point of view, but He also spiritually. My God, My God why has thou forsaken me, He said.

Verse 6: The Sin Bearing One. The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. I believe that all the sins of God's Elect were laid upon Him — past, present, and future. He was the true Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Verse 7: The Silent One. Here we are told that He opened not His mouth. Think of what He could have said, I am the Alpha and Omega, the first and last, the beginning and the end, the great "I Am," the lily of the valley, the bright and morning star, the rose of Sharon, the Lamb of God, the way, the truth, the life. Our Lord could have said much more, but he opened not his mouth. For this

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SCRIPTURE

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cause came he into the world. Just as Christ was silent here, so will every lost person be put to silence when he stands before the Lord of Glory.

Verse 8: The Stricken One. The stroke of death was upon him. We see him stricken for the transgressions of God's people. We don't think much about it when a person up in years is cut off. We say he has lived a full life, and his time is come to go. But here we have our Lord being smitten, stricken, and cut off out of the land of the living at a very early age; only around 33 years old. Yet, when we stop to think about it, we rejoice knowing that it was for us that he was laying down his life.

Verse 9: The Sincere One. Here we are told that there was no deceit in His mouth. There is one thing for sure, there was no foolishness about our Lord. He came to do a job, and He did it. He did not try to do something and fail. You and I set out to do many things and fail, but not our Lord. When He said it is finished in John 19:30, He meant that He had paid the full price for the sins of the elect; and nothing could be added to it. Jesus never fails. This was a motto my mother had on the wall just above my bed, and it would glow in the night so you could read it. Many times in the night I would wake up and read that motto. It was true then, and it is true now. He could do everything but fail, thank God.

Verse 10: The Submissive One. Here we read that it pleased the Lord to bruise Him. Christ said, "I came not to do my own will, but the will of Him that sent me." Again Christ said, "I do always those things that please the Father." We know this is true, because there came a voice from heaven, saying, "this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

Verse 11: The Satisfied One. Here we are told that He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied. I believe that on the cross the Lord could see all those for whom He was dying. We have already seen that there is no failing with our Lord. How could it be said, He shall be satisfied, if even one of those for whom He was dying should perish? I have no trouble at all in believing that our Lord will have preeminence over souls. John saw a great multitude which no man could number of all nations, and kindreds, people, and tongues standing before the throne clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands.

Verse 12: The Successful One. Here we are told that He made intercession for the transgressors. Thank God He did or we would still be in our sins. Now we can see how Philip has preached to the eunuch. What were the results? Look with me back in Acts 8:35-37, "Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." You can't tell it like it is, if you don't believe it like it was. Stay with the same Scripture.

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TRIUMPH

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newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection" (Rom. 6:4, 5).

By the infinite work of a righteous Saviour, the selected of God will be victorious over the flesh. Yet for a time, we are in the flesh. It was Jesus, however, who condemned sin in the flesh. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:" (Rom. 8:2, 3). This is "The Triumph of the Crucified."

Through the sufferings of the eternal Son, the incarnate God learned obedience. "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered... And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Heb. 5:8, Phil. 2:8).

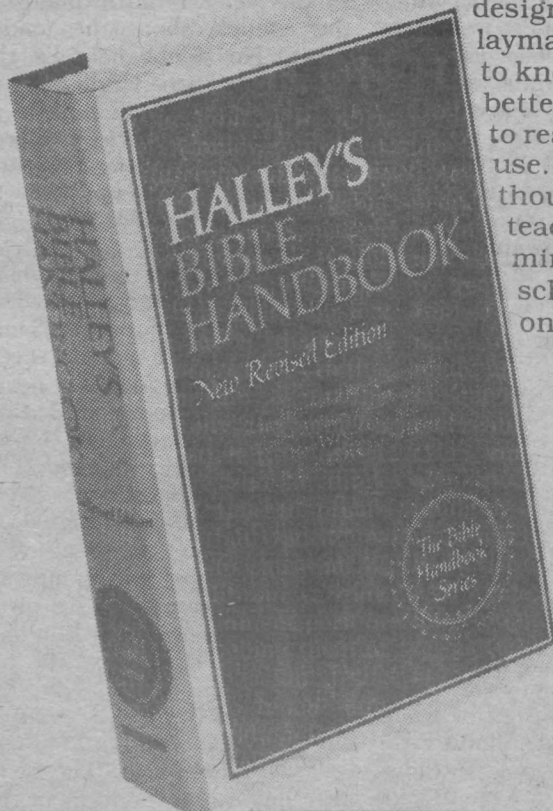
Since Jesus Christ did suffer, we, the redeemed, are consigned to suffer for His sake that we might share the glory of His perfect obedience. "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Rom. 8:17). The sufferings of the saints are adduced as glorious, for they are a conforming tool of God which shall ultimately be realized in the image of Christ. "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;" (Phil. 3:7-10). This is "The Triumph of the Crucified."

Q: What's the last word in Bible study guides?

A: Halley's!

Halley's Bible Handbook contains more Bible facts and information than any other book its size. It contains notes and commentary on the Bible Books, an outline of early Church History, archeological information, maps, photographs and illustrations. Plus many other useful features. *Halley's Bible Handbook* is not

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\$8⁹⁵

SOMETHING ABOUT THE BUTTERFLY AND THE SAVED

The butterfly begins with a planted egg
On the milkweed plant it is laid.
The egg is a caterpillar so very small
But, it grows enough to begin to crawl.
Then up down the stems and leaves it goes
It eats and eats and grows and grows.
Until one day when the time is just right
It spews forth silk whether it is day or night.
With a watchful vigil you can see
The caterpillar changed into a cocoon completely.
With its silk it becomes attached to its stronghold
And weaves itself into a cocoon that is sealed with a thread of gold.
Then for several days while inside the cocoon
Its wings grow furled around it, to emerge soon.
After its appointed days of growing are done
The cocoon opens and a butterfly opens its wings in the sun.
Then it seeks a limb or a leaf to hold onto until it dries
And then in all of its beauty away it flies.

Just as God performs His work from the caterpillar to the butterfly
He performs His work within us, on no other work I can rely.
We are soul, spirit, and body if we live
Planted in the womb to begin with.
There we are nurtured and grow within
All being known to God, before we knew Him.
A natural birth, coming forth with water, too
Then we grow body and soul until we're given spiritual birth anew.
To everything there is a time and a season
But, sometimes man wants a reason.
Can you explain the process of becoming a butterfly?
Neither can I except for what has met my eye.
So is the process of us becoming spiritual, it cannot be seen
And our lives should be counted worthy of the redeemed.
And when it comes the time for us to die
We will leave our body here and our spirit will fly.
Crossing the River Jordan where Christ our outstretched limb awaits
He will welcome us and carry us inside Heaven's gates.
Janie Turner

ANNOUNCEMENT

Elder Johnny Pruitt has resigned his church in Ellaville, Ga. He is available for pulpit supply, special preaching appointments, and especially for the pastorate wherever the Lord might open the door. I feel personally that Johnny is a very fine, sound, and able preacher. I have greatly enjoyed fellowship with him and hearing him preach the Word. He can be reached in care of Ruth Pruitt, Rt. 1, Box 138, Gallagher, WV. 25803. Or call him at (304) 595-1470.

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