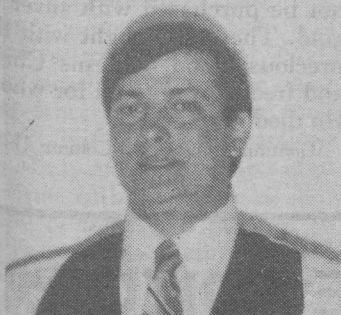


## WHY A CHRISTIAN SHOULD NOT OBSERVE EASTER

by Doug Newell  
South Shore, Ky.

Galatians 4:8-11. "Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. But now, after that ye have



Doug Newell

known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain" "Here comes Peter Cottontail, hopping down the bunny trail. Hippity, hoppity, Easter's on its way." Yes, below-

(Continued on Page 8 Column 2)

## GOD'S PREDESTINATION

by Raymond Waugh  
Midland, Texas

We are speaking on the subject of "God's Predestination" — not philosophical determinism, as some would say. Most specifically, we speak concerning God's Scriptural Predestination.

I realize that this is a bad word in many peoples' minds. I was fortunate in that I went to one of America's foremost Presbyterian Universities. There, we had some professors from the "old school" and some



Raymond Waugh

from the "new school." Consequently, anyone who so desired could become involved in discussions and seminars on "Predestination" and other subjects that relate to "The Doctrines of Grace!"

(Continued on Page 4 Column 5)

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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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## EVANGELISM, CALVINISM, AND THE PREACHING OF CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON

by James Stuart Murray

Charles Haddon Spurgeon was a PREACHER. From the 1850's to the 1890's, he regularly spoke to thousands each Lord's Day. Coming to London in April 1854 (when only 19 years of age), he accepted a call from the congregation of the New Park Street Baptist Chapel, where he found a faithful but weary group of less than two hundred (200) attenders in a church building which would seat 1200. Within a year the building was filled to capacity and plans were made to enlarge it; meanwhile the regular evening meetings of the congregation were moved to Exeter Hall which seated 4,000 and allowed standing room for an additional 1,000. When the owners of that establishment complained that they could not be continually renting the place to members of one Baptist congregation, the New Park Street Church, in October of 1856, sought and acquired the Sunday morning use of the Royal Surrey Gardens Music Hall — the largest available building in London, seating as many as 10,000 persons. In that same month of October the members of New Park Street held their first meeting for consideration of the erection of "a great Tabernacle," which was to seat 5,000 persons. The foundation stone of that great building was laid on August 16, 1859. One biographer writes of the opening of the Tabernacle as

follows:

The opening services were commenced on March 25, 1861, and were continued without interruption for five weeks. As a result of all these efforts the great Tabernacle, to hold five thousand people, was free from debt at the end of the special services, and \$155,000 of free-will offerings had been poured into the hands of the treasurer. Since then various improvements have



Charles Haddon Spurgeon

been made in the audience-room, and, using every facility modern invention could suggest, seats have been provided for 5,500 persons and standing room for 1,000 more — total, 6,500.

In fact, some \$31,000 had been raised, of which more than \$11,000 was a result of offerings from speaking engagements of the Pastor. The work at the Metropolitan Tabernacle progressed by leaps and bounds,

and by 1864, only ten years after the beginning of his ministry, Spurgeon had received into membership through baptism some 3,569 souls. For the next two decades, Spurgeon spoke morning and evening to capacity crowds in this great Metropolitan Tabernacle.

In addition to his own congregation, Spurgeon did his best to assist other churches that requested his services. During the early years of his ministry, it was not uncommon for Spurgeon to preach every day of the week, at times 10 sermons in 7 days. He covered the length and breadth of southern England, made regular and frequent summer trips to Scotland, and even travelled in continental Europe. Moreover, his sermons were published in the British Isles, in Europe, in North America, in Africa, and in Australia. Thousands looked to his messages as the means by which God's saving grace was applied to their hearts. His energy and zeal were a marvel to behold. From the first Sunday in 1855, he published one sermon a week in tract form for more than twenty-seven (27) years. Today over 2,000 of Charles Haddon Spurgeon's sermons are in print, to be found mainly in the New Park Street Pulpit and the Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit series respectively. Truly he was a witness who, by the help of the Spirit, preached in Jerusalem, in

(Continued on Page 9 Column 1)

## THE DOCTRINES OF SOVEREIGN GRACE

by Wil Bang  
Cary, N.C.

"But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me; and many such things are with him" (Job 23:13, 14). "He



Wil Bang

shall choose our inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob whom he loved. Selah" (Psa. 47:4). "To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (I Peter 1:4). "There are many devices in a man's

(Continued on Page 6 Column 1)

## THE FIRST CAUSE OF DIVORCE

by Bob Belanger  
Goose Creek, S.C.

"The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him. Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? And he



Bob Belanger

answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they

(Continued on Page 3 Column 2)

## The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

### WHITE IN THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB

"And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said unto me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (Rev. 7:13-14).

I have chosen the last seven words of v. 14 for my subject: "white in the blood of the Lamb." The 7th chapter of Revelation is a paranthetic portion dealing with the saved of the tribulation. Vss. 1-8 tell us of 144,000 Jews, 12,000 from each tribe, who will be saved early in the tribulation. These saved Jews will be sealed by the Lord, and they will be not only

saved, but also preserved physically through the tribulation and will enter the Millennium in their natural bodies. I believe that they will constitute the "brethren" at the judgment of the nations in Matthew 25:31-46. Vss. 9-17 tell us of a great, innumerable multitude of Gentiles who will be saved during the tribulation. Chapter 8 of Revelation continues the time sequence of ch. 6 which was interrupted by the paranthesis of ch. 7.

There are many cleansing agents on the market today. Many claims are made relative to the amazing and superior cleansing power of each of these. Doubtless, many of these claims are false. Probably one of these is about as good as the other. Katie says that Tide is the best. Since she does the washing, I

leave that up to her. I suspect that other brands are just as good. Likely any of these many brands will do the job of cleansing. However, this is not true relative to that which cleanses from sin. My friend, the blood of Jesus Christ is the only thing that will wash away your sins. All other advertised cleansing agents are totally unable to do the job, and all other claims made in their behalf are totally false. The blood of Jesus is not one among many products that will cleanse from sin. It is not even the "best" cleanser on the religious market. The blood of Jesus Christ is the only cleanser from sin.

I am often amused (and very sceptical) when I see a t.v. commercial which tells me that the person was not aware of being

(Continued on Page 2 Column 1)

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## WHITE

(Continued from Page 1)

photographed, and that the  
testimony was unsolicited.  
However, I am certain that  
there have been, and are,  
multiplied thousands who glad-  
ly, without solicitation, and  
without pay will testify to the  
cleansing power of the blood of  
the Lamb. Often one may run  
clothes through the wash cycle,  
using her favorite cleanser; and  
some may still be dirty. It has to  
be done again. This is never true  
of the blood of Jesus Christ. One  
washing in this fountain will  
cleanse forever. The adver-  
tisements for cleansers will tell  
us of certain stains that are very  
difficult to get out, but will  
assure us that their product will  
do the job. Well, this is most  
certainly true of the blood of  
Jesus Christ. No matter how  
dark the sin might be, no matter  
how deeply ingrained or long  
continued; there is "power,  
power, wonder working power  
in the precious blood of the  
Lamb." The blood of Jesus  
Christ is equal to the task.  
No one has ever tried it without  
complete and eternal success.

Let us look awhile at the  
blood-washed throng in Revela-  
tion 7: 9-17. I would suggest  
that you pause now and read  
this Scripture, and that you  
keep it before you while reading  
the rest of this article. "After  
this I beheld, and, lo, a great  
multitude, which no man  
could number...stood before  
the throne..." (v.9). This  
group of blood washed ones con-  
stitute a great multitude.  
Remember that these are only  
the saved Gentiles of the tribula-  
tion period. This will constitute  
only a very small portion of  
the total number of the saved.  
Therefore, the totality of the

saved will be a vast multitude. I  
know that Arminians lie on us  
about this. They constantly ac-  
cuse us of believing that only a  
small handful will be saved. We  
have heard this times without  
number. This lie has been  
refuted repeatedly by sovereign  
grace believers. Why will Armi-  
nians go on and on teaching  
what they know, or could and  
should know is a lie? I have  
often said that the world has yet  
to hear a truthful presentation of  
what we do believe from the lips  
of an Arminian. The truth is  
that we believe - yea, we verily  
know - that the finally saved  
will constitute an innumerable  
multitude. God's grace is a large  
grace. It is an effectual grace.  
God's grace shall show forth a  
part of its glory in the vast  
multitude of the saved.

Note that this blood washed



Joe Wilson

multitude are, "... of all na-  
tions, and kindreds, and peo-  
ple, and tongues..." Praise  
God for this. The rich and poor  
shall be there, the educated and  
uneducated, the high and low of  
society, those from every race  
and every nation - all will go to  
make up this great multitude.  
This verse helps explain the so  
called universalistic portions of  
Scripture. The Bible does not  
teach that Christ died for or that  
God loves all the world, in the  
Arminian definition of those  
words. The Bible teaches that  
the elect of God come from  
among every race, kind, class,  
and nation of mankind. It is all  
without distinction, not all  
without exception that make up  
the multitude of the elect and  
redeemed.

Next, notice that this blood  
washed multitude give God all  
the glory of their salvation. "And  
cried with a loud voice, saying,  
Salvation to our God  
which sitteth upon the throne,  
and unto the Lamb" (v.10).  
Saying, Amen: Blessing, and  
glory, and wisdom, and  
thanksgiving, and honour,  
and power, and might, be un-  
to our God for ever and ever.  
Amen" (v.12). There are no Ar-  
minians among that throng.  
Now, don't misunderstand me.  
I do not mean to say that no Ar-  
minians are saved. However, as  
the blood of Jesus has washed  
them from their sins here and  
now; before they get yonder, the  
power of the Spirit will  
straighten out their theology. All  
in that multitude will be washed  
in the blood and sound doctrine.  
There will be no one in heaven  
but sovereign gracers. Everyone  
there will believe that salvation  
is by the sovereign, electing,  
predestinating, effectual, and  
everlasting grace of God.  
Heaven will abound in praise to  
God. Those who are there will  
give God all the glory for being  
there. These know themselves  
too well to take to themselves  
any credit for salvation. Men  
may be glory seekers here, but  
not there. No man in that  
throng will desire any glory  
himself. Each one there will  
sincerely and earnestly desire to  
give glory to the thrice holy

### Trinity.

Now let us notice some of the  
blessings of this blood washed  
throng - precious and eternal  
blessings. They are "before the  
throne" (v.9). From that throne  
radiates the white light of the ex-  
ceeding glory of God. Men, as  
they are by nature, could never  
come before that throne. Should  
one so dare, he would be driven  
into the outer darkness of eter-  
nal hell. But these blood washed  
ones walk up and down before  
the throne. They stand unafraid  
before its glory. They bask in  
the glory that radiates from the  
One who sits upon the throne.  
What a wonderful privilege and  
blessing is this!

They are, "clothed with  
white robes" (v.9). These white  
robes are real and literal. But  
they might also represent to us  
the spotless robe of the imputed  
righteousness of Jesus Christ  
which is placed upon the blood  
washed one. We have no white  
robes of our own. Even our  
righteousnesses are as filthy rags  
before the throne of His  
holiness. Jesus Christ, in the  
days of His earthly life, wrought  
out a perfect righteousness - one  
that was perfectly acceptable to  
the Father. The Father said of  
His Son, "...This is my beloved  
Son, in whom I am well  
pleased" (Mt.3:17). This  
perfect righteousness of Jesus  
Christ is imputed to every  
believer. Jesus Christ becomes  
the believer's righteousness. The  
believer is made the  
righteousness of God in Christ,  
and he is accepted in the Belov-  
ed.

They have "palms in their  
hands" (v.9). These are  
"palms of victory." They have  
won the victory over the an-  
tichrist. The believer may suffer  
many a fall in his battle with the  
world, the flesh, and the devil;  
but he will win the final and  
eternal victory through the  
blood of the Lamb and the  
power of the Spirit. Every  
blood-washed child of God will  
have these palms of victory.

They, "serve him day and  
night in his temple" (v.15).  
What a glorious occupation is  
this! In heaven, we will not float  
around on clouds of laziness, do-  
ing nothing at all. No, who  
would want it so? We will serve  
God without weariness, without  
failure, and without interrup-  
tion. Is it not the greatest joy of  
our lives when we are serving  
Him? Do we not count it our  
chief joy on this earth to be busy  
for Him? But, here we must do  
other things, here we grow  
weary, here we sometimes  
become cold and indifferent for  
a season. Yonder, we will serve  
Him gladly, gloriously, and  
forever.

"...he that sitteth on the  
throne shall dwell among  
them" (v.15) God will be with  
them. They will see Him. They  
will see the dear Lord Jesus  
Christ face to face. There will  
be no veil between. They will  
know the fulness of the face to  
face fellowship with their Lord  
and Saviour forever and ever.  
Will not this be a glorious bless-  
ing? "Whom have I in heaven  
but thee? and there is none  
upon earth that I desire  
beside thee" (Psa.73:25). Sure-  
ly, this is the testimony of every  
blood washed child of God. This  
desire will be fulfilled when we  
get to heaven.

"They shall hunger no  
more, neither thirst any  
more; neither shall the sun  
light on them, nor any heat.  
For the Lamb which is in the  
midst of the throne shall feed  
them, and shall lead them un-  
to living fountains of

waters..." (v.16-17). Oh, it may  
be that many of these hungered  
and thirsted down here. It may  
be that they were among the  
poorest of the poor. They may  
have barely existed while upon  
the earth. But, yonder in that  
fair place, they will have every  
need supplied. The heat of the  
burning sun will smite no more.  
They will be safe from every af-  
fliction. They will be filled to  
the fullest with everything they  
will ever desire.

"...and God shall wipe away  
all tears from their eyes"  
(v.17). Down here the child of  
God may weep. God's people  
have suffered much in this  
world. There has been sickness  
and sorrow and sin that has  
made them to weep many tears.  
But yonder in glory, they will  
never weep again. God will

remove from them every cause  
of crying. They will have no sin  
to weep over. They will have  
glorified bodies free from  
sickness, pain, and sin. They  
will never have the broken heart  
they knew so well in this life.

What precious and wor-  
thwhile blessings are these!  
Who would not desire them?  
With these blessings one is eter-  
nally rich. Without them, one is  
forever poor. One who has all  
these blessings could have room  
for nothing more - neither would  
he desire ought else. Only the  
blood washed ones will ever  
have these blessings. They can-  
not be purchased with silver or  
gold. They are bought with the  
precious blood of Jesus Christ  
and freely given to all for whom  
He died.

(Continued on Page 3 Column 1)

## FROM THE EDITOR

I recently published in this paper an article by Chuck Sandelin  
titled "Why The Church Did Not Start At Pentecost." I am in full  
agreement with this article. Later I received a letter from a brother  
who vehemently opposed this article. He suggested that Brother  
Sandelin was, "all washed up and should retire as a writer." He in-  
formed me that he had written a booklet proving indisputably that  
the church did start at Pentecost. And that, if I was open to the  
mind of the Spirit; he would send me this booklet, and I would be  
able to see this truth. He informed me that "our men" needed to  
restudy our position, study the Scriptures, especially the Greek. He  
informed me that if I could not see that the church started at  
Pentecost, there would be no need of our continuing fellowship.

Needless to say, I wrote this brother an appropriate reply. I in-  
formed him that he had not proved, and could not prove, that the  
church started at Pentecost: in fact, that he could not produce even  
one verse to support such heresy. I suggested to him that he had  
been very hard on Brother Sandelin and the rest of us over this mat-  
ter. I informed him that the Bible, Greek or English, did not sup-  
port his theory. I did not forget to inform him that the Greek word  
"ecclesia," translated "church" in the KJV, carried in its inherent  
meaning the thought of locality, visibility, and organization for a  
purpose, since the brother believed that it was the Universal Invisi-  
ble Church that did begin at Pentecost. I further informed this dear  
brother that it was very strange that he would break fellowship over  
a doctrine that did not have a single verse in the Bible to support it,  
or words to that effect.

Now, I am all for fellowship. I will go a long ways to avoid break-  
ing fellowship. I would even continue to fellowship with this brother  
in the Lord, though knowing his belief on this matter, I could not  
use his articles in The Baptist Examiner. (I did print one article — a  
good one — by him, but did not know his belief on the church at  
that time). (I try to widen our circle of fellowship as best I can,  
without compromising the truths we believe). I would be happy to  
continue fellowship with this brother. He seems to be very sound on  
much of the Word of God. I informed him that the matter of con-  
tinued fellowship rested solely with him.

Now, to the point. Is it not strange that a brother would become  
so vehement, even to the point of severely belittling others, even to  
the point of breaking fellowship; and all this over a doctrine that  
does not have one verse in the Bible to support it? I speak of the  
doctrine that the church started at Pentecost. I repeat there is not  
one Scripture that teaches, or even hints at, this doctrine. It is one of  
the popular heresies held by many that has the least proof. In the  
matter of lack of Scriptural proof, this doctrine stands in the same  
category as that of sprinkling for Baptism and that of infant bap-  
tism. Let my dear brother ponder this statement.

The brother to whom I refer told me that the Baptism of the Holy  
Spirit was the origin of the church, and of course this took place on  
the Day of Pentecost. My friends, the baptism of the Holy Spirit has  
nothing at all to do with the origin of the church, and there is not a  
verse in the Bible that even hints at this. The church starting at  
Pentecost, and the baptism of the Spirit originating the church are  
kindred heresies with no support for them except the suppositions of  
the mind of men with preconceived ideas.

If I could prove anything from the Bible, I could prove that the  
church did not start at Pentecost — that the church was already in  
existence before that day. In my next editorial, I will give some of  
this Biblical proof. I hope that my dear brother will read this  
editorial and the next one, that he will restudy his position, and that  
the Holy Spirit will show him "Church Truth." I mean this sincere-  
ly, for I remember what a great blessing it was (has been and still is)  
to my soul when God showed me these truths about His precious  
Church. My brother cannot be more opposed to these truths than I  
was at one time. I may please our Lord to bring him along the same  
path that He has me. The brother is very able in much of the Word  
of God. I would greatly delight to have him as one of our kind.

As I write this, I think of Gene Kiger. Oh, how opposed he once  
was to the truths we believe about the church. He walked out of the  
Grace Baptist Church in Stanleyville, N.C. (which I long pastored),  
determined that he would never darken those doors again. He told  
his wife that if he died, she was not to allow that church to have  
anything to do with his funeral. Gene Kiger is now the very fine and  
able pastor of that church, and is one of the strongest men I know  
on what we teach about the Lord's Church. The Holy Spirit who  
taught Gene Kiger and me church truth is well able to do the same  
for the brother referred to in this editorial. I pray that He will do  
this.



## WHITE

(Continued from Page 2)

Let us think for a while of that from which men must be cleansed ere they can possess such blessings as described above. Let us think of their sins. These blood washed ones were born in sin and guilty of sin the same as the rest of mankind. The difference is not in nature, but in the grace and power of God. These were born in sin. These chose sin many times. They knew the right from the wrong. They deliberately, again and again, chose that which was contrary to the law of God. They practiced sin: some more than others, some longer than others; but they all practiced sin. Many of them were covered all over with the filth of sin. Many of them had plunged to the very depths of sin. Many of them had been guilty of more, and more heinous sins than some who are now in hell.

This sin is a black, vile, loathsome, filthy thing. My friend, read the Bible through from Genesis to Revelation. See what God says about sin. He never jokes about it. He never excuses it. He never makes light of it. It is always a wicked thing that lies under His curse and wrath. It is that thing that when it comes into contact with the holiness of God provokes Him to wrath. God's wrath against sin is not an optional matter. It is rather the necessary consequence of sin coming before the face of a thrice holy God. God will never allow one sin to stand in His glorious presence. God's holiness is such that He would plunge a world into hell before He would allow one sin in heaven. God's holiness is such, and man's sin is such; that unless something be found to cleanse man perfectly from his sin, there is no hope for anyone.

There are many things on the religious market that are advertised as cleansers from sin. But their claims are all false. Not one of them will do the job. Good works will not save from sin. Baptism will not wash away the filth of sin. Church membership and religious works will not save the soul. Mourner's bench emotionalism will not bring forgiveness and acceptance with God. The free-will decision that one makes all by himself apart from the effectual work of the Holy Spirit - this will not regenerate or save the soul.

The blood of Jesus is the one and only thing that will cleanse from sin. The blood of Jesus satisfies the holiness of God. It satisfies the claims of the broken law of God. The blood of Jesus washes away the guilt of sin. No matter how many, no matter how dirty; the blood of Jesus saves from sin. Let us look at some Scriptures to this effect. "...wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow" (Psa. 51:7). David was not looking at the blood of animal sacrifices for cleansing from sin. We see this later in the Psalm (v. 16). David was looking down the avenue of time. He saw, with the eye of faith, the Lord Jesus Christ dying on Calvary. He was trusting in the blood of Jesus, and knew that that blood makes whiter than snow.

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isa. 1:18). Isaiah was looking to Calvary when he wrote this. "...the blood of

Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). "...Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood" (Rev. 1:5). And the words of my text, "...These are they which came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God...." (Rev. 7:14-15). This is a small part of the verses in the Bible that tell us of the cleansing value and power of the blood of Jesus Christ.

The Bible is a book about blood - about the blood of Jesus Christ. The blood of Jesus Christ is the life of the Bible. Without the blood of Jesus Christ, the Bible would be a dead book - there would be no saving life in it. The blood of Jesus Christ is the life of salvation. Praise God for election and predestination, for they chose a people and guaranteed that Jesus would do the work that would save those people. Thank God for the effectual call of the Holy Spirit, for it brings the elect to saving faith in His shed blood. But, my friend, without the blood of Jesus Christ, election would fail of its purpose, and the effectual call would have nothing to call one unto. Yes, the blood of Jesus Christ is the life blood of God's plan of salvation.

My friend, I have one question to ask you. It is an important question. Your eternal destiny will be in harmony with how you answer this question. Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb? With that you are saved forever. Without that, no matter what else you might have, you are lost and undone. Let those of us who are saved be eternally grateful to Jesus Christ for shedding His precious blood for our sins. Let us show that gratitude by a heart full of love, a holy life to His glory, and faithful service to Him in His church to the best of our Spirit enabled ability. Let us also be faithful in witnessing to others concerning the salvation that is in the blood of Jesus Christ. If you are not saved, I urge you now, as an ambassador of the Lord, Repent of your sins and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved. May God bless you all.

## FIRST CAUSE

(Continued from Page 1)

twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He said unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery. His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry. But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given" (Matthew 19:3-11).

Divorce. The very word seems to convey a certain ominous darkness. It was in the

early days of my youth that I first heard the word spoken in hushed tones, as if some deep dread and shame was rising out of the sea of humanity. For indeed, in those days folks seemed to recognize the great shame and dishonor involved in the breaking of sacred marriage vows. Yet it was not until this great evil befell me, that I began to realize the full extent of what is involved in the sin of divorce.

Recent statistics have claimed that 52% of all new marriages in America will end in divorce. This is very alarming and when carefully considered, very fearful. What is such telling us? It speaks to us of much betrayal, disloyalty, unfaithfulness, treachery, and a deep lack of reverence and fear of the Lord God. It is betrayal of the worst sort among men, beloved, for it betrays the closest intimacy possible between man and wife that have vowed before the Lord to love and honor. Without doubt divorce is one of the major sins committed in our times, though by man it is simply viewed as a matter of incompatibility. Let me say that though this writer has fallen into its clutches, I can never and will never consider the matter other than grievous sin.

Many young couples today eagerly enter the bonds of marriage with a "yea" on their lips, while in their hearts is "nay." That is, "If the marriage does not work, there is always divorce." Beloved, if a marriage does not work it is because it is not being worked, either by one or both parties. Either or one of the partners is not willing to put away "self"; or simply, true love does not exist in the marriage. From experience I have found that the sin of "self", i.e., self-will, self-desire, selfishness, etc., is usually one of the leading causes in the break of a marriage. Divorce is more, much more, than the cessation of a marriage or the simple separating of the parties. It is the death of a marriage.

With the advent of the so called "liberation" and "equal rights" movement came the greatest rise in America of divorce. This surely is an indicator of the nation's status; i.e., what is leading and has led to the destruction of the family unit and moral decline. Such movements as these mentioned prove two things. First, that the nation's men, on the whole, have failed in their responsibilities to their family and to their women. Secondly, the women in rebellion, against their loss of male authority and security, have risen up in retaliation. But these are reasons of fleshly wisdom, and though they may hold truth, they nevertheless do not get to the root of the divorce problem. They do not get to the real reason and cause for divorce.

Divorce reflects failure, lack of discipline, but above all it is that sin has entered the family. Sin is that great divider, that great separator, that has not only totally alienated man from God but also man from man. Legally the most frequently accepted grounds for divorce has been infertility, infidelity, criminality, and insanity. Yet today, divorce is easily granted on grounds of incompatibility and separation for one year. Divorce at the present seems to be the eager ready answer to all problems that may plague a marriage, and because the love of man has waxed cold, the desire for reconciliation is seldom found. Beneath the ruins

of a crumbling marriage the psychologist may dig without answers, yet all the while slithering beneath all is sin. Deep dark depraved sin eagerly enforces divorce so as to open the doors of so called "liberty" and freedom which leads the lusty hearts into further depths of sin.

I have found that there are very few things in this life that can nearly destroy a person emotionally, like divorce. I have found this experience to be one of the most humbling experiences in life; for though man think it to be so, sin can never exalt. The sin of divorce will without doubt, leave life long effects that will carry even through the lives of the offspring of the marriage while the main parties involved are long in the grave.

Marriage is said to be brought about by what is referred to as the "affairs of the heart." Yet how many are not aware that divorce is brought about in much the same manner. The "affairs of the heart" is the first cause of divorce. Divorce then is an act wrought in the heart. An act which openly declares the total depravity of man. This we have learned and have declared unto us from wisdom greater than that of Solomon of old, even the Lord Jesus Christ.

In our opening Scripture reading of Matthew 19:3-11, the Lord Jesus Christ teaches with authority, on the subject of divorce. As with many doctrines of the Word of God man holds many misconceptions about the matter of divorce, and sad to say, many of these errors are held to by children of God. By way of example, I remember some years ago speaking on the matter of divorce with a woman who had been divorced some fifteen years. This woman, a professing Christian, had been advised by her pastor (?) that since she was divorced she could never remarry. As she discussed her divorce, I soon learned that she had a scriptural one, the cause not being hers, thus allowing for remarriage. Because she had been so misinformed she spent fifteen years of her life alone with much loneliness and sorrow. I cannot begin to tell you how elated she was when she was shown the truth of the matter from the Word of God. Such truths by His grace, we will endeavor to show here though limited in extent due to space.

As we have noted before, but because of its grave importance we say again: divorce is a most grievous sin before God and a matter of great evil to contend with. Yet it does in no wise hinder the eternal security of the believer. We mention security because there are those of late who hold to and teach the idea that if a man has been or is divorced he can no longer preach or pastor a church. They claim that if he is divorced and remarried he cannot preach because he has two wives, i.e., his former and present wife. Such an idea is lacking sound reasoning and above all has no Scriptural foundation for the following reasons. First, the above idea is supposedly based on 1 Timothy 3:2, particularly in the words, "The husband of one wife." But a divorce is a cessation of a marriage therefore the marriage no longer exists. Should the child of God, who is called into the ministry, not remarry he is therefore a single man, without a wife, as if he had never been married, if he should remarry, he then becomes "the husband of one wife." Second-

ly, since divorce is a sinful matter we must be mindful of the promises of the Word of God and the power of the blood of Christ. For it is declared with all certainty in 1 John 1:7, "and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." To refuse a man the ministry on grounds of divorce is an implication that this sin is unpardonable and therefore must suffer lifelong penalty by being refused the ministry. Such an idea smacks of Catholicism in the doctrine of penance of which the Word of God knows nothing! No wound is so great that He cannot heal.

Lest we wander too far however, the question yet remains as to how divorce comes about. The Lord Jesus Christ declares in Matthew 19:8,

"...Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so." Regarding this, Unger writes, "Monogamy is God's standard, but certain accommodations to human frailty were permitted by Mosaic law." (See Deut. 24:1-4). It was in the garden that the Lord brought Eve to Adam to be his only wife (Gen. 2:22), and it was in the garden that their hearts were hardened for sin had entered in. (Gen. 3:7). The heart of man became filled with abundance of evil, and in that heart came lust, division, dissensions, covetousness, selfishness, dissatisfaction and discontentment. How often it is that we pray for a certain desire to be fulfilled and a while after that we have had our petition answered, we grumble with displeasure, having forgotten the blessings. Such hard hearts we have indeed. How is it with you who are blessed to be husbands? Do you love your wives enough to die for them (Eph. 5:25)? Your wives, do you indeed reverence your husbands and are you subject to them (Eph. 5:24)? Or is it that both have become cold and hardened towards one another? Lest this be so beloved of God, let us heed the warnings of our Lord, and remember your oath and vows to one another. How little is thought today of the weight of words and promises made.

Let us understand our Lord's meaning here in Matt. 19:8. Let us understand that were it not for the total depravity of man, were it not for his hardened heart there would never be a reason nor an excuse for seeking a divorce. "From the beginning it was not so." Of Matt. 19:8, John Gill writes, "Though this was by Divine direction of Moses, in his system of laws, allowed of divorces; yet not God, but He is said to do it, because it was a branch of the political and judicial laws, by which the people of the Jews were governed under Moses, and whilst the Mosaic economy continued, and did not concern other people, and other times; and therefore it is said 'you' and 'your' wives, you Jews, and you only... They being such a stubborn and inflexible people, that when they were once displeased there was no reconciling them." The experience of divorce will surely convince to the fact that depraved hardened hearts are involved, for it is a most ugly and bitter experience. Some have been heard to say of their divorce, that they separated on

(Continued on Page 4 Column 3)



# The Baptist Examiner Forum I

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER — P.O. Box 60 — ASHLAND, KENTUCKY 41105-0060

What about those who claim that they have power to stop bleeding by reading Ezekiel 16:6?

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"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). This verse tells us that the apostles were given power. The word power is translated from the Greek word "dunamis" which means a worker of miracles. They were given this ability that they might shew forth the power of God. Man has been fascinated by this. There are those today that claim they have the power to heal and stop bleeding. Notice that the power the apostles had came from God. The miracles as far as speaking in tongues and healing have ceased. God used these miracles to shew His power. Man is fascinated by the book of Acts. Man desires to be able to do these miracles mainly for vain-glory. Now don't get me wrong. God heals. He is still the Great Physician. Anytime someone is healed or stops bleeding, it is because of the Lord. A lot of people who claim to be able to stop bleeding are not saved people. I know one man in particular who claimed he was able to do this, and the man had never professed to be saved. When the Lord did give men this power they were always saved men. Notice in Acts 19:13-16, "Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. And there were seven sons of one Sueva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded." No lost man can do anything in the name of the Lord. Now, if we had this power don't you think it would be mentioned in the Word of God how we are to use it? Don't you think that a man who possessed this power would spend a large amount of his time in the hospital helping patients who were bleeding to death?

It is my belief that the Lord works through His church. I believe that there are no secret gifts or talents given to a group of people outside of the Lord's Church. In other words, some Baptists would practice this talent or at least be familiar with

it, if it were from the Lord. Remember the Lord started His church and gave us His Word, and if any new doctrines or practices come up; they are not of the Lord.

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In imitation Latin this claim is called hocus-pocus. The word "hocus-pocus" according to Webster means, (1) meaningless words used as a formula by conjurers, (2) a magician's trick or trickery, (3) any meaningless action or talk meant to draw attention away from some trick or deception. Surely one of these definitions would fit such a claim.

In Ezekiel 16, God is telling the prophet Ezekiel to remind Israel that at her birth she had been cast out into a field unwashed and left as an unwanted baby. He said, "And as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee; — None eye pitied thee, to do any of these unto thee; but thou wast cast out in the open field, — in the day that wast born," (Ezek. 16:4, 5). Then He tells Ezekiel, "And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, live" (Ezek. 16:6). This is God telling how He took this unwanted baby, this dying baby (Israel), and caused it to live. He goes on and tells how he washed and cleaned it up, dressed it with the finest clothes and took her as His own. Any one who used these words of verse 6 is placing himself in the place of God. The Devil has been trying this but he will not succeed, neither will the one who makes the above claim.

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Ezekiel 16:6: "And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live."

It is amazing the things some people can get out of Scripture. People are able to get far more out of the Bible than God put into it. That is a sad, but true thought. As far as I can see, there is not even a hint in this verse to substantiate a theory of stopping bleeding by its reading. Sometimes, I amuse myself by wondering how some of these

heresies came into existence. Maybe someone was reading this verse while his nose was bleeding and it stopped, so they thought up this belief. I have a question, if one person can stop bleeding by reading this verse, why can't another? Is there a special way to read it? Is it because one person reads it too slow or too fast? Is there a special way you must sit or stand, or what is the difference between those who can read this verse and make bleeding stop and the person who reads this verse and nothing happens?

I think this verse has a clear reference to the nation of Israel. I believe the reference is to the sinful condition of Israel. The usage of the words "polluted" and "blood" refer to their actions against God. God is reminding them that even when they were polluted in their own blood, He still said unto them "Live." He saved them and delivered them in spite of their transgressions against Him.

I think the thought here is good for us today. We need to remember from whence God saved us. We too were polluted in our own blood and God said unto us, "Live." We did not deserve such a statement from God. In spite of our pollution, Jesus came that we might live. This thought should have an effect on our lives. We should live to His honor and glory. God forgive us for not living as we should for a God who has done so much for us. May God bless you all.

## FIRST CAUSE

(Continued from Page 3)

"good terms." This may well be so if the "terms" were pleasing and satisfying to a stony heart, but personally, I believe that divorce can do nothing but inwardly make bitter enemies out of those who once shared in deep intimacy. It goes beyond me to understand how such betrayal can make for "good terms."

Another aspect I would desire to share in the position of the single parent, condition which arises from the ruins of divorce. As a single parent, I have found great inadequacies in such a role for I believe it to be utterly impossible that the one parent can fill the positions of both father and mother. There is no such thing as "equality of the sexes" so to speak. No man can fill the place of a mother, and no woman can be a father. Divine design prohibits such since each sex plays a differing role in the rearing of children. It is worthy of great note that as our Lord completed His discourse on divorce in Matthew 19, we next find Him laying His hands on little children. (Matt. 19:13-15). Herein is a message of contrast as He had previously spoken of hard hearted man, His own tenderness went out to those who suffer themost in divorce as He says: "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me... And he laid his hands on them." Thus He showed Himself to be

the fulfiller of the sure promises of Ps. 27:10 which reads: "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up (will gather me)." Our Lord knows the hard heart of man and how it influences the little ones. He knows the little hearts that had been forgotten by mothers and fathers. Oh beloved, look on your little ones and let not the word nor thought of divorce enter your homes. Let not your hearts be so hardened. "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matt. 19:6).

The laws of the land allow for many reasons to divorce, but the Word of God allows but two. We are aware that some may disagree here, but let us search and see. First, I am convinced that many divorces are in the making before the marriage has even taken place. Most procedures for seeking a partner these days is the cart before the horse method. By many, the partner they desire must be good looking or beautiful. They should own a nice car and dress in the latest fashions. The male should be muscular and the female possessed of a good figure. After some or all of these conditions are met, they may "fall in love." Then they decide to live together to see if they are compatible when in reality they seek to excuse living in open sin. On such as these conditions they seek marriage not realizing that that which is conceived in sin cannot bring forth good. Hence such conditions usually end in bitter divorce. Now of the two grounds for divorce, the first is found here in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9. Here our Lord declares: "But I say unto you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery; and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery."

We observe here, that our Lord during His personal ministry, declared that fornication was the only scriptural reason for divorce. Note that fornication includes all manner of sexual sins. If one party in the marriage is guilty of such then the other may scripturally divorce which leaves the guiltless party free to remarry. However, the guilty party cannot remarry for such a marriage is recognized by the Lord as sin as long as that second man-made marriage lasts. Should the guilty party genuinely repent and become saved, they may remarry. Incompatibility, separation, mental cruelty, etc., are not scriptural grounds for divorce unless they fall within the bounds of the second scriptural reason for divorce, which we note below. We must add here that the Lord does not declare that it is a "must" for a divorce on grounds of fornication, for again the main cause is "hardness of heart." Simply stated, the party desiring the divorce has not the spirit of repentance or forgiveness depending on the reason for seeking one. One party is not willing to forgive offences or the other not willing to repent of evils, hence the hard heart rules by sin on both parties, if the offender has asked forgiveness. There is no excuse for committing fornication and neither is there for not showing forgiveness to restoration of the marriage. Yet because such sin has occurred it may take years to restore a trust betrayed by such.

The second scriptural reason for divorce is found in I Corinthians 7:12-15. This of course deals with the saved children of God. In these verses we find a situation that should not normally exist among the Lord's own; but here Paul, by the Spirit, proposes the situation of a Christian marrying a non-Christian. It can happen that in some instances after a couple has married, that only one of the party becomes saved according to Divine election, and here Paul gives instructions regarding such situations and possible divorce. Now it is shown in the Word of God that one that is already saved should never marry the lost. Although 2 Corinthians 6:14 does not directly deal with the subject of marriage, it well applies and should be carefully considered by the saved in seeking a spouse. I have seen some very unhappy people among the saved who have married unbelievers or the "daughters of men." It is most usual that the lost party will greatly hinder the spiritual growth of the saved partner. To marry under such circumstances is a sign of weakness on the saved individuals part. In I Corinthians 7:12 Paul tells the elect that if they have a lost spouse, continue the marriage and do not seek a divorce so long as the lost party is "pleased to dwell" with them. Such also is noted in verse 13. Verse 15 gives the second scriptural reason where we read: "But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such case." "Bondage" is in reference to the bond of marriage, thus the child of God is not "enslaved" by the situation and the marriage may be dissolved leaving the child of God at liberty to remarry.

Those among us who have suffered divorce, this disease of the heart, have an experience, though unwelcome, that must be told to our children. It behooves every child of God everywhere to be on their guard against the enemy of self. "Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband" (I Cor. 7:2-3). May His blessings abide upon each of you.

## PREDESTINATION

(Continued from Page 1)

Even at this very moment, some, apparently, would like to give "Predestination" a bad connotation because of its presumed involvement with Calvin. But, my dearly beloved friends, "Predestination" is one of God's words. In the Greek, it is "Poorizo." Too, this is one of God's holy truths, realizing, of course, that all of God's truths are holy. So, there is no way that any mortal man can preach or teach "The whole counsel of God" without becoming involved positively and favorably with the subject of "Predestination." Truly, there is no way that a man can serve God without delving into and proclaiming the "Predestination" teaching of our God. If your minister or your preacher never teaches or preaches favorably on the subject, then you are being short-changed.

In the book of Romans, the

(Continued on Page 5 Column 3)



If you want to grow in grace, be sure you are alive at the roots.

# The Baptist Examiner Forum II

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER — P.O. Box 60 — ASHLAND, KENTUCKY 41105-0060

*In witnessing to the unsaved, should we tell them to repent and believe or tell them to wait on the Holy Spirit?*

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just tell one to wait on the Holy Spirit without giving them God's Word.

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There need be no question as to how to witness to the unsaved. I doubt that there is anything more clearly taught in the Word of God. The encounter between Philip and the eunuch is a good example. "Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus" (Acts 8:35). Philip told the man about God's means of salvation through the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son. That through faith in Him one becomes a child of God, and a candidate for membership in a New Testament Church. In baptism you show forth your repentance toward God, the burying of the old man and the raising of the new to serve the King God through His Church. A person may wait upon the Holy Spirit without trusting Christ and die in their sins and be condemned, but none shall be condemned that trust Christ with their eternal souls. "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John 3:18).

## PREDESTINATION

(Continued from Page 4)

8th chapter, we find this truth. All of us doubtless are acquainted with the 28th verse, "...all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Then, we go into the 29th and the 30th verses. Here we read, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." Herein, God is dealing most specifically with the wonder of His elective grace. Those whom He has elected from everlasting are predestined to be glorified. Can you see this? I trust that you can!

Over in Ephesians the first chapter and verses 4 and 5, we find these words, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." Then, in verses 10 and 11, we read, "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ both

which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him; in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will..."

I realize that many will take issue with this glorious truth, but let us never forget that across the millennia Satan has led many astray with his, "Yea, hath God Said?" Too, many take issue with this wondrous truth of "Predestination" because a man by the name of Calvin supposedly promoted it. Some, needless to say, reject even the idea because another man by the name of Arminius took issue with it.

Yet, dear friends, long before Calvin ever saw the light of day, long before there was a man by the name of Arminius, long before the so-called Reformation, long before the Roman Catholic Church, God was predestinating His own. He was predestinating the people of Israel. We see this in Isaiah 44 and verses 1 and 2, "Yet, now hear, O Jacob my servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen; thus saith the Lord that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, which will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob, my servant; and thou, Jesurun, whom I have chosen." Too, let's look at Jeremiah 1:5, "Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee; an before thou camest forth out of the womb, I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." In these two Scriptures, we see God predestinating Israel. Then, we see God predestinating one of His prophets to Israel.

Then, in the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, we have a tremendous testimony wherein God explains that the life and the activity of our Lord Jesus was predestinated, also. Let's look at a portion of this beautiful Word this morning, "Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground; he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not." Then, God goes on in verse 10 and a part of 11, "Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief; when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied..." Then, we see most specifically in Luke 22:22, "And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined; but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed!"

Later, in Acts 2:22-24, God explains through the Apostle Peter, "...Jesus of Nazareth... Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain; whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." Herein, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit joined in holy counsel

before this world began, before the foundation of the world. In that eternal moment, they knew that sin would enter into the creation they would bring forth, and they knew, too, there in eternity that there would be the elect whom they already had predetermined. It was predestined, then, that Jesus was sent forth to be born of a virgin and to be laid in a manger. Even then, it was predestined that He would be praised by the angels as they sang to the shepherds watching their flocks in the fields, praised by the wise men who came from the East, and He would be honored by the leaders of Israel as they discussed the deep things of God with him at the age of 12. Yes, then, there came that moment when John would look up and say, "Behold the Lamb of God who which taketh away the sin of the world." If we can receive it, my dearly beloved friends, the life and the activities of the Lord Jesus were predestined by God.

Too, as we read in the book of Romans, God predestines each one of us who will come to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Notice in chapter 8 and verse 28. Here He speaks to those who love God and who are "the called". And how are they called? Not according to your purpose, not according to my purpose, and not even according to their purpose. Rather, they are called "according to His purpose."

These whom God has elected from everlasting, He foreknows. Not only does He elect them and foreknow them, but He predestinates them "to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." Notice, too, "Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called. And whom he called, them he also justified!"

The word, "justification," is a legal term meaning, "just as if I had never sinned." It is imputed righteousness! So, when we believe that Jesus died, that He was buried, and that He was resurrected from the grave, even now, as the elect of God, we are saved. And when we are saved, we are saved forever. God does not indulge in any halfway measures. God is sovereignly and eternally victorious in all that He does and in all that He effects both in time and in eternity. When, we, as the elect of God, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, all of our past sins are under the blood — not the waters of baptism! All of our present sins are under the blood of the crucified, buried, and resurrected Lord Jesus — not the waters of baptism! And every sin that we ever will commit likewise is under His "precious blood," as Peter tells us — not the waters of baptism, whatever may be the mode, though there is only one Scriptural Mode, and that is immersion!

Hear and forever rejoice in the wonder of the truth, "There is, therefore, no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus"! No condemnation! No judgment! We, the elect of God, who are saved by "the precious blood of Christ" will never stand before the judgment bar of Almighty God! Why? Simply because we have been saved by grace through faith in the Lord

(Continued on Page 6 Column 1)

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER  
MARCH 22, 1986  
PAGE FIVE



## IS "THAT" IN THE BIBLE?



QUESTION: — Who tells of a "garden of nuts"?

ANSWER: Solomon, Song of Solomon 6:11. "I went down into the garden of nuts to see the fruits of the valley,..." The Hebrew word used here means "walnuts."

## PREDESTINATION

(Continued from Page 5)

Jesus Christ" — not of ourselves, but it is the gift of God! As one in a distant day, we have "found grace in the sight of God." He legally justifies us forever — makes us righteous! Because we are elected, predestined, and justified in His sight, our God, in finality, will glorify us.

He will glorify us even as His only begotten Son has been glorified. Look with me at I John 3 and verse 2, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is"! This is that glorification! This is that eternal moment when we shall be like Jesus, and that forever! This is that eternal moment which God has predestined for us who are His elect in which we shall be "heirs of God, and joint heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ"!

This word, "predestination," then, is not a bad word. It is not a word that we should fear. It is not a word that people should hate, regardless of who may have used it or who may be using it. It is not a word that some should rail against because of Calvin or Arminius. Rather, it is a word in which we should rejoice. If we are the elect of God, and we have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, or if we will believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, then we, truly, are involved in "God's Predestination"!

Wonderfully, He has predestinated us "to be conformed to the image of His Son." He has predestined us to be glorified as His Son. And, today, if you, as the elect of God, can believe that Jesus died for your sins, that He was buried, and that He has been resurrected, then you have partaken of "The gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." Truly, you have participated in the love of God! You are participating in the love of God! You will participate in the love of God forever! You, beloved brother or sister in Christ, have been and are predestined of God for eternal glorification. Believe, then, today, and be saved!

## DOCTRINES

(Continued from Page 1)

heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand" (Prov 19:21). "And when the Gentiles heard

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER  
MARCH 22, 1986  
PAGE SIX

this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed" (Acts 13:48).

These verses are only a few which declare that God is Almighty, that He alone is sovereign. "He hath done whatsoever he hath pleased;" "And he is before all things, and by him all things consist" (Psa. 115:3; Col. 1:17). To declare that God has been overruled in any matter, even if in the smallest detail is to bring charge against the most Holy, as well as manifest one's acute stupidity. "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand" (Isa. 14:24). The term "almighty" cannot be used with reference to God if one purpose, one desire, or one thought failed to completely satisfy His holy will. For the titles "almighty — sovereign" must be stricken from our vocabulary if there is even the smallest possibility that one of God's intentions in the slightest manner failed to meet the nod of His three times Holy approval. "And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what doest thou?" (Dan. 4:35).

When we say God is Almighty, that He alone is sovereign, we simply are saying that God is affected by nothing save His own will, influenced not the least in anything, and whatever has been, is, or will be, must be because God ordained it exactly that way. "For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast. 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 forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations" (Psa. 33:9-11).

When speaking of sovereign grace, we again must admire and acknowledge the Almighty God that purposed it. Grace is sovereign because it is God's grace and it is from Him only that it has its source. It flows from God. We have included the word "sovereign" only to emphasize the fact that God is hindered by nothing, and whatsoever His soul desireth, even that He doeth.

It is also our desire to use the words "sovereign grace" instead of "Calvinism" for the obvious reason that Calvin was a Baptist-opposing, baby-sprinkling, Roman Catholic once removed, who when leaving the old whore, dragged with him some of her infamous teachings. Neither do we feel we have the right or privilege to attach a man's name to the doctrines of God.

The word grace would not need to be defined by words of description (sovereign), if man had the proper understanding of grace. However, observation clearly illustrates that even those that profess that they are saved by grace, yea, even the grace of God, have such a very dull and unattractive understanding of that grace, it seemed wise to call it sovereign grace.

Just about everyone that claims Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, claim Him by grace. In the very beginning then, we meet with the first brazen contradiction. The definition of the

grace of God. The Arminian, the free-will, and almost all of Christendom view grace as something offered to all of mankind, but totally ineffectual unless the spiritually dead sinner is pleased to allow its effectiveness. Immediately, we can discern the infected polluted, and powerless grace of those who insist that the sinner is the Lord of his own destiny. Will he that is evil suddenly by his own desire do good? Let us see, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil?" (Jere. 13:23). Such a horrid deception is the teaching that leaves God's grace less potent than the worms of the earth. What a filthy degrading definition man applies to grace and the God of it. Oh! but you see, this is only man's view of grace. This is his definition and not God's. The God of the Bible never becomes subservient to Satan or to sinners. He does what pleases Him. Never is God defeated, disappointed, overruled, or even disturbed by the actions of sinful man. "Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth..." (Psa. 135:6). "Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass..." (Isa. 14:24). "There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the Lord" (Prov. 21:30).

According to the Arminian school of thought, the alienated sinner must first, by his own freewill, (a will which the Bible teaches is not free at all, but in bondage to sin) ask Jesus to save him. When he says, I repent, I believe, then Jesus saves him. Then after all of that, they say truly the sinner was saved by grace. What is taught in this conception, however, is not the grace of God, but rather a sickening description of a helpless Saviour and distorted understanding of what dead sinner really means. The one glorified in a grace like this is not God nor His Christ, but the sinner who decided to follow Jesus. This type of theology should make even the most unlearned stagger at its contradiction, not to mention the insult and the injustice placed before the throne of God. How one could ever respect a God that is overruled by His own creation is beyond me. It's blasphemy!

The grace of God that one will find in the Bible has God as its author. He looks only to His own purpose for the fulfillment of His desire. Those whom He decreed to receive it, will receive it because the grace and the God of it are sovereign.

The recipients of God's grace are willing because God hath made them so. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power..." (Psa. 110:3). The result being, grace is never left unbestowed where God has ordained to bestow the same. How different from the Arminian view. They see it as grace offered to sinful man but totally powerless unless the sinner is willing to receive it. The Word of God on the other hand teaches that man is totally powerless, more than that, it teaches that he is dead to all spiritual graces. He cannot and will not receive this grace because he is at enmity with it and neither is it in his capacity to desire or seek it without Divine intervention. In other words, there will be no coming to Jesus, on the part of the sinner unless God gives him the

ability to come. "And he said, therefore, said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given him of my Father" (John 6:65). To still argue, as many do, that man can refuse to come while the Bible teaches it was given unto man by God; is just another way of declaring aloud that God is humiliated by mighty man. The sinner is too powerful and stony hearted for even God to overcome. This type of thinking is an insult of the basest sort. It publishes abroad that God is not only a failure in purpose but that He likewise is not an adequate instructor. Once again, the filth of Arminian inconsistency raises its ugly head, as it contradicts the words of Jesus Christ the Lord. "It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God. Every man, therefore, that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (John 6:45). Let us always remember that all the Father gave Jesus "shall come." They shall come because they are taught of God. There is not the slightest hint that any will refuse to come after being taught of God. The sinner will want to come to Jesus. Yea, more than that, he will have to come for God hath drawn him.

The advocates of free-willism contend that salvation must be the choice of the sinner. They plead their position solidly on human merit. According to their teaching, God sent His Son to die for everyone. What makes grace; grace, is not what God through Christ did, but rather what the sinner does. Let me illustrate in his "An Examination of Tulip." "The word of God teaches that, while man is totally depraved and totally unable to help himself, (Amen,) our Lord draws every man sufficiently and enlightens every man as much as necessary for that individual to make a decision of his own free will."

I would like to ask the heretic evangelist if these people who have been enlightened and drawn sufficiently are natural men, are they carnal? The Word of God teaches that the natural man and the carnal mind cannot know the things of the Spirit of God. "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be Spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. 8:5-7). "But the natural receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (I Cor. 2:14). Mr. Sumner then says that those of us who do not believe his Arminian heresy "erroneously insist that man's spiritual deadness makes such a voluntary decision impossible short of the actual reception of spiritual life." Amen, but not only us, God as well. The natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God. So those that do receive the things of God are not natural and spiritually dead, but quickened by the Spirit of God. "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know

the things that are freely given to us of God" (I Cor. 2:10, 12). I would think that if God had enlightened sufficiently, it would simply teach us that what we are dealing with is someone who can receive the things of the Spirit of God. In other words, he is not one who is any longer spiritually dead.

The same author later in his book said of sovereign grace, especially unconditional election, was akin to "communist Russia, Red China, and Fascist Spain." Under irresistible grace he declares that if God's Word teaches this, it "makes God out to be a hypocrite." Such is the spiritual depth of this flesh exalting, God dishonoring, free-will, Arminian heretic. I believe the doctrine of sovereign grace, but I do not believe that believing them makes me or anyone else a communist!

It needs to be understood that the natural man has the understanding darkened. He is alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in him because of the blindness of his heart (Eph. 4:18). Surely such a person of this description is not going to repent, believe, and have faith. All of the Arminian gimmicks, all the combined efforts and prayers of Christianity are not enough to make a dead man any more than a dead man. What fallen man needs before he will ever approach, is the ability to do so, and that is something that is completely outside the scope and power of humanity. "Blessed is the man whom thou chooseth, and causet to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts; we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple" (Psa. 65:4). It is true that faith, repentance, and believing are all part of the sinner's salvation, but to whom do we attribute these virtues? Salvation is the total work of God. Man does not add a single ingredient. "Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, by grace ye are saved" (Eph. 2:5). Some will say, he must have faith. True, but where does he get this faith? Those that are alienated, separated, spiritually dead do not have faith. Paul told the church at Ephesus that they were quickened, made alive spiritually, without faith on their part. "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)" (Eph. 2:1, 4, 5). It is certainly true that all the children of God receive faith, and I would say immediately upon regeneration, but that faith is not what regenerates them or gives them life in Christ. Faith is a gift of God, not of yourself. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8). If God did not give faith to His elect, they would forever remain unchanged. This we will discuss at greater length when dealing with total depravity.

The same is true of repentance as is of faith. Repentance is, if it is true repentance, given of God. Man again is left out as to having anything to do with the effectualness of his salvation. Salvation is of the Lord. God-wrought repentance cuts to

(Continued on Page 7 Column 5)



## STUDIES IN EZEKIEL

Willard Willis, Monroe, Ohio

"And between the chambers was the wideness of twenty cubits round about the house on every side" (Ezek. 41:10).

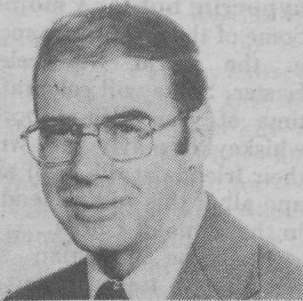
The wideness of the twenty chambers of the temple is an obvious reference to the distance of the chambers on each side of the room. This distance will prevail throughout the entire temple structure, or "round about the house on every side." "And the doors of the side chambers were toward the place that was left, one door toward the north, and another door toward the south: and the breadth of the place that was left was five cubits round about" (Ezek. 41:11). The doors of the lower lodges will open toward the "place that was left," or the void space between them. The second and third stories, of course, must open onto the staircase. The breadth of the place that was left, that is, the void, will be five cubits. "Now the building that was before the separate place at the end toward the west was seventy cubits broad; and the wall of the building was five cubits thick round about, and the length thereof ninety cubits" (Ezek. 41:12).

The reference to the separate place is a reference to the holy of holies, which, in the second temple, was separated by a veil. God has not chosen to reveal to us the significance of the building that is to be toward the separate place. This is a building that the Scriptures heretofore have not made reference to. The building will be seventy cubits broad (105') with a wall five cubits (7½') thick. The wall will be ninety cubits (135').

There is no reference made to the doors for the new building, or the people who are to inhabit it. It appears therefore that this particular building is a storehouse — a storehouse which supports the temple structure and activity. We know, of course, that our Lord fulfilled all of these things that were observed in the previous temple. Perhaps, then, this building which is to be before the separate place (holy of holies) is filled, in type, with the merits of Christ. Those therefore who will serve in the new temple will know, from the new building that all has been done for them and that their actions are only in commemoration of the finished work of our Lord. They, in other words, as they work toward the separate place, will know that their access to God does not depend upon themselves, but upon that which is within the building that stands before the separate place.

"So he measured the house, an hundred cubits long; and the separate place, and the building, with the walls thereof, an hundred cubits long" (Ezek. 41:13). Here we have the sum total of the temple (the house) including its parts. The sum total is one hundred cubits long or approximately one hundred and fifty feet. The reference to the separate place, building and walls is a reference to the parts of the temple. The separate place being the holy of holies, the building being the holy place or sanctuary with the walls thereof. These, all together, made up one hundred and fifty

cubits in length from east to west. We can sum up the one hundred cubits for the temple as follows: the east wall, six cubits; the passage through the porch, eleven cubits; the wall between the porch and the temple, six cubits; the temple or holy place, forty cubits; the wall between the holy place and the most holy place, two cubits; the holiest of all, twenty cubits; the chambers at the end of it, four cubits; and the outer wall of them, five



Willard Willis

cubits. "Also the breadth of the face of the house, and of the separate place toward the east, an hundred cubits" (Ezek. 41:14). The face of the house refers to the entire front of the temple which housed the holy and most holy place. Both of these looked toward the east. It was measured from north to south, or the face of it. Here again we have a sum of one hundred cubits arrived at as follows: the breadth of the temple twenty cubits; the thickness of the outward walls, twelve cubits; the walls of the chambers, five cubits on each side; the breadth of the void space, five cubits on each side; and twenty cubits round about the house. We are to see, then, that the length and breadth of the temple will be the same. They, in fact, will make up a perfect foursquare. Keep in mind that the New Jerusalem, according to Revelation 21:16, will also be foursquare. "And he measured the length of the building over against the separate place which was behind it, and the galleries thereof on the one side and on the other side, an hundred cubits, with the inner temple, and the porches of the court; The door posts, and the narrow windows, and the galleries round about on their three stories, over against the door, ceiled with wood round about, and from the ground up to the windows and the windows were covered" (Ezek. 41:15, 16).

The door posts are those of the inner temple, or holy of holies, since this was the last mentioned. There were no windows in the Tabernacle or in Solomon's temple. God, in fact, dwelt in the thick darkness. Here, however, there is light which coincides with the door to the temple, that is, the door which will be twice the width of the one which was in Solomon's temple. There, in fact, will be a much closer fellowship with God and light will be given on great and mighty things. It is as stated in the following passages: "Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not... Behold, I will bring it health and cure, and I will cure them, and will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth" (Jer. 33:3, 6). The windows are described as being narrow, that is, they are narrow without, but broad within and give forth an abundance of light.

It is to be remembered that during the time of our text, that is during the reign of Christ upon the earth—the time when He sits on the throne of David, there will be no need of light from the sun or moon. It is as stated in the following passages: "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it" (Rev. 21:23, 24).

The fact that the windows of the future temple are to be covered does not mean that the light will be blocked out. The covering is obviously for the sake of appearance. It appears therefore that the covering will involve curtains rather than being boarded up. "To that above the door, even unto the inner house, and without, and by all the wall round about within and without, by measure" (Ezek. 41:17). The measuring continues to that above the door, etc. All will be predestinated so that every thing in the temple and surrounding it will be according to the pattern which has already been drawn up in heaven. This same truth applies relative to all that is to be taught, believed and practiced in the Lord's churches today. It is as stated in the following passage: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. 8:20).

"And it was made with cherubims and palm trees, so that a palm tree was between a cherub and a cherub; and every cherub had two faces" (Ezek. 41:18). All the wall of the house round about will be ornamented with cherubims and palm trees. Fausset, in his Bible Encyclopedia, says regarding the cherubims: "The appearance of the cherubim in the holiest place afterwards suggested to man the same assurance of a common meeting ground with God at peace and in holiness." Mr. Fausset also made the following statement regarding the palm trees: "The palm denotes the saints spiritual beauty, ever fresh joy, and fruitfulness; his orderly upright aspect, perpetual verdure, rising from earth towards heaven. Also the elastic fibre sending it upward, however, loaded with weights and agitated by winds, symbolizes the believer already sitting in heavenly places, in spite of earthly burdens... Rough to the touch, encased below in dry bark, but fruitful and green above; so the saint despised below, beautiful above, straightened with many trials here, but there bearing fruit before God unto everlasting life."

It is said in our text that every cherub had two faces. One of these faces was that of a man while the other was that of a lion. Keep in mind that the palm trees are on each side of the cherub so that the face of man looks toward one palm tree while the face of the lion looks toward another palm tree. "So that the face of a man was toward the palm tree on the one side, and the face of a young lion toward the palm tree on the other side: it was made through all the house

round about. From the ground unto above the door were cherubims and palm trees made, and on the wall of the temple" (Ezek. 41:19, 20).

The cherubims in the above passage are the same as those which Ezekiel saw by the river Chebar (10:20). They also appear to be the same as the living creature which John saw (Rev. 4:7, 8). The fact that they look toward the palm-tree shows that they are upright and sincere in their doctrine-being completely devoted to God in belief and practice. The fact that they look toward the palm-tree indicates that they patiently bear all weights and pressures which are laid upon them, and that they rise heavenwards in their affections and desires. The fact that they look toward the palm-trees also states that they triumph over all through Christ the Lord. The palm-tree is an emblem of all these things I have stated. The face of a young lion toward the palm-tree on the other side, indicates the strength they have in their endeavors. They have strength to withstand the enemy, to support the weak and bear their infirmities. They are full of courage and boldness in defending all that is Christ's.

All of the wall of the house will be ornamented with the cherubim and the palm-trees. They, in fact, will be made through all the house round about from the ground to above the door. "The posts of the temple were squared, and the face of the sanctuary; the appearance of the one as the appearance of the other" (Ezek. 41:21).

The "posts of the temple" will be on each side of the door. They will be flat and square rather than round. They, in fact, will be four-square as is almost every thing else in this wonderful building. The fact that they are square denotes firmness, stability and the perfection of all things in the temple. Our text informs us that the face of the holy of holies will have the same appearance as that of the temple. The only difference will be that the one will be larger than the other.

"The altar of wood was three cubits high, and the length thereof two cubits; and the corners thereof, and the length thereof, and the walls thereof, were of wood: and he said unto me, This is the table that is before the LORD" (Ezek. 41:22). The reference in this passage is to the altar of incense—the altar which typifies our Lord in His intercession and meditation. The altar is to be made of wood so as to portray the human nature of Christ — the human nature in which He mediates and intercedes for us.

The wood is grown on earth. Our Lord Jesus was also born on the earth of a virgin and grew up among us as a tall cedar. The altar of incense, both in the Tabernacle and in the Temple, was covered with gold and was called the golden altar. The gold spoke of the divinity of Jesus Christ. The altar before us is one cubit longer and one cubit broader and one cubit higher than the Mosaic one. This fact shows that the intercession of Jesus Christ will go far beyond that of the priests under the law. He is our High-Priest and none can compare with His priestly work.

Our text states: "This is the

table that is before the LORD"; that is, either this altar is the table of the Lord, or Ezekiel's guide may have turned himself to the right hand of the altar and pointed to the table of shewbread which stood in the same place. Tables, of course, are for serving. The table before us is God's table where the people eat the true bread from heaven. God, of course, provides all the food on the table and bids us to come and dine. "And the temple and the sanctuary had two doors" (Ezek. 41:23). The meaning is not that the temple and the sanctuary will have two doors each, but they will have a total of two doors, or one door each. "And the doors had two leaves apiece, two turning leaves; two leaves for the one door, and two leaves for the other door" (Ezek. 41:24). Each door is to have two leaves which meet at the center post. This fact means that they may be opened individually or together.

"And there were made on them, on the doors of the temple, cherubims and palm trees, like as were made upon the walls; and there were thick planks upon the face of the porch without. And there were narrow windows and palm trees on the one side and on the other side, on the sides of the porch, and upon the side chambers of the house, and thick planks" (Ezek. 41:25, 26). The doors of the temple will give an abundant entrance to all who enter there. The palm tree, as Mr. Fausset states, "denotes the saints spiritual beauty, every fresh joy, and fruitfulness..." The walls and the thick planks, no doubt, refer to the same as that which is set forth in the following passages: "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks... Violence shall no more be heard in the land, wasting nor destruction within the borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise" (Isa. 26:1, 60:18).

## DOCTRINES

(Continued from Page 6)

the quick and leaves the saint as dust before the Almighty God that hath uttered his name. Paul said that it was the goodness of God that leadeth thee to repentance (Rom. 2:4). God exalted Jesus as Prince and Saviour to give repentance and forgiveness of sins (Acts 5:31).

In Acts 11:18 it is stated that God granted repentance unto life. The obvious of course, is that if God had not granted repentance, there would not have been any. To speak of refusing the granted repentance is a diabolical suggestion. Paul said the same to Timothy with respect to repentance. "...if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth" (II Tim. 2:25). The answer to the many who remain totally unrepentant is that they were never granted true repentance from God. They were non-elect. The source of truth, faith, and

(Continued on Page 8 Column 1)



## DOCTRINES

(Continued from Page 7)

repentance is from the Lord. God-wrought faith and repentance carry with them qualities that formal, man-manufactured remorse does not contain. There is a convicting shame and sorrow because of sin. Pride is expelled and a hatred of one's own being takes its place. These and other effects will be dealt with in the section "The Effects of Sovereign Grace." Before leaving the thought of faith and repentance, let us admire the precious scroll of Ezekiel 36:24-32. (Please read them.) Do we see in these words a God that is Almighty? Do we see a God that will not allow His chosen ones to forever wander? Yes, 'tis true. We see a God that not only will cleanse us from our filthiness, but will place within His elect a new heart and spirit which by God's sovereign grace will cause them to walk in His statutes. Something that will never be done if God does not do it. Likewise, it will cease to continue if ever left without the continual presence of the Holy Spirit of God. It is also very clear that after God has given a new heart and spirit, the vessel of mercy will then, and only then, remember his evil ungodly ways and that attitude of self-sufficiency and arrogant pride gives way to hatred of oneself because of iniquities and abominations. It is truly sad to try and reverse the order. Arminian doctrines teach that man first has his wicked heart and spirit overwhelmed by conviction and then repents and God saves him, giving him a new heart and a new spirit. The reverse order of truth. God first does the work of giving life, for only He can bring about such a change. The reaction, of course, is as noted in Ezekiel 36:24-32.

In closing, let us ask a question. Will man ever come to Christ without Christ? The answer is clearly no, even the Arminian agrees to that. Another question — will a man ever repent without the Holy Spirit? Of course not. Why then am I to believe that a man will do anything Godward unless God has already done an effectual work? People talk about faith. What is faith? Where does it come from? Do I have it hidden somewhere inside my being, hoping one day I will exercise it? God forbid. The natural man is devoid of any faith and desires none.

In view of what we have just said, is it possible for a man without faith to repent? Watch it, Arminian. The way you answer this question could put a strain on your flesh exalting, God insulting position. My answer would be no. It is not possible for a man to repent without faith. So what we have then is the answer to our question. If I ask Jesus to have mercy and forgive me of my ungodly and sinful ways, I evidently have faith that He will. That is truly faith in exercise when man repents and trusts Jesus Christ as Saviour. But, could I trust, could I believe, or have faith without God? Absolutely not. The result then is manifest when we see a person ashamed and heart-broken over sins and he hates what he is. It is very clear that God has already placed His Spirit within him. God help us to run away from the teachings of salvation left up to man. God

forgive us for even thinking that we determine what God has forever ordained.

## CHRISTIAN

(Continued from Page 1)

ed friends, Easter is on its way. Easter is coming and it's sad to say that there are many of God's children anxiously awaiting its arrival. Paul was pointing out to the Galatians their folly of becoming involved with idolatry after knowing the true and living God. Paul was quite upset with them that they would return to the weak and beggarly elements and forsake the God that had saved their souls. I share with Paul a disappointment in the brethren who involve themselves and their churches with celebrations such as Easter and Christmas. No Christian should be involved with the Easter celebration, Christmas celebration, or any worldly festival because:

I. We are not commanded to observe it. God has left us His Word, and all the things we are responsible to do are written in the Bible. All the things that we are to observe are written in His Book, and nowhere is this festival mentioned. The word Easter does appear in the Word of God in Acts 12:4, "And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people." Herod had taken Peter prisoner and he could not be brought up for trial because it was the time to observe the Passover. The word here should have been translated "passover" instead of "Easter." When the Bible was translated from Greek to English they replaced the word passover with Easter. The commandment to observe the passover was given in Exodus 12:17, "And ye shall observe the feast of unleavened bread; for in this selfsame day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever." Thus when the Bible speaks of Easter it is not speaking of the festival that men celebrate today known as Easter. The Bible is clearly speaking of the passover.

Easter is supposed to be a time when we commemorate the resurrection of Jesus Christ, but this cannot be found in the Bible. Listen beloved, if it can't be found in God's Word then we had better steer clear of it. The Bible says, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil" (I Thess. 5:21-22). All of your attempts to prove Easter something godly, with the Bible, will fail. This is the first reason why a Christian shouldn't observe Easter. The Christian doesn't need a worldly festival to remember what Christ has done for him. The Christian should think about this every day. The Christian should thank the Lord daily for his salvation. The Christian should attend the services at the Lord's local church whenever she meets during the week to worship. The Christian doesn't need a worldly celebration once a year to worship Christ. The Lord has given us a special ordinance for observing the death and resurrection of Himself. This, of course, is the Lord's Supper. This unlike Easter can be proved by the Bible. Therefore the Christian can and should observe it. "And

when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come" (I Cor. 11:24-26). Let me point out here that this ordinance is given to the church and is restricted to the church. In other words, you must be a Scripturally baptized member of a Sovereign Grace Landmark Independent Missionary Baptist Church to observe this supper, and that restricted to your own local church as far as your taking of this supper. Yes, there are Biblical ways of remembering the death and resurrection of Christ, but observing Easter is not one of them.

II. The Christian shouldn't observe Easter because the whole world is preparing to celebrate it. This in itself should tell us that it is not a Christian practice. Let's notice some Scripture concerning the world. John 15:18, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you." You must realize that the world does not love Jesus. Jesus is despised by most of this planet. When Christians are hated and persecuted, it is because of our most precious Lord Jesus. (John 1:10-11, "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not." Jesus while in this world was not looked upon as the King of glory. He was not revered by the world, nor was He missed when He left. While He was here on earth the world did not set up a big celebration in His honour, but rather they hated Him. They hated Him so much that they falsely accused Him of crimes so that they could crucify Him. They wanted to see Him suffer greatly. They wanted Him dead and done away with, because His words were not pleasing to their ears. No, dear friends, when Jesus walked this earth in the flesh; there were no big celebrations honouring Him. In light of this, the Christian should have nothing to do with Easter. I'm reminded of Exodus 23:2, "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil..." Just because the world celebrates a day, why must the dear lambs of God get involved with it? Why do the children of God want to get involved with God-haters and join hands with them in celebrating Easter?

III. The Christian shouldn't observe Easter because of the hypocrisy involved. Yes, Easter is probably one of the most hypocritical days on our calendar. Easter is the one Sunday in the year that the hypocrite will come to the church services. He lives like the devil himself all year round, but on Easter Sunday here he comes into the church house feeling all good inside and desiring for everyone to see the brand new suit that he bought just for the occasion. He thinks that he has come to worship God in his own way, when in fact there are three reasons why he has come. "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (I John 2:16). The hypocrite has been deceived by

the devil when he thinks that God is in heaven smiling down on him because he has come to church. The devil is the master of deception, and his greatest deception at Easter is making people feel good about themselves. This also holds true for Christmas. The devil has people so busy feeling good about themselves that they have no time to think about the Lord, or to listen to someone who tells them their need of repentance. Yes, the devil gives people much joy during this festival but it won't last. Job 20:5, "That the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment?" Some of the most filthy speakers in the world will celebrate Easter. Some will celebrate this time of year with a bottle of whiskey, or maybe they will join their friends at the local tavern, and all of this will pretend to be in the name of Christ.

IV. The Christian should not observe Easter because it is heathen in origin. I mentioned previously that Easter is not Biblical and could not be proved with the Bible, thus we must go to another source to find its origin. Easter comes from pagan origin, from people who are involved with idolatry. The word "Easter" is derived from the word "Eastre," a Anglo-Saxon name of a teutonic goddess. How shameful for a child of God to be caught up in this sin of idolatry. So how did this heathenism work its way into the lives of Christians? The Roman Catholic Church adopted these customs and christianized them; and now some Christians ignorantly observe these heathen practices. When you observe Easter you are linking up with the Catholic Church and her idolatry. When I think of those that have been killed because they would not accept Easter, I wonder how the Christian can dare observe it. Listen beloved, you are treading on mighty dangerous ground when you get involved in heathenism. I'm not saying that the Christian that observes Easter no longer believes that there is a God, but I am saying that he is observing a heathen festival that originated from people that worshipped other gods and idols. Easter is not a Christian holiday, and the historic position of Christians has been to treat it as heathenism and idolatry.

V. The Christian should not observe Easter because of its foolishness. Did you ever wonder what Peter Cottontail had to do with the resurrection of Christ? The rabbit was used to represent fertility when the pagans worshipped their goddess. They also used eggs that were painted brightly to represent the sunlight of spring. These two practices are so foolish and absurd that no Christian should be caught up in them. Many will admit that it is foolish and that there is no truth in it; but say it is for the children, and that there is no harm in it. Well mom and dad, if you want to do something for your children tell them about Jesus. Give them the gospel of Jesus Christ. Don't give them lies and idolatry that stems back to ancient Babylon, but rather give them Christ. This is another reason that you shouldn't observe Easter; that is, lying to your children and making them believe that a rabbit brings them candy every year, making that rabbit to be a "god."

VI. The Christian shouldn't

observe Easter because it has taken a few Biblical truths and twisted them around to fit a heathen festival. Notice a few things that are connected with Easter. There are forty days of fasting and Lent that have absolutely nothing to do with the Word of God. Along with this there is the observance of Good Friday. Good Friday is celebrated as the day that Jesus was crucified. They then turn around and observe Sunday as the day that He arose, but there are some Scriptural problems with this teaching. Matthew 12:40, "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." According to the Bible, the Catholics did some mighty poor figuring with their doctrine. Christ was in the grave three days and three nights, but the celebration of Easter has Him coming out of the grave too soon and on the wrong day. They didn't stop and add up their days correctly before they came up with their new doctrine, and even with this very critical mistake look how man has swallowed the foolishness of Easter. Man loves a festival and a celebration and will ignore the plain teachings of the Word of God to have them. The Bible says that Jesus had risen from the grave early Sunday morning. "And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him. And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun. And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great. And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted. And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified; he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him" (Mark 16:1-6). The Catholic doctrine does not agree with the bible nor do they care that it doesn't. When they christianized this heathen festival, they were more concerned with the keeping of the Babylonian festivals that with adhering to the Word of God. The Old Testament Sabbath was the seventh day of the week which was Saturday. Now according to scripture the sabbath was already past, and it was the first day of the week. It was Sunday. The Jewish days began at 6:00 p.m. and Jesus had already risen early on the first day. In order for Scripture to be fulfilled Jesus would have to have been crucified on Wednesday. This is the only way that He could have been in the grave three days and three nights. It does not take much figuring to come to this conclusion. Those that will observe Easter either have not taken the time to see this, or they simply don't care. The Christian should not have anything to do with a celebration that so openly disregards the Word of God.

In closing let me ask the reader that observes Easter, does this festival mean more to you than your Saviour? Do you owe your all to the goddess of

(Continued on Page 9 Column 1)



## CHRISTIAN

(Continued from Page 8)

heaven or to the God of heaven? The God of heaven is not pleased with this so-called Holy day. Amos 5:21, "I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies." I'm sure, and I say it with the authority of the Word of God, that He hates and He despises Easter. Now, if our Lord hates this day, then we should hate it also. No Christian should involve himself with a festival that God hates. May the Lord bless this to your hearts.

## EVANGELISM

(Continued from Page 1)

Judaea, in Samaria, and in the uttermost parts of the world.

Consistently large crowds, continuing invitations from the leading evangelical ministers of his day, thousands of personal testimonies to the spiritual impact of his messages, and growth in his own congregation are clear indications of not only a popular preaching style, but of a preacher whose words carried with them the awakening power of God. Here then is testimony to the blessing of God in a preaching ministry. It was owned by the Master in a way which few have been over these two thousand years of New Testament Church history.

And yet, it would be unfair to review the accomplishments of this great Preacher without mentioning his labours in fields outside the pulpit. One might recount the great tradition of the Pastor's College in which men were trained for the Gospel Ministry. It was begun in 1856 by Spurgeon himself, and for several years he remained its sole teacher and financial supporter. By the time of his death in 1892, some 900 men had completed studies at the College, of which by far the greatest percentage were in pastoral or missionary work. Students were to be found labouring in India, China, Japan, Africa, Spain, Italy, the West Indies, and South America, not to mention Australia, New Zealand, Canada, United States and throughout the British Isles. The editor of Spurgeon's autobiography concludes, with some justification, that

...if Spurgeon had done nothing beyond founding and carrying on the Pastor's College, it would have been a noble life-work.

But consider also the foundation of the monthly magazine *The Sword and Trowel*; from its inception in 1865, to his death, Spurgeon was a prominent, if not the main, contributor to its pages. Moreover, he was its editor, only relinquishing that function in the last days of his life on earth. Besides the periodical, the massive amount of literature published over his name staggers the imagination: some 155 titles listing him as author appear in the British Library card catalogue. This long list includes many different types of literature, from his massive seven volume commentary on the Psalms, *The Treasury of David*, to a series of homely stories teaching moral lessons under the name of John Ploughman's Talks. It is noteworthy that these books were purchased in very large quantities: by 1892, 120,000 copies of the Treasury volumes and 600,000 copies of the Ploughman's Talks. Spurgeon also wrote the devotional helps, *Morning by Morning* and *Even-*

*ing by Evening*; compiled *Our Own Hymnbook*; gave his analysis of Biblical scholarship in *Commenting and Commentaries*; penned expositions of Biblical Books, lectures to pastoral students, discussions on soul-winning, descriptions of the gospel ministry, guides to the raising and training of children, illustrative material for preachers and dozens of other things.

But that is not all. One must not forget the Colportage Association under his care, which, by 1892, numbered 92 persons as colporteurs, sold 11,255 pounds of material, paid 689,284 visits, and participated in, or delivered sermons at 10,147 services. And do not forget the Stockwell Orphanages which he established, one for boys in 1866 and one for girls in 1880. By 1892, 1,600 boys and girls had been provided for and given educations at these homes. All of these things ought to be given due weight in any attempt to evaluate the impact of the ministry of Charles Haddon Spurgeon. But when all is said and done, Charles Haddon Spurgeon was a PREACHER.

One glance at the material that remains in bibliographies and books on church history is enough to underline this truth. Northrup's work on Spurgeon, *Spurgeon's Life and Works* is subtitled "Being a Graphic Account of the Greatest Preacher of Modern Times." Conwell's biographical account of *Spurgeon's Life* is subtitled "The World's Great Preacher." Neither of these books is of very great value, especially Conwell's, but they demonstrate that even those who did not really understand the man, recognized his status as a preacher of the gospel. E.F. Adcock's biography of Spurgeon is entitled *Charles H. Spurgeon: Prince of Preachers*; this latter phrase is echoed by Dallimore in his recent biography. An anonymous volume entitled *Spurgeon: The People's Preacher* also appeared. And Kathy Triggs, who finds by means of her own interpretation of Spurgeon's theology (an erroneous one, I believe) reason to be disappointed with him in his later years, wants to remember him as *The Boy Preacher of the Fens*. In sum, then, the biographical tradition clearly remembers Spurgeon as a preacher, a great preacher.

It is the preaching of this great Baptist divine to which I wish to draw your attention in the remainder of this paper. My reason for doing so is simple. Spurgeon's sermons represent a type of preaching which, in the minds of many persons today (both non-Christians and Christians alike I am sorry to say), is an impossibility. On the one hand he was EVANGELISTIC in his proclamation. Spurgeon had great success in the spiritual battle. The salvation of men's souls came by his preaching; men flocked to hear him, and their hearts were touched by the hand of God as they listened. He was, above all else, an evangelical preacher concerned for the glory of God in the salvation of souls. No man disputes this view of Spurgeon's work.

The alleged "impossibility" to which I make reference is a result of the fact that Spurgeon was a CALVINISTIC preacher, and many today, both outside and inside the church, believe that one cannot be both evangelistic and Calvinistic. That a Calvinistic preacher would be able to give a free offer

of the gospel, let alone be willing to do so, seems to many to be unthinkable. This situation suggests that what Spurgeon said over a hundred years ago is still true in our own day: "there is nothing upon which men need to be more instructed than upon the question of what Calvinism really is."

The difficulty of dealing with a "Calvinistic evangelist" or an "evangelistic Calvinist," whichever you prefer, has not escaped the notice of those who would like to own Spurgeon as their hero, but who find themselves in disagreement with his theology. Helmut Theilicke, for example, a man who ought to know better, writes in the foreword to a recent edition of *Spurgeon's Soul-Winner*:

When I consider the dogmatic system behind Spurgeon's spiritual meditations, I must confess that my own are different. But what does it matter? I can see that fresh and unpolluted water springs forth in Spurgeon's preaching. The impression is so strong that it is a secondary question by what theology the source is enclosed....

Here is one way to deal with the "difficulty" noted above; circumvent it by claiming that theology does not matter in preaching. What a peculiar thing for a theologian to say! He does, however, at least recognize in Spurgeon's sermons a theology foreign to his own. This is more than can be said for A. Blackwood who writes: "(Billy) Graham preaches today what Spurgeon did two generations ago." Can the man have read anything which Spurgeon had written?

But these gentlemen represent the least threat to the correct estimation of Spurgeon and his preaching. The most vicious detractor is a man who has much to gain by making Spurgeon his spiritual predecessor. The most brazen example of amnesia about what Spurgeon preached is to be found in the writings of John R. Rice. He writes, in a book entitled "Pre-destined for Hell? No!"

I am convinced that Whitefiel and Spurgeon were both influenced, by the pressure of Arminian theology in their day, to call themselves Calvinists... There is an occasional reference to election and predestination in Spurgeon's preaching. But it was with him not a major matter.

And yet, this man for whom it was not a "major matter" writes:

I have my own private opinion that there is no such thing as preaching Christ and Him crucified, unless we preach what now-a-days is called Calvinism. It is a nickname to call it Calvinism; Calvinism is the gospel, and nothing else (*Autobiography I, 268*).

In a letter to a close friend, Spurgeon writes:

Dear me, how little satisfies the crowd! What on earth are other preachers up to, when, with ten times the talent, they are snoring along with prose sermons, and sending the world away? The reason is, I believe, they do not know what the gospel is; they are afraid of real gospel Calvinism, and therefore the Lord does not own them (*Autobiography I, 341*).

It would be a task fit to fill three papers just to skim the writings of Spurgeon and find all those many references in which he avows himself to be a Calvinist, and claims that Calvinism is nothing else than

the gospel so nicknamed. It should be obvious to even the casual reader that Calvinism was not merely something that Spurgeon employed in order to distinguish himself from other preachers; for him it was the whole counsel of God for salvation. In preface to a series of sermons on the main points of Calvinism which were delivered during the opening services at the Tabernacle, Spurgeon states:

It may happen this afternoon that the term "Calvinism" may be frequently used. Let it not be misunderstood; we only use the term for shortness. That doctrine which is called "Calvinism" did not spring from Calvin; we believe that it sprang from the great founder of all truth (*Autobiography II, 45*).

Far from feeling that "Calvinism" was no "major matter," it becomes clear to the reader that Spurgeon saw it as a summary of true Biblical teachings, nothing short of the heart of true gospel preaching.

It is also suggested by Mr. Rice that "Spurgeon was never an active and strong Calvinist in the sense of Calvin and the Westminster Confession of Faith, though he nominally accepted the system of Calvinism." Could it be that Spurgeon was a "nominal" Calvinist? Could it be that Spurgeon found himself at odds with Calvin and the Puritans over the true meaning of the Calvinistic doctrines of grace? Hear what he himself has to say:

There is no soul living who holds more firmly to the doctrines of grace than I do, and if any man asks me whether I am ashamed to be called a Calvinist, I answer — I wish to be called nothing but a Christian;... (*Autobiography I, 173*).

Mr. Rice would seem justified in his appraisal of Spurgeon if the sentence concluded as I have left it. But read on... but if you ask me, do I hold the doctrinal views which were held by John Calvin, I reply, I do in the main hold them, and rejoice to avow it (*Autobiography I, 173*).

Add to these words such comments as, The old truth that Calvin preached, that Augustine preached, is the truth that I must preach today, or else be false to my conscience and my God. I cannot shape the truth; I know of no such thing as paring off the rough edges of a doctrine. John Knox's gospel is my gospel. That which thundered through Scotland must thunder through England again (*Autobiography I, 162*).

Spurgeon realized that the doctrines of grace which the Reformers proclaimed were not acceptable to the pride of man. But even in sermons before thousands at the Music Hall (thousands who were not from his own congregation) he held firmly to these doctrines which humbled men before a mighty God; doctrines which teach that if man is to be saved, God will have to do the saving. In his farewell sermon at the Music Hall, Spurgeon said:

There is a tendency in this age to throw doctrinal truth into a shade. Too many preachers are offended with that stern truth which Covenanters held, and to which the Puritans testified in the midst of a licentious age. We are told that the times have changed, that we are to modify these old (so-called) Calvinistic doctrines, and bring them down to the tone of the times; that, in fact, they need dilution, that men have become so intelligent that we must pare off the angles

of our religion, and make the square into a circle by rounding off the most prominent edges. Any man who does this, so far as my judgment goes, does not declare all the counsel of God (*Autobiography I, 536*).

What can be "nominal" about a man's convictions when he can say: Perhaps there is only one thing on earth that I love better than the last I have mentioned (i.e. England), and that is the pure doctrine of unadulterated Calvinism ("The Eternal Name," NPSP I, 169).

Spurgeon's use of the term Calvinism does not betray any nominal commitment to the truths so named; nor does he appear to have removed himself from Calvin, or the Puritans of Westminster. Mr. Rice would call these last named persons hyper-Calvinists, or extreme Calvinists, and he will have nothing to do with them. Why is it then that he desires to have Charles Haddon Spurgeon to be his spiritual predecessor when Spurgeon took as his precursors these very persons? Mr. Rice's appraisal of Spurgeon's preaching, and the theology which lies behind it, is mixed with error, and shows what seems to be a conscious attempt to deceive his readers. When he prints sermons by Spurgeon in the *Sword of the Lord*, aspects of Calvinistic theology which might appear in it (except the doctrine of perseverance) are removed or rewritten; thus one may have read Spurgeon's sermons in that paper for years and be totally unaware of the true position of Spurgeon on these matters.

Leaving Mr. Rice, let me note another way that men have tried to deprive Spurgeon of his much-loved Calvinism. In his *History of English Baptists*, A.C. Underwood writes:

But his intense zeal for the conversion of souls led him to step outside the bounds of the creed he had inherited... the truth seems to be that the old Calvinistic phrases were often on Spurgeon's lips but the genuine Calvinistic meaning had gone out of them.

In Underwood's view Spurgeon used the terms but changed the meanings. Thus when Spurgeon says:

I believe there is a better epitome (sc. of the Gospel) in the five points of Calvinism; election according to the foreknowledge of God; the natural depravity and sinfulness of man; particular redemption by the blood of Christ; effectual calling by the power of the Spirit; and ultimate perseverance by the efforts of God's might ("The Bible," NPSP, I, 37), he actually does not mean what he appears to mean. Is it possible that Spurgeon might have used the words but emptied them of their traditionally accepted meanings? More precisely, we might ask what Spurgeon did believe with regard to these doctrines of grace? Look at what he said in his sermons, and then see if it is possible to agree with Underwood.

First, of man's depravity and inability, he says: I am bound to the doctrine of the depravity of the human heart because I find myself depraved in heart, and have daily proof that in my flesh there dwelleth no good thing (*Autobiography I, 168*).

In another place Spurgeon

(Continued on Page 10 Column 1)



## EVANGELISM

(Continued from Page 9)

spells out what he took to be the prevailing view of his day when he puts words into the mouth of a make-believe preacher as follows:

We do not want Christ to choose for us in the matter of Heaven and hell. It is so plain and easy, that every man who has a grain of common sense will choose Heaven, and any person would know better than to choose hell. We have no need to any superior intelligence or any greater Being, to choose Heaven and hell for us. It is left to our free-will, and we have enough wisdom given us, sufficiently correct means to judge for ourselves.

Spurgeon's simple reply is:

...my good brother, it may be very true that we could, but I think we should want something more than common sense before we should choose aright (Autobiography I, 165).

In a Sermon entitled "Elijah's Appeal to the Undecided," Spurgeon states clearly that man is "unable" in spiritual matters. He argues:

I may preach to you, my hearers; and all the ministers in the world may preach to you that are wavering, but you will never decide for God through the force of your own will. None of you, if left to your natural judgment, to the use of your own reason, will ever decide for God... I know that none of you will ever decide for God's gospel, unless God decide for you;... (NPSP, III, 191-192).

Or consider his comments from another sermon but upon a similar theme.

More seriously I say, I do not believe any man can repent with evangelical repentance, of himself. You ask me then to what purpose is the sermon I have endeavoured to preach, proving the necessity of repentance? Allow me to make the sermon of some purpose, under God, by its conclusion. Sinner! thou art so desperately set on sin, that I have no hope thou wilt ever turn from it of thyself. But listen! He who died on Calvary is exalted on high "to give repentance and remission of sin." Dost thou this morning feel thou art a sinner? If so, ask of Christ to give the repentance, for He can work repentance in thine heart by His Spirit, though thou canst not work in there thyself ("Turn or Burn" NPSP, II, 439).

I leave you to decide for yourselves; could he have stated the essence of the doctrine of man's depravity and inability any more obviously?

Second, of man's unconditional election, he states: ...I believe the doctrine of election, because I am quite certain that, if God had not chosen me, I should never have chosen Him; and I am sure He chose me before I was born, or else He never would have chosen me afterwards; and He must have elected me for reasons unknown to me, for I never could find any reason in myself why He should have looked upon me with special love. So I am forced to accept that great Biblical doctrine (Autobiography I, 166).

That God's choice was not determined by foreknowledge of acts of the elect was a theme to which Spurgeon returned again and again. In a Sermon entitled "The Dumb Singing" he presses

home the point with great care when he declares to his listeners: grace is always grace, but it never seems so gracious as when we see it brought to our unworthy selves. Ay, my friends, you may be Arminians in your doctrine, but you never can be Arminians in your feelings; you are obliged to confess that it is all of grace, and cast away the thought that it was of your foreseen faith or of your foreseen good works that the Lord chose you (NPSP, III, 123).

Here is a second term which Spurgeon uses with all of the vigor of its original significance.

Third, we come to the most "difficult" of the so-called five points of Calvinistic soteriology: particular redemption. This doctrine more than any other one would expect Spurgeon to dilute or to use without its true and traditional Calvinistic force. I can do nothing better than quote him at length on the subject.

Some persons love the doctrine of universal atonement because they say, "It is so beautiful. It is a lovely idea that Christ should have died for all men; it commends itself," they say, "to the instincts of humanity; there is something in it full of joy and beauty." I admit there is, but beauty may be often associated with falsehood. There is much which I might admire in the theory of universal redemption, but I will just show what the supposition necessarily involves. If Christ on His cross intended to save every man, then He intended to save those who were lost before He died. If the doctrine be true, that He died for all men, then He died for some who were in hell before He came into the world, for doubtless there were even then myriads there who had been cast away because of their sins. Once again, if it were Christ's intention to save all men, how deplorable has He been disappointed, for we have His own testimony that there is a lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, and into which pit of woe have been cast some of the very persons who, according to the theory of universal redemption, were bought with His blood. That seems to be a conception a thousand times more repulsive than any of those consequences which are said to be associated with the Calvinistic and Christian doctrine of a special and particular redemption. To think that my Saviour died for men who were or are in hell, seems a supposition too horrible for me to entertain. To imagine for a moment that He was a substitution for all the sons of men, and that God, having first punished the Substitute, afterwards punished the sinners themselves, seems to conflict with all my ideas of divine justice. That Christ should offer an atonement and satisfaction for the sins of all men, and that afterwards some of those very men should be punished for the sins for which Christ had already atoned, appears to me to be the most monstrous iniquity that could ever have been imputed to Saturn, to Janus, to the goddess of the Thugs, or the most diabolical heathen deities. God forbid that we should ever think thus of Jehovah, the just and wise and good (Autobiography I, 172).

Plain and searching, Spurgeon's words leave no doubt about the view which he held under the name particular redemption.

Fourth, we come to the doctrine of irresistible grace. As is often the case, Spurgeon describes his belief by using his own experience as an exemplary case. He relates of himself that I did not commence my spiritual life — no, rather I kicked, and struggled against the things of the Spirit; when He drew me, for a time I did not run after Him: there was a natural hatred in my soul for everything holy and good. Wooings were lost upon me — warnings were cast to the wind — thunders were despised; and as for whispers of His love, they were rejected as being less than nothing and vanity. But, sure I am, I can say now, speaking on behalf of myself, "He only is my salvation." It was He who turned my heart, and brought me down on my knees before Him. I can in very deed, say with Doddridge and Toplady — Grace taught my soul to pray, And made my eyes overflow; (Autobiography I, 164).

Or, again, he writes: ...when He first came to me, did I not spurn Him? When He knocked at the door, and asked for entrance, did I not drive Him away, and do despite to His grace? Ah, I can remember that I full often did so, until, at last, by the power of His effectual grace, He said, "I must, I will come in;" and then He turned to my heart, and made me love Him (Autobiography I, 167).

These same things he told to his congregation in a Sermon entitled "Heaven and Hell," Preaching on Matthew 8:11, 12, "Many shall come from east and west," he states:

God says, "you shall come." You, yourself, say, "you won't come; God says "You shall come." Yes! there are some here who are laughing at salvation, who can scoff at Christ and mock at the Gospel; but I tell you some of you shall come yet. "What?" you say, "can God make me become a Christian?" I tell you Yes, for herein rests the power of the gospel. It does not ask your consent; but it gets it. It does not say, Will you have it? but it makes you willing in the day of God's power (NPSP, I, 305-6).

The Gospel is the power of God even in its application by the Spirit. Spurgeon surely does hold to a thorough going version of the doctrine of irresistible grace.

Fifth, and lastly, consider Spurgeon's remarks concerning the doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints.

If one dear saint of God had perished, so might all; if one of the covenant ones be lost, so may all be; and then there is no gospel promise true, but the Bible is a lie, and there is nothing in it worth my acceptance. I will be an infidel at once when I can believe that a saint of God can ever fall finally. If God hath loved me once, then He will love me forever.

I do not know how some people, who believe that a Christian can fall from grace, manage to be happy. It must be a very commendable thing in them to be able to get through a day without despair. If I did not believe the doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints, I think I should be of all men the most miserable, because I should lack any ground of comfort (Autobiography I, 169).

In a sermon entitled "Healing for the Wounded," Spurgeon states his position very openly.

No man who is once saved of God shall ever be lost. If we receive mercy by faith, we shall

never lose it. When God heals once, he heals forever. Although some who teach false doctrine do assert that children of God may be lost, they have no warrant in Scripture, nor in experience, for we know that He keepeth the saints. He who is once forgiven, can not be punished. He who is once healed shall never find his soul unto death (NPSP, II, 31).

In summary then see how Spurgeon describes the gospel he preaches.

I do not believe we can preach the gospel, if we do not preach justification by faith, without works; not unless we preach the sovereignty of God in His dispensation of grace; nor unless we exalt the electing, unchangeable, eternal, immutable, conquering love of Jehovah; nor do I think we can preach the gospel, unless we base it upon the special and particular redemption of His elect and chosen people which Christ wrought out upon the cross; nor can I comprehend a gospel which lets saints fall away after they are called, and suffers the children of God to be burned in the fires of damnation after having once believed in "Jesus Christ Crucified," (NPSP, I, 88-89).

It is patently obvious that Underhill has completely mistaken Spurgeon's theological position. It is an untruth to claim that Spurgeon's ministry had the form of traditional Calvinism but none of the essence. In fact in a Sermon entitled "The Comer's Conflict with Satan" (NPSP, II, 301-302), Spurgeon says that "the devil tries to keep the soul in bondage, darkness, and despair" by perverting "the five great doctrines which we hold to be most prominent in Scripture: election, man's depravity, effectual calling, final perseverance, and redemption." But having settled the question of whether or not Spurgeon was a Calvinist in the traditional sense, and whether or not he himself was aware of the meanings of the terms he employed in his preaching, note how Spurgeon emphasized his role as a preacher of the good news of salvation in Christ. His Calvinism never caused him to draw back from presenting Christ before men as a Saviour of sinners. His evangelistic endeavour was in no way hampered by the fact that he believed unmistakably and strongly in the sovereignty of God in the affairs of men.

Spurgeon himself was not oblivious to the fact that many old time Calvinists of his own day felt that he was too free with his invitations to Christ. These men felt that more restraint should be exercised in the presentation of the Saviour to crowds of men who might not qualify as proper "seekers." It was just at this point that Spurgeon's Calvinism reflects the true balance of a Biblical position rather than the stagnation of a crusty theology which desires consistency in terms of man's reason rather than the free expression of the revealed truth of the Scriptures. Spurgeon himself knew well that it was his "free offer of the Gospel" that set him apart from the group of "hyper-Calvinists" (as he would term them) who erred by limiting the gospel presentation.

Spurgeon himself commented on a sermon at the Surrey Music Hall in 1858 in the following way:

I recollect great complaint be-

ing made against my sermon on the words, "Compel them to come in," in which I was enabled to speak with much tenderness and compassion for souls. The violent, rigid school of Hyper-Calvinists said that the discourse was Arminian and unsound, but it was a small matter to me to be condemned by the judgment of men, for my Master set His seal very clearly upon that message. I think I never preached another sermon by which so many souls were won to God, as our church-meetings long continued to testify; and all over the world, wherever the printed discourse has been scattered, sinners have been saved through its instrumentality; and, therefore, if it be vile to exhort sinners to come to Christ, I purpose to be viler still. I am as firm a believer in the doctrines of grace as any man living, and a true Calvinist after the order of John Calvin himself; and probably I have read more of his works than any one of my accusers ever did; but if it be thought an evil thing to bid sinners "lay hold of eternal life," I will be yet more evil in this respect, and herein imitate not only Calvin, but also my Lord and His apostles, who, though they taught that salvation is of grace, and grace alone, feared not to speak to men as rational beings and responsible agents, and to bid them "strive to enter in at the strait gate", and "labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life" (Autobiography I, 530-1).

Spurgeon continued to the end of his life exhorting men to come to Christ. His doctrine was not one which was based on human logic, but on divine power; with God all things are possible, and if God were to command Spurgeon to preach to those who could not of themselves repent, so be it. Spurgeon was as ready to preach to the "dry bones" as Ezekiel was, if God's Word demanded it.

But, argued these Hypermen, surely it is illogical to preach the Saviour to men who cannot hear and respond; moreover, it is "casting your pearls before swine." No human logic would prevent Spurgeon from his divine mission for the souls of men. He spoke on the day of the dedication of the Tabernacle as follows:

We believe in the five great points commonly known as Calvinistic... Against all comers, especially against all lovers of Arminianism, we defend and maintain pure gospel truth. At the same time, I can make this public declaration, ... I belong not to the sect of those who are afraid to invite the sinner to come to Christ, I warn him, I invite him, I exhort him. Hence, then, I have contumely on either hand. Inconsistency is charged against me by some people, as if anything that God commanded could be inconsistent; I will glory in such inconsistency even to the end. I bind myself precisely to no form of doctrine. I love those five points as being the angels of the gospel, but then I love the centre between the angels better still" (Autobiography II, 12).

That "centre" is the Lord Jesus Christ proclaimed as the Saviour of a lost and dying world, friend to sinners, and kind receiver of all who come to Him for rest.

On April 10, 1861, at a communion service at the Tabernacle, Spurgeon defended

(Continued on Page 11 Column 1)



## EVANGELISM

(Continued from Page 10)

Calvinism as the doctrine of revival through the centuries. He powerfully refuted the charge that Calvinists dare not preach the gospel to the unregenerate. He says:

Did not Bunyan plead with sinners, and whoever classed him with any but the Calvinists? Did not Charnock, Goodwin, and How agonize for souls, and what were they but Calvinists? Did not Jonathan Edwards preach to sinners, and who more clear and explicit on these doctrinal matters? The works of our innumerable divines teem with passionate appeals to the unconverted... Was George Whitefield any less seraphic? Did his eyes weep the fewer tears or his bowels move with less compassion because he believed in God's electing love and preached the sovereignty of the most High (Autobiography II, 45-6)?

On revivals he declared:

...in the history of the church, with but few exceptions, you could not find a revival at all that was not produced by the orthodox faith. What was that great work which was done by Augustine, when the church suddenly woke up from the pestiferous and deadly sleep into which Pelagian doctrine had cast it? What was the Reformation itself but the waking up of men's minds to those old truths?... Need I mention to you better names than Huss, Jerome of Prague, Farel, John Knox, Wycliffe, Wishart, Bradford? Need I do more than say that these held the same views, and that in their day anything like an Arminian revival was utterly unheard of... And then let me turn you to the continent of America. How gross the falsehood that Calvinistic doctrine is unfavourable to revivals! Look at that wondrous shaking under Jonathan Edwards and others which we might quote. Or turn to Scotland — what shall we say of M'Cheyne? What shall we say of those renowned Calvinists, Dr. Chalmers, Dr. Wardlaw, and before them Livingstone, Haldane, Erskine, and the like (Autobiography II, 46)?

These doctrines, says Spurgeon, do not put the church to sleep.

In all this Spurgeon saw the clear command of Scripture to preach the good news without distinction to men of every nation. Not content to study his doctrine as men went to Hell, Spurgeon embodies the greatest features of what he refers to as "glorious Calvinism" (Autobiography I, 250-1) — commanding men everywhere to repent and believe the gospel, while at the same time confessing that unless the Lord build a house they labour in vain that do build it. Keeping in balance the two great truths of man's responsibility and God's sovereignty.

In the short space remaining I wish to introduce a consideration of the methodology employed by Spurgeon in his "evangelistic Calvinism." What evidence can be gathered from his sermons to indicate the "how to" aspect of his "free offer of the gospel"? The question richly deserves an answer since my own experience has shown that at times the Calvinistic preacher (especially the younger one) falters when he comes to this portion of his message. What I have to say in what follows is quite preliminary in nature but

does arise out of a reading of Spurgeon's own sermons in the New Park Street Pulpit.

Any number of points might be included as details in the description of Spurgeon's expression of the "free offer" (e.g. the transitory nature of human life, the immediate availability of forgiveness, the simplicity of the gospel), but I have chosen to note three in particular because they systematically appear in his sermons. First, Spurgeon's "offer" regularly removes the possibility of a neutral stance for any of his listeners. As he himself says, "I like, you know, at the end of my sermon to cry out, 'Divide! Divide!' There are two parties here —..." ("The Comforter," NPSP, I, 80). He is ever fond of dividing his listeners into two categories. Moreover, Spurgeon rarely speaks in terms of "Christians and Non Christians" but rather employs a division arising directly out of the text upon which he is preaching. In this way (as it seems to me) the person who claims to be a Christian is not left in the safety of his previous profession unscathed (and unhelped) by the preacher's words, but is confronted afresh in each sermon by the Word of God. For example, when he is preaching about the comfort of the Holy Spirit, he speaks to "some who are comforted, and others who are the comfortless ones" (80-81). Very often he speaks of those who are convicted by the words of the Scripture, and those who are laughing at his preaching (e.g. "The Comer's Conflict" with Satan," NPSP, II, 310). In each case the listener must examine his own heart. He is not left to gain false comfort from past days; the claims of Christ come to him afresh at each hearing.

Second, throughout his early sermons Spurgeon speaks often of the importance of conviction.

I want to make a man feel his sins before I dare tell him anything about Christ. I want to probe into his soul and make him feel that he is lost before I tell him anything about the purchased blessing. It is the ruin of many to tell them, "Now just believe on Christ, and that is all you have to do" ("The Comforter," NPSP, I, 82).

For Spurgeon conviction, or "the realization that one needs a Saviour," was an indication that God was at work in a man's heart. He knew only too well that men who feel no sorrow for sin will never seek a Saviour, and that by nature men feel no true evangelical conviction for sin.

Often in his sermons he mentions that he has a Saviour to preach to the sinners, but only to sinners. He pleads "And if thou knowest thyself to be lost and ruined, if the Holy Spirit has humbled thee and made thee feel thy sin, let me tell thee how thou shalt be saved" ("Love's Commendation," NPSP, II, 423). Spurgeon took the Lord's words very seriously where the latter says that He came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance; or that it is the ill, not the well who need a physician. In a sermon on Romans 5:8, he argues with men as follows:

"How can I believe that Christ died for me?" Why, thus. He says He died for sinners; canst thou say thou art a sinner? I do not mean with that fine complimentary phrase which many of you use, when you say, "Yes, I am a sinner;" and if I sit down to ask you, ... you never did anything wrong... Now that

it is the sort of sinners I do not think I shall preach to. The sort of sinners I would call to repentance are those whom Christ invited — those who mean what they say when they confess that they have been guilty, vile and lost. If thou knowest thy sinfulness, so truly Christ died for thee ("Love's Commendation," NPSP, II, 423).

The meaning of Spurgeon's remarks about the importance of knowing your sinfulness is further explained by an illustration from yet another sermon.

Let me tell you a story to see how Christ saves souls. Mr. Whitefield had a brother, who had been like him an earnest Christian, but he had backslidden; he went far from the ways of godliness; and one afternoon, after he had been recovered from his backsliding, he was sitting in a room in a chapel-house. He had heard his brother preach the day before, and his poor conscience had been cut to the very quick. Said Whitefield's brother, when he was at tea, "I am a lost man," and he groaned and cried, and could neither eat nor drink. Said Lady Huntingdon, who sat opposite, "What did you say, Mr. Whitefield?" "Madam," said he, "I said I am a lost man." "I'm glad of it," said she; "I'm glad of it." "Your ladyship, how can you say so? It is cruel to say you are glad that I am a lost man." "I repeat it, sir," said she; "I am heartily glad of it." He looked at her, more and more astonished at her barbarity. "I am glad of it," said she "because it is written, the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost." With tears rolling down his cheeks, he said, "What a precious Scripture; and how is it that it comes with such force to me?" "O! madam," said he, "madam, I bless God for that; then He will save me; I trust my soul in His hands, He has forgiven me" ("The Blood Shedding," NPSP, III, 291-2).

In a theology which allows men's ability to produce an evangelical repentance and faith, then recognition of sin means much less; but for Charles Haddon Spurgeon, Calvinistic evangelist, conviction of sin comes only by the hand of God. Thus he makes much of it.

A sense of sin is all we have to look for as ministers. We preach to sinners; and let us know that a man will take his title of sinner to himself, and we then say to him, "Look unto Christ, and ye shall be saved" ("Sovereignty and Salvation," NPSP, I, 15).

A third, and final regular element of Spurgeon's evangelistic pleading is the declaration that the Lord Jesus Christ turns away not one of those who come to Him.

Weary sinner, hellish sinner, thou art the devil's cast-away, reprobate, profligate, harlot, robber, thief, adulterer, fornicator, drunkard, swearer, Sabbath-breaker — list! I speak to thee as well as the rest. I exempt no man. God hath said there is no exemption "WHOSOEVER believeth on the name of Jesus Christ shall be saved" ("The Comforter," NPSP, I, 83-4).

Or again, this I will venture to say: if thou castest thyself on Christ, and He deserteth thee, I will be willing to go halves with thee in all thy misery and woe. For He will never do it: never, never, never ("Sovereignty and Salvation," NPSP, I, 15).

Such an assurance of Christ's compassion gave power to Spurgeon's preaching. Heaven's

gates are thus thrown wide and no one can blame the evangelist for excluding any man. Those hearing this message must I think feel the weight of their responsibility before God. The hardened rebel refuses yet another invitation to "Come and dine"; He does not come because he will not. The humbled sinner flees to Christ with those words on his lips which Spurgeon so often quoted from Toplady's famous hymn:

Nothing in my hand I bring;  
Simply to thy cross I cling.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon was a PREACHER.

—Copied from The Gospel Witness

Editor's Note: I do not like nor use the term "Calvinism." However, this is an excellent article, and I have left it as written. Many Arminians today delight to pretend to be in Spurgeon's camp. They build monuments for Spurgeon and then do all they can to oppose the doctrines he preached. This article gives a good presentation of Spurgeon as one who believed wholeheartedly in the doctrine of Grace, yet also believed in and practiced Evangelism. I consider Spurgeon to be a well rounded preacher as to these two things. I wish that more of those who brag on him would follow his steps in both of these matters. Many who boast of Spurgeon as a strong preacher of grace do not imitate his evangelism. Many who like to claim him as their kind on evangelism utterly detest the doctrines of grace. I highly commend this article as to these two matters.

## THE LOCAL CHURCH IN EPHESIANS PART III

by Joseph M. Wilson

We have learned the following things about the church in Ephesians. It is the same kind of church as spoken of elsewhere in the New Testament. It was the church Paul established during his third missionary journey. It was the church where Timothy was serving when Paul wrote I Timothy. It was the church to which Christ sent a message in Revelation 2:1-7. It is the body, or rather, a body of Christ. It is a habitation of God through the Spirit. It is the instructor of heavenly principalities and powers as to the manifold wisdom of God. Now let us study further relative to the church in Ephesians.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the head of the church in Ephesians. "...Christ is the head of the church..." (Eph. 5:23).

As members of sound Baptist churches we dare not own any head but Christ. Let the Church of England have its queen. Let the Methodists have their controlling bishops. Let the Catholics have their pope. Let the Presbyterians have their synods. Yea, let the institutions of men (churches falsely so-called) have whom or what they will as their heads — but let Baptists own and recognize no head but Jesus Christ. For any man or group to claim or exercise headship over the church is to usurp the authority which belongs only to Jesus Christ, and such will surely answer to the Lord against whom they rebel.

The pastor is not the head of the church. Under God, he has a place of leadership — a place that demands honor and respect. As he preaches the truths of God's Word, he has authority derived from the authoritative Word, and should be listened to by all who honor

God's Word. However, the pastor must not be an arbitrary dictator over the Lord's church. He is not the head of the church. The truth is that the pastor, along with every member of the church is subject to the authority of the church. God-given authority resides in a true church of Christ and not in the pastor of the church. The church at Ephesus had tried them which said they were apostles and were not and had found them liars. Read Revelation 2:2. Every member of the church must bow before the authority of the church. If it isn't a true church get out of it, but while a member thereof, respect its authority. The pastor is a servant of the church, the messenger to the church, the leader of the church, but only Jesus Christ is the head of the church.

The deacons are not the head of the church. God only knows how many deacon boards have usurped the authority of Christ and are running professed Baptist churches with an iron rule. God only knows how many true churches have been completely ruined by deacon boards and are no longer even to be considered as true churches of Christ. The word "deacon" means "servant," and it is the deacon's business to serve the church. When he seeks to rule the church, he rebels against the authority of Christ, and wrecks the church.

The Ladies Aid, or any other group of women, is not the head of the church. Listen: The place of women in the church is that of silence and subjection. When women start speaking in the church, it isn't long until they start running the church. Brethren, a "woman-run" church is not a fit place for either man or beast. Bossy, usurping women have ruined more churches than we can tell. Brethren, you better keep the women in their God-appointed place in the church, or they will cause you more trouble than you will ever cure. Christ is the head of the church.

Conventions and associations are not heads of the church. Now it is utterly unscriptural and anti-true scriptural for a Baptist church to join an association or a convention. When you join anything, you confess that what you join is larger, and more important than a Baptist church. A church lowers its position and shows its utter misunderstanding of God's Word when it joins anything. When you join something, you become a part of it and whoever is the head of it automatically becomes your head.

So, who is the head of convention churches? Besides being filthy and utterly corrupt, the convention and association is wrong to start with. In fact, the reason the convention is so rotten is because it was wrong to start with. I have not the least particle of use for the convention, and not much use for any church that is a part thereof. It is a vile, filthy, corrupt organization. Wake Forest College (Baptist college of North Carolina) has had Martin Luther King, Dick Gregory, and Erskine Caldwell as speakers. They invited the Soviet representative to the U.N. to speak. I once said on our radio program that it looked like anyone could speak at

(Continued on Page 12 Column 1)



## TUNE IN TO THE CALL TO CALVARY

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

## LOCAL

(Continued from Page 11)

Wake Forest except a patriotic American, a sound Baptist preacher, or the Lord Jesus Christ. These corrupt speakers, I presume, are paid out of money put into collection plates in convention churches. To call this sound Biblical practice, to call such a school a Christian college, is a disgusting joke and a crime against God. Brethren, the "co-op" is the God of the Southern Baptist Convention. A preacher could live like the devil and preach doctrines that originate in Hell, but as long as he leads his church to feed the "co-op", to bow at the sacred shrine of the "co-op", he is an honored member in the S.B.C. But let a man live ever so godly, preach the truth without any admixture of error; and then speak out against the evils of the "co-op", fail to bow at the sacred "co-op", and brother, he is out. He is blacklisted, and if they can get him out of the church he is in now, he will never get another convention church. The association and convention exercise an influence over member churches that, to all practical purposes, amounts to authority. You S.B.C. boys know that this is the truth. Associations and conventions are rebels against the authority of God. Usurpers of the authority of Jesus Christ, and member churches have departed from the faith of the New Testament. It is my firm conviction based upon God's Word that it is a sin for associations and conventions to exist; a sin for any church to be a member of such an organization; a sin for any believer to be a member of such a church; and I hope by now you get the impression that I am against the convention. I challenge any man living to give Scriptural authority for such organizations or for membership in them. Brethren, there is not enough whitewash in the universe to cover the black, filthy corruption of the Southern Baptist Convention, and the only remedy for those who bow to the Bible is "Come out of her, my people." Christ is the head of the church.

The church is the executive agent in the Lord's work, and not the legislative. A Baptist church has no right to make laws; but only to learn what laws are given in God's Word, and to carry them out. A Baptist church has no right to vote on letting the women speak, or joining the convention, or changing the doctrines. What she votes does not change the Word of God. A vote contrary to the Word of God does not change that precious Word. Let us diligently study God's Word, let us pray to our glorious Head for light on the Word, and let us walk in obedience to our one and only Head. Christ is the head of the church.

The church in Ephesians is the espoused bride of the heavenly Bridegroom.

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might

sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word" (Eph. 5:25, 26).

Ephesians 5:23-33 uses the relationship between Christ and the church to illustrate the relationship between husband and wife. Now, this church that is the espoused bride of Christ, is the same church that is spoken of elsewhere in this book, and elsewhere in the New Testament. It is not a universal invisible monstrosity. The words "wife," "husband," and "church" in this passage are used in the institutional and generic sense. The wife is not a universal invisible wife. The husband is not a universal invisible husband. You say that is foolish. It is no more foolish than when the heretics speak of a universal invisible church. As the words husband and wife are used generically, and when applied, refer to a local visible husband and a local visible wife; so the word church, when applied, refers to a local visible church. What straws men clutch at in order to hold on to a preconceived theory!

The church, which is the bride of Christ, is not the redeemed of all ages for the Bible speaks of the bride, the bridegroom, the friend of the bridegroom, the companions of the bride, and those invited to the wedding. So, there will be others in Heaven besides Baptists; but only those who were faithful, loyal members of sound Baptist churches will be in the Bride of Christ. This church is not the redeemed from Pentecost to the Rapture. The Bible knows nothing of such a church. It came from the mind of a heretic or a worse place than that. The church of our Lord was started during His earthly ministry, before Pentecost, and will be continued by His sovereign power until His coming again; and only those who are members of this church will be in the Bride.

Being in the Bride is a place of special reward. Salvation is by grace, but there are rewards for faithful service.

"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints" (Rev. 19:7, 8).

Notice here that the wife had made herself ready. Note that the fine linen was the righteous acts of the saints, not the imputed righteousness of Christ. Certainly, Scriptural baptism which fulfills all righteousness is necessary to this fine linen and to being in the Bride. So being in the Bride is a special reward, a wonderful reward, an unspeakable reward given to those who by Scriptural baptism become members of sound Baptist churches and remain loyal faithful members of such churches. Baptist brethren, the church in glory, or in prospect, theory of the Bride of Christ was invented to get men in the church over yonder who refuse to become members here, who despise the Lord's church here. They deliberately chose to remain out of true churches while here on earth. They showed

their contempt for true churches here on earth. Let them stay out of the church there when she is married to her Lord. Do not invent a theory to get those in the bride who rebelled against church truth on earth. It makes a difference now whether or not one is a Baptist. It makes a big difference now. And brethren, it is going to make a tremendous difference in glory. Do you think that God would make What He does now of church membership, and then after death say that it didn't matter? Brethren, what a glorious day that will be! When the bride walks down the aisle of Glory to be married to the Heavenly Bridegroom! How the members of false churches who get there will wish they had been true to God's Word and members of God's church. How it will repay for the ridicule and persecution Baptists have endured when they are married to Christ. Amen! Amen!

The church in Ephesians is the God-ordained institution through which the Lord's work is to be done and through which God is to get glory.

"Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen" (Eph. 3:21).

This is one of the greatest verses in the Bible on the church. Me thinks I could rise in the middle of the night and preach on it without further preparation. But it would take many life times to get out of it all that is in it.

It is our chief duty to glorify God. The chief end of man is to glorify God. Happiness is not our chief duty. Helping others is not our chief duty. Serving our country is not our chief duty. Glorifying our God is our chief duty.

"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (I Cor. 10:31).

Now in glorifying God, we are not to decide what, or which, will glorify God; each man choosing differently because of different opinions; but we are to learn from the Word of God that which glorifies Him. The Bible is the textbook on how believers may bring glory to God. Now this Word tells us that God gets glory through the church. The church spoken of here is the same one we have been talking about — a local visible, sound missionary Baptist church. We are not at liberty in the matter. If we desire to glorify God we must become members of a sound church and serve God through that church.

We are not to glorify God through free-lancism. This is where the preacher or a little group with him go out on their own without any church authority. The preacher sets up a tent and has meetings on his own. He gets a radio program and calls himself "your radio pastor" or "your radio evangelist," and completely ignores the authority of the true local church of our Lord. Now brethren, if God calls a man to preach, and if God calls a man to do a certain work, such as some mission work, radio preaching or any other work; then God will cause some sound church to recognize that call and authorize that work. And if God doesn't lead some sound church to recognize your call to preach and to authorize a work you desire to do; then don't you preach, and don't you do that work. When God called Paul and Barnabas to do missionary work, God also caused the

church at Antioch to recognize that call and to send them forth with church authority.

"As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed..." (Acts 13:2-4).

Brethren, the only ones sent forth by the Holy Ghost are those sent forth by church authority. When they finished their first missionary journey they reported back to the church that sent them forth. Read Acts 14:26, 27.

We are not to glorify God through mission boards. Conventions, associations and mission boards are all alike, and are without one particle of Scriptural authority. God gave the authority to do mission work to the church, and the church has no right to delegate that authority to any man or board. Mission boards are operating without authority, are sinful and treasonous against the Word of God, are parasites living off of the churches, and should be destroyed immediately, if not sooner. Let false churches have what they will and work as they please, but let Baptists follow the teachings of the precious Word of God. When they do, the mission boards, trustee boards of schools started by man, and the like will not receive another dollar of Baptist money.

Since it is our duty to glorify God, and God says He gets glory through the church; it is

## APPRECIATED LETTERS

(I received this anonymous letter with a request to print it). Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, I would like to encourage you to help one another. Don't let us become cold and uncaring like the world. Let God's love shine through you. Encourage and lift your brother and sister up while it is still today. If you see someone with a need, fill it. Let us all be a shining example of a people who always love and care for one another.

Mansfield, Oh.  
Editor's Note: Surely, we can all profit from seeking to put this letter into practice.

Dear Joe, I almost missed your front page notice about trial subscriptions. Listed below are some names and addresses of some possibles I'll be talking to for the sake of follow-up... I've enjoyed your publication very much and look forward to continuing to share it with believers with open mindedness...

Bryan L. Skillestad  
Cannon Falls Minn.

Dear Brother Wilson, The reason I wanted a list of the people that receive TBE in this area was that I would know if the people I have put on the list were still receiving the paper... I guess the year had run out on them... Anyway, here is a list of people for you to send T.B.E. to, and I will be praying that it will bless them as it has blessed me. No, my church does not teach or preach as the T.B.E. does. I used to send T.B.E. to my pastor, and he didn't want it. That is his loss. I pray that God will one day open his eyes to the truth. He doesn't try to change my mind or my belief in the doctrine of Election,

therefore the duty of every saved person to be a member of, to faithfully attend, to regularly and systematically support, and to serve God as a member of, and under the authority of a sound missionary Baptist church. Let us seek more and more to glorify Him. Let us realize that we can't do this, except through the church. God will richly and eternally reward those who bring glory to Him through His church, and they will be members of the Bride of our precious Lord. God bless you all. Amen!

## BOOK REVIEW

We have a new book available through our book store. It is, "Why Did Christ Die?", and is by F.E. Marsh. This is a practical and devotional study of the subject. In looking through the book, I do not find a limited, definite, and effective atonement taught therein. It is my conviction that no man can have a proper understanding of the Atonement of Jesus Christ without realizing that the Atonement was limited to a definite number of certain individuals, and that it results in the eternal salvation of all for whom it was made. No man has the Biblical truth of the nature of the atonement unless he sees these things about it. I do not think that Mr. Marsh sees this, and cannot greatly recommend the book. The book does have some devotional and practical material that might possibly be of a little help. It is a paperback book of just over 200 pages. It sells for \$6.95. Order from our bookstore and the profit goes into the ministry.

Anyway, I need the paper (T.B.E.) to read. I couldn't do without it. My husband doesn't see to read much, but he also has had his eyes opened by our Father in heaven. In Christ.

(Name and address withheld so as to not cause this dear sister any trouble with her church and pastor.)

Editor's Note: The older I get the more I am inclined to partially adopt a philosophy of "to each his own." However, for my part I would not remain a member of such a church with such a pastor. One is thus supporting, with membership, presence, means, and prayer, false doctrines. This is the advice I give, when asked about such a situation. Still, I know that such action is difficult. I sympathize with those in areas where they cannot attend a true, sound church, and I leave the matter to them and the Lord.

## SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

The King's Addition Baptist Church of South Shore Kentucky will have its annual Bible Conference April 4-6. Services will begin at 7:00 p.m. Friday and will conclude with an afternoon service on Sunday. The church will provide noon and evening meals on Saturday and Sunday for all who attend. Many men known to the readers of The Baptist Examiner will be preaching at this conference. This conference is a time of great blessing. I hope all who can, will attend these services. For further information, call pastor James Hobbs at (614) 259-2402 or the church at (606) 932-4741. Or you may write Elder James Hobbs at Rt. 2, Box 182, McDermott, Oh. 45652. This editor hopes to see many of our readers at this conference.