

GRAND OLD LANDMARKS

by John Alber
6935 Dexter St.
Commerce City, Co. 80022



John Alber

For my text today, I wish to use three verses of Scripture from the Old Testament. The first one should be a familiar one to the readers of The Baptist Examiner: "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). For the past fifty-seven years, The Baptist Examiner has used this particular verse of Scripture as its motto; a motto that has encouraged and strengthened many of God's little lambs. For some, this paper is all that they have ever known and it has tried over the years to be most faithful to the general teachings of the Word of God: The Bible. Those

(Continued on Page 9 Column 5)

WHAT A PASTOR OWES HIS CHURCH

by Medford Caudill
22111 C.R. 38, Rt. 5
Goshen, IN. 46526

There is no relationship as misunderstood by outsiders or the world as the relationship between a pastor and the church. Many think that the pastor owns or runs the church.

(Continued on Page 11 Column 1)



Medford Caudill

OUR CRITICS: GOD BLESS THEM

by Ray Hiatt
13956 Mantanyas Dr., S.E.
Ft. Myers, FL. 33905

The purpose of this paper is to review a review. Several years ago I purchased a copy of the Atlantic Monthly copyrighted 1858. The Atlantic Monthly was a popular magazine in those long ago times. This particular copy included articles published in the magazine for that year much as The Baptist Examiner binds copies of its yearly output and distributes it in one unit.

I bought this book and laid it aside for many years, only reading in it from time to time when some theme attracted my mind. Recently I found in the back of this book a series of Book Reviews for the year 1858, and among them was reviewed a book of Charles Haddon Spurgeon's sermons.



Ray Hiatt

May Our Critics Never Leave Us

It is patent that if you speak unpopular truth you shall be flayed. The reading public wants easily digested material and they reject anything which resembles ground glass. I have always contended that the average man whether saved or lost, does not want to be made to

THINK. The reading public lost or saved, does not like to be disquieted by barbed hooks of unpopular truth. When they read anything beyond the bland and easily digestible they tend to lash out in wrath.

The Bible is always unpopular because it speaks of spiritual things in a carnal world. Those who preach the Bible with any strength at all are shouted down, tarred and feathered, publicly defamed, shot at, prodded at, poked at and crucified when opportunity avails.

It is a dangerous thing to study the Bible, for in studying you learn and what you learn you MUST speak. Silent Christians are questionable creatures. I don't know whether Nicodemus was saved when he crept to Christ after hours, but I tend to question it. Children of God not only hear Christ's voice, but they speak forth his words to a hostile world. Like

(Continued on Page 4 Column 5)

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The Baptist Examiner

Baptist Is Our Middle Name

Paid Circulation in All States and in Many Foreign Countries

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

VOL. 58, NO. 8

ASHLAND, KENTUCKY, APRIL 19, 1986

WHOLE NUMBER 2483

BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT

by Wil Bang
304 Holtz Ln.
Cary, N.C. 27511

"And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain; and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the



Wil Bang

kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:1-3).

There are many definitions as to "poor in Spirit." Some attribute it to a feeling of spiritual poverty with respect to a natural attitude directed toward good (Rom. 7:18). To others, it is a thorough, but spiritual denunciation of self and a total reliance upon the Godhead to safeguard, protect, and deliver the beneficiaries of saving mercies (Rom. 7:24; I Peter 1:3-5; Jude 24, 25); while others advance the position that it is not so much what we feel, assess, or even acknowledge by Spirit-wrought convictions as applicable to ourselves; but rather how we stand in the estimate of God. (As viewed by God through Christ; Col. 1:20-22; I Cor. 1:8, 9; I Thess. 3:13) — all of which are obviously and redundantly to be acclaimed as an imputed spiritual standing dictated by immutable incomprehensibility (Rom. 4:4-8).

To affix a description of "poor in Spirit" to one or even more

(Continued on Page 6 Column 4)

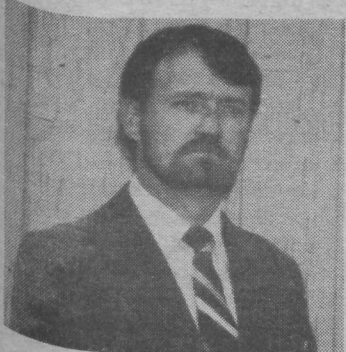
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WATCHING

by Bob Belanger
704 Liberty Hall Rd.
Lot 22, Goose Creek, S.C.
29445

Isaiah 21:8....I stand continually upon the watchtower....
A ready observer undoubtedly will notice that the verse just quoted above is not in its fullness, the purpose being that just these few words out of context may stand as an alarm; as a means for all of us who are born again, to observe our standing as days of darkness continually make their approach. A darkness that prevails more each day as nation upon nation deals with power struggles, famines, threats of war, and so called natural disasters. Oh the

(Continued on Page 8 Column 5)



Bob Belanger

JUST FIVE WEEKS TILL A GREAT EVENT OF 1986 OUR BIBLE CONFERENCE BE THERE!

CAN THE ETHIOPIAN CHANGE HIS SKIN

by Doug Newell
Asst. Editor

Jeremiah 13:23, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." Jeremiah had spoken to the people, and they would not hear him. He had come to the conclusion that they would not change, just as a man could not change the color of his skin or the leopard his spots. How true this is. They can do a lot with medicine today, but they are unable to change the color of a man's skin. In this article I want to deal with the fact that it is just as impossible for man to change

himself on the inside as it is for him to change the color of his skin. Our text says, "may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil". Of course the answer to this is no. They never will, of themselves, do good. We don't preach a gospel that tells man to change, but rather one that changes men. Many false gospels are in the world today, leading men into the fires of hell. These gospels tell men to change themselves, to lay aside their evil, and begin to live good lives. These people are preaching an impossible way of salvation. Our text said that a man could change the color of his skin, or the leopard could change his spots before he could

change his life by forsaking evil to do good. The sinner cannot change himself.

One reason is the sinner cannot change his habit. From the time of birth man has been sinning. From that first cry from the womb, the child begins sinning against God. The Bible says, "We go forth from the womb speaking lies." From this seemingly innocent cry, man begins the habit of sin. The more time goes on it becomes easier for him to sin. He is so accustomed to sin that he thinks nothing at all of his rebellion against God. Just as the smoker lights up another cigarette without thinking, so does man

(Continued on Page 3 Column 4)

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

BAPTIST CHURCH AUTHORITY

"And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. 18:17, 18).

There is no portion of God's truth more neglected, perverted, denied, and abused today than is church truth. Very few, even among truly saved people, know the first thing about church truth. Men's blind belief in the awful heresy of the universal invisible church has shut the door for them upon what the Bible really teaches about the Lord's

true churches. No man can hold belief in a universal invisible church and even begin to understand the Bible teaching on the Lord's church.

Few truths in the Bible are more important for the saved person than is church truth. Proper Christian life and service begins with faithfulness in and to the Lord's church. The fullest and highest of rewards come from faithfulness in and to the Lord's church. How can those who are utterly destitute of the least bit of church truth even begin to properly serve the Lord? They cannot.

We are living in an age of intensified rebellion against authority. Children rebel against their parents. The wife rebels against her husband.

Women rebel against their God ordained place of subjection to men. Students rebel against their teachers. The citizen rebels against the government. Oh, what an awful age it is! The demon possessed youth of our day advocate and practice "doing your own thing." So, when we put together the ignorance of men about church truth and the special sin of this age of rebellion against authority, we see the great importance of my subject of Church Authority. Surely, this Bible doctrine is laughed at, denied, and almost unheard of in our day. Even saved people seem to have no respect at all for church authority, and become enraged if one suggests that the church has

(Continued on Page 2 Column 1)

Tithing also means that a man gets nine dollars from God for every dollar that God gets from the man.

The Baptist Examiner

THE BAPTIST PAPER FOR
THE BAPTIST PEOPLE

JOSEPH M. WILSON, EDITOR
Office Ph. 606-325-2012
Home Ph. 606-329-1758

DOUGLAS P. NEWELL III,
ASST. ED.
Home Address
Rt. 2 - Box 170-H
South Shore, Ky. 41175
Home Ph. 606-757-4714

Editorial Department, located in
ASHLAND, KENTUCKY, where all
subscriptions and communications
should be sent. Address: P.O. Box
60, Zip Code 41105-0060.

PUBLICATION POLICIES: All matter for publication should
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PUBLISHED EVERY 2 WEEKS with paid circulation
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SUBSCRIPTION RATES

One year \$ 6.00
Two years \$11.00
When you subscribe for others or
secure subscriptions each \$ 4.00

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Entered as second class matter March 4,
1978, in the post office of Ashland, Kentucky,
under the Act of March 3, 1879.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The
Baptist Examiner, P.O. Box 60, Ashland, Ken-
tucky 41105-0060.

BAPTIST

(Continued from Page 1)

authority over the individual
believer. We need to study
carefully, preach with power,
stand unwavering, and practice
without compromise: Church
Authority. Let us look at this
subject a little.

Now, please understand that
I am talking about the authority
of the Lord's church. I am not
talking about the false institu-
tions started by men and
demons such as the Methodists,



Joe Wilson

Presbyterians, Holy-rollers, etc.
to the point of nausea. And I am
talking about true Baptist churches
and not everything that
calls itself by that glorious
name. I am not talking about
so-called Baptist churches that
were not organized by the
authority of another Baptist
church. I am not talking about
so-called Baptist churches that
fight bitterly against the truths
of God's Word. You can call
Bible-fighting, Bible-hating
organizations true churches just
because they wear the Baptist
name if you want to. I have as
much use for the Methodists
and others as I do for the Bible-

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER
APRIL 19, 1986
PAGE TWO

FROM THE EDITOR

What is wrong with the term, "soul winning"? In my first
editorial of this year I gave some resolutions I was making for the
new year. I used these words in one of them, "I want to pray and
work hard at winning souls to Christ this year." I later received a
letter which criticized me for some things in the resolutions. The
matter of "soul winning" was one of the things criticized. I was in-
formed that I would not win one soul in 1986 and that my language
would give much comfort to many Arminians. I have given this
matter much thought, before writing the editorial and after receiv-
ing this criticism.

I realize that the criticisms that many of our kind make against
the term "soul winning" come from a very sincere love for the truths
of Sovereign Grace. Doubtless, many of those who use the term
"soul winning" so frequently today are very opposed to the Biblical
truth of how God actually does save sinners. Doubtless, many who
use this term have, by their false doctrines and fleshly practices,
given a bad impression to our own using of the term. My brother,
my sister, shall we let the heretic's distortion and perversion of
Biblical truth drive us from the proper preaching of that truth?
Surely not. If we do this, what truth will we have left to preach?

Understand that I am opposed to the false doctrines and practices
of many who so frequently use the term "soul winning." But the
Bible does use this term, (Pro. 11:30). What are we going to do with
this term? Are we going to preach against it? Are we going to make
light of and mock it? (many of our kind do this) Are we going to
pervert it by a false interpretation? (Some of our kind do this) I sug-
gest that we use the term, preach it, and begin to practice it.

There are many other terms used in the Bible concerning the
same general truth, which seemingly would be as objectionable as
this one is to some of our kind. The term "catch men" is used in
Luke 5:10. The term "fishers of men" is used. Surely, this term is
the same in meaning as "soul winning." Paul says in I Corinthians
4:15 "...I have begotten you through the gospel." Surely, to
speak of begetting dead sinners should be as objectionable to our
kind as the term "soul winning." The words, "shall save a soul
from death" is used in James 5:16. Surely, this is as strong a term
as that of "soul winning."

I am told that I cannot win a soul, that this is the work of the Ho-
ly Spirit. I know that. Neither can I "catch" men, nor "beget
a dead sinner to life", nor "save a soul from death". But they used
these terms, and these terms must have some meaning. I would sug-
gest that those who would criticize me for using the term "soul win-
ning" would explain to me what those words mean in Proverbs
11:30, and would rebuke Peter, Paul, and James as well. My
brother, we need to beware lest in our zealous defense of some
Biblical truth, we pervert, ignore, and disobey some other truth.

Of course, I cannot win a soul. Of course, the Holy Spirit must do
this. I know that. Well then, what does the term mean? What do
the similar terms mentioned in this editorial mean? It simply means
that old Missionary Baptist Doctrine that the Holy Spirit uses the
gospel in saving souls, in giving spiritual life. And that that gospel is
given by others. When the Holy Spirit uses the gospel that one gives
to another to bring that soul to Christ, then the one who gave the
gospel has won that soul to Christ, has begotten that soul, has
caught that fish, has saved that soul from death.

hating Arminians who call
themselves Baptists. I am sick
in my soul over the way
Sovereign Grace Baptists mealy-
mouth around and compromise
with God-denying and Bible-
hating Arminians. So unders-
tand that I am talking about the
authority of a true, landmark,
sovereign grace Missionary
Baptist Church.

Let us notice some
preliminary observations. All
authority resides in God. There
is no authority on earth but of
God. God, in the exercise of His
sovereignty, gives to individuals
and organizations authority over
others in certain situations and
relationships. God gives the
parent authority over the child,
the husband over the wife, man
over woman, government over
citizen, and church over church
member. Now, no individual or
group has any rightful authority
over any other except it be given
and ordained of God. Rebellion
against the authority that God
gives is rebellion, not just
against the individual or
organization, but against God
Himself. Therefore, to rebel
against church authority is to
rebel against God Almighty.
Now, let us look at some proofs
of church authority.

"If any man defile the tem-
ple of God, him shall God
destroy: for the temple of God
is holy, which temple ye
are" (1 Cor. 3:17).

Here we see that God will deal
with men as to how they treat
His church. Surely, this
establishes the principle of
church authority. Men may pay

little attention to their attitude
and action towards the
Lord's Baptist churches. But
God keeps a record, and men
will give account to Him for
these things.

The words in my text which
head this article surely establish
the doctrine of church authority.
There we are told to "hear the
church." Oh, my brother, the
church has an authority, and
men had better listen to that
authority. To those who despise
church authority, we are in-
formed that the proper decisions
of true churches are confirmed
by the high court of heaven
itself. Ye who despise church
authority despise, not the
authority of men, but the
authority of heaven itself. We
will see more proof of church
authority as we proceed.

The church has authority over
the Lord's work in the world to-
day. In Matthew 28:18-20, we
have what is known as the great
commission. This commission is
certainly given to the Lord's
church. Now it was not given to
a Methodist church, or a Holy-
roller church, or a Presbyterian
church, or to any other than a
true Baptist church; for the sim-
ple reason that the Lord's Ba-
ptist church was the only church
in existence at the time the com-
mission was given. Now it does
not take the intellect of a giant
brain to figure out that those
churches that were not in ex-
istence at that time, and did not
come into existence for from six
hundred to eighteen hundred
years after that time - that those
(Continued on Page 3 Column 1)

I tell you that one must get rid of more than the word "soul win-
ing" to get rid of the doctrine and duty taught thereby. We have
responsibility to give the gospel to the unsaved. God uses this giving
of the gospel to give life to dead sinners, to win souls to Christ.
When God uses us in this way, the term "soul winning" properly
applies.

Why argue with this term? Why disobey this duty? The attempt
that some men have made to interpret this term "soul winning" in a
way that gets around its obvious and true meaning (which I have
herein given) are miserable and sometimes absurd in the extreme.
One false exegete will say that it means to get already saved people
into a Baptist church so their lives can be saved. Another will say
that it means to be friendly and winsome in personality so as to win
them to ourselves. Brother, when you have thus destroyed "soul
winning" in its real meaning, what are you going to do with "catch-
ing men," "saving a soul from death", and "begetting men with
the gospel"?

Let us stand strong and true to the doctrines of sovereign grace.
But let us not ignore, disobey, and pervert other portions of Scrip-
ture in so doing. I urge every reader of The Baptist Examiner to join
me in the resolution to, "pray and work hard at winning souls to
Christ this year." I see nothing wrong with this resolution. The
wrong that I do see, in myself and others, is that we are not obeying
the Word of God in the matter of winning souls.

Let me just add this: It will be time enough to lay our failure to
see people saved at the foot of God's sovereignty when we have
faithfully and persistently done our part in giving the gospel to the
unsaved. Comments welcomed.

ASSISTANT EDITOR



Doug Newell

"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse,
deceiving and being deceived" (II Timothy 3:13). I have a letter
on my desk that I received a few weeks ago, concerning an article
that appeared in the paper. The writer was very critical of my article
and seemed quite upset over it. The article concerned the Jehovah's
Witness cult, their origin and beliefs. As I read the letter I found
my surprise that it was not a member of one of those said cults, but
rather a member of one of the Campbellite Churches in the area.
I then wondered what I had said to offend him. One thing that upset
him was my statement that Jesus was talking to Baptist in Acts 1:15.
He was upset that I said that the Baptists could lay hold to the
claim. As I understand it the Campbellites, better known as the
Church of Christ, boldly claim that they are the true church of Jesus
Christ. I suppose this is why my article upset this man so. These
people have been greatly deceived. Their founder was Alexander
Campbell, who decided one day that he would start his own church
because the church Jesus started around 1800 years earlier was not
good enough for him. Now, this church that Jesus started was the
Baptist Church, and if the Campbellites get mad I can't help it.
They should face up to their history, though, and admit that their
organization does not go back very far. Some of them wills stand
and boldly say, "our church goes all the way back to Pentecost."
Sorry, Campbellite, you still don't go back far enough even if you
did start on Pentecost; and you didn't. The Lord's church was in ex-
istence before Pentecost. I understand that there are some Baptists
out there that are saying this. I can understand Satan's church
saying that, but not a Baptist! Notice in Acts 1:15 "And in those
days, Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said
(the number of names together were about an hundred and
twenty). Now, Campbellite, if you want to argue, you can argue
with the Lord. All I have done is bring you His Word.

This Campbellite, (I understand that they don't like to be called
this, but what are we to do? They are not the Church of Christ).
This Campbellite wants to have a debate between the two of us.
This is very common among these people. But let me assure you
that there will be no debate. They have asked to come to Calvary
and debate, and bring their heresy into our church. Let me assure
you that this will never happen. The Campbellites can keep their
doctrine of works for salvation. They can preach their water baptism
some place else. They will not speak at our church. I mention this to
discourage any other group that think they can have a shot at
preaching in the Lord's Church. The Word of God is not up for
debate. The Campbellite has heard of the grace of God, and he
refuses to believe it. Instead he believes that water can save him.
The Campbellite has heard of the true church of Jesus Christ, and
he refuses to accept it. The Campbellite stands in total opposition to
God, His Word and His Church. We recognize these people as
enemies of the cross of Christ. We consider their doctrine in gross
conflict with the Word of God, therefore their unscriptural doctrine
will not be preached in our church. Please don't think that I hate
these people. I have sympathy for them, and hope the Lord will be
pleased to deliver them from false doctrine before it's eternally too
late. I do hate what they preach. I despise their baptismal regenera-
tion doctrine that leads men to hell. I despise any doctrine that turns
men's minds to works rather than to Jesus. No, I don't hate these
people but I can't stand what they preach. So, Campbellite, you can
forget about preaching at Calvary Baptist Church. We do invite you
to attend our services. You would be welcome to come and hear the
gospel of Christ. We are sorry that God's Word offends so many, but
wish it were not so, but with God's wonderful grace we will con-
tinue to boldly stand for God's Word.

BAPTIST

(Continued from Page 2)

churches were not given the great commission to do the Lord's work in the world. These man-demon made churches do not have any authority to even exist, much less authority to do the Lord's work. They were started by men and demons. Therefore, man and demon authority is all that they have. They were started as rivals to that organization which Jesus started and authorized to do His work in the world today.

Now most assuredly, since no organization on earth except a true Baptist church has authority to do God's work today, it is certainly true that no individual has any authority at all from God to do God's work in the world. Even though that individual be a member of a true church, still he must work in, through, and under the authority of that church. The individual who is a member of a true church, but who will not work under the authority of that church, is as much a rebel against church authority as the false churches of men are such rebels. God has given His work into the hand of His churches. God authorizes no individual, as an individual, to do His work today. How hear this well. There are many men, who are members of true churches, who seem to feel that God has authorized them instead of His church or in addition to His church. Many of these individuals will not bow to the authority of the church and seek to act on their own supposed authority. This is a sore evil and must be firmly dealt with by the Lord's churches. This evil is one that afflicts many men who think they are called to preach. The individual has no right to get him a radio program, start him a mission, hold special services in homes, or anything except he be authorized to do these things by one of the Lord's churches. Brother, if God calls you to preach, He calls you to do that under the authority of a true church and not as a free lancer on your own. Oh, I cannot be too emphatic here. The individual as an individual has no authority whatsoever to do God's work. All the authority there is to do God's work is given to the Lord's true Baptist churches. The individual must work as a member of, in, through, and under the authority of a true church of Jesus Christ.

Churches must be very firm on this matter. Churches should insist that its members submit to its authority in the matter of doing the Lord's work. Sometimes when a man will not submit to the church's authority, the church will compromise by giving that man authority to go ahead and do some work so as to get along with the man. This should not be done. If a man will not bow to the authority of the church, he should be disciplined, not pampered and pacified. Brother, if you feel that God has called you to preach, get in a true church and work under the authority of that church, and do not think that you are bigger than the church.

Acts 13:1-4 informs us of the authority of the church in sending out missionaries. Acts 14:26,27 shows us those missionaries reporting back to the church under whose authority they were doing God's work in the world. Acts 15:24 informs us about some free lancers who were acting without church

authority and the whole chapter shows us what great trouble they caused. I do say this, and may repeat it later: all the false doctrine we have with us today has come about because men have despised church authority. You see some of this in Acts 15. Now let us notice some things that come from the principle that the church has authority over the Lord's work.

The pastor is under church authority. He is chosen by the church and dismissed by the church at her pleasure. His preaching is to be judged by the church, and if not according to God's Word, the church is to exercise her authority over the pulpit. Whatever is preached in the pulpit is under the authority of the church, and the church is responsible for it. There is to be no free lance activity whatsoever by the pastor or by any other preacher in the church. All is to be under the authority of the church. If the church has any other activities such as printing tracts or papers, Bible study, radio work, services in jails, nursing homes, or anything of this order—these things are to be under the absolute authority and control of the church. Bible studies have often become monsters that exercised tyranny over the church. I do not refer to individual and personal Bible study, but to an individual teaching Bible studies to groups. But Bible studies or any other activity is to be controlled absolutely by the church. Anything of this nature that is not under the absolute control of the church is in rebellion against the church and has no right to exist. Churches have often created monsters that have turned against and destroyed their creator.

The authority of the church over the Lord's work in the world means that churches must be mothered by and organized by the authority of a true church. One man does not have the right to start a church. Assuredly one woman does not have the right to start a church. Any number of men and women do not have the right to start a church. Such may be properly baptized. They may presently be members of a true church. But that does not give them the right to start a church. How many times have groups gotten angry at the church and gone off and started their own so called churches. These are no more churches than the masons, the lions, the bats and buzzards are churches. Only a true Baptist church has the right to start another church. A so-called church not given birth by another church is no true church of our Lord.

This truth does away with all mission boards, Bible schools, and all forms of Christian work in the world today that is not under the absolute authority of true churches. The mission board is a man made organization and robs God of the authority and glory that is due Him in His true churches. Understand me clearly. No form of so-called Christian work in the world that is not under the absolute authority of a true Baptist church - no such work-has any authority from God to do what they are doing. They should disband immediately. Churches should not in any way show favor to or support these man-made organizations. What a shame it is that some churches who seemingly believe much church truth compromise that truth by supporting and showing favor to unscriptural and

anti-scriptural boards, schools, camps, orphanages and so on. I do hope I have made myself crystal clear in this point. The church has authority over the Lord's work in the world. No other organization, and no individual, has any authority to do God's work.

The church has authority over the ordinances. Matthew 28:18-20 gives the church the authority over the ordinances. I Corinthians 11:2 informs us that the ordinances are given to the church. In I Corinthians 1:17, even the great Apostle Paul disclaimed any authority to baptize. From these Scriptures, and from the New Testament as a whole, we learn that baptism must be performed under the authority of a true Baptist church; and that the Lord's Supper must be set in, for, and under the authority of a true church. Otherwise these ordinances are null and void. Baptism that is not performed under Baptist church authority is no more baptism than the sprinkling of the Methodist, the no baptism of the Quaker, or the dunking in play of one boy by another at the old swimming hole.

I remember when a Methodist friend became quite angry with me when I informed her I would rather be baptized by a Baptist deacon than a Methodist preacher. But I only told her the truth of God's Word. Of course, that is with the Baptist deacon being authorized by a true Baptist church. I have heard of a Methodist church using hamburger and soda pop as elements for the Lord's Supper. Hallelujah, that is what they ought to use. Methodists cannot observe the Lord's Supper no matter what they use, for they have no authority from God. So let them get some nourishment out of it so that their false religious ritual will not be completely useless. But do understand that if you have not been baptized on church authority, you have not been baptized at all. And that unless you are a member of a true Baptist church and take the Lord's Supper there, you have not observed it at all.

The church has authority over its members. Romans 14:1 and Acts 9:26 show us that the church has authority to receive members. No one can become a member of one of the Lord's churches unless that church votes to receive such into membership. The church has authority over its door and should use that authority carefully in receiving members. Matthew 18:17; I Corinthians 2:6 and other Scriptures inform us that the church has the authority to exclude members. Now I know some double-dyed idiots who are utterly destitute of any knowledge of church truth say that we should never put anyone out of the church. I know further that some weak-kneed, jelly-fish, compromising, sentimental, half-way Baptists believe in church discipline, but never practice it. They do not want to hurt anyone's feelings. Well, "la-de-da." How about the Lord's feelings? How about the purity of the church? How about obedience to God's Word? The church not only has the authority and the right to exclude members, she has the obligation before her Lord to do this. Woe be to that church who fails in this.

II Corinthians 2:6-8, informs us that the church has the right and responsibility to restore excluded members when they re-

pent of the sins which brought about their exclusion. So we see the church's authority over its members in receiving, excluding, and restoring. This authority begins when one is received into membership and it ceases when the church releases from that authority. The member cannot have his name dropped or leave at his option just because he is mad at the church or is trying to escape discipline. The church must release the member from its authority by granting a letter to another church of like faith and order. Churches should be very careful about taking members by statement, lest they be found interfering with the authority of another church.

Furthermore the church has the authority over its members in expecting some things out of them, such as faithfulness to the church, soundness in doctrine, and cleanness of life. The church has the right to make some demands upon its members and the members are to submit to and respond to those demands of the church.

Now, we must observe that there are some limits to church authority. The authority of the church is limited to its own work and its own membership. One church cannot exercise any authority over another church. Church authority is limited to and by the Word of God. The church cannot demand or expect that which is contrary to the Word of God from its members. Then, the authority of the church is limited in that it does not relate to the salvation of the individual. The salvation of the soul is between the individual and the sovereign Lord, and the church has no jurisdiction in this matter. May God bless you to believe and practice the truth of church authority. God bless you all.

CAN THE

(Continued from Page 1)

sin, and never thinks about it. Man is bound to sin just like he was chained to it. There is no way for him to free himself. When God looked down and saw man, He saw that the imaginations of man's thoughts were upon evil continually (Gen. 6:5). He cannot change in that his mind is fixed upon evil. How can a man do good when his mind is on evil continually. This is an impossibility. If a man's thoughts are upon evil, he cannot think of holy things. He cannot think of divine things. He cannot think of things that would glorify God, or things that would be good for God's people. He cannot think of the blessed Word of God as his guide in life.

Yes he has thoughts, but all of his thoughts are evil thoughts. Even all of the seemingly good thoughts are evil because man's motives are evil. Instead of thinking of God's glory, man is thinking of self interest, pride, vanity, or self gain. Man is bound to sin, and will not change his life because all of his thoughts are evil.

A man's own conscience will keep him from changing. Titus 1:15, "Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure but even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient and unto every good work reprobate".

I'm sure you have heard the phrase, "let your conscience be your guide". This is not a good suggestion for the reprobate. His conscience is defiled. Their conscience will always lead them to disobedience. Their conscience is always an abomination to God. Of course some people are worse than others. Some things that greatly disturb some people are thought very little of by others. Our conscience is a product of our environment, and our upbringing has a lot to do with our conscience. For instance: if you were raised by a family of thieves, you would think very little of going out and stealing. If you were raised by parents who lied about everything, you wouldn't think it much to lie about things to get your way. On the other hand if you were raised by a moral family, these things might bother you or discourage you from committing these sins. Thus a conscience will not change a man. No matter how good or bad a conscience he might have, he is still defiled and abominable in the sight of God.

There is no goodness in man that would cause him to change himself. Paul said, "For I know that in me, (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. 7:18). We often hear people as they talk of others tell how good they are. Man will compare himself to others and will say, I am as good as most men, and if as good as most, will be all right come judgment day. I have heard it said before that hell is full of good men (so called). There is no goodness in man that would cause him to change. Man is full of sin, and there is no goodness in him. Notice in Galatians 5:19-21, "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. There is no goodness at all in man that would cause him to change.

Man cannot change himself because he is dead. Romans 5:12, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." A dead man cannot change himself into anything. Being dead, he is not capable of doing anything. Man is as dead spiritually as the man that's lying in the grave. The man in the grave cannot do anything for himself, he is dead. Thus a man that is accustomed to doing evil cannot do good because he is dead. He is so dead that he cannot hear. You can tell him of his sinful condition all you want to, but he will not hear. Dead people cannot hear. He is also blind and he cannot see. He cannot see that without Christ he is on his way to hell. He cannot see that he is defiled from head to foot, and that there is no soundness in him. He cannot see nor hear; how can he change? He is dead in that he cannot see the plain teachings of the Word of God. It upsets us at times when men will not and cannot see the

(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 is the "number" referred to in I Timothy 5:9? Does this section deal with the church supporting some widows or with such widows having special duties in the church?

Doug
Newell
Rt. 2 Box 170
South Shore, Ky.
41175

ASSISTANT
PASTOR
Calvary
Baptist Church
Ashland, Ky.



This verse deals with the church supporting some of the widows. There is no indication at all that the number referred to in this verse, is referring to an office held by some widows. Some are of the opinion that this verse refers to deaconesses, but I don't believe that it does. I believe this verse is talking about the church taking care of those widows in the church that have no way of supporting themselves or a family to take care of them. Paul teaches this in verses 4 and 5. "But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God. Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day" (I Tim. 5: 4-5). Those widows that had a family, the family was to take care of them. This is so different from our day. Now when parents get on in years they are shipped off to a nursing home. Now I know that there are cases where people have to be taken care of by professionals around the clock, and that the nursing home is the answer. But often times the elderly are shipped off just because of their age, and their family doesn't want to take care of them. The Bible says to first shew piety at home, to our own family. He goes on to say in verse eight, "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." Paul uses some pretty strong language against those who don't take care of their family members.

The verse in question deals with the widows that have no family. One of the requirements were that they were to be over sixty years of age. In Bible times this was considered old age. Women usually did not marry again after they reached this age. Another requirement was that they have a good report for good works. That they be faithful members of the church, and women that loved God, and loved to serve Him. Notice that the church is responsible for her membership, and especially so for the older widows. Many times these dear saints of God are neglected by the church, and the church is wrong in doing so. The number spoken of are the faithful widows that are over sixty years of age. Again the reason for the older women being taken care of was that they

probably wouldn't remarry. Paul told them to refuse the younger widows, "for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry." Paul said later on in the chapter, that it was better for the younger widows to remarry than to remain unmarried. I hope this has answered your question, and I hope that the Lord's churches will see the responsibility that they have toward their elderly members.

JAMES
HOBBS
Rt. 2, Box 182
McDermott, Ohio
45652

PASTOR
Kings Addition
Baptist Church
South Shore, Ky.



The entire book of I Timothy is written concerning the church and a preacher's duty in the church. "These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (I Tim. 3:14, 15).

The "number" here in verse 9 is not referring to church membership but rather the number of widows who receive special attention and help from the church. "And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration" (Acts 6:1).

This passage and those around it are pointing out that the church has a responsibility to care for those who need it but those who have families should not need the churches care. As far as duties toward the church, they have the same duties that all members have, but not any special or extra duties. This is dealing strictly with the care of the widows.

CLYDE T.
EVERMAN
108 Burdsall Ave
Ft. Mitchell, Ky.
41017

Deacon
Calvary
Baptist Church
Ashland, Ky.



"Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man."

Beginning with the first church at Jerusalem, the early churches provided for their widows who were in need. We see this from Acts six where there was murmuring among the Grecians because they thought their widows were not getting the same treatment as the widows of the Hebrews. This led to the election of seven men (deacons) by the church for the purpose of over-seeing of the matter.

In I Timothy 5 the Apostle Paul is instructing Timothy concerning the responsibility of the churches in the care of the widows who were in need. Widows who had someone to provide for them were not to be included in that number, "If any man or woman that believeth, have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged: that it may relieve them that are widows indeed" (I Tim. 5:16). Neither were the widows under sixty to be the responsibility of the church for Paul said, "But the younger widows refuse: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry" (I Tim. 5:11).

The widow who qualified for support from the church must be sixty years of age and have a record that she had "lodged strangers," had "brought up children," "washed the saints feet," "relieved the afflicted," and that she had, "diligently followed every good work." What Paul is saying is that if a widow in former days had spent her time in real service for her Lord, now, not being able to provide for herself, the church was to include her in the number for which the church was caring.

CAN THE

(Continued from Page 3)

plainest teachings of the Bible. We must remember that they are dead, and dead people have no understanding. They are incapable of learning or doing anything that would change them.

The sinner will not change for the simple fact he has no desire to change. The sinner has a love for sin. Of all of his loves, sin is his greatest. John 3:19, "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil". Men love to sin. They wrap themselves up in their sins and cherish them as their greatest possession. So the reason men do not change themselves is that they don't have a desire to depart from their sinning. He loves sin more than he loves himself. This is evidenced in the actions of the drunkard. He will drink that rotten stuff until he throws up all over himself. He will drink it until his liver is eaten away by the alcohol. Yes his pleasure of wine means more to him than his own body. It means more to him than his own family, whom he will forsake for days that he might indulge in his sin. The same holds true for those on drugs who abuse themselves and others that they might enjoy the pleasures of sin. The sinner loves to think about sin. He loves to talk about sin. The sinner enjoys talking about his sins with others. Notice those at work on Monday morning, how they describe in detail their week-end of sin. They absolutely love sin, and the more the better. They love to tell of their sins and love to hear of

others sins. But go to them and tell them what a great church service you had the day before, and they will treat you like you have some kind of disease. They don't enjoy hearing about godly things. They only want to hear of sin. So I say that man will not change because he is satisfied in his present condition. He loves to laugh about sin. Sin is not serious to him, but something to laugh about and joke about. Walk past the bar room or the pool hall and you will hear laughter. You do not hear remorse or despair, but loud laughter. Why? Because they are enjoying sin. They are enjoying cursing and taking God's name in vain. They are enjoying cheating on their wives with the whore that frequents those kind of places. Yes they love sin and have no desire to change. He will not change because his appetite of sin is never full. Proverbs 27:20, "Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied." He can't get his fill of sin. Even sinning twenty-four hours a day, he can't sin enough to be satisfied.

One might ask: What about the hypocrite, doesn't he change for a little while? I answer that definitely "no". He still has a love for sin. He might hide his love of it, but it's still there. He might publicly abstain from certain sins, but his love for them is still there. Eventually his sins will find him out, and he will be caught back committing those sins that he so desperately loves. A man may give up certain sins, but his love for them will remain. All the while he is abstaining from them, in his evil mind he is longing for them. Thus the hypocrite never changes.

He can't change because self won't let him change. By this I mean that man by nature is self-sufficient. He says I'm going to do whatever I please. No one is going to tell me what to do. They say we will not have Jesus to rule over us! He says he doesn't need the gospel or the church or anything to do with God. He will not hear and therefore he has no faith, for faith cometh by hearing. He is self-righteous. Instead of humility and dependence in Christ, he relies on himself. Not realizing that his righteousness are as filthy rags, he continues on in self-righteousness. Never intending to nor desiring to change. He is self-willed. He will not recognize his state. He will not submit himself to Christ. His will is to sin against God, and to do his own selfish and prideful will. He is self-seeking. He looks for his own way of salvation. He wants it on his own terms and in his own time. Proverbs 17:11, "An evil man seeketh only rebellion; therefore a cruel messenger shall be sent against him." Thus we see that self will keep a man from changing. All of the afore mentioned make it impossible for man to change himself. If this be true why are we told to tell men to repent? If they are dead why preach to them? If man is incapable of changing or repenting of himself, why do we tell them to? The answer is God has commanded all men to repent and we are to deliver that message. Notice in Acts 17:30, "and the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent." Just because man is incapable, because of his sinfulness, to repent; this does not excuse him from God's commandments.

What good does it do to tell men to repent and trust Christ? It drives them to despair. You may say I thought that man is dead, and cannot hear, and is unable to move. How can he be driven to despair? If you will remember our text said "Can the Ethiopian change his skin?" A man cannot change his skin, nor can he change his heart, but he can be changed. God can take a man that is black with sin and change him into a white-hearted man. This is only an illustration. Don't think that I am implying that black people are more sinful than white. He can wash the blackness of sin away and make that man clean and white in the blood of Jesus Christ. Yes a man can be changed. The spirit of God can take the Word of Life, make it effective in one's life, and instantly that person is changed. The Bible says, "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Cor. 5:17). Our text holds true in that a man cannot change himself, but the Bible also says that God can change him. Yes, beloved, God is able to take a coal black sinner and make him white as snow. He will be a new creature, and will lose the desire that he once had for sin. The sinner will love the things that he once hated. He will love Christ, he will love the people of God, and he will love the Word of God. The sinner will change from trusting self to trusting Christ. Instead of enmity, there is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit to guide him. He is now conscious of his sins and has no desire to remain in them. He will continue to sin, but the love for that sin will be gone. In the main he will live a life of obedience. No one is perfect, but his new nature will cause him to follow the Lord. Yes the Ethiopian can be changed, but the Lord must do it. A man cannot change himself, it's not possible, but with the Lord all things are possible. The only way to change is to trust Christ.

CRITICS

(Continued from Page 1)

Jeremiah, they cannot "stay". All the saints of God are bold in some degree and boldness begets critics, God bless them.

I take a somewhat different view of critics than most folks. I rather enjoy them. I learned long ago that no critic can harm me, so if there is no harm there is no pain, and without pain there may be benefits. I only object to criticism that is not PRECISE for it tells me nothing of my wrong, but I never reject criticism out of hand. God may well have sent the critic for the very purpose of aiding me. I never reject aid from God even if it froths at the mouth. All of our critics are mild, neither are they always wrong. I have had some critics of my written work point me in a more directed way of service. All in all I think that I prefer five critics to one compliment. Compliments are many times social pleasantries, but criticisms are many times well thought (even if they are wrong). I have learned more from my critics than from compliments, so I always say to my critics, "God bless you, please do not desert me."

Baptists have a long and bloody record of regicide. They wage war regularly on the

(Continued on Page 5 Column 5)

The Baptist Examiner Forum II

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT

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

Did Jephthah offer his daughter as a sacrifice unto the Lord or did he dedicate her to perpetual virginity?

DAVID S. WEST
Rt. 1, Box 271,
Cross, SC
29436



Jephthah lived during the time of the judges when there was no king in Israel. He was the son of a harlot. Gilead was his father. Gilead had other sons and they put Jephthah out of their home so that he would not inherit in their father's house. During this time the enemies of Israel, under the rule of Ammon oppressed Israel. Jephthah had become a mighty man in valour. The sons of Gilead then were forced to call upon Jephthah to help them out so that they might win the victory over the people of Ammon.

In this turn of events the sons of Gilead made Jephthah to be their captain. Jephthah took the problem to the Lord. In his request to the Lord to give him victory over the enemies of the children of Israel, He made a vow; and the vow was that whosoever came through the door of his house to meet him first upon his return from his victory over the ammonites, he would offer for a burnt offering. What he returned from the battle with the victory, his daughter was the first to come through the door to meet him. What a shock this was to Jephthah. This brought him very low. This daughter was his only child.

Did Jephthah carry out this vow? This has been a perplexing question to many through the ages. It is believed by some that he did, while it is believed by others that she was kept in perpetual virginity, and therefore was not to get married and have children. To have children was an honor. Women in olden times who were barren were looked on with reproach by others and as a reproach from the Lord.

Hannah was such a woman as this. She was the wife of Elkanah. Peninnah was the other wife of Elkanah. Peninnah provoked her very much and made her to fret. It was bad enough to her that the Lord had made her barren, but to be provoked so by her adversary made it much worse.

Besides all this, godly women of old looked forward to the coming Messiah and each hoped that they would be the one by whom He came. We are not sure if this was the case with the daughter of Jephthah or not. At any rate, it was the desire of women to get married and bear children. And this was so with the daughter of Jephthah.

It seems that Jephthah had explained the vow to his daughter, and she was willing for him to perform the vow. Whatever seemed good to him. We see also that Jephthah's daughter was very faithful to him. The most important part of all, so far as the daughter of Jephthah was concerned, was that the Lord had given victory to Israel by the hand of her

father. So it mattered not to her what the decision was so long as there was freedom in Israel.

Jephthah had made a vow that he no doubt regreted, and to offer his daughter up as a burnt offering would add injury to injury. The request of the daughter of Jephthah was to go away into the mountains to bewail her virginity and then to return. What was the reason for this? What was the purpose in this? She would be offered up as a burnt offering anyway. Was it not that she would never be allowed to get married and have children. Her being a virgin would not be the reason that she would not bring forth children, but rather her death. Would it not rather be the more proper to bewail her death, since that is what was to soon come? That is if indeed that is what was to take place. It seems that the decision that was agreed upon between Jephthah and his daughter was that she was to be a perpetual virgin. This would bring sorrow both to Jephthah and his daughter. For her not to have children he would have no issue after him. In many ways this would be equal unto death: for his family line would cease.

Besides this, we notice that no date was set for the offering of Jephthah's daughter. The performance of the vow was at least not speedily executed. It seems that very likely it could have been put off year after year until the death of Jephthah's daughter. In Judges 11:39 it is said, "...And she knew no man..." That is, she did not get married nor bear children. The point of emphasis is that she was a virgin and was to continue so to be.

Furthermore, in Judges 11:40, "That the daughters of Israel went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite four days in a year." In which it was not said that they went to lament her death but rather to lament her. And I think this to lament her because she was shut up to her virginity. And this was the death in the line of Jephthah.

DAN PHILLIPS
Rt. 6, Box 611A
Bristol, Tenn
37620

PASTOR:
New Testament
Baptist Church
Bristol, Tenn.



There has been a lot of speculation on this question. Judges 11:31 says, "Then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the Lord's and I will offer it up for a burnt offering." I personally can not believe that there would be animals living in a General's house, and that he would expect one to come running out to meet him when he got home from the

battle to congratulate him on his victory.

I believe that Jephthah, in his eagerness to win the battle before him, spoke without realizing what he was saying. He wanted God's blessing and, while making this vow, he could not think of any particular object to name great enough to dedicate to the Lord. Afterwards if he had time to think upon what he had promised, perhaps he thought of his daughter and just maybe Abraham and Isaac came to his mind. This would help him while in battle. After the battle was won and the rejoicing was at an end, he headed home only to be welcomed and greeted by his only daughter. Then his vow flashed before his mind. Now let us look at Judges 11:35, "And it came to pass, when he saw her, that he rent his clothes, and said, Alas, my daughter! thou has brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me: for I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I cannot go back."

The next verses tell us that she agreed with her father that if he had promised the Lord to offer as a sacrifice to Him the first to come from the house to meet him that he could not go back on his promise. And if she could have two months to bewail her virginity with her friends, that she would return and he could fulfill his vow to the Lord. Verse thirty-nine tells us that she returned and her father did with her according to his vow which he had vowed. Jephthah seemed to be a man of God, and is listed in the Great Hall of Fame chapter of Hebrews eleven. Even though human sacrifice was not permitted in God's sight, I believe that Jephthah in order to live up to his promise to the Lord offered up as a burnt offering his only child. I have no reason to believe that she could be just dedicated to the Lord as a virgin to serve Him as a fulfillment of his vow.

God bless.

JAMES A. CRACE
1862 St. John's Rd
Ludlow, Ky
41016

PASTOR
Bethel
Baptist
Church
Ludlow, Ky.



"Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon the earth: therefore let thy words be few" (Ecc. 5:2).

I believe Jephthah made a hasty vow unto God. In a time in his life when God had promised to use him in a great way to bring victory to His people. At a time when he should have been strong in faith, he makes a great blunder. The Spirit of God had revealed the way of victory unto him. This is a good lesson for us, in that when you stand be careful lest you fall, as Paul ex-

horts, "...Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (I Cor. 10:11, 12).

Jephthah's vow was bound to lead to sin, especially when considering that he was the leader, a man in the public eye, and what the vow involved. He vowed... "whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering.", if any forethought did he take in making this vow? Did he think a lamb, or a goat, or some house pet would come forth to meet him upon his victorious arrival? What if it had been his parents, or wife, or some dear friend? The fact that it was his only child that came forth only tended to worsen the dilemma he had put himself into. He left himself no good choice; either he had to break his word, and that to God, or break the sixth commandment, "Thou shalt not kill." What a terrible choice he had forced upon himself! He had much time afterward to consider his folly. His obedient daughter sought two months in order to mourn the fact that she had not wedded. He granted her this time, at the end of which he kept his vow. "And it came to pass at the end of two months, that she returned unto her father, who did with her according to his vow which he had vowed." (Judges 11:39a).

JAMES O. WILMOTH
1747 Fullington Rd
Toledo, Oh. 43614

TEACHER:
Grace
Baptist
Church
Toledo, Oh.



The story of Jephthah is revealed to us in the eleventh chapter of the Book of Judges. He was the leader and captain of Israel. He was a Gileadite and the son of an harlot. The Word of God refers to him as a man of great faith (Heb. 11:32). He delivered Israel from the Ammonites, who for many centuries clashed with the Hebrews. It is from one of these many clashes that the question centers.

"Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah, and he passed over Gilead, and Manasseh, and passed over Mizpeh of Gilead, and from Mizpeh of Gilead he passed over unto the children of Ammon. And Jephthah vowed a vow unto the Lord, and said, If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands, Then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering" (Judges 11:29-31).

Jephthah was guided by the Spirit of the Lord. He then vowed unto the Lord. His vow was based on gaining the victory over the Ammonites. If he received that victory, then he would offer as a burnt offering whatsoever came forth from the doors of his house when he returned. The vow is voluntary and carries the idea of setting

apart or consecrating something or someone.

A vow has obligations, according to God's Word, and cannot be altered. "If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond; he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth" (Num. 30:2). "When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for the Lord thy God loveth the man that keepeth his word: therefore thou shalt pay that which thou hast vowed" (Ecc. 5:4).

The one that came out to meet Jephthah was his only child, his daughter. With great anguish he told her of his vow unto the Lord. She, with great and wonderful understanding, told her father that he must do that which he had promised unto the Lord. She then asked a favor of him. That favor was that she might be allowed, for a period of two months, to bewail her virginity. It was a great disgrace for a Hebrew woman to die childless. At the end of the two months, she returned to her father who did with her according to his vow.

The vow was that he offer a burnt offering. I believe that this is what he did. The idea of perpetual virginity did not surface until almost 1200 years after the death of Christ. I cannot find any reason or purpose for a doctrine of perpetual virginity. Man becomes dissatisfied with what the Word states and attempts to fashion to suit his own needs.

CRITICS

(Continued from Page 4)

king's house, which of course is their own. A Baptist church is the King's Temple in organized form, so when Baptists war on each other they do it unto the King. Regicide. To assault the King's sons who are princes of the house is all the same as to do it unto the King.

Sovereign Grace Baptists know a great deal. I have said in recent papers that we are at the head of the class by grace. We know much, but one thing we have NEVER learned is how to properly value our critics. Our critics are among our greatest assets which we should appreciate and enjoy. Baptists are largely children. This is a criticism of us all. Children do not take criticism well. They balk, pout, glare, scream and sulk until they mature. When they mature they can be admonished well because they receive it well. An ancient word says that if you rebuke a wise man he will grow in wisdom. Perhaps "wise" and "mature" might be synonymous here.

Baptists tend to PERSONALIZE every criticism urged against them. Thus they show their childishness.

I have several times examined the published doctrines of Baptist brethren only to have them gnash their teeth and howl. Believing themselves attacked (which they weren't) they personalized the matter and attacked in turn. I have published works for years and at no time has anyone ever taken me to PRECISE Scripture and disproved a point I have shown. Yet, I have had critics cry, "You

(Continued on Page 6 Column 1)



QUESTION: Who was the first professional lamplighter?

ANSWER: Aaron, Exodus 30:7, 8. "And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it..."

CRITICS

(Continued from Page 5)

have attacked us" and heap scorn and bile upon my head. I rather enjoy this but I don't learn much truth from it. I have NEVER had a critic reply to printed works and answer by Scripture, but I have some who screamed imprecations and slander. I expect such things from children so they don't unduly trouble me. A wise man once said, "I am never surprised at beastly conduct when it is done by a beast." I expect nothing from children but childishness so their darts do not trouble my mind. I thank God for my critics for at least they care enough to carp. I have learned more from my critics than from my friends. May God spare my critics unto me, for I would be somewhat desolate without them. They lighten my way, even when the light springs from fires of wrath. I ask them to be PRECISE, but ire seldom includes PRECISION. Yet, I value them for they serve me well.

Spurgeon had critics because he spoke. I think he spoke rather well. The critics I shall cite from The Atlantic Monthly, 1858 did not target Spurgeon's themes so much as the man himself. When men speak unpopular truth their critics try to stay the message by slaying the messenger. There was a custom in ancient Greece to slay the messenger who brought bad tidings, because bad tidings cause discomfort and men dislike being discomfited. "Slay the messenger" has always been practiced and it finds place among childish Baptists of this hour.

The only way to avoid criticism is to say nothing, do nothing, be nothing and espouse nothing. Be bland and you shall spare yourself pain. Be bold and prepare for missiles (many times from your kinsmen).

I shall share some of the "Book Review" from 1858 on Spurgeon's works. Actually it is more of a review of the man himself. Quoting then from The Atlantic Monthly, 1858, "Whatever elements of Christianity may be left unexpressed in them, it is certain that Mr. Spurgeon has succeeded in expressing himself. Mr. Spurgeon, we suppose, would be classed among Calvinists, but he is not merely that. He detached from their relations certain doctrines of Calvinism which especially interest him, and so emphasizes

and intensifies them, so blends them with his personal being and experience, that the impression he stamps upon the mind is rather of Spurgeonism than Calvinism. His converts are likely to mistake being Spurgeonized for being Christianized; for the Christianity he preaches is not so much vital Christianity as it is Christianity passed through the vitalities of his own nature, and essentially modified and lowered in the process.

"As a theologian he is coarse, ignorant, narrow minded, and strikingly deficient in fine spiritual perceptions. Warmth of feeling combined with narrowness of mind make him a bigot. He believes in Spurgeonism so thoroughly and simply that toleration is out of the question, and doctrines opposed to his own he refers, with instantaneous and ingenuous dogmatism, as folly and wickedness.

"Indeed the incapacity of our preacher to discern, or mentally to reproduce, a religious character differing in creed from his own, makes him the most amusingly intolerant of Popes, not because he is malignant, but because he is Spurgeon. If he had learning or largeness of mind, he would probably lose the great portion of his power.

"He gets his hearers into a corner, limits the range of their vision to the doctrine he is expounding, refuses to listen to any excuses or palliations, and then screams to them, 'Believe or be damned'. In his own mind he is sure they will be damned, if they do not believe. So far as regards his influence over those minds whose religious emotions are strong, but whose religious principles are weak, every limitation of his mind is an increase of his force.

"The reader who contrives to preserve his calmness amid this storm of words cannot but be vexed that rhetoric so efficient should frequently be combined with notions so narrow, with bigotry so besotted, with religious principles so materialized; that the man who is loudly proclaimed as the greatest living orator of the pulpit should have so little of that Christian spirit which refines when it inflames, which exalts, enlarges, and purifies the nature it moves. For Mr. Spurgeon is, after all, little more than a theological stump-orator, a Protestant Dominican, easy of comprehension because he leaves out the higher elements of his themes, and not hesitating to vulgarize Christianity, if he may thereby extend it among the vulgar.

"It has been attempted to justify him by the examples of Luther and Bunyan, to neither of whom does he bear more than the most superficial resemblance. He is, to be sure, as natural as Luther, but then his nature happens to be a puny nature as compared with that of the great Reformer. Bunyan's pharaseology is homely, but Bunyan's celestializing imagination kept his 'familiar grasp of things divine', from being irreverent pawing of things divine. Mr. Spurgeon's nature works on a low level of influence. Deficient in imagination, with a mind coarse and unspiritualized, though religiously impressed, he animalizes his creed in attempting to give it sensuous reality and impressiveness."

Thus speaks a 19th century savant of Brother Charles Haddon Spurgeon. Our brother suffered at the hands of intellec-

tuals, moralizers and the Episcopal effete of his day.

In reading this "Book Review," I have rather admired the reviewer's facility and skill. He's certainly more readable than Baptist critics of our time. I would imagine him to be an Episcopalian and used to sitting before high alters where sonorous sermons and high sounding moral lessons were accustomed to be preached. He's an able writer, but sadly he assaults a rather good man. His entire remarks show him to be just another gifted man defeated by intellectualism. I wish that all of my critics wrote as well as this man, but I surely wouldn't want his eye turned upon me. All in all I think I prefer screaming critics who sputter to a man of this writer's ability, even though they would not be nearly as interesting as he.

We all have our critics, God bless them, especially those of us who scribble. Their flaming arrows deliver us from self veneration while they drip with bile. We shall never be undone by our critics, only provoked unto better service. Let all our critics be vigorous, as this "book reviewer" has been, for we can hardly expect our critics to bring savory morsels to our plate. Let them be scurrilous if their natures direct them that way, but let them not depart.

I don't know if Brother Spurgeon ever read this particular "Book Review," and I doubt it. If so it probably amused him. Our critics are more amusing and entertaining than the circus, if we properly value their offerings.

Rudyard Kipling was a contemporary of Spurgeon, but of a far different literary genre. In recalling his school days Kipling tells of a teacher who constantly insulted him, always derided him, casually degraded him and daily reproached him. Yet, Kipling says that he remembers nothing but joy when this angry teacher, "broke his precious ointments over my head." This irate teacher taught him more than all others. He says of these experiences, "One learns more from a good scholar in a rage than from a score of lucid and laborious drudges." So then our critics are not always wicked even when they smite us.

Baptists need to learn. We need to learn to treasure our critics as we would precious ointment. Even if our critics are sulphurous we must assess their value to us well, for what is aimed at our heads may well find place in our hearts for our good.

If Sovereign Grace Baptists mature beyond childhood and learn to accept their critics in a DEPERSONALIZED way then 90 percent of Baptist wars would cease. When we attempt to follow a doctrine to it's lair we MUST meet some on the way who would thwart us. Make your friends if possible and invite them to journey with you. Lincoln was once derided for not wanting to destroy his enemies and he replied, "Do I not destroy my enemies when I make them my friends"? Baptists should not take their critics to task but to heart. Enmity can be slain by kindness and all shall gain. Invective can be turned to blessing if the critic be turned by love. Ah, but when pamphlet replies unto pamphlet with worsening and worsening language nothing is gained and we all lose blessings.

All of our critics are malcontents of some sort, so it is our task to make them "content" and obliterate the "mal". Ornate tongue lashings

have never served the cause of Christ, and have never aided a Baptist ministry.

We Sovereign Grace Baptists could lose a little of our hauteur and benefit from it. We are always so overly careful that none gain an advantage of us that we return fire for fire and spite for spite. We should resent wrong doctrine, but not a kinsman.

I wrote an article many years ago on "Freemasonry" and likened it unto children crying in the street. Sovereign Grace Baptists sometime remind me of children screaming in the streets. Being wronged we avenge it, being slighted we slander, being pained we agitate for redress. I truly love a people who can laugh at themselves, but Sovereign Grace Baptists haven't quite attained unto this. We are a fervent people, to our credit, but we are foolish with our critics. We should conserve our fervour for true work not the scourging of our critics. When scorned we may sway with kindness. We can "win" our critics to peace. The head of the class would do well to remember that a soft answer turneth away wrath.

A wise man's mother once told him, "Son, if you wish to get on well in this world you must be oh so smart, or oh so pleasant." The man said, "I tried smart, I prefer pleasant." Of a very truth we are a smart people. By grace we are a knowing people. Perhaps we should sometime try "pleasant," and especially with our critics, God bless them all. Fare thee well.

BLESSED

(Continued from Page 1)

than one facet of character is to limit the meaning rather than expand it to instruction. Poor in spirit would of necessity have a much more extended application to a saint years under the molding perfection of the Potter, than it would to a babe who hitherto had never heard of such a thing. There is a bewildering intruder injected into much of Christianity in these days of accelerated visible success. It can be readily seen even in those assemblies which insist on sovereign grace as Biblical. The intruder is ministerial pride (if we may call it that), manifested by the "pulpititeer" who is unwilling to leave revelation and instruction in the power of the Grand Revelator. He tells his hearers if you have not seen what I have seen, then you are not saved; if you have not felt what I feel, then you just are not born again. A course like this is obviously introduced to solidify the speaker's spiritual condition, rather than admonish the hearers in the realms of sound doctrine. It is a manner in which the preacher may eulogize his exploits without ever mentioning his own name. The absolute prerequisite to salvation, however, is not feelings or exploits (God forbid! Feelings we have all the time — some admirable humanly speaking; others just out and out filthy). Stated plainly, salvation is the quickening power of the Holy Spirit which inaugurates a living spiritual being. Then and only then are we entitled to delineate spiritual feelings — and these now secured should not be our own which are woefully imperfect at best, but those which Christ described as fruits of the Spirit which are better termed as spiritual attributes granted, rather than feelings displayed or felt.

The Beatitudes are not conditions one will see functioning in his own life or a rising up to their perfection to confirm his sonship. The teaching of Christ does proclaim that the closer one draws to His overwhelming holiness, the more will these spiritual gems appear as absent. It truly would be quite repugnant to hear one speak as if these saintly blooms were his, not to mention the self-righteous air it would broadcast. "The beatific character and attitude described by our Lord in vv 3-12 are unattainable by self-effort, but are wrought in the Christian by the work of the indwelling Holy Spirit (I Cor. 3:16; Gal. 5:22, 23)," C.I. Scofield.

Because this blessed constitution cannot be acquired nor performed by laborious efforts applied and adhered to by men, it becomes clearly evident that the poor in spirit are not those who are materially devoid of abundance. If Christ sought only to advance temporal poverty, the greater majority of mankind would be, by nature, what Jesus here insists is only possessed by grace. So, we can safely conclude that financial emptiness is far removed from the sacred meaning. Those persons wrapped in rags of social nothingness are by birth and practice no less rancid than the wealthy Pharaohs of Egypt. The diseased bodies and hungering stomachs of the poor may draw forth the natural pity of the masses, but we by nature hold in admiration the affluent. The poverty stricken lack not the wicked desires, but only the opportunity to exercise their inherent rottenness. Moral restraint is the act of providence and nothing more.

There is a tendency by many to deem the poor in spirit as that soft spoken, bland, unintruding, nice guy who is everybody's yes man; the backward, awkward, listless, wallflower who would rather compromise than contend. Or, as D. Martin Lloyd-Jones describes, "nervous and different." Some seek so diligently to impress others with their humility, that they surpass the persistence manifested by the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda with respect to his need of healing (John 5:1-9).

We are just altogether too much in love with ourselves. So much so, that we make supposed humility the object of pride. The Big "I" (me, me) is still the prominent feature of our conver-

(Continued on Page 8 Column 3)

"Blessed is he that considers the poor: the LORD will deliver him in time of trouble. The LORD will preserve him, and keep him alive: and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies. The LORD will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness. I said, LORD, be merciful unto me: heal my soul: for I have sinned against thee. Mine enemies speak evil of me. When shall he die, and his name perish? And if he come to see me, he speaketh vanity: his heart gathereth iniquity to itself: when he goeth abroad, he telleth it. All that hate me whisper together against me: against me do they devise my hurt. An evil disease, say they, cleaveth lieth he shall rise up no more.

(Psalm 41:1-13)

When we give our contribution into God's house, we are not giving to the Lord, we are just taking our hands off what belongs to Him.

STUDIES IN EZEKIEL

Willard Willis, Monroe, Ohio



"Afterwards he brought me to the gate, even to the gate that looketh toward the east" (Ezek. 43:1).

The temple has now been measured and its glorious structure and ornaments have been set before Ezekiel. The temple, at this point, resembles the marvellous body of Adam before life was breathed into him. The Temple, at this point, will also be a dead body of bricks, stones and mortar until God indwells it. The same can be said of our Lord's churches. They, in fact, are nothing without God the Spirit.

You will note from the passage which is before us that Ezekiel will be brought to the "gate that looketh toward the east." The reason for his being brought to this gate is set forth in the following passage:

"And, behold, the glory of God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like the noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory" (Ezek. 43:2).

The arrival and entrance of God into the Temple is here likened to the rising of the sun in the east — the sun which pushes back the darkness and brings fresh light upon the earth. We have a similar reference in the following passages:

"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall rise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and the kings to the brightness of thy rising" (Isaiah 60:1-3).

Our text states (v. 2), "and the earth shined with his glory."

God's glory shines upon the truth and dispels error, even as the morning sun dispels darkness. It will most certainly be so during the Millennium when the Temple is set up and God indwells it. This period of time, in fact, will be as stated in the following passage:

"And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (Isaiah 2:3).

Ezekiel, then, was taken to the east gate where he saw the glory of God ascending from the east. We, too, look toward the east when we look toward Israel where our Lord was born, and lived out His precious life. It, in fact, was in the east that the star appeared.

God's return to the Temple is very significant, especially to the Jews, for in a previous chapter we observed as He, because of Israel's sins, left the temple (Ezek. 11:22, 23).

The Lord, according to Ezekiel 43:2, will have a voice like a noise of many waters when He returns to indwell the Temple. His voice, of course, will speak the message of love, grace, peace, mercy, pardon, reconciliation and righteousness. He will speak of life, liberty and salvation. These glorious messages together will be like the sound of many waters in that they, like a flood, will cover the earth. They will not only cover the earth, but they will be accompanied by power. They, in fact, will be soul-shaking, heart-melting, soul-quicken and enlightening.

"And it was according to the appearance of the vision which I saw, even according to the vision that I saw when I came to destroy the city: and the visions were like the visions that I saw by the river Chebar; and I fell upon my face" (Ezek. 43:3).

The vision to which Ezekiel refers, is the one he alludes to in chapters one, nine and ten. The record shows that there was the likeness of a throne in each of his visions, and the appearance of God's glory on the thrones.

Ezekiel informs us that his vision was "even according to the vision that I saw when I came to destroy the city." It is not meant here that Ezekiel destroyed the city, but only that it was through him that the destruction of the city by the Chaldeans was foretold. His prediction, in fact, made the destruction of the city a certainty, since he was God's spokesman.

Ezekiel informs us further that his "vision were like the vision" that he saw by the river Chebar. His vision by the river Chebar involved the four living creatures and the wheels, the throne of sapphire and the glorious appearance above it. The difference between those visions and the one before us is that God is now arriving, whereas there, He was departing, especially in the last vision.

Ezekiel informs us that he, as the result of this last vision, fell upon his face. He did so in reverence to such glorious majesty. He, in fact, was overwhelmed with such a display of goodness and mercy and very sensible to his own unworthiness to behold that which he saw. One will find by reading Isaiah 6:1-5 that Isaiah had the same reaction when he saw the Lord sitting on His throne.

"And the glory of the Lord came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east" (Ezek. 43:4).

God the Spirit came to indwell the church on the day of Pentecost and here God the Son will come to indwell the Temple, or to sit on the throne of David during the Millennium. The house being finished, the Master of the house arrives from the east like the rising of the sun, and moves in so that we have God dwelling among men and all because of the accomplishments of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

"So the Spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and, behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house" (Ezek. 43:5).

All of us, on occasion, have stopped by to visit a loved one, only to find that they were not at

home. We found their house so very empty. Their absence left a void. Their house, however, became warm and alive when they returned. Ezekiel now experiences a similar thing in regard to the Temple. He, on entering the "inner court," finds that the "glory of the Lord filled the house." The house, in fact, was filled up with God's glory. Idols and all other things that are false will have been put away and the most righteous God will shine upon His people. It will truly be "glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

"And I heard him speaking to me out of the house; and the man stood by me" (Ezek. 43:6).

Ezekiel, in chapter forty and verse five, had been admonished to behold with his eyes and hear with his ears; furthermore, he was to set his heart upon all that was to be shown to him. We find that Ezekiel was obedient to his Lord, since in verse six of our text he states:

"And I heard him speaking unto me out of the house; and the man stood by me."

The man whom Ezekiel had seen at the first — his guide, stood by him as a mediator between him and His God. He stood by him as an advocate with the Father. He also stood by him so as to interpret what was said, and to guide him into further knowledge.

We have, in the scene before us, the presence of the entire Godhead. God the Spirit brought Ezekiel in vision to the place before us, while God the Son is his guide, Mediator and Advocate. God the Father, on the other hand, is speaking to the prophet from out of the house.

"And he said unto me, Son of man, the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever, and my holy name, shall the house of Israel no more defile, neither they, nor their kings, by their whoredom, nor by the carcasses of their kings in their high places" (Ezek. 43:7).

This passage is a fulfillment of Luke 1:31-33 which states: "And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

The Lord Jesus, when dwelling among us for thirty three years, did not have a throne. He became one of us and was tempted in all points as we are tempted. He laid aside His royal rights, and, as Isaiah informs us, was "led as a lamb to the slaughter." Here, however, in the passage before us, He sits upon His throne and His feet rest upon the earth — His footstool. It is as stated in the following passage:

"Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of

my rest?" (Isaiah 66:1). The Lord's presence among His people will assure that the house of Israel will no more "defile, neither they nor their kings, by their whoredom, nor by the carcasses of their kings in their high places." (Ezek. 43:7). The reference to the carcasses of their kings in their high places is an obvious reference to the worship of images such as Moloch and Baal. These kings were only carcasses of kings. They, in fact, were lifeless and useless and the high places which were set up to honor them, were abominable.

"In their setting of their threshold by my thresholds, and their posts by my posts, and the wall between me and them, they have even defiled my holy name by their abominations that they have committed: wherefore I have consumed them in mine anger" (Ezek. 43:8).

The threshold is the entrance way into the house. There is only one threshold or entrance way into God's house. Men therefore set up another threshold or entrance way when they try to enter God's house by any other way than that which He has directed. The other threshold which people have set up today is that of works for salvation.

They not only had set their thresholds by His threshold, but they also had their posts by His posts. This is done when men substitute their ordinances for God's Ordinances, or when they bring into His worship things which He has not commanded. Commandments of men, in other words, are taught rather than the commandments of God.

The result of their thresholds and their posts was that a wall was erected between them and their God. It was a wall of separation — a wall which hid God from their view — a wall which prevented His blessings from flowing to them — a wall which prevented their communion with Him.

They had even defiled His holy name by their abominations; that is, by their false doctrines, idolatrous worship and immoral lives. The result being that He consumed them in His anger.

"Now let them put away their whoredom, and the carcasses of their kings, far from me, and I will dwell in the midst of them for ever" (Ezek. 43:9). The above passage has the same ring as John 14:21 which states: "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."

It is not only that Israel is mandated to put away their whoredoms and the carcasses of their kings, but the same message is applicable to the world today. It is, as far as God's people are concerned, "Come out from among them and be ye separate." "Learn not the way of the heathen," or "in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." It is, give up your ways and abide by my ways and I will dwell among you.

"Thou son of man, shew the house to the house of Israel, that they may be

ashamed of their iniquities: and let them measure the pattern" (Ezek. 43:10). This passage has a message regarding the future temple that is not easily detected in the previous chapters. The message is that the future temple, among other things, is to be a measuring device. Those, in fact, who measure the temple pattern, will also measure their own conduct. The temple is to be a mirror, even as God's Word is a mirror. You and I, by looking into God's Word, see our true selves. The temple is to have a similar effect upon those who measure its pattern. Ezekiel, in fact, is to show the temple to the house of Israel so that they will be ashamed of their iniquities. We do the same thing, when we, by witnessing, show the Word of God to people. We ask them to measure the pattern of the Word against their own lives.

"And if they be ashamed of all that they have done, shew them the form of the house, and the fashion thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the ordinances thereof: and write it in their sight, that they may keep the whole form thereof, and do them" (Ezek. 43:11).

We have, in this passage, a similarity of that which God requires today. It is, "show them the form of the house," the ordinances, laws, etc., if "they be ashamed of all that they have done."

One, when ashamed of his ways, is saying that his way is all wrong. It is at this point that they are ready and willing to follow God's ways. These are the only kind of people that our Lord invites into His church where they can learn of His great truths. The same will apply to those who will come to worship at God's future temple. They will be expected to hear and heed every truth. The new temple, in fact, as is true of the Lord's church, will be the pillar and ground of the truth.

"This is the law of the house; Upon the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof round about shall be most holy. Behold, this is the law of the house." (Ezek. 43:12). The temple, as is true of God's Word, is to be "most holy." The temple will be God's Word, or the expression of God to His people. He speaks today out of His Word. He will speak to the people in that day via His temple. God's Word measures men today and the temple will measure them then. The Word, of course, is to last forever, but the message set forth by God's Word, will be set forth by His temple. It appears that the very structure of the temple and its ornaments will speak, not in the written word, but in a language from God which the people will understand.

The key to the temple structure and the message it delivers, rests in the fact that the Lord Jesus will be sitting in the temple on the throne of His father David. It follows then that the reign of David and our Lord's reign will have similarities; the

(Continued on Page 8 Column 1)

EZEKIEL

(Continued from Page 7)

difference of course, being that our Lord's reign will be without error. All the types and shadows which surrounded David's reign will be realized to their fullest. The shadow, in fact, will have fled away and the substance will have replaced it so that a reference to the altar in the new temple, or any of the other parts of the temple and its furniture, will be a reference to the fullest meaning of that which these were meant to portray. It is as stated in verse twelve where we read: "This is the law of the house; upon the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof round about shall be most holy." There, in other words, will not be a looking forward to God's tomorrow, but that tomorrow will be here. The well of blessings will be full and each person will have his or her own bucket to draw blessings from God's well.

The "top of the mountain", in the passage before us, no doubt, refers to the fact that the top of the mountain of God's favor and blessings will have been reached.

"And these are the measures of the altar after the cubits: The cubit is a cubit and a handbreadth; even the bottom shall be a cubit, and the breadth a cubit, and the border thereof by the edge thereof round about shall be a span; and this shall be the higher place of the altar. And from the bottom upon the ground even to the lower settle shall be two cubits, and the breadth one cubit; and from the lesser settle even to the greater settle shall be four cubits, and the breadth one cubit. So the altar shall be four cubits; and from the altar and upward shall be four horns. And the altar shall be twelve cubits long, twelve broad, square in the four squares thereof; and the border about it shall be half a cubit; and the bottom thereof shall be a cubit about; and his stairs shall look toward the east" (Ezek. 43:13-17).

The word for altar in Ezekiel 43:15 (above) is "harel" and means "mount of God," and, as such, denotes the highest security which can be afforded to restored Israel.

The altar in the new temple will commemorate or celebrate that which our Lord has done and this commemoration will be at the highest pitch possible. The people, in fact, as the altar before us declares, will be on the mount of God, that is, enjoying the fulness of blessings.

The altar was God's meeting place between Himself and man. The Lord Jesus, of course, is our altar. Here in Ezekiel, He is the altar of the people, that is, the meeting place between God and them.

The particulars of the altar as set forth in Ezekiel 43:13-17, carry with them God's Word to His people. The people will be taught this message and enabled to receive it with great joy even as we are given the ability to hear and receive such passages as Romans 8:28 or any other passage of Scripture. It is as stated in the following passage:

"And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us

Stewardship puts the Golden Rule in business in place of the rule of gold.

go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (Isa. 2:3).

It appears to me that no one today will be given the ability to understand the full meaning of the altar in the passages before us. It has a message which will not be taught in full until the Lord Jesus reigns from the new temple.

"And he said unto me, Son of man, thus saith the Lord God; these are the ordinances of the altar in the day when they shall make it, to offer burnt offerings thereon, and to sprinkle blood thereon" (Ezek. 43:18).

An ordinance is a decree or law. The ordinances of the altar therefore are the rules relating to the altar and the means of worship thereby in the new temple. The people will become very familiar with the meaning of these ordinances during the time of the new temple.

"And thou shalt give to the priests the Levites, that be of the seed of Zadok, which approach unto me, to minister unto me, saith the Lord GOD, a young bullock for a sin-offering" (Ezek. 43:19).

The Levites, or priests, were of the family of Zadok; who descended from Aaron, and were the eldest house of Aaron. It was to them that the priesthood belonged.

The name "Zadok" means "a righteous one," thus Zadok was a type of Jesus Christ. He was also a type of Jesus Christ in that he and his seed approached God and ministered unto Him. The Lord Jesus, of course, fulfilled these types to the full as He did all others.

These types are brought into the new temple as a means of lifting up the Lord Jesus. Those who partake of these things will know that there is salvation in none other than our Lord Jesus Christ. They will know that there is no access or ministering before God except by way of the true Zadok the Lord Jesus Christ.

The "young bullock" which is to be brought as a "sin-offering" will also be a means of causing all to rejoice in the finished work of the Lord Jesus. The young bullock will be strong and laborious, and as such will picture the Lord Jesus as the only one able to bear the sins of His people.

"And thou shalt take of the blood thereof, and put it on the four horns of it, and on the four corners of the settle, and upon the border round about: thus shalt thou cleanse and purge it. Thou shalt take the bullock also of the sin-offering, and he shall burn it in the appointed place of the house, without the sanctuary.

And on the second day thou shalt offer a kid of the goats without blemish for a sin offering; and they shall cleanse the altar, as they did cleanse it with the bullock. When thou hast made an end of cleansing it, thou shalt offer a young bullock without blemish, and a ram out of the flock without blemish. And thou shalt offer them before the Lord, and the priest shall cast salt upon them, and they shall offer them up for a burnt-offering unto the LORD. Seven days shalt thou prepare every day a goat for a sin offering: they shall also prepare a young bullock, and a ram out of the flock, without

blemish. Seven days shall they purge the altar and purify it; and they shall consecrate themselves. And when these days are expired, it shall be, that upon the eighth day, and so forward, the priests shall make your burnt offerings upon the altar, and your peace offerings; and I will accept you, saith the Lord GOD" (Ezek. 43:20-27).

We, in pondering the above passages, must keep in mind Ezekiel 43:10, 11 and Isaiah 2:3 where we are informed that the action taken, as stated in the above passages, will be a means of teaching the people. The temple will be the pulpit and the above will be the message that will go forth. The people will be thrilled with the message they receive from the various offerings, since each will exalt their great Saviour and Lord.

BLESSED

(Continued from Page 6)

sation. "It is easy to be proud... It is not easy to be humble and reverent as ever becomes us" (Commentary on Romans, Wm. S. Plumer).

Blessed has the meaning of happy — poor in spirit describes a broken and contrite heart. The verse, however, in no manner teaches "happy are the miserable." The blessedness of a man is of God through Christ; righteousness achieved by the vicarious acts of Deity's eternal King, imputed without works, while the poorness of spirit is a spiritual sensitivity initiated by the Holy Spirit which of necessity must condemn the remaining motives and active desires toward filth which still permeates the saint's being. "The poor in spirit are the ones who are of a broken and contrite spirit for their manifold sins, and cannot entertain any proud opinion of their own righteousness, but flee unto the free grace of God... true blessedness or happiness lieth in the favor of God" (Matthew Poole).

It is not said blessed are those who have never sinned, but rather, blessed are those whose sins are forgiven. The most celebrated angels in eternity will not share the effulgent glory granted to the least of the redeemed (Rom. 8:16, 17).

Behold the Psalmist as he gives description of the blessedness: happy is the man... "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works. Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin" (Rom. 4:6-8). (See also Psa. 32:1, 2).

The poor in Spirit are those who cry, who are all their life in trouble; nonetheless, they are encamped, saved, and delivered. "This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. O taste and see that the LORD is good... blessed is the man that trusteth in him" (Psa. 34:6-8). Noteworthy is the fact that this poor man that cries because of troubles, sins, and afflictions is later in this same Psalm described as broken and contrite; while it also answereth to a better report; that being delivered by

strength and declared righteous by sovereign prerogative. "The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous... but the LORD Delivereth him out of them all" (Psa. 34:17-19). God not only is affectionately touched, but likewise pleased with the cries of the ones He, by His Son, views as blessed. A spirit which is broken and the heart that is contrite must be such by knowledge imparted of its contrary and sinful uselessness that surrounds every phase of the supplicant's life. He has been taught that he is just plain dirty. This blessed man may be sternly revolted by the appalling knowledge of his rottenness, or he may be devoured by the sad acknowledgment that he is barely sensitive to that horrendous disease which clings to his corrupt frame. In whatever state, whether supple, tender, and crushed by his deformity; or grieved and woefully ashamed because of hardening deceit; his cry, if he be God's, is to a greater or lesser degree, the same — "have mercy upon me... blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly... cleanse me... purge me... Hide thy face from my sins... create in me a clean heart... renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away... restore me... Deliver me..." It is only after God has created in His elect this disdain for personal wretchedness, as well as the abhorrence for spiritual coldness to which the poor man is inebriated, do we begin to understand the beatitudes as spiritual presents imparted, and not natural qualities needing only guidance. Admittance of their absence, if truly felt, is a sign of greater humility, than describing oneself as poor and humble. It is after God has granted the broken spirit that He is pleased with the sacrifices of the righteous. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart" (Matt. 5:3). "O God, thou wilt not despise... Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of the righteous..." (Psa. 51).

This marvelous confession by the Psalmist was not what caused his contrition, but was the result. It is the poor in spirit who shall be revived. "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit" (Psa. 51:10-12). To the poor in spirit is the promise that his heart and spirit shall be revived. "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (Isa. 57:15).

How will the great God do all these glorious things? He will heal, He will lead, He will restore, He will comfort, He will create, He will strengthen, He will help, He will uphold, He will hear, He will not forsake. "I have seen his ways, and will heal him: I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners. I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near,

saith the LORD; and I will heal him" (Isa. 57:18, 19). "Fear thou not; for I am with thee; be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness... For I the LORD thy GOD will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee. Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.. when the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them" (Isa. 41:10, 13, 14, 17).

God will look favorably on those whom He has instructed in mercy; the precious, who are habitually aware of the Father's continued preservation of their being. The poor one who trembles at His word. "...but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word" (Isa. 66:2b).

Blessed, yea blessed; poor in Spirit, but rich in faith — to those is the kingdom promised. "Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" (James 2:5).

Oh! God, do Thou in me that which Thou hast herein described. Amen.

WATCHING

(Continued from Page 1)

unrest of the nations of our times! Who is there to calm the raging seas of humanity? Who will watch? Who will sound the alarm? Who will but give an attentive ear? Even a basic analysis of mankind at this hour will plainly show that nation upon nation is reaping the results of grievous sin in the lands. Yea, our own nation, with its lofty and proud looks, has become so blinded by sin that it appears locked in the grips of the most evil kind of sins and dares to stand forth before the world and proclaim itself a "Christian nation". Truly we have come to a "famine in the land". But, you say, how can this be when we are the "breadbasket" of the world? we say, beloved, we as a nation, have come to a famine of hearing. Hearing, that is, in "thus saith the Lord" and "what saith the Lord". Yea, we have stopped our ears to the Word of God and the only hope of salvation!

We ask ourselves beloved, how has America become so steeped in such gross evils? Such evils as Sodomy from coast to coast, which the Lord is punishing thus far with "AIDS". It will be only by the sovereign grace of God if a cure is found for such an evil disease, and only by the Grace of a Sovereign God if the entire nation is not overcome by this disease and wiped from the face of the earth. Yet, we are told we must have compassion, and remember "gay rights." Then we have the further evils of mass murder of 15 million innocent babies; we have abundance of rape, and not just our women, but small defenseless, trusting children. We are filled with massive divorce and adultery cases, and we must not forget to mention those who are now demanding the so called right to

(Continued on Page 9 Column 1)

WATCHING

(Continued from Page 8)

have sexual relations with children from six years old and upward. How has America sunk to such sin and degradation? In part because it is a nation of mankind and therefore composed of a totally depraved people. In part because it is a nation of spoiled children blessed in over abundance and unthankful. Then beloved, we must ask further, what am I, as a child of God; as a Landmark Baptist, doing about all this evil? Could it be that some of these things exist in our land because we, as members of the true Baptist Churches, are not "standing" continually upon the watchtower? We are not giving that "certain sound" and may be avoiding the issues of the black sins of our land? Oh, beloved how I sincerely pray not! Yet I know, as concerning myself, I cannot say, "I stand continually upon the watchtower."

There are many implications in the words of our text. It is implied that one is the watchman. In the case of the child of God, it is the trained, disciplined, Christian soldier of the true church that is the watchman. It is also the church; "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (Ephesians 6:18). Then further, a watchman must have good eyesight, he must be able to see. Certainly no blind man would be of any value in the watchtower, for how should he warn of danger? The meaning of every aspect we seek to cover concerning the watchman, is that without a good understanding of the Word of God you cannot venture to the tower. Our land reeks of watchmen in towers built in the woods, surrounded by mirrors, calling out "peace and safety". These watch-men must needs be removed (false religions), but such can only be done by much prayer, study, and yes, beloved, for our land, fasting should not be neglected. Then to be a watchman, one must be alert. A child of God walking with the world is not alert, but slowly being lulled to sleep by forgetfulness, apathy, carelessness, and the enticements of Satan and the flesh. A watchman must never leave his post unless properly relieved of duty, therefore it implies a responsible person, a reliable person, a loyal and dedicated person. Yet it was to the first Baptists our Lord said; "What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Matthew 26:40-41). Yea, even beloved Paul was forced to say... "for what I would, that do I not" (Romans 7:15). I have found, beloved, that when our faith is tested, we see what we really are; and then we can only wonder at His Grace.

Only briefly do we observe the implications of Isaiah 21:8 as concerning the watchman, but as concerning the watching itself, with this we seek to deal by His grace. Watching is a part of the stewardship of Christ, that is of Christian discipleship, and as seen in Ephesians 6:18, watching, keeping a watch, joins only hand in hand with prayer of the deepest sort. "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching

thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." One author states that the Greek here translated "watching", expresses not mere wakefulness, but the watchfulness of those who are intent upon a thing." The thing, in the case of Ephesians 6:18, is the Christians armor in part being prayer, and this prayer, beloved, is in behalf of one another; the watching, loving and caring for the brethren of Christ. Then again, watching is to have many purposes, some of which we shall only briefly mention.

The Apostle Paul without doubt had to be one of the most Christlike men that has ever walked among men, but only by the elective grace of the Lord. We are surely touched by some of his final words to the elders of Ephesus in Acts 20:31. "Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn everyone night and day with tears." Such love for the brethren. Such love for the church. Would to God our often so hardened hearts would be so moved to tears-tears, sadness, fear for, and love for the elect of the Lord's house. His final words were words of warning and grave concern. "Therefore (that is, because of "grievous wolves", false brethren, will enter the church) watch and remember..."

There is a lesson here beloved, a lesson of deep gravity in these facts: Firstly, "grievous wolves" did enter the church at Ephesus Secondly, the church obviously did not "watch" against these. Thirdly, the church did not "remember", take to heart his warning by the Spirit. How can we come to such conclusions as these? I ask, where is the church of Ephesus today? What happened to this Baptist Church? For further thought, where are now the seven Baptist churches of Asia, Corinth, and so on? Would we say, "I stand continually upon the watchtower" of ourselves and not wonder what happened to these churches in sincerest fear? Once the call, the full Gospel truths that only true Baptists believe, is abandoned, how may we say we have a watchtower? How may we say we have a watch? There was a warning to the church at Sardis: "Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee." (Revelation 3:2-3) I will not enter upon dispensationalism or the prophetic aspects of these verses, but present them out of consideration for the fact that the church at Sardis was a Baptist Church, but is no more, for they remained not watchful. The times in which we live are eye openers. Many so called professing brethren I have met of the so called "mystical body" are all to quick to tell me how the doctrines I seek to hold to can only alienate the "carnal Christians". How that we must speak only in love and of love; but my reply to these, who take the stand of compromise, is that ignorance begets ignorance, and surely love is a deep desire that others may know and rejoice in the full truth. I have heard much of the

"mystical body" of Christ, but I have never once read of it in the Word of God. I read much in the Word of God concerning love and love of the truth, but I have never read compromise in order that truth will stand! The point is, beloved, these things are very alarming; they are eye openers and only those who are watching can make the stand for the truth, by His grace. In the words, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith." (1 Corinthians 16:13). We are admonished not to be lulled to sleep by compromise. Love for our fellowman should certainly prevail, but "preaching" the truth in love will never fail, for His Word will not return unto Him void, but will accomplish that whereunto He has sent it. Therefore, "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving." (Colossians 4:2) "But watch thou in all things" (2 Timothy 4:5).

Watching, watchfulness, and the idea thereof is conveyed to us throughout the Word of God. The Jews were waiting and looking for the Messiah, but had they continued to watch the Word of God, they would have known Him when He came. The same idea is shown to the Gentiles throughout the New Testament. We look back on times passed by faith and yet we are told to look forward, to be watchful, be faithful I Peter 4:7 states; "But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." "Watch unto prayer" is the warning; but why? Because an end is near, yea, very near. It is clear from the words penned by Peter, and breathed by the Spirit, that there was a certain expectation believed and held by the Apostles and the first Baptist churches. It is this "watching unto prayer," that is, a very sober form of watching, we seek now to deal with.

For this cause we write, for this joyous occasion we need to "stand continually upon the watchtower", for it, in essence, is the cause for all other causes of watching. The Lord Jesus Christ, just prior to His betrayal gave this, His command, to His elect: "And what I say unto you I say unto all, watch," (Mark 13:37). Many seem to be at wits end these days trying to decide, of what, when, where, and how we are to watch, and by this, I refer to the soon coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. In Matthew 24:42, our Lord declared, "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come" Again in Mark 13:33 we read: "Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is." And still further in Luke 12:40, "Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not." "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh..." (Matthew 25:13). It does not take a doctorate in theology to understand the teaching of our Lord in the above verses for, simply stated, He has declared a necessity to watchfulness because His return is imminent, impending, or could happen at any time. This should be the deep longing of every child of God; watching in great, joyful, loving, anticipation for "this same Jesus", for the Lord declares, "Blessed is he that watcheth," (Revelation 16:15), for He will indeed keep us in perfect peace whose mind

is stayed on Him, and without reservation how blessed our lives shall be. Yea, watching in all earnestness, sincerity, and sobriety. Beloved, the world watches the heavens in fear, even at this hour, for they watch not for the Lord of Lords, but for the war of wars, never thinking that the earth is not to the disposing of men, but of the Lord. "Ye are all the children of the light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober: For they that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thessalonians 5:5-9)

"...But let us watch... For God hath not appointed us to wrath." For clarity, a certain side stepping is needed here while still keeping with the subject of watching. Note the use of the words, "Ye, we, us," in the above verses. With all certainty, these words apply to the elect brethren of the true church. Thus by this we see that firstly, the epistle to the Thessalonians is addressed to the true churches. In noticing 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and 5:1-9, we see that the Apostle Paul is writing about the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ "in the clouds" to rapture His people at the first phase of the second coming. To say that this is not so is to deny the imminency of His return and His own words of sure promise; therefore we are bidden to watch! Secondly, "for God hath not appointed us to wrath" (1 Thess. 5:9) "To all that be in Rome," Paul wrote, "being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him" (Rom. 5:9); and again, "even Jesus which delivered us from the wrath to come." To believe that the saved must go through the great tribulation the time of Jacob's trouble, is to deny the promises of the Word of God. It is to believe that the elect will be spared the wrath of judgment for sin only to suffer the wrath of God on earth. Sacred writ surely declared, "not appointed, we shall be saved, delivered from the wrath to come." How shall we be delivered if it is not a pre-tribulation rapture? Therefore we are indeed to watch.

We consider briefly the Old Testament types which prophesy to us of a pre-tribulation rapture. Enoch, I believe, well knew of the coming flood, for it was after the birth of his son Methuselah, that he repented and "walked with God" and "was translated that he should not see death." (Heb. 11:5) I have read that Enoch so named his son to indicate that at Methuselah's death the flood would come, for such is the interpretation of the name. If memory serves me correctly, Methuselah died just prior, to the sending of the flood. Nevertheless, both Enoch and Noah were raptured before the flood. Noah portraying the rapture in the safety of the ark which typifies the Lord Jesus Christ. Without doubt, these men of faith were watching. Yet, judging from the times in which we live (more akin to Lot's day) we would be

led to believe that many saints will be as Lot of old, for the Lord put forth this alarming inquiry, I believe for our times: "Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith (i.e., believe in the whole doctrines of revealed truth) on the earth?" (Luke 18:8) Though the question of our Lord seems at present to be answered in the negative, yet we see Lot was delivered from destruction. Likewise when both Moses and Joseph took Gentile brides, it was before God's wrath of plagues and famine, which again typifies the rapture of the saints before the great tribulation. Having briefly considered these, we should well see the necessity of sober watching, and bow our knees in humble thanksgiving for these revealed promises. Disagree you may, but hope you must, otherwise where is your comfort? The problems that many brethren have concerning the rapture is that they cannot distinguish between the words, "church", "kingdom", and in just what respect the Lord was speaking to the twelve; i.e., as a church, elect, or as Jews. Until this is distinguished properly, confusion and error will only proceed. Never, ever recorded in the Word of God do we find the church of God suffering the wrath of God such as is in the great tribulation. Undenially, many will be saved during that time, but you may search and never find the bride of Christ, the true church faithful members. Watching, beloved, belongs primarily to the church, for it alone is the true watchman, the one most accountable for the giving of the certain sound of the gospel.

May we as Baptists be not ashamed in that day and be able to faithfully and truthfully proclaim, "I stand continually upon the watchtower," for let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. "I say unto you all, Watch." He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." (Rev. 22:20).

GRAND

(Continued from Page 1)

who would write for and in behalf of T.B.E. have been and are in agreement in general with its basic doctrinal position. Now, my intention today in this article is not to uphold this great theological paper, though it is most appreciated by many different folks with all kinds of background, but to point to some very precious landmarks that we must not ever lose sight of as God's dear children. In the book of Proverbs one will find my other two verses of Scripture that I wish to use as my text for this message. "Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set" (Pro. 22:28). Again, "Remove not the old landmark: and enter not into the fields of the fatherless" (Pro. 23:10). My subject in this article that I wish to draw your attention to is this: Grand and precious Old Landmarks that we dare not lose.

Again, let me say, there are certain old landmarks that we dare not do away with in our present day! God help us to see

(Continued on Page 10 Column 1)

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER
APRIL 19, 1986
PAGE NINE

GRAND

(Continued from Page 9)

these landmarks, and then, to do something about them. Yes, by the very title of this one subject, anyone can see and recognize that it could easily develop into a series of sermons or articles. Therefore, let me very briefly introduce you to my subject: Old Landmarks. In the twenty Centuries that have come and gone since our Lord established His church, several doctrinal positions have always stood out within the Lord's true churches. These have become known as Old Landmarks!

The first old landmark: The Bible is the verbal, plenary, inspired Word of God. For the first eighteen hundred years of "church history" (let it be understood that I am using that phrase in a very loose way) there was never a question as to the Bible being the very sure Word of God. But in the past one hundred and fifty years, the very foundation of our belief has been under great attack and that by the god of this world: Satan. Oh Beloved, this is an Old Landmark that we must never give up! The Bible is either the blessed eternal Word of God without any error or it is absolutely nothing. There is no reason under the sun to discuss any other Biblical doctrine if one does not first agree that the Bible is God's own revelation of Himself unto man; and that the revelation that we have is without error in the original autography manuscripts. "For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven" (Psa. 119:89). Again, we read what the Apostle Peter had to say about the Holy Scriptures in his epistles: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pet. 1:20-21). Again, the Apostle Paul picks up this grand old theme and writes, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16-17). The first of these Old Landmarks that has divided us from other folk who are somewhat religious is this one doctrine: divine inspiration. Thus, a very weak view on Biblical inspiration will only lead one down a very dangerous path. Beloved, the Bible is "God-breathed" from cover to cover; and even the cover the old preacher reasoned, and that because it said, "The Holy Bible."

God said it, and that, Beloved, settles it whether you or I believe it or not! There are sixty-six different books found within the book that we call the Bible; yes, some 1,189 chapters within those different books; yea, 31,173 different verses throughout the blessed, eternal, Word of God. The Bible as we have it is the full, final, and complete revelation of Almighty God. The Bible is complete! We do not need any more information about God and His plan of redemption for sinful man. Jude, the half brother of our Lord Jesus Christ, wrote, "That ye should earnestly contend

The lad who gave his loaves and fishes didn't have to go without his dinner.

for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3).

The Apostle John warned us about adding or taking away from the Word of God in the last book of the Bible: Revelation. "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book" (Rev. 22:18-19). You see, Beloved, these verses of Holy Scriptures simply mean this: we already have a body of doctrine; and therefore, that body of truth needs not ever be changed. On that one account alone, whether in our private homes, or in our places of public business, or in our assembly, the only authority that the child of God needs so far as divine revelation is concerned is God's inspired Word: the Holy Bible.

The second old landmark: the Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. There have been many good books written on this one grand old theme; some for and yea, some against it, but the truth of the whole matter must be decided from the teachings of the Word of God that we have come to know and love as the inspired Bible. Oh, beloved, don't ever give up this precious grand old landmark! If you have missed the central truth of this one landmark, then, you have missed out altogether. There are many folk today who do not believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ; and Beloved, to believe thus: means, absolutely no salvation. How dare one make such a statement! "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God" (1 John 5:5). Our salvation is so secured by one's basic belief that Jesus Christ is God. "Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost" (1 Cor. 12:3). This grand old landmark is so essential to our glorious eternal salvation! To deny this great Biblical truth, means to simply deny Him! In the personal ministry of our Lord as recorded by the Apostle John, our Lord claimed to be the eternal great "I AM" of the Old Testament. "Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58). Jesus Christ was God and that is so declared in the first chapter of the Gospel account by John. "In the beginning was the Word (Logos), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). "And the Word (Logos) was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). There are many other great and wonderful passages of Holy Scriptures that would support this most wonderful truth. To the believer, there should never be a question with regards to this truth: Jesus Christ was God and yea, will always be God.

The third old landmark: The Virgin Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Oh, beloved, this Biblical doctrine like the last one is most essential to the

Christian faith and therefore, ought not ever be taken lightly. Those folk who would deny the deity of our Lord would also deny this doctrine as well. "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (Isa. 7:14). The liberals hate this doctrine and have attacked it in so many different ways. The enemy of God hates this grand and glorious Bible truth. Matthew gives to us these words in his Gospel account, "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us" (Matt. 1:23). Yes, there are many in the world today who would attempt to destroy this one grand old landmark. Years ago, Crozer Theological Seminary was noted for its belief in general of the fundamental doctrines of the Bible, and especially the Virgin Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Dr. Henry G. Weston, D.D., LL.D. was her President and was one of the consulting editors of the original Scofield Reference Bible. Then, as does most schools of higher learning, sharply departed from its once firm stand in the Virgin Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ and many other fundamental doctrines. Today, that school no longer believes in the deity of our Lord, much less in His virgin birth. God deliver us from that kind of schooling! With regards to this one doctrine, there can be no question as to its fact. The Bible claims eternal deity for our Lord Jesus Christ, and that deity was brought into this world by the miracle of the virgin birth. "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Gal. 4:4-5). A Baptist theologian wrote about this subject and had this to say, "Every book, every chapter, and every verse in the Bible is connected in some way to this fact." Oh Beloved, listen, our Lord Jesus Christ did not have a human father as every other human has had. You see, the baby to which the Virgin Mary gave birth to was a supernaturally conceived baby and that of the Holy Spirit of God. This is a most grand theme and is supported in both the Old and the New Testaments. Don't give up this landmark!

The fourth old landmark: the vicarious atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ for His own. The Bible is most clear on this one point: Jesus Christ our Lord died on the cruel tree of Calvary to pay the ransom price that God the Father required. "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pet. 2:21-24). Again, we read from the Book of Peter, "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the

flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pet. 3:18). On Beloved, all of this simply means: our wonderful Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, died on the cross of Calvary not for Himself, but for others: the elect. How could all of this be? Because of His sinless nature, the Lord of Glory could and did die on the cruel cross in our behalf. It must be understood right here and up front, our Lord Jesus Christ knew absolutely no sin — "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. 5:21). And then again, in Peter's first epistle, these most wonderful words are written for us about our Lord's sinlessness: "Forasmuch as ye know that we were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you" (1 Pet. 1:18-20). Listen to me, the liberals have had a hay day in their vicious attack of our Lord's death on the cruel Roman tree, but Beloved, that does not change what our Lord did for His own. This is a most certain and very precious landmark that we dare not give up! Hold fast to this great truth.

The fifth old landmark: the physical resurrection and future bodily return of our Lord Jesus Christ. "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:9, 11). Again we read these wonderful and perhaps, the greatest eight words in all of the New Testament: "He is not here: for he is risen" (Matt. 28:6). Why are these words so great? Because they tell us that God the Father was well pleased with the work of His eternal Son. Because they tell us that our Lord had finished the task that He was sent into the world to accomplish: to purchase our redemption. Because the grave and death could not hold our Lord; and because, He lives, we shall also live forever. Amen! Again, Oh, beloved, we must never give up this grand old landmark! Dr. Luke told Theophilus that there were many infallible proofs of the resurrection of our blessed eternal Lord Jesus Christ. Perhaps the greatest of those proofs today is the church that our Lord left behind. What a grand old landmark! Not only did our Lord die on the cruel Roman tree of Calvary, but death could not and did not contain Him. "He is risen." Oh, but please don't stop there, for this same Jesus who died on Calvary is coming back to this earth. This is right, and in the very same manner in which He left: with a visible body. By some, the above five theological terms have been called the fundamental Bible doctrines that divide us from the rest of Christendom. Indeed, these five most wonderful Bible doctrines will separate us from the Neo-Evangelical; but, there are more precious old landmarks that must be stood for in these days in which we

live. What about the autonomy of each local church, the priesthood of all true born again believers in Christ Jesus, the two Biblical ordinances that our Lord gave to His church during His earthly public ministry, the individual's soul liberty, the saved and Scripturally baptized person for membership within a true church, the two officers of a church: pastor and deacons and then, separation of church and State. These are equally as important grand old landmarks.

Lastly, the sixth old landmark: the imminent, literal, pre-millennial, pre-trib coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is an old landmark that many of our churches and pastors have been giving up these days. The Scriptures are quite clear on this one subject: the rapture of the saints of God; and that, beloved, will take place before the time of Jacob's trouble (Jer. 30) gets started. In fact, though one may call their church a church, it is indeed not a church when it denies the literal fulfillment of Biblical prophecy. This one doctrine is of vital importance to the true church of our Lord Jesus Christ. If you please, a church that does not believe in the return of our Lord, is not being true to the Scriptures that it claims to follow. Oh listen, the coming of our Lord for His Saints is a most encouraging and wonderful doctrine. It is the next big event in God's prophetic time table; for it is imminent, that is, it may take place at any given moment. Praise our God, it is the next event; thereby,

(Continued on Page 11 Column 1)

AFTER TAPS

In the coolness of the evening
After all the lights are out,
And throughout the camp is silence
Save the sentry's hailing shout.
Comes the hour of deep reflection
For the resting soldier chaps;
And the weary oft find comfort
In the stillness after taps.

In the darkness gleam the faces
Of the folks we've left behind,
There are mother, wife and sweetheart
And our friends so true and kind
Once again there comes the vision
Of that homeland, and perhaps
One can even hear the voices
Of those loved ones, after taps.

Oft the aching heart grows weary,
Oft it almost seems to break
Midst war's mad and hellish turmoil
And the sufferings they make.
How we bless the starlit gloaming
As the busy day it caps,
And there comes escape from torment
In our dreaming, after taps.

To the soul there comes assurance
That the cause is good and just,
That we can't be doomed to failure
While in God we put our trust;
And should death's cold arms enfold us
There'll be peace when life's cord snaps,
For we know we'll find our loved ones
Over yonder, after taps.

Written in France in 1918 by G.E. Jones and used in the memorial service of his son, Emerson, who died in England, June 14, 1944, in the U.S. Army Air Forces. Used also in his own funeral service, Feb. 2, 1966.

GRAND

(Continued from Page 10)

snatching away every true born again believer that has lived since the death of righteous Abel in the Old Testament. Listen, "He will come again." That is what the apostle John promised us as he quoted our Lord in the fourteenth chapter of his Gospel account. Oh, beloved, don't give up this glorious truth! Hold fast to that which has once been delivered unto the saints of God. May God bless your heart as you think upon these wonderful and grand old landmarks.

PASTOR

(Continued from Page 1)

Some believe a pastor's responsibility is basically to marry and to bury. Yet this relationship is also misunderstood by many church members. The world may think the pastor owns the church, but some church members think that they own the pastor. There are church members who think that the Greek word for pastor is "janitorus", from which we also obtain the word janitor. Others think the pastor is only a preacher. The church hires him to speak three times a week, and that is the extent of his duties. He is, more or less, a paid lecturer. We wish to examine in this article what a pastor owes to the church.

A pastor owes to the church, first of all, the truth. That statement may seem self evident, yet there are some pastors who do not give their church the truth. "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (II Timothy 4:3,4). False doctrine is both a preacher problem and a congregation problem. We have known many preachers who were taught the truth and preached the truth, but then began to wander from it. We often lament that pastor so and so has deluded his congregation and led them astray. The fault is not entirely the preacher's, however. II Timothy says, "shall they heap to themselves teachers." The truth of the matter is that most congregations hear exactly what they want to hear. If they are led astray, it is as much their desire to hear falsehood as it is their pastors willingness to teach it.

A pastor does not owe his church opinions, although it is his right to give his opinion, a pastor's opinions on politics, social institutions, the weather, television programs, sports, or a million other subjects may be very good and even at times full of insight. A pastor does not owe his church those opinions, yet some pastors give their church more of their opinions than they do of the truth.

The truth of the gospel must be declared by the pastor. This is part of his duty to the congregation, and he must take the utmost care not to neglect it. "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (II Timothy 1:13). If a pastor is to declare the truth he must stick closely to the Scriptures, for they are the Word of God and God is truth.

A pastor owes his church time spent in study and prayer. How

is he to declare the truth if he does not study the truth? I have met many church members who have said they liked and admired their pastor because of his friendliness, his visitation, or his way with young people or older people. I have met very few church members who have said they liked and admired their pastor because of the amount of time he spent in his study. Scripturally speaking, however, a pastor's time in study or prayer is much more important than visiting, friendliness, or his ability to get along with people. The quality, effectiveness, impact, and usefulness of a sermon will greatly depend upon the amount of time the pastor spent that week in study and prayer. In fact the apostles thought this their main duty. Deacons were appointed in the first church to take care of the physical burdens of the church that those who were concerned with the spiritual burdens might better do their job. "But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word" (Acts 6:4).

If a pastor ever gets to the point where he knows all things and no longer needs to study he is useless to the church he pastors. If he can learn no more, (or rather thinks he can learn no more), then they can learn no more either for he is their teacher. When the pastor stops growing spiritually, the church stops growing also.

A pastor owes his church a careful watchfulness. "Preach the word, be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (II Timothy 4:2). A pastor owes it to his church to reprove and rebuke sin. This is misunderstood and misconstrued by many church members. The average church member does not want his pastor to mention his sins to him. Somehow they have gotten the idea that their "personal" is none of their pastor's business.

"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you" (Hebrews 13:17). Your pastor must account not only for himself, but for you also. He is the undershepherd that the good and great Shepherd has set over that portion of the flock that you are a member of. When he rebukes or reproves you for sin, it is for your own good. He tells you of those things because he wants to help you, and wants to see you become a better Christian. Listen to him. He knows what he is talking about.

A preacher owes his church not just rebuke and reproof, but exhortation also. He ought to give a pat on the back where it is due. He ought to be constantly trying to build up the flock, to show it not just its weaknesses, but its strengths also. A pastor ought to encourage church members, and not just discourage them.

A pastor owes his church a total commitment. We have far too many part-time pastors. By that I do not mean those who must work at a secular job to make a living for their families. Many times that is necessary, and there is certainly nothing unscriptural about the many "tent makers" we have pastoring churches today. However, there are some preachers who look at their church as a past-

time job. A way to raise a little extra money. Some look at it rather like a hobby, something to fill their spare time with. A good pastor will be totally committed to the church that he pastors. It will be in his heart to love them, to serve them, to pray for them, to teach them, to do whatever needs to be done for them.

"The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest" (Luke 10:2).

Letter

I recently received the following letter. I receive many such letters. Oh, what sad days are these in which we live! There are so many who believe the truths we teach in The Baptist Examiner, but who cannot find a church near them standing for the same precious truths.

Dear Brother Wilson, I want to thank you for the tapes you have sent me. They have been a real blessing to me... My family and I attend a small independent Baptist Church in... I like the church. All the people are warm and friendly, and the pastor is a good man whom I respect. But I have differences with him on some things. First of all, he believes in having a Christmas program... I don't believe we should have anything to do with Christmas at all. He sees nothing wrong with a Christmas tree, I see everything wrong with it. This is strange to me because he has preached against the Catholic religion, and Christmas is about as Catholic as one can get.

Next, he teaches that the church didn't start until the day of Pentecost. I believe that Jesus Christ started His church before then... He goes on to say that, once in heaven, all the saved will be in the bride... I don't agree with that. If Christ's bride is His true church, then how can someone who came out of a false church be in His bride?

He preached about the five points of Calvinism (Sovereign Grace) and he only agrees with total depravity and eternal security. He does not hold with the limited atonement, unconditional election, and irresistible grace. He teaches that election is to a position in Christ rather than to salvation. I disagree. I believe in God's indisputable sovereignty in all things.

My wife and I believe that a woman should wear a head covering in the assembly. The other women do not. I believe that we should use real wine... with unleavened bread in the Lord's Supper. As far as I know, the church uses grape juice and soda crackers...

There is one more thing... The pastor won't allow me or my wife to hold any position in the church because she has been previously married and divorced... My wife caught her husband in bed with another woman. She divorced him because of it. I met and married her about two years later, and we have a good marriage. I have not been married before, but the pastor won't allow me to become a deacon or Sunday school teacher until my wife's ex-husband dies. I don't feel this is fair, but I really don't know what to do about it... Name withheld by editor.

Now I give the essence of my answer and advice to this brother. It adds up to saying

that I would not be a member of such a church. I do not think a man who believes in the truths of God's Word, as this brother states in his letter, should be a member of a church that teaches so much contrary to that truth. I do not think a Christian should be a member of a church that teaches as much contrary to the Bible as this one does. I certainly would not want to be a member of a church that had Christmas services. I certainly would not want to be a member of a church that dishonored the Lord's death by using grape juice and soda crackers in the Lord's Supper. Using these elements teaches, by symbolism, that there was sin in the body and blood of Jesus Christ. Baptism by sprinkling (?) teaches symbolically a gospel without the death and resurrection of Christ in it. I would not want to be a member of a church that teaches such heresies, even though it is done symbolically; and the church may not really believe such.

I certainly would not be a member of a church that opposed the glorious doctrines of God's grace such as the one mentioned above does. Sovereign grace is too important for me to support the contrary by my membership, presence, and money. I really do not see how people can believe one thing strongly; and then be members of, supporting with presence, membership, and money that which seeks to tear down what they believe, and to promote what they believe to be false.

Then, I surely would not be a member of a church that treated some of its members like second-class members; not letting them have offices in the church, because of the church's false and unscriptural belief about divorce and remarriage. The lady in the above letter surely had every right to get a divorce. And surely, any man who even wants to believe the truth knows that a Scriptural divorce entitles to a Scriptural remarriage. How wrong and unscriptural it is for the above mentioned church to treat this brother and sister as they do over this matter. I hope it doesn't happen, but it would serve such a preacher right to catch his wife in bed with another man, and then see how he would feel about the matter. Thank God that He often spares men the things they really deserve. I wonder what the above preacher would think about the matter if he was involved in such rather than someone else?

I have advised the brother who wrote this letter to immediately get out of such a church. He should get his membership out of such. He should not attend or support such a church a moment longer. He should put his membership in a church that teaches and practices the truth, even if that church is at such a distance that he cannot attend it. He should consider moving to where there is such a church. He should, if he cannot move, put his membership in such a church anyway. Then he should consider having meetings of some sort where he is, with such being authorized by a church of which he is a member.

I have received another letter from this brother. He has followed my advice about leaving the so-called church he was in. He is considering putting his membership in our church. He is considering moving here or having some services in his

home, hoping to reach others with these precious truths. I commend this brother highly. He has done the right thing. He is planning to do the right thing. What he has done and is planning to do is hard and difficult, but it is much better than being a member of and supporting a church (?) that teaches and practices the things that his former church did. May God greatly bless this man and his wife in their service for Him.

DEFINITIONS

by Ray Hiatt

An "oblique" is defined as beginning at a fixed point, but gradually diverging from the true. Several doctrines which trouble us may be described as "oblique." Many doctrines which later wander astray begin from a fixed point of truth or intent. Many false doctrines were begun by men who had no desire nor intent to preach falsehood, but who failed to follow the doctrine to its end to see where it would ultimately lead them. Doctrine must not only be correct at its inception, but also true at its terminus. Many false teachings have sprung from the lives of good men who failed to follow this basic and simple procedure. They failed to ask, "Where will this thing ultimately lead me?" Had they examined it fully in the beginning, they would have avoided the end which has been ruinous for many.

Men are far too quick to adopt a beautiful sentiment simply because it is beautiful on the surface. They see it beginning at a fixed point of probity, and do not notice until too late that it diverges unto an "oblique." Then it is many times too late and they are left with the disagreeable task of having to defend an "oblique" doctrine which they many times do not fully believe. Yet, they do defend it because pride compels them. How often have we seen good men go astray after a beautiful sentiment which they failed to examine fully.

I shall give some examples of "oblique" doctrines. Perhaps the first of this company is the "Universal Church." For many folks this doctrine began at a fixed point of sentimentality. I have had tender hearted people tell me that they could not stand the thought that any of God's children would be outside of Christ's church. They want all saved people in the "church." Their desire to see God's children blessed is a good fixed point. However, in their case they diverged unto the "oblique." Hating the thought of exclusivity, they fabricated a "universal church" in which they have all the "born again." This satisfied their sentimental urges. This doctrine is classically "oblique." It begins by seeking the good of God's children. This is not wrong. It becomes wrong when it diverges unto an imaginary structure for the sake of their tender feelings.

"The Priesthood Of The Church," is an "oblique" doctrine. The men who created this doctrine did so from good intent. They had seen Christ's churches set at nought by the world and by many Baptists.

(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

DEFINITIONS

(Continued from Page 11)

This horrified them. They attempted to lift Christ's churches above the degeneration of the world and in so doing they erred by going too far. They ascribed to Christ's churches benefits and attributes which Christ never intended. They did this out of good intentions. They began at a good fixed point but diverged unto the "oblique." They failed to examine their doctrine to see where it would ultimately lead them. If they had examined it fully before preaching it, many would have abandoned it. However, they failed in this, and having failed; they have gone unto the ruination of hard-shellism.

Mission boards are founded on an "oblique" doctrine. They began with good intent. Many good men had a genuine desire to see the salvation of souls, so they constructed agencies to carry the Word. They failed to think their doctrine through to its ultimate end. They built structures which came to war against Christ's churches. They began with genuine intent but the "oblique" claimed them.

There are many other examples of doctrines which began with a beautiful sentiment but which wandered astray. My brother, I offer you this encouragement and issue to you this alarm. If some beautiful sentiment attracts your mind look further than the beginning of it. Look unto its end. Look to where this doctrine must ultimately lead you.

I weep for men who have gone astray for this single, simple cause. Good men. Admirable men. Men whom I have admired and respected. I have seen them go off following a beautiful sentiment. Their initial intentions were good, but they failed to examine the sentiment to its ultimate end. They failed to see the depths to which it would lead them. They failed to see that they would be called upon to defend the indefensible. I have seen good men go astray after an elusive creed who tried to defend points which I had every reason to believe that they realized could not be defended. But, they had gone off on a divergent trail and were compelled to defend its every twisting and turning. Pride kills. It has slain Baptist preachers far more gifted than I, and far more able than I. They dallied with the "oblique," and it swallowed them up at the end; for at the end it ruled them;

My Baptist friend; whatever you believe and whatever beautiful sentiments you follow do yourself this service. Study all of it, all of it. Look at the end as well as the beginning. See where this beautiful sentiment will lead you. Do this especially before you preach it or print it, for once preached or printed it may well rule you unto ruination. Examine the path you follow before you follow it. It may well be an "oblique" trail leading to disorder.

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER
APRIL 19, 1986
PAGE TWELVE

THEY MISLED US

by Paul Harvey

"They" told us that, if we'd relax about sex, take our clothes off, and not get all up-tight about it, there would be no more sex crimes.

So, we let it all hang out, and the incidence of rape has increased 10 percent in one year.

Maybe we'd better question some of the other advice "they" gave us.

"They" told us that, if we'd tough with criminals, that we should go easy on them. So we went easy on them, and the rate of violent crime has increased 47 percent since 1968, increased 6 percent last year, is increasing 15 percent this year.

"They" told us that, if we'd just be more generous with poor folks, there'd be no motive for stealing any more. So, we gave everybody a guaranteed income, and robbery, burglary, larceny, and auto theft are running 15 percent ahead of one year ago.

"They" said the churches are "old-fashioned," that they must modernize, liberalize, rationalize compromise.

And those that compromised most are shrinking fastest.

If it is appearing up to here "they" gave us some awfully bad advice. "they" did.

"They" insisted that our schools must boot God out, and rely on enhancing Junior's intelligence.

So, we graduated a generation

of Juniors with refined intellects and undisciplined emotions, so school age suicides have soared 92 percent in two years.

"They" told us alcoholism and drug addiction were sicknesses, not crimes. Now we're gagging, choking, strangling on forbidden fruit.

"They" said informal marriage was enough, so now the odds are 5 to 4 your rapture will be ruptured, and 2 in 7 that the next baby will be born illegitimate.

Every ugly headline in today's newspaper, and yesterday's, and tomorrow's, is somebody's emotions gone out of whack.

Spaceship earth came with a book of instructions; let's see what it says. It says we should not be slothful in business. In fact, it says, he who does not work, let him not eat.

It says women should wear modest apparel. It says, don't steal anything, anything!

It says, don't get drunk, period.

It says, you sleep only with your own wife.

It says, you don't do what you "want," you do what you "ought," and for those who consciences are anesthetized, it specifies which is which.

In other words, if that rule Book were not divinely inspired, it would still be the best blueprint for an orderly existence.

Forum I

I. Timothy 5:9; "Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man."

SAM
WILSON
1490 North
Spring St.
Gladwin, Michigan
48624

PASTOR
Grace
Baptist Church
Gladwin, Michigan



In order to understand this verse we must study the context from which it is taken. It would be helpful in understanding this verse and the context of this chapter if you could dig back six articles ago and read those answers. Since this is a two-part question, let us answer one question at a time.

First, the question about the term "number" and what it refers to, in verse nine. I believe the word number refers to widows who are to be cared for by the church. There are guidelines set down so as to determine who should and should not receive help from the church. If you read the next seven verses you will find these guidelines expanded and elaborated on. The number refers to widows who qualify to be helped by the church.

The second question deals with whether or not this verse gives or requires special duties from some widows. Let me say from the start, that it is in no way giving any support to deaconesses. Such an animal

does not exist in God's Word. The context of the chapter does not deal with what these widows were to do, but with what they had done in the past. This verse does not teach that there is a special duty for widows. The verse is dealing more with the church's responsibility to the widow than the widow's responsibility to the church. In some cases widows may have greater opportunities than some of the married women due to time and circumstances, but they are not under any greater Biblical obligation. I wish we would all realize our opportunities and responsibilities to God. I never will forget preaching a revival at The Calvary Baptist Church in Ashland. I remember a widow woman in that church making trips to bring visitors to church and how it should shame some of us younger folks who always have excuses. Thank God for widows who remain faithful in the church after their husbands are dead and gone. By the way, that widow woman was Sister Gilpin. May God bless you all, and especially you faithful widows in God's service.

A FENCE OR A HOSPITAL

One state passed a law forbidding the bible to be read in the public schools, and the same state passed another law requiring that a Bible be placed in every prison cell in the state. What reasoning! A fence at the top of the cliff is much better than a hospital at the bottom.

UNGODLY NUDISM

by Waldo Whiddon

Is the "Modern Day" wearing apparel sinful? Yes, both male and female. Both have

gone too far to the left to please a loving, forgiving God. Why is apparel sinful? Because it is not in line with God's Word. Immodest apparel is one of the great sins of the day. Adam and Eve fell into transgression, Gen. 3:7, saw their nakedness, and tried to cover themselves with fig leaves. It would not work then, and it won't work now, for it is contrary to the apparel of God. We see in this a great contrast between then and now. Adam and Eve became ashamed, and tried to cover their own nakedness. Today, it seems to be quite the opposite. We can scarcely contain ourselves, unless we are showing all, and leaving nothing to the imagination. May God help us to see the wrong in the apparel of today. God was not pleased with the coverings made by Adam and Eve because they did not properly cover, hence He made for them a better covering.

There are many who follow the everyday styles ignorantly, not grasping the Biblical inference against the mode of dress, because of not having studied the Scriptures prohibiting such mode of apparel. Others seem to indicate the objective of the idol of style and fashion is to arouse the passions of the opposite sex, such as short, form fitting dresses with low necks, shorts, slacks. Such apparel induces crime with the sick minded, causing us to wonder what has become of our peaceful way of life. The way we live has brought on a lot of our modern day crime. People can be seen walking the streets of our cities in short-shorts. Mothers of small children, seemingly conscious free, in any supermarket, or other public places wearing mini-skirts, short-shorts, even the style of

the coat over shorts, making it appear as if there was nothing but the coat being worn. My brother, that is an abomination before God. Some of these people are church members, and a lot of them actually profess to be Christians. No one today cares to hear this sort of criticism. It is very unpopular, but God takes a stand against such fads, and we believe parents should take a stand for decency before the children, and set a good example. Rather, it would seem some would encourage the youngster to get used to semi-nudeness.

Modernists teach, "If the heart is right, all is right." If a heart is right with God, it would seem she would not want to expose her body in such bad taste before God's public, on public display before the worldly sin that God had saved her from in the first place. Hold on Brother, the ladies are not in a field. We are equally guilty of this abomination of the mode of dress. Also, we laid down our self-respect a long time ago, going more than half-naked, and trying to see who could look the most like a wild animal, with no respect for God's Word saying to live clean and respectable, wrapped up in hair to such an extent as to scare a bear to death if met in daylight.

What is the answer? Repent! "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." I John 2:15. When the clouds of heaven roll back at the coming of the King, it will be too late to grab for the bottom of a short garment and try to pull it down. Now is the time. Let both male and female be ever mindful of the opposite sex, and the ensuing result of nudism, and semi-nudism as practiced today. May God help us... Amen.

APPRECIATED LETTERS

Dear Bro. in Christ:

Just a line to say I enjoy the paper very much. Bro. Joe; keep up the good work. I am sending for a two year subscription. I would hate to ever have to be without my paper. Sister in Christ, Maysel Salisbury, Clay, W. Va.

Dear Sir,

I have been receiving the bulk of T.B.E. for Ghana, and I have been sending them to their respective owners. It has given me the opportunity of knowing some members of the body of Christ outside Accra, where I live. Thank you very much. Yours in His service, Stephen K. Sawiri, Ghana, West Africa.

Dear Sirs:

Please extend my subscription for another year, for your wonderful paper. I am glad you were good enough to send it to me free for a year. If I get any money, I will send for another years subscription. I can hardly wait for it to come. I especially love Bro. Wilson's sermons. I thank you again for the good paper. Pat Howard, Harriman, Tenn.

Dear Bro. Wilson:

I thank you, for your very nice letter. It is appreciated. I eagerly look forward to each new issue of T.B.E. I include three subscriptions for some very dear friends of mine. I am a woman of seventy-one years of age. I love my Bible and study it each day. I believe the way you

do. Wishing you God's richest blessings. Sincerely, Clela Kirk.

Bro. Wilson:

I just read your article, "from the editor," in the Jan 25, 1986 issue of T.B.E. Your views on a pastor and missionary being under the same rules is the only proper way to do things. I don't know why anyone would object to it. But, if you get opposing views, would you print them in the T.B.E. if possible? I'm sure others would also like to know the reasons why some would object to having rules. May God bless you. J. Ralph Woolard.

BOOK REVIEW

We have a new book available. It is "Practical Truth From Judges" by Luke H. Wiseman. This book presents a general coverage of the entire period of the Judges. The author then deals fully with four of the judges of this period. It is my firm conviction (one which I put into practice) that we need to know more about, and preach more frequently from the Old Testament. I believe that historical and biographical preaching from the Old Testament can be a great blessing to us today. Any book that will help the preacher in this is a valuable tool to add to his collection. This book is such a one. I recommend it to our readers. It is a hardback book of over 350 pages. The price is \$12.95. Remember that the profit goes into our ministry.